

The Day of The Lord– Sunday November 3rd 2013.

Now as to the times and the epochs, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night (1.Thess.5:1-2)

Beloved in the Lord,

The Day of the Lord is coming. This fact has been the hope, and always will be the hope of every true Christian person. The Day of the Lord is coming. On the day of His ascension, forty days after Easter, Jesus left this world and returned to Heaven where He sat down at the Father's right hand. On that day, as Jesus ascended, the disciples continued to look heavenward. They were trying to catch one last glimpse of Jesus as He left. At this time they received a powerful reminder that Jesus would be coming back.

We read in Acts 1:9-11

“And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.¹⁰ And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was going, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them.¹¹ They also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven.”

These two men in white clothing were angels, God's messengers and they confirmed what Jesus had taught them, namely that He would return in power and glory. The day of the Lord will be a glorious day. He will come just as He left, in the clouds. He will come to take His children home to Heaven.

The fact of Jesus return is taught all throughout the New Testament. God's plan of salvation did not end on Easter morning.

We read Jesus words in John 14:1-3

“Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me.² In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.³ If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.”

Clearly Jesus stated that He will come back again and receive us to Himself. He will do this so that we may live forever with Him. This is the reason He came in the first place. He came to save us from the wages of our sin. He came to suffer and die in our stead, to pay for our sin with His precious blood in order that we may be saved. Those who are saved will live forever with Him in the Father's house.

The day of Jesus return is drawing ever closer. When it will be, we do not know, but we do know that it will be, because God has promised it. Every true Christian lives with this blessed hope everyday. Today could be the day.

We need to understand that even if Jesus tarries, the day of the Lord for each of us individually is only as far away as the day of our death. When we die, we are no longer subject to time. Between the time we close our eyes in death and open them in a new resurrected body, time will have no meaning. It is like when you sleep, you are not aware of the time lapse. Whether we sleep a few days or a 1000 years, it will have no significance.

If we happen to be alive on the Day of the Lord, then we will go through the process of death and resurrection in an instant. Paul explains this in his letter to the Corinthians:

“⁵¹ Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, ⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. ⁵³ For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. ⁵⁴ But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, “Death is swallowed up in victory.” (1. Corinthians 15:51-54)

Paul is clearly teaching, that on the Day of the Lord, those who have died in Christ will be raised, and those who are alive will be changed. I understand this to mean that if we are alive when Jesus appears, then we will die and rise again in a new resurrected body in the time it takes to blink. We will then be reunited with all Christians of all the ages and taken to the Father’s House. Paul describes this in his letter to the Thessalonians:

But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. ¹⁴ For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. ¹⁵ For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore comfort one another with these words.” (1. Thessalonians 4:13-18)

Do you get excited by this? I do. Jesus Himself is coming personally to get us. Paul is telling us to comfort one another with this truth. This is one reason God has given us His Holy Word. It takes us out of ignorance and unveils the truth, and with the truth we are free. With the truth we can bring hope and comfort to the grieving and the hurt. We do not have to sink in grief as those who have no hope, for we have the truth.

We need to read these words on a regular basis and allow them to bring us comfort and hope and joy and peace.

When we live with our focus on Jesus, and we live with the blessed hope of His return, it strengthens us. In the text I quoted from 1 Corinthians 15 – the great resurrection chapter – Paul closes with these words:

“but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁵⁸ Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord.

You see, when we live with the blessed hope of Jesus return, it helps us to be steadfast in our faith; to be immovable, to always be abounding in His work, knowing that we do not labour in vain.

Wow this is better than any multi vitamin. It is a stimulant that we need to take everyday. We should start everyday with the thought: “Maybe today Lord. Today is the Day you will come. I will strive to be doing my best so as to be ready when You come.” I want the Lord to find me working for Him when He comes, in order that His name be glorified.

Back to our text: Paul wrote that the day will come as a thief in the night. In writing this Paul is restating what Jesus Himself taught. We read in Matthew 24:

³⁶ “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. ³⁷ For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. ³⁸ For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, ³⁹ and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be. ⁴⁰ Then there will be two men in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. ⁴¹ Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one will be left.

Be Ready for His Coming

⁴² “Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming. ⁴³ But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. ⁴⁴ For this reason you also must be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think He will.

⁴⁵ “Who then is the faithful and sensible slave whom his master put in charge of his household to give them their food at the proper time? ⁴⁶ Blessed is that slave whom his master finds so doing when he comes. ⁴⁷ Truly I say to you that he will put him in charge of all his possessions. ⁴⁸ But if that evil slave says in his heart, ‘My master is not coming for a long time,’ ⁴⁹ and begins to beat his fellow slaves and eat and drink with drunkards; ⁵⁰ the

master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour which he does not know,⁵¹ and will cut him in pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” (Matthew 24:36-51)

Jesus taught and Paul reiterates it, that we are to be ready for the day of the Lord. We are to be alert, sober, watching and working. This will be of great blessing to us.

While we have life, we should be about our Lord’s business. We should be striving to do His work. Always remember Paul wrote: “Our labour for the Lord is not in vain.”

Everything we do, we should be doing for His glory and for His Kingdom. Our motivation should be our love for Him.

Paul wrote:

“Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.

²³ Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men,²⁴ knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.” (Colossians 3:17;23-24)

To summarise what we have spoken about: We are to live with the blessed and sure hope of Jesus return. We should be alert and ready and watching and waiting for that day. Till that day comes we are to be working diligently for the Lord always giving Him thanks and honour.

Maranatha. Come Lord Jesus.

Amen.

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All Bible quotations taken from New American Standard Bible.