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The World Needs Justice

Open your eyes to the injustice around you—and reach out to our last and only hope for making it right.

- Joel Hilliker
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In northeastern Nigeria, a farmer named Umar Bate was nearly ready to harvest and sell a bumper crop of fat watermelons. A cattleman named Musa Jabbi watched over his herd of 400 cows, growing plump on fertile plains. A fisherman named Abubakar Gamandi prepared to market a rich take of fish he had smoked. But then, as the *Los Angeles Times* reported, “it all went wrong.”

Boko Haram, the Islamic State affiliate in West Africa, swept through the area, plundering and killing.

When terrorists attacked Umar’s town, he abandoned his watermelons, along with 30 tons of rice and 18 tons of maize. He was forced to move into a bleak refugee camp and reduced to a life of begging. Musa lost nearly 90 percent of his cattle and had to camp on the outskirts of his town. The terrorists seized the boys from his village and turned them into their foot soldiers. Abubakar said terrorists impeded a convoy of fishermen, slit their throats, tied them up, and dumped them into Lake Chad. No one goes back to fish out of fear of attack.

These terrorists deliberately murdered or drove out Nigeria’s food producers, looted food supplies, stole and killed cattle, and forced rural food markets to close. They sacked villages, kidnapped girls and women, and killed people indiscriminately. Their campaign of terror left hundreds of thousands of children severely malnourished and caused 1.4 million people in northeastern Nigeria to flee their homes.

Why? What is their goal? They want to establish the Islamic State in Nigeria. They are resisting the nation’s Westernization by waging war against people they consider infidels. In other words, as they murder, pillage, loot and destroy, they think they are *doing God’s work!*

The world today has enough bad news that we can easily push it out of mind. Boko Haram barely makes headlines worldwide in the face of so many other dangerous threats. But it is real, and it is turning *real people’s* lives upside down, and *killing* real people.

We are near the fulfillment of what Jesus Christ prophesied to be a time of “great tribulation”—when world conditions will become unbearable for the overwhelming majority of mankind (Matthew 24:21). But there are people on Earth today who are already living through Tribulation-like nightmares.

Nigeria is just *one* tragedy in *one* corner of the globe that receives scant attention worldwide. Think of the 17-year-old living on the streets of Salvador in northeastern Brazil, who can only survive by doing jobs for a local drug gang—“trafficking, packing, stealing, killing.” “I had a knife, a gun, all these sorts of things, to defend myself,” he told a bbc reporter. “I could only sleep in the morning because during the night I had to stay awake. There were many dangers, someone could come and kill me.” Think of the impoverished, war-ravaged refugee in Syria who sells one of his kidneys for cash. “What can they do?” says the broker who illegally convinced him to do it. “They are desperate and they have no other means to survive but to sell their organs.”

Think of the girls in Muslim countries who are having their genitals mutilated, being forced to marry old men, or getting sold into sex slavery. Think of the women who are being murdered—Islamic “justice” for the crime of dishonoring their families—because they were raped or renounced their religion. Think of the families in North Korea who are living on \$2 per month, raising children whose growth is stunted by malnutrition, because of the tyrannical regime that diverts all its resources to its military.

You share this planet with 7.4 billion other people. All of them desperately need God. And hundreds of millions of them, right this very moment, are suffering oppression and injustice that you may have a difficult time even imagining.

When you see how many people are suffering and being destroyed, you realize this is Satan’s world. He is now “the god of this world ... which deceiveth the whole world” (2 Corinthians 4:4; Revelation 12:9). Throughout human history under his rule, the *vast majority* of people have been oppressed, lived under the boot of a dictator, languished in slavery. Billions have lived in poverty and deprivation. Billions have been undernourished. Billions have suffered from warfare. The vast majority have lived in ignorance. The vast majority have suffered terrible injustice in this world ruled by Satan the devil.

The Apostle Paul said we must not lose sight of these people. “I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men,” he wrote (1 Timothy 2:1). He urged us to offer up supplications, prayers, intercessions and even *thanks* for all of them! We lose sight of them amid day-to-day busyness and distractions—but we must learn to think of them the way that God does: “For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth” (verses 3-4).

God has a *marvelous* plan to extend salvation to all people. Jesus Christ died for *all men*, to be dealt with in due time (verses 5-6). God will have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. But right now this world is ruled by Satan, who would have all men to suffer and be destroyed.

But God sees what is happening. And He promises to bring perfect justice—to all people.

The God of Perfect Justice

Imagine how God feels when He sees a pitiful human being oppressing another human being. It makes Him *furiously* angry!

