



LEGACY INSTITUTE

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Dear Fellow-laborers in God's fields,
Greetings to all of you from Chiang Mai, Thailand.

Just across the border the poor people of Burma (Myanmar) are suffering without enough food, shelter and clean water after cyclone Nargis hit without warning in the Irrawaddy Delta region which includes Rangoon (Yangon). One aid worker said it was the worst destruction he had seen since Indonesia after the December 26, 2004 tsunami! Estimates range from 70,000 - 100,000 killed and 50,000 - 60,000 missing.

News coming out of Burma is tragic. It is now several weeks after the cyclone came through and Burma's governing junta still will only allow a trickle of aid and foreign aid workers into the country to help. The generals are asking for over 11 billion dollars in aid – but want to handle distribution of that aid themselves. Governments and NGOs (Non-Government Organizations) are fully aware that the military junta is incapable of handling this magnitude of logistics and do not trust where the money might end up.

What about the people who have lost loved ones, crops and homes? They are crammed together under tarps in Buddhist temples and refugee camps; living in unsanitary conditions (*an understatement*); without enough food and taking their cooking water out of pools choked with filth and dead corpses. They continue to wait for help. Meanwhile respiratory diseases and diarrhea are already taking their toll. Because of the unsanitary conditions and foul water, chances of an outbreak of cholera, typhoid and other water born epidemics are very high.

Aid has only just recently started trickling in. People from Yangon who have not been hit so hard have been taking matters into their own hands and taking food and drinking water out to their suffering fellow citizens. Unbelievably, they have been stopped by Burmese soldiers and told they cannot distribute aid directly, but instead, have to give the supplies up to the government for “official” distribution.

And if that is not enough, the Burmese government is now starting a campaign to forcibly evict the Nargis refugees out of temples and refugee camps, where they have a little food and some shelter from the monsoon rains, *back to their homes to “rebuild”*. But they have nothing to rebuild with! It is insane! The poor victims of Myanmar are living a nightmare that could well be found in the pages of Dante's *Inferno*!

The world has condemned the tyrannical behavior of the Burmese ruling generals, but has done little else to make this rogue leadership take responsibility. Still they stonewall the international community.

Where is the international community's moral compass in all this? I hear bluff and bluster but I don't see any stiff penalties or actions that would make the Burmese generals change their ways. Several western governments threatened to forcibly distribute aid anyway without the approval of the junta. But nothing ever came of that. The Burmese generals are adamant as flint! And they remain in control.

The aid workers who do finally get in are amazed that more are not dying. Well, maybe it is because the people of Myanmar normally live in unsanitary and extremely poor conditions already – long before Nargis. They are used to hunger, death and deprivation! They live in a country where the government doesn't care about them at all, especially if they belong to an ethnic minority.

It is very painful for me to see the poor suffer so close to Thailand that has an abundance of food and a royal family that have spent their entire lives caring for the poor and helpless. In fact King Bhumibol and Queen Sirikit were among the first to send food, shelters and medical teams to Myanmar. I guess the ruling generals could not refuse the King of Thailand!

Why doesn't the world community DO something about this? Don't wait on the UN. They have already been to Myanmar and little has changed! It sounds like Darfur where there is a lot of talk – but little action!

Well, I have a suspicion it has more to do with economics than world politics. The west, including the US, Britain and France are heavily invested in Myanmar. So are China, Singapore and Japan.

I have asked people who they think is the number one investor in Myanmar. Invariably they say, "China".

But China is number TWO. Who is number ONE?

Merry Old England! That's who! It surprises everyone I talk to that Britain is the largest investor in Myanmar!

No one wants to rock the boat too much. They might lose their concessions for all those natural resources such as gas, oil, gold, platinum, jade and gems, teak and other commodities. Myanmar is RICH in natural resources. Before independence, Myanmar was the largest exporter of rice in the world! The industrialized nations of the world want all those natural resources to fuel their own economies and they are willing to turn a blind eye to the satanic excesses of an evil military oligarchy in order to secure their place at the trough.

What a terrible shame. God must be disgusted, not only at the evil policies of a prideful and greedy government willing to sacrifice their own people to satisfy its lusts, but also the nations and world leaders who do nothing about it.

But there is a day of reckoning coming. God remembers. Time goes by and perhaps from our human perspective, we think God has forgotten or He doesn't see. The truth is that He DOES SEE and He DOES REMEMBER!

Judgment is coming!

Most people think that Jesus' return will be happy and joyous with the people of the Earth gathering on hilltops to receive Him. Or they think that He will sneak back to secretly "rapture" His elect before the prophesied tribulation occurs. Such false ideas completely miss one of the most important reasons for His return – JUDGMENT!

Evil leaders think they can get away with taking advantage of the poor and helpless who cannot help themselves. But these leaders are wrong!

