a sermon from ESTHER 4:13-14:
FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS!

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. A PRAYER
II. A PROPOSITION
III. A BIBLE VERSE - ESTHER 4:13-14
IV. INTRODUCTION
V. A LESSON FROM THE BOOK OF ESTHER – FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS
VI. EVIL MEN FROM WITHIN ARISE TO DESTROY GOD’S PEOPLE TODAY
VII. WHEN EVIL SEEKS TO DESTROY GOD’S PEOPLE FROM WITHIN
VIII. WHO IS HE THAT TROUBLES THE CHURCH TODAY?
IX. TOUGH TIMES CALLS FOR A STRONG, NOT A LUKEWARM, FAITH
X. WHEN GOD’S PEOPLE SUFFER FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS AND FAITH
XI. CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH STAND VICTORIOUS EVEN NOW
XII. IN CONCLUSION
XIII. REFERENCES
I. A PRAYER

“O GOD, You Who have established the foundations of Your Church upon the holy mountains: Grant that She may not be moved by any wiles of error which would fain compass her overthrow, nor may she be shaken by any earthly disquietude, but ever stand firmly upon the ordinances of The Apostles and by their help, be kept in safety!” ¹

Amen.

II. A PROPOSITION

My Friends, in this difficult, sinful, apostate age, are we not called to The Kingdom of GOD for such a time as this?

III. A BIBLE VERSE - Consider ESTHER 4:13-14

13 Then Mordecai commanded to answer Esther, Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews.
14 For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this? ²

IV. INTRODUCTION

We live in a most difficult time and place in the prophetic history of GOD. The Torah, The Prophets and The Writings have been set down in The Old Testament. The Law of GOD that convicts men of sin has been revealed. The Gospels, The Epistles and The Apocalypse have been set down in The New Testament. JESUS CHRIST The Saviour has come Incarnate, suffered, died, arose from the dead and is now seated in glory Above.

Ancient Israel, the Old Covenant bride of GOD, has passed into history, and yet its remnant has endured through history and seems within our lifetime to be in its early throws of rebirth. The Church has been called out into existence by our Lord Himself, has spread to all the four corners of the earth and has withstood and flourished in the face of the evils of the world, the flesh and the devil.

¹ 1, Catholic Family Prayer Book, prayer “Against Error” Pope Saint Leo The Great. p 323.
Like in the time of Esther and Mordecai in that hostile heathen ancient land of Babylon, we today in The Church in The West often seem to find ourselves in like circumstances. GOD’s people in The Church face both evil and perversion from without and even from within. And evil men still plot, however vainly, the overthrow of the saints. And yet, The Almighty is still in control over all the course of human history. The Creator’s will remains sovereign over all things. The arm of The LORD continues to work His decrees according to His prophetic designs in both this world and in eternity. Where we as Christians find ourselves in the flow of events in the world of men is not by accident or mere chance, but by the design of GOD.

And as Mordecai said to Esther in ESTHER 4:14, so These Words speak to us even now, “…and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?” Indeed, who knows? GOD knows!

V. A LESSON FROM THE BOOK OF ESTHER – FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

In the Book of Esther, we read of an insidious plot to destroy the Old Testament People of GOD - the Jews - lead by the wicked & perverse Haman. It is recorded how Divine Providence placed Esther as the Queen of Media-Persia, that she was able to intercede on behalf of the Jews to her husband King Ahasuerus. Here we see how this one person rose up - submitting to GOD’s guiding hand - to be used to save the Jews from utter destruction. The result is the Jewish holiday of Purim, which celebrates The Almighty’s deliverance and preservation of His people from the efforts of wicked men to destroy them.  

O LORD, so much of men’s afflictions and sorrows comes down upon our heads when we rebel against GOD Word and become confederate the enemies of GOD’s people! It is a rebellion as old as The Fall of Adam and Eve in The Garden, which brings suffering and destruction upon our own heads when we reject The Holy Scriptures, The holy Church and defile what has been sanctified by The Spirit of GOD. It comes upon us when we make unclean what the faith, righteousness and blood of the saints and martyrs

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3 3, Wycliffe Bible Commentary, ESTHER, Introduction, p 447448.
of both Israel and The Church over thousands of years. It comes upon us by our own hands when we turn away from The true JESUS CHRIST and His suffering, death and resurrection at The Cross wrought for us by The Love of GOD!

But from The good which GOD wrought out of the evil designed against His saints in The Book of ESTHER, we may see first this point: The LORD does not close His eyes to evil, but being always sovereign over all things, brings good out of evil in all things. So Saint Augustine observes, “For Almighty GOD…. because He is supremely good, would never allow any evil whatsoever to exist in His works [of creation] if He were not so all-powerful and good as to cause good to emerge from evil itself!”