Read God’s command in Zechariah 7:8-10: “Execute true judgment, and shew mercy and compassions every man to his brother: And oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart.” Every single human being is ultimately a child of God. Show compassion. Especially look after those who are neediest. This is a command! It is truly important to God.

Sadly, this world, under Satan’s influence, has not heeded God’s instructions. “But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear. Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the Lord of hosts hath sent in his spirit by the former prophets: therefore”—notice! —“came a *great wrath* from the Lord of hosts” (verses 11-12). They have not executed true judgment; they have not shown mercy or compassion. They have been respecters of persons and unjust. They have been harsh and dictatorial. They’ve oppressed the weak, the widow, fatherless, stranger and poor. This has outraged God, and He is going to send great wrath! Terrible punishment is coming because of man’s terrible treatment of fellow man.

“Therefore it is come to pass, that *as he cried, and they would not hear; so they cried, and I would not hear* saith the Lord of hosts: But I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations whom they knew not. Thus the land was desolate after them, that no man passed through nor returned: for they laid the pleasant land desolate” (verses 13-14). This is an expression of God’s perfect justice: *They didn’t listen to me—so I will not listen to them!*

The good news is, God *will* establish *perfect justice*. This punishment leads right into the family vision of Zechariah 8: “Thus saith the Lord of hosts; There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for very age. And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof” (verses 4-5). In order to bring this happy vision about, God must first confront the injustices of this world!

God is passionate about establishing and administering perfect justice. And He wants to build that same quality of character in *you*.

What God Commands of You

God wants you to hate oppression and suffering. His law repeatedly commands us to look after the blind, the deaf, the poor, the stranger—those who are in need. “He who oppresses a poor [low or weak] man *insults his Maker*, but he who is kind to the needy honors him” (Proverbs 14:31; Revised Standard Version). God takes the way you treat your fellow man very personally!

When Christ returns, He will separate the sheep from the goats (Matthew 25:31-33). By what criterion? By how you treated those who were hungry and thirsty; how you treated the stranger and those who were naked, sick or in prison. If you *fed* them, gave them water, took them in, clothed them, visited them, then, He says, it is like you did that to Him personally! If

you ignored those who were suffering and treated them with disdain, He takes *that* personally too! And to you, He says, “Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels” (verse 41).

It is easy to treat someone dismissively and to think nothing of it. But God says this has eternal consequences!

“Whoso mocketh the poor reproacheth his Maker: and he that is glad at calamities shall not be unpunished” (Proverbs 17:5). How many in this world are *glad* at calamities? Seeing people go down is great entertainment. God says such contempt for others will be punished.

God wants you to treat others the way you want to be treated (Matthew 7:12). When God sees someone experiencing calamity, He is not glad—He is *grieved*! He has no pleasure in death—even the death of the wicked (Ezekiel 33:11).

“Rob not the poor, because he is poor: neither oppress the afflicted in the gate: For the Lord will plead their cause, and spoil the soul of those that spoiled them” (Proverbs 22:22-23). Isn’t that perfect justice? Many people think they are getting away with their robbing, oppressing, spoiling—but God is keeping track. He promises to see that justice is done!

“He that oppresseth the poor to increase his riches, and he that giveth to the rich, shall surely come to want” (verse 16). There have been many publicly traded companies that have lost *billions*, costing investors a fortune; yet somehow, chief executives have walked away with several millions. People call it a disaster, but the executives didn’t think so—they got theirs. Is there anything *just* about that? God says He will *spoil* those who spoiled others! Those who came by their wealth unlawfully didn’t mind bringing other people to poverty. God will ensure they understand what it feels like to be on the other end of that exchange.

“The rich and poor meet together: the Lord is the maker of them all” (verse 2). Many rich people think they are better than others. But wealth doesn’t change someone’s status in *God’s eyes*. He made *all* mankind—and He wants *every one* to achieve his or her full potential.

God Will Arise

Think of the 302,093 people who were murdered worldwide in a single year, 2010, according to the United Nations. All of those victims received injustice. And many of those murderers escaped justice. An additional 576,133 people committed suicide. That cold statistic represents a mountain of suffering, both from those who took their own lives and those they left behind.

The UN Human Development Program stated that 103,437 people were killed in civil wars in 2010; 25.3 million were pushed out of their homes; 12.8 million refugees were driven from their country. On top of that, 5 million people were killed by pollution such as unsanitary water and unclear air. So many of these problems are caused by mismanagement on the part of leaders who have no concern for the people.

Psalm 12 was written when unrighteousness was rampant. Verses 2-4 describe conditions much like those of today. How will God respond? “For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord ...” (verse 5). God hears the sighing of the needy—and He will *stop* the oppression! “I will set him in the safety for which he yearns,” says the New King James Version.