Malachi 3:5

*“And I will come near you for judgment;
I will be a swift witness
Against sorcerers,
Against adulterers,
Against perjurers,
Against those who exploit wage earners and widows and orphans,
And against those who turn away an alien –
Because they do not fear Me,
Says the LORD of hosts.”¹*

One of the most important responsibilities of leadership is to provide for and protect those who cannot take care of themselves. In Burma and the border regions of Thailand there are many widows and orphans because of war and disease. God EXPECTS human leaders to provide for them. If they don't, God will bring Judgment upon them!

James 1:27

“Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.”

The word “visit” in the King James means more than to go and “say hello” to the widows and orphans; it means to “take care of their needs”.

But instead of helping them, many leaders in today's sick and dying world are taking away what little the needy have left! Jesus talked about the leaders of his day and their abuse of the poor!

¹ NKJV throughout unless otherwise noted.

Matthew 23:14

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. Therefore you will receive greater condemnation.”

Legacy Institute in Thailand is blessed and the entire kingdom of Thailand is blessed to have a king and queen who have dedicated their entire lives to helping the poor in their country and even in surrounding countries. Let me give you an example. In 1979, starving Cambodian refugees were flooding into Thailand to escape the war and deprivation of the Khmer Rouge. Thai soldiers guarding the border were driving them back and not allowing them to stay in Thailand. Going back to Cambodia was certain death!

Queen Sirikit intervened and told the soldiers to let them in. Her actions saved hundreds of thousands of lives! That is the kind of leadership God loves!

Those who devour widow's houses will pay dearly for their crimes! Their crime is not only against the poor and helpless. Their crime is AGAINST GOD!

STATUS OF COG MEMBERS IN BURMA

Now I want to update you about our COG brethren in Burma. After Nargis hit, all communications with our brethren in Burma were cut off. But very soon we were able to contact some of our people via cell phone and then later, the internet. The news we received was very encouraging. In fact, it was miraculous!

I want to share with you an email report I recently received from the Church of God deacon in Yangon.

Read this!

“Dear Aj Leon,

“Thanks for your mail again. i am sorry to hear that you are sick. but you will be better soon. we are praying for you. i used the money like what you said. thank you very much for your helping. May God bless you more.

“we got a phone call from Ve Ga Phaw, SaKangyi. everything is fine there. she said that they could have a wedding there and help people who are in trouble.

“Sincerely,

“U Myo Zaw.”

I find this utterly amazing! Sakangyi village is in the west of the delta region and home to Saw Lay Bey's (now deceased) old COG congregation. Here are Church of God brethren living in the middle of death and destruction able, not only to take care of their own needs, but to hold a wedding and even help others in dire need! Our Great God separates His people and saves them out of the path of destruction. He makes a difference between His own and others! Both houses on either side of Deacon Myo Zaw's house in Yangon were almost

completely collapsed by the cyclone. Myo Zaw's house miraculously received only a little damage to the roof! He and other COG members in Yangon are well and able to carry on with life and even help others.

Legacy was able to get our fellow-laborers' donated funds to Myo Zaw and this was used to repair his roof and buy foodstuffs and clean drinking water for his family and others. Funds were also given to Sakangyi COG members. So far, no one has gotten really sick. We all should thank our Most High God for His gracious intervention to protect and provide for His people in very terrible circumstances.

NATURAL DISASTERS INCREASING

We all need God more now than ever before. The news I read and the reports I hear tell me that things in this world are getting worse and worse. The words of Jesus the Messiah in Matthew 24 are coming alive before our very eyes! I have heard people mock by saying, "Well, we have ALWAYS had earthquakes and wars!" Maybe so, but the magnitude of natural disasters is ratcheting up! Did you know that the earthquake on December 26, 2004 near Sumatra is considered one of the deadliest natural disasters in recorded history? More than 225,000 people were killed! The earthquake that caused the devastating 30 meter tsunami measured between 9.1 and 9.3 on the seismograph and was the second largest earthquake ever recorded. It lasted 8.3 to 10 minutes and caused the entire planet to vibrate and actually moved islands out of their place! Hundreds of aftershocks measuring up to 6.6 continued to occur daily for up to four months after the main quake.

It seems that I have heard this type of island-moving earthquake mentioned somewhere before!

Revelation 6:12-7:1

"I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place. And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"

Maybe we are not quite yet to the time spoken of in Revelation 6, but more and more the words John wrote fit the natural disasters we are already experiencing!

The Bible has a lot to say about the Day of the Lord and the time of the wrath of God that brings judgment on the Earth. Some people teach that when the Bible talks about the "Day of the Lord" it is talking about Sunday. Not only is this patently false, but hides from humanity truth about the true meaning of the "Lord's Day" or the "Day of the Lord" and the magnitude of destruction that God's wrath brings to a sin filled and rebellious world.

The Bible is filled with scriptures describing the terrible plagues, earthquakes, famines and diseases that will be unleashed. But no one wants to hear it! No one wants to think about what is coming. The Great Sumatra-Andaman Earthquake is only a fore-runner of what is to come. We are getting closer and closer to the end. And natural disasters are increasing at an alarming rate!