So the evil plans of Haman to destroy the Jews throughout the Persian Empire not only came to nought, but fell back upon his own head and those who with him sought to obliterate GOD’s people! Haman was hung on the very gallows he had erected to hang Mordecai upon by order of the king. The Jewish people were blessed and flourished throughout the land. Esther remained the beloved wife of the king, reigning with him over the land. And The Jewish people were in part restored back to The Holy Land under the benevolent protection and blessing of the Persian kings.

And secondly, we may see in the events of ESTHER this second point: GOD does not allow His people to sit passively by and be mere spectators of evil! He calls us to stand fast in His love and truth to oppose what is wicked! GOD places us His saints when and where He desires in the flow of human history and equips us with His Divine Grace, so that we may serve Him by resisting evil. Mordecai knew this, that “…The unfailing Providence of GOD in behalf of His people Israel…” and now The Church works supreme to deliver us from evil when we act in His guidance to do His will.

Therefore, are we not called to The Kingdom of GOD for such a time as this?

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4 Catechism of The Catholic Church, # 311, p92. Quote from “St. Augustine, Enchiridion 3, 11: PL 40, 236.”
5 3, Wycliffe Bible Commentary, ESTHER 4:13-17, p 452.
VI. EVIL MEN FROM WITHIN ARISE TO DESTROY GOD’S PEOPLE TODAY

In the Episcopal Church U.S.A. [ECUSA] and other Church in our own time, evil men have risen up from within to destroy the people of GOD. ECUSA has crowned its apostasy with placement of a Bishop who openly boasts of his adultery, divorce and sodomy! Having cheated on his wife and children in monstrous adultery with another man; having deserted his wife and children, having divorced himself from his family, having openly rejoiced in his homosexual union with a fellow sodomite, that particular denomination now boasts of offering up before GOD and the world a modern day Haman – a Mr. Robinson - as a Bishop of The Church. This man too, as did Haman, seeks to destroy GOD’s people today. But while Haman sought to destroy the saints of GOD from without, here we have a man who seeks to destroy the saints of GOD from within.

O LORD, that we may tear our clothes, dawn sackcloth and pile upon our heads dust and ashes in mourning for this wayward part of The Body of CHRIST on earth, which has defiled herself with this unspeakable destroyer of The Church of GOD and a corruptor of the lives and souls of Christian people today! Like Haman, the enemies of GOD stand not only outside The Church today, but within The Body of CHIRST, erecting their gallows in the courtyards of our lives for the purpose of our destruction! Yet we may fully trust that GOD will deliver His faithful out from under all such oppressors and destroyers.

But with King David as in PSALM 18:2-6 we should in faith in The LORD cry out, “The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower… The sorrows of death compassed me, and the floods of ungodly men made me afraid. The sorrows of hell compassed me about… In my distress I called upon The LORD, and cried unto my GOD: He heard my voice out of His temple, and my cry came before Him,

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6 5, CNN.com/u.s, ““Episcopalians approve gay bishop - Opposition vows to seek intervention from Anglican leaders.” 8/06/2003 AD.
7 6, Wikipedia Encyclopedia, entry for “Gene Robinson,” retrieved 8/31/2005 AD.
even into His ears.” 8 And then David reports, “He delivered me…!” 9 So does He deliver His people out of their affliction when we cry out unto Him!

Is it not so, that we are called to The Kingdom of GOD for such a time as this?

VII. WHEN EVIL SEEKS TO DESTROY GOD’S PEOPLE FROM WITHIN

The English parliamentarian Edmund Burke once wrote, “All that is necessary for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing.” 10 If those of us faithful to GOD’s Word in The Church do not stand up in the power & might of The Cross to oppose blasphemous and ungodly men in positions of authority over GOD’s people, as in ancient Israel, so also in The Church! And it is indeed painful to see such iniquity march through the institutions of the Churches and institutions of the nation that one loves. But this phenomenon is nothing new. We see this pattern played out in The Book of I KINGS in the corruption of GOD’s people by wicked men and women in positions of authority over them may be seen in the Biblical account of the wicked King Ahab and Queen Jezebel of ancient Israel.