You can have absolute confidence in God’s promises (verse 6). People say, *Where is God?* He hasn’t come on their timetable, but He is coming—have faith in that!

God hates oppression and suffering! He hates the fact that this world is ruled by Satan, subjecting mankind to suffering and bondage to sin. God is filled with compassion to relieve the world and set mankind free!

In Psalm 72, which he wrote for his son Solomon, King David described righteous rulership. “Give the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the king’s son. He shall judge thy people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment. The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness. He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor” (verses 1-4). So much rulership in this world is *oppressive*! God’s rulership *breaks* oppression—it saves the children of the needy.

Those children aren’t just in far-off El Salvador or South Sudan. They are *in your town*. Last year while traveling by plane, I sat next to a woman who worked in a mental health facility in Oklahoma City. She told me that this place serves children as young as 6 years old. They have been terribly abused, to the point where some of them now hear voices telling them to *kill their parents*! Such tragedies are unfolding within a couple miles of my home in peaceful, rural Oklahoma. What is happening *right now* in your neighborhood?

“For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper. He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy. He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence: and precious shall their blood be in his sight” (verses 12-14). God is *passionate* about establishing perfect justice.

The Prayer of the Afflicted

Psalm 102 is titled “A prayer of the afflicted.” You could view it as a prophecy of what people will be saying in the Great Tribulation. “Hear my prayer, O Lord, and let my cry come unto thee. Hide not thy face from me in the day when I am in trouble; incline thine ear unto me: in the day when I call answer me speedily” (verses 1-2). Psalms like this offer great hope to those in affliction. Soon, this will be the prayer of the world!

God is going to rise and have mercy on those who suffer (verse 13). God is putting the unjust leaders of this world on notice (verse 15).

“When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory. He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer. This shall be written for the generation to come: and the people which shall be created shall praise the Lord. For he hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the Lord behold the earth; To hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death; To declare the name of the Lord in Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem; When the people are gathered together, and the kingdoms, to serve the Lord” (verses 16-22). God speed that day, which will come after the Tribulation and the Day of the Lord.

In 2016, the UN Children’s Fund warned that *25,000 children* are suffering from severe acute malnutrition in North Korea. Severe drought had crippled its agricultural production, and women and children in particular were hit with reduced food rations. This nation is spending massive resources to build intercontinental ballistic missiles and nuclear warheads! Western nations want to punish it by imposing economic sanctions, but North Korea’s leaders are largely impervious to sanctions because *they don’t care* if their people starve around them!

The UN Food and Agriculture Organization estimates around 795 million people suffered from chronic undernourishment in 2014–2016. The UN Children’s Fund estimates that 156 million children worldwide are affected by stunting—a long, slow process caused by poor nutrition that causes them to have normal body proportions but fail to reach a normal height. Some preschool children in North Korea are fully *5 inches shorter* than their peers—even from the same family—in South Korea! In the sub-Saharan region, more than 1 in 4 people are undernourished. Undernutrition causes 3.1 million child deaths every year. In 2011, it accounted for 45 percent of all deaths of children under 5!

Each one of these children is as precious as your children and mine. These are not extras in a movie—these are real people who are slowly shriveling.

“Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses. And he led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation. Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men! For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness” (Psalm 107:5-9). This has a spiritual application as well; God will fill the spiritually hungry in this world. But it is also exciting to think on how He will correct the problems of malnutrition, hunger and starvation.

This world is also about to experience a revolution in health! Good, healthy food will be available for everyone, and *supernatural healing* for those who are sick (verses 17-20). Just consider what Christ did at His first coming: He healed people constantly! “And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and *healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease* among the people. And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and *he healed them*” (Matthew 4:23-24). God wants to heal the *whole world*.

“They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; These see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep. For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits’ end” (Psalm 107:23-27). This world is experiencing all kinds of storms. In 2016, at least 10,000 people were killed in each of the ongoing wars in Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq and Nigeria—55,000 died *just in Syria!* Wars in Mexico, Yemen, Pakistan, Ukraine, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Egypt and Libya each killed at least 2,000 people *just last year*. God *longs* to bring peace to these war-torn regions (verses 28-30).

Releasing the Prisoners

Psalm 107 also describes those suffering in prison: “Such as sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, being bound in affliction and iron; Because they rebelled against the words of God, and contemned the counsel of the most High: Therefore he brought down their heart with labour; they fell down, and there was none to help” (verses 10-12). How many in this world live in captivity because of their own rebellion? How many are sitting in prison because of *other people’s sin*?