Judgment is coming. The first time Jesus came to *die* for sin. The second time He is coming to bring judgment on the Earth *because* of sin!

Revelation 14:14-16

“Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and on the cloud sat one like the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, “Thrust in Your sickle and reap, for the time has come for You to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe.” So He who sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped.”

I see so much injustice all over the world. It is not only in Burma that we find injustice. We have to go no further than our own doorsteps, our own communities and our own nation (*and sadly, sometimes our own churches!*) But a reckoning is coming. Even the Earth itself is building up to that dreadful and terrible Day of the Lord – *the time of vengeance of Our Lord God Almighty!*

The Bible tells us we should be the kind of people who cry and sigh over the sins of the Earth. (**Ezek. 9:4**) None of us should ever say that “the Lord delays His coming”. Rather we should be waiting expectantly and remembering to concentrate on cleaning up our own sins in anticipation of that soon coming Day of Vengeance when King Jesus thrusts in His sickle.

1 Thessalonians 5:1-10

“But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For when they say, “Peace and safety!” then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation. For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.”

Between now and the time of the Day of the Lord, we who belong to the Lord have time to repent of our sins and prepare for His coming. We know what is coming because God warns us in the pages of our Bibles. Are we listening?

The increasing natural disasters we are experiencing serve as a warning that the time is approaching when the Messiah will return. God wants us to get our houses in order. He wants us to get the leaven cleaned out! And I am not just talking about individuals in the churches of God; I am talking about our church organizations themselves!

Are any of us *really* prepared to weather the tests and trials that are coming? The natural disasters and economic crises we are now experiencing are only a foretaste of what is building to a future climax.

The story of the 10 virgins comes to mind (*Matt. 25*). The 5 wise virgins prepared for their Lord's coming. The 5 foolish did not! Once the bridegroom comes, it is TOO LATE to run out and try to buy some oil!

I remember when I was a young boy. I knew that I would be 50 years old during the year 2000. But the year 2000 seemed so far away! And 50 was *soooo old!*

Now I look back and the last 50 years of my life have literally flown by! Where did all the time go?

We cannot afford the luxury of thinking we have a lot of time left. If we do, then that prophesied "Day of the Lord" will come suddenly upon us and we will not be prepared. Jesus tells us that "that Day" will come suddenly like a "thief in the night". Jesus uses this allegory, not in reference to the silence or time of the theft, but rather to the fact that the householder WAS NOT PREPARED!!

Matthew 24:42-44

*"Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. But know this, that **if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into.**"*

"Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."

The events surrounding the Day of the Lord and the Advent of the Messiah are catastrophic and mind-boggling! The Bible tells us that it will be a time of trouble unlike anything ever experienced in history. Are you prepared? Am I?

I have no idea when the end will come. Everyone who has tried to predict *when* have gotten themselves into trouble. Jesus even told us that it wasn't given to us – or even to Him – to know. But God does not leave us in the dark. He explains clearly in the Holy Bible the SIGNS that are heralds of the end. Are we listening to God? Are we making those important preparations for the END?

Are we doing everything we can to fulfill our God given commission to PREACH THE GOSPEL TO ALL THE WORLD?

I am now 57 years old. That is not so old! (*At least that is what I keep telling myself!*) But my body is wearing out. I recently was diagnosed with Type 2 Adult Onset Diabetes. My blood test measured over 300! The doctor was encouraging and said that if I lost weight and exercised regularly, I could bring it under control. But this is a warning to me that time is running out!

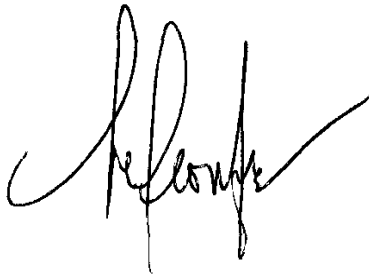
My good friend and Legacy Institute board member Herb Vierra recently had a heart attack! He is now recovering after successful bypass surgery but cannot return to his work as a cabinet maker for some time to come. Again it is a warning to us at Legacy that time is short!

Add to our health problems the increased natural disasters we see all over the world; add to this signs of the growing emergence of a “New World Order”; and it doesn’t take a rocket scientist to figure out that the END is coming soon. *AND* we still have **A LOT OF WORK TO DO!**

All of us need to recharge that *sense of urgency* we once had! For those of us who call ourselves “fellow-laborers”, we are getting more and more contacts from people in Burma, Laos and now even Cambodia asking us for more information about the Gospel message translated into their own languages. The WORK of God is far, far from over!

Let us all be about Our Father’s business so that, whether we are dead or alive at the coming of the King of Kings, He can say to us: “*Well done, good and faithful servant*”.

In service to our soon coming King,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Leon Sexton', with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

T. Leon Sexton

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