Now King Ahab had married the heathen Jezebel, who herself was a daughter of Ethbaal, the king of pagan Zidon and priest of the false deity Baal. 11 Under now Queen Jezebel’s influence, King Ahab had brought into Israel the widespread worship of this false god and, in so doing, had grossly corrupted the people of GOD and turned their hearts away from The LORD! 12 I KINGS 16:31-33 records this outrageous corruption of GOD’s people by Ahab, who “…went and served Baal, and worshipped him. And he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria [, the capitol of the northern kingdom]. And Ahab made a grove; and Ahab did more to

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8 2, KJV, PSALM 18:2-6.
9 2, KJV, PSALM 18:17.
11 8, Fausset’s Bible Dictionary, entry for “Baal,” # 434.01.
12 2, KJV, I KINGS chapters 16-21. The Biblical account of the wickedness of King Ahab, his heathen wife the Queen Jezebel and their bringing into Israel the widespread worship of the false deity Baal.
provoke The LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him!” 13

It is said of Ahab, “It was nothing [for him] to break The Second Commandment - “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image…” 14 - by image-worship, he would set aside The First - “Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.” 15 - also by introducing other gods; his little finger should fall heavier upon GOD's ordinances than… [the previous wicked King of Israel, Jeroboam]. Making light of less sins makes way for greater, and those that endeavour to extenuate other people's sins will but aggravate their own!” 16

So we read of the Biblically historic face to face meeting of the faithful prophet Elijah and the perverse and wicked King Ahab of ancient Israel in I KINGS 18:17-18: “And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel? And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken The Commandments of The LORD, and thou hast followed Baalim!” 17

The evil man is forever trying to blame the falling of Divine judgement and punishment for national sins upon the righteous, rather than upon the wicked where it rightly belongs. We see this today when faithful Christians object to wicked men, apostasy and sin abounding in much of The Church! But here “Elijah met Ahab’s insinuating remarks forthrightly by casting the challenge back into his face. He reminded the king that it was not he, Elijah, who had been the troubler…” of Israel, but rather the

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13 2, KJV, I KINGS 16:31-33.
14 2, KJV, EXODUS 20:4-6. The Second Commandment: “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I The LORD thy GOD am a jealous GOD, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me, and keep My Commandments.”
15 2, KJV, EXODUS 20:2-3. The Second Commandment: “I am The LORD thy GOD, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.”
king himself for leading GOD’s people into apostasy and rebellion against The LORD! ¹⁸

But what was the end of Ahab and Jezebel, these ruiners of GOD’s people? The same end that awaits all unrepentant and corrupt men, most especially those who for a time find manage to gain authority over the saints of The LORD on earth, be it in ancient Israel or now in The Church! They are all, by the hand of The Almighty, struck down for all the world to see, cast aside into utter disgrace and receive the just reward for their evil deeds before The Judgement Seat of The Creator!

Such was the fate of King Ahab, as recorded in I KINGS 22:19-21, where the prophet Micaiah proclaims to him, “…Hear thou therefore The Word of The LORD: I saw The LORD sitting on His throne, and all the host of heaven standing by Him on His right hand and on his left. And The LORD said, Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at [the coming battle at] Ramothgilead?... And there came forth a spirit, and stood before The LORD, and said, I will persuade him!” ¹⁹ And as Scripture records here, GOD sent forth His angel to tempt Ahab into his final fall and destruction! So while we see such wicked men seem to prosper for a time, let us not doubt that The LORD is still in control, and all such men shall be brought down by GOD’s design.

My Friends, are we not called to The Kingdom of GOD for such a time as this?

VIII. WHO IS HE THAT TROUBLES THE CHURCH TODAY?

Who is he that troubles The Church today? Is it those who live by The Word of GOD? The apostate among us would have us believe so, but I think not. Rather, is it not those who - while pretending to be Christians - consciously forsake the Commandments of CHRIST? How much more so when the very clergy forsake The holy Bible in both their private lives and public duties? Such is this sodomite pretender of Christian leadership - a King Ahab of the Church in America!

The American Founding Father George Mason observed, "As nations cannot be rewarded or punished in the next world, they must be in this. By an inevitable chain of causes and effects, Providence punishes national sins by national calamities." Do we not see the chastisement of The Almighty upon our land in our recent national disasters, in the lack of piety, in the loss of respect for human life, in the destruction of families, in the unraveling of the very fabric of our society - beginning in The Church itself?

Such Churches in which the apostate dominate - and the unfortunate nations so cursed by their cancerous presence - become a law unto themselves! They cast away the blessings of salvation at The Cross - not realizing that such haughty lawlessness leads to self-destruction for their own lives & souls, the lives & souls of the flock around them, the nation so infected with their blasphemy, and shameful destructive corrosion of even The Church itself! So Saint Paul warns us of such apostates within The Body of CHRIST in TITUS 1:15-16, “…unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. They profess that they know GOD; but in works they deny Him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate!”