During World War ii, Germany was bombarded by Allied air raids on its industrial complexes, so it began constructing production facilities underground. At one facility, the Dora-Mittelbau Camp, prisoners dug huge tunnels and constructed large underground factories and development facilities for missiles and experimental weapons. Prisoners were kept mostly underground, deprived of daylight and fresh air. The mortality rate was higher than at most other concentration camps. The crematoria were kept busy incinerating the corpses.

In April 1945, the Soviet Army was advancing, and the Nazis began to evacuate the prisoners from Dora-Mittelbau and send them to the Bergen-Belsen Camp. Thousands were killed during death marches under horrendous conditions. One Jew who

survived and made it from Dora-Mittelbau to Bergen-Belsen was Alan Zimm.

"Exactly at 9 o'clock, the gate of the camp, which was two blocks away," Zimm said, "you could see far away, the gate opened up and a jeep with four military police, the English, dressed up in the white belts and the white gloves and the red hats. They sit in the front of the jeep, four of them with machine guns like that. And a truck with loudspeakers behind them, and he said, 'My dear friends,' in every language. In German, in Polish, in Yiddish, you name it. '*From now on you are free. You are liberated by the Allied forces. And the Germans have nothing to do to you anymore. You are free people.*'"

"Everybody was crying. It was such an emotional experience. It's hard to describe it. The people were jumping and hugging and kissing. And everybody was running to the jeep. ... [T]hey lifted up the mp on their shoulders and carried him all the way around the block. And still people did not believe. There were a lot of people still afraid" (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum).

"Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saved them out of their distresses. He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and brake their bands in sunder. Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men! For he hath broken the gates of brass, and cut the bars of iron in sunder" (verses 13-16). What a *wonderful prophecy!* This type of liberation is going to happen on *aglobal scale!*

Gerda Weissmann Klein was 15 when Nazis invaded her country, conscripted her brother, and moved her and her parents to a ghetto. Her father was taken away forever, dying in Auschwitz. Then she was torn, kicking and screaming, from her mother, who would also die in Auschwitz. She spent years enslaved in concentration camp textile factories. Then she was forced into a 350-mile winter death march that killed about 3,880 out of 4,000 women, including Gerda's best friend, Ilse, who died in her arms.

"All of a sudden I saw a strange car coming down the hill, no longer green, not bearing the swastika, but a white star," she said. "It was sort of a mud-splattered vehicle *but I've never seen a star brighter in my life.* And two men sort of jumped out, came running toward us and one came toward where I stood. ... [H]e spoke to me in German—he said, 'Does anybody here speak German or English?' and I said, 'I speak German.' I felt that I had to tell him we are Jewish ... I was a little afraid to tell him that but I said to him, 'We are Jewish, you know.' He didn't answer me for quite a while. And then his own voice sort of betrayed his own emotion and he said, 'So am I.' I would say it was the greatest hour of my life."

She said, "He looked to me like a young god. I have to tell you I weighed 68 pounds. My hair was white. And you can imagine, I hadn't had a bath in years." But this man called her a *lady*. He asked her to show him where the other *ladies* were—and said, "Won't you come with me?" "And I said, 'Sure.' He held the door open for me and let me precede him, and in that gesture *restored me to humanity.*

"And that young American of the day," Gerda said, "is my husband" (ibid).

"He turneth the wilderness into a standing water, and dry ground into watersprings. And there he maketh the hungry to dwell, that they may prepare a city for habitation; And sow the fields, and plant vineyards, which may yield fruits of increase. He blesseth them also, so that they are multiplied greatly; and suffereth not their cattle to decrease" (verses 35-38).

Soon, people will never have to experience such horrors again. Umar Bate, Musa Jabbi, Abubakar Gamandi—and all those others living through nightmares around the world—will never experience another terrorist attack. Soon they will have plenty—blessings poured out!

"Yet setteth he the poor on high from affliction, and maketh him families like a flock. The righteous shall see it, and rejoice: and all iniquity shall stop her mouth. Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the lovingkindness of the Lord" (verses 41-43). The whole world will understand *firsthand* the God of perfect justice!

"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord ... to comfort all that mourn. To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified. And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations. ... For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations" (Isaiah 61:1-4, 11).

God will have *all men* to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. Christ gave Himself as a ransom for all, and all will be able to claim that gift in due time. That time is coming soon!

Christ instructed us to pray, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10). This is a prayer of yearning to see God relieve this world of its suffering. Fervently pray it daily. Do all you can to be part of the solution rather than contributing to the problem. Support God's work that warns people about what they are doing to themselves and offers the hope that God will stop this madness!

Look around at this world and *cry out* for God to arise! See the vision of God's plan for all mankind. And do all you can to *hasten* the day when we can help God finally bring perfect justice to all mankind.✱

