

GLEANINGS — March 13, A.D. 2016

Don't worry, be...

A look back through the millenia makes clear that liberty has been a rarity for the fallen sons of Adam. Even if we Americans claim that we live in "the land of the free," we must be brave and qualify that claim. Liberty and justice have not been enjoyed always and by all here. And the republic brought forth on this continent in the 18th century is now only eleven score and seven years young – we are a toddler nation, and an experimental one as well.

But there is an ancient kingdom that has been growing and flourishing for two thousand years, founded in the days of the Caesars just as the captive prophet previously foretold (Daniel 2:44). This kingdom is firmly rooted in the past even more deeply than that. Its truly human Ruler is invisible not on account of His being ethereal or having only the existence of a philosophical construct, but because He is transcendentally exalted over all the earth. His righteous and kindly rule is the bountiful source of every good thing received by every human being under Heaven.

As hymnist Ernest W. Shurtleff (A.D. 1862-1917) phrased it, "for not with swords loud clashing, nor roll of stirring drums; with deeds of love and mercy the heavenly kingdom comes." As history marches onward to His final triumph over death itself, people of every nation, tribe, people, and tongue are increasingly bowing the unfeigned knee to King Jesus. As they keep His holy and righteous commandments and thus live in genuine love, His beneficent rule becomes quite visible. It is made manifest by its fruit, full of the sweet nectar of peace.

"Don't worry be happy" is pollyannaish*. Bitter disappointment and worse will continue to be the legacy of every heroic looking figure in our endless pantheon** of false christs. "Think globally, act locally" comes closer to the mark but lacks the life giving marrow that comes from certain bones which were never broken on that ancient Roman cross. God's word reveals the only empowering hope for living triumphantly through the greatest darkness of this world.

The sure hope of the citizen of the Kingdom of Heaven is celebrated in the 37th Psalm, one of those timeless songs that the Spirit of God breathed out through David son of Jesse, Christ's ancestor and foreshadower. Are you are able to receive them with joy?

"Do not fret because of evildoers, nor be envious of the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb. Trust in the LORD, and do good; dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness."

* *derived from the name of a child heroine created by American author Eleanor Porter (A.D. 1868-1920), the word means unreasonably or illogically optimistic*

** *a domed, circular temple at Rome, erected c. A.D. 120 by the emperor Hadrian, gave us this word which refers to the gods of a particular mythology, considered collectively.*