Many in America’s Churches today seem to feel that they are a law unto themselves. Do not many of our fellow Christians and even clergy of The Church today so walk? Do many in The Church not boast in their own apostasy and prideful sin, while rejecting the very Word of GOD and His Decrees regulating Right and Wrong? The danger of such vain degeneracy is the willful self-destruction of their own lives, our nation and - most horrific of all - the corruption & abomination they bring into the very Body of CHRIST on earth, which is the visible Church?

My Friends, are we not called to The Kingdom of GOD for such a time as this?

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21 2, KJV, TITUS 1:15-16.
IX. TOUGH TIMES CALLS FOR A STRONG, NOT A LUKEWARM, FAITH

Recall The Words of warning to the lukewarm and compromised Church at Laodicea by The HOLY SPIRIT as recorded by Saint John in REVELATION 3:14-19: “And unto the angel of The Church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith The Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of GOD; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent!” 22

Esther and Mordecai lived in tough times. The evil around them certainly seemed for some time that it would consume and destroy them and all those that they loved! But Mordecai’s faith and confidence in GOD was undaunted and unswerving. And Esther’s dedication to be a faithful and brave servant of The LORD came to be total and complete. When we are His, The Almighty corrects us when we stray into sin, that we might repent, seek His face, receive His merciful Grace and return to Him!

Thanks be to GOD that Esther and Mordecai were not lukewarm in their faith in GOD! For then where would have GOD’s people have been? The lukewarm Church at Laodicea is a picture of what GOD’s people should not be, for “the lukewarm person does not become greatly disturbed at hearing heretical teaching, and is not vigorous in the defense of The Truth.” 23 They knew The LORD’s hand was upon them, and they did not shrink from the battle. Nor should we when the battle comes to us! In tough times where wickedness abounds outside The Church and evil destroyers of GOD’s people arise even within The Church, we are called to pick up the armor of GOD and enter into the fight!

Saint Paul counsels us in EPHESIANAS 6:11-18 to enter into the fight for the sake of our own souls and lives, those of others both outside and within The Church, for the sake of our blessed Lord JESUS CHRIST and for the coming of His Kingdom even now: “Put on the whole armour of GOD, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of

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22 2, KJV, REVELATION 3:14-19.
23 3, Wycliffe Bible Commenatary, REVELATION 3:14-22, P1504.
the devil… Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of The Gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of The Spirit, which is The Word of GOD: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in The Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints!” 24

For The blessed Saviour calls us to The Kingdom of GOD for such a time as this!

X. WHEN GOD’S PEOPLE SUFFER FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS AND FAITH

The LORD GOD places us when & where He pleases according to His will. Today we find ourselves in a time & place of great wickedness and abomination - not only in the heathen society around us - but even within The very Church visible herself! And as CHRIST suffered for us, so we His New Covenant saints find that we not uncommonly suffer for His sake, for the souls and lives of others and for The Kingdom of GOD. In our suffering, when we walk with our Lord, we are drawn closer to Him, “…consecrated to bear fruit by configuration to The Saviour’s redemptive Passion. [Such] suffering… acquires a new meaning; it becomes a participation in the saving work of JESUS” CHRIST for our own souls, for the souls of others and for His Kingdom both on earth and in Heaven. 25

Saint Faustina wrote in her Diary of “Divine Mercy” of this: “Once, when I was suffering greatly, I left my work and escaped to JESUS and asked Him to give me his strength. After a very short prayer, I returned to my work, filled with enthusiasm and joy. Then, one of the sisters… said to me, ‘You must have many consolations today, Sister; you look so radiant. Surely, GOD is giving you no suffering, but only consolations!’ ‘You are greatly mistaken, Sister,’ I answered, ‘for it is precisely when I suffer much that my joy is greater; and when I suffer less, my joy also is less!’” 26

24 2, KJV, EPHESIANAS 6:11-18.
25 4, Catechism of The Catholic Church, # 1521, Union with The Passion of CHRIST, p 423.
26 10, Saint Faustina, Diary of Divine Mercy, Notebook I, entry 303, p 340. On suffering, when it causes us to seek and draw closer to CHRIST, causes us to receive greater mercy and joy in Him.
I believe Saint Faustina is saying here that our suffering, when it causes us to seek and draw closer to our Lord JESUS CHRIST, brings into our lives and upon our souls greater Divine mercy. Esther and Mordecai came to understand this, in that GOD turned their suffering into joy in Him when they and their fellow Jews sought His deliverance in the midst of their affliction. Let us not buy the lie of the devil that, if we are Christian, our lives shall be devoid of any pain, sorrow or suffering. But when it does come, let us come before The Cross of The blessed Saviour and seek The Divine Mercy of GOD!

As Saint Paul declares in II CORINTHIANS 1:5-7 of his suffering in CHRIST for the lives and souls of others and for The Kingdom of GOD, it is also a sanctification and drawing of his own life and soul closer to The Saviour: “For as the sufferings of CHRIST abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by CHRIST. And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation. And our hope of you is stedfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation.”

For we truly have been called to The Kingdom of GOD for such a time as this!

XI. CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH STAND VICTORIOUS EVEN NOW

But ladies and gentlemen, in spite of the raging of the wicked, the apostate and the perverse against the will of GOD and His people down through the ages, we know that evil shall not prevail! Though we indeed do suffer for the sake of righteousness in The LORD and for our holy faith in CHRIST, even this has a purpose and a happy ending for GOD’s people! As the psalmist records in PSALM 2:1-3, “Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against The LORD, and against His anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us!”

27, KJV, II CORINTHIANS 1:5-7.
28, KJV, PSALM 2:1-3.
But this is as the raging of the dust of the earth against the rays of the sun, or the raging of the grasshopper against the clouds in the sky! For as the psalmist continues in PSALM 2:4-7, “He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: The Lord shall have them in derision!” 29 For The King of The Universe preserves His saints and His Church! And as The GOD The Father upheld His Son, Who is The Rock upon which His will extends over all the earth and throughout all of creation, so He upholds those who are called by His Name! “Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: The LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee!” 30

Recall Saint Peter’s confession to our Lord in MATTHEW 16:16: “…Thou art The CHRIST, The Son of The living GOD!” 31 And what was the response of The Messiah to Saint Peter? “…thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it!” 32 Yes, the people of GOD have suffered, and do suffer, and will suffer until The Return of CHRIST. But in our suffering, afflictions and challenges, GOD Himself is there with us, consecrating the cries of His saints and drawing us to Himself in holiness and strength!

But like King David in PSALM 3:3-5 as we cry out against those that trouble and afflict us – the Hamans, the Robinsons, the Ahabs of this world – we know that GOD is our help, and His hand advances The Kingdom of Heaven upon earth even now, until it shall be fully established at The Second Coming of CHRIST! So we take certain assurance with David, “…But thou, O LORD, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head. I cried unto The LORD with my voice, and He heard me out of His holy hill… I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for The LORD sustained me!” 33

29 2, KJV, PSALM 2:4.
30 2, KJV, PSALM 2:6-7.
31 2, KJV, MATTHEW 16:16.
32 2, KJV, MATTHEW 16:18.
33 2, KJV, PSALM 3:3-5.
See what a Rock of salvation is GOD for us when we are in distress! First, He is our safety and our shield, “…which denotes an interest in The Divine protection…” in all that we do and in every circumstance of our lives.  

Second, He is our glory and our honor, in that GOD is first and above all else Who we hunger after, to be like and to be with, that we “…may be to GOD for a Name and a praise.”  

Third, He is our joy and deliverance, in that The Almighty lifts up our heads from out of our troubles when we turn to Him. “If, in the worst of times, GOD's people can lift up their heads with joy, knowing that all shall work for good to them, they will… [see that] it is GOD that is the lifter up of their head, that gives them both cause to rejoice…”

And what does King David conclude, seeing that The LORD is our safety and shield, our glory and honour, our joy and deliverance? It is this, which he confesses with all assurance in PSALM 3:6-8, “I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that have set themselves against me round about. Arise, O LORD; save me, O my GOD: for Thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the cheek bone; thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly. Salvation belongeth unto The LORD: Thy blessing is upon Thy people…! “

Indeed, CHRIST has called us to The Kingdom of GOD for such a time as this!

XII. IN CONCLUSION

My dear Brothers and Sisters, let The Church humble herself before our Lord JESUS CHRIST and intercede in prayer and good works for the purification of The Church visible on earth. Let us seek GOD’s guidance from the Holy Scriptures - guided by the Holy Spirit - that we may see the blessed day when The Church in this time and place puts away abominations, apostasy and blasphemy! Let us seek to be The LORD’s instruments to carry out His Will for the work of The Church here and now! For in doing so, we shall realize this:

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37 2, KJV, PSALM 3:6-8.
That we are with all certainty called to The Kingdom of GOD for such a time as this! In The Name of GOD The Father, and The Son and The Holy Ghost. AMEN.
XIII. REFERENCES


