

**“The Day of
the Lord
cometh...”**

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God has given His people an urgent message of repentance at this time! His message is directly aimed at you and me. In God's abundant and unlimited mercy, He warns us to *listen, take heed* and *act* immediately on what He has to say before it is too late. God's urgent message tells us how we can be protected from the coming destruction about to befall the "sleeping virgins", the nations of Israel and the rest of mankind. Repentance is key to avoid being taken captive in the coming Great Tribulation.

God's faithful people must now sound a trumpet and alarm in Zion, or God's Church:

"Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the LORD cometh, for it is nigh at hand" (Joel 2:1).

Brethren of God, please take the time to read this very urgent message and get ready for the soon-coming time when Christ will come 'as a thief in the night' (Rev. 3:3, 16:15).

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Chapter 1

The Day of the Lord vs. the Day of the Lord's Wrath

A number of Old Testament prophecies discuss the soon coming 'Day of the Lord' (Joel 1:15, 2:1; Mal. 3:1 etc). Many scriptures in the New Testament also discuss this Day, clearly indicating that it will come 'as a thief in the night'. Notice, both 1 Thess. 5:2 and 2 Pet. 3:10 state that "*the Day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night*". This suggests that this event will take place *quickly* and at a time when it is *least expected*.

Historically, the Church of God believed that the 'Day of the Lord' will be the last year of the three and a half years of Great Tribulation, during which the final of seven seals would be opened culminating in the return of Jesus Christ (Rev. 16). Until recently, and presumably without even realizing it, the Church mistakenly believed that the final year of Great Tribulation would come 'as a thief in the night' (2 Pet. 3:10).

Interestingly, other scriptures clearly state that *Christ* will come 'as a thief in the night'. Notice carefully: "I [*Christ*] will come on thee as a thief" (Rev. 3:3). Rev. 16:15 also states: "Behold, I [*Christ*] come as a thief". These two scriptures confirm that *Christ* will come to His temple (Mal. 3:1) 'as a thief'!

Christ and the Day of the Lord come 'as a thief'

The scriptures we have just discussed demonstrate that both the *Day of the Lord* and *Christ* will come 'as a thief'. Are these scriptures talking about two separate events coming 'as a thief'?

which will take place within a year of each other, one marking the beginning of the final year of Great Tribulation and the other marking the return of Christ on a future Feast of Trumpets?

If we allow scripture to guide us in answering this most important question, we will see that the Biblical answer on both counts is a resounding ‘NO!’ As we proceed, it will become plainly evident that the last year of Great Tribulation will *not* come ‘as a thief’, nor will the return of Christ to rule all nations on a future Feast of Trumpets come ‘as a thief’. Those of God’s people who are plunged into the Great Tribulation (Rev. 3:16) and the world at large will be warned *in advance* of both of these two events.

It is important to note that God’s Church has had an incorrect understanding as to the meaning of the *Day of the Lord* and its starting point. Until 1997, the Church had totally misunderstood the meaning of the *Day of the Lord* coming ‘as a thief’ and *Christ* coming ‘as a thief’. It was only when God gave deeper understanding on this subject that this Truth was clarified to those in God’s Church who would listen to His Voice. We will see that both the *Day of the Lord* ‘coming as a thief’ and *Christ* ‘coming as a thief’ are one and the same event which will occur *just* before the Great Tribulation begins! As we proceed, we will show how scripture defines and supports this fact.

Two Witnesses

At this juncture, let us briefly consider the commission and work of the Two Witnesses: We know that the Two Witnesses will be brought on the scene by God to fulfill a specific commission (Rev. 11:3). Their work will span 1260 days during which they will cry aloud to the Laodiceans who would have been spewed out of God’s mouth into the Great Tribulation (Rev. 3:16) and to the nations of Israel. In an effort to gain the attention of these people, and in order to stir them to

look to God and seek repentance, God will grant the Two Witnesses the power to perform mighty miracles. Notice:

“And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will” (Rev. 11:5-6).

As already indicated, the main message of the Two Witnesses will be to warn the “sleeping virgins” who would have just been plunged into the time of greatest trouble brought about by the sudden destruction resulting from the opening of the first four seals, which will be very quickly compounded by the Great Tribulation (Rev. 3:16). Once the Great Tribulation begins, their *cry* will be one of repentance toward God and that the Bridegroom is about to come (on a Day of Pentecost) to collect His Bride (Matt. 25:1-12; Matt. 24:30-31; 1 Cor. 15:52). The Two Witnesses will also cry aloud that on a subsequent Feast of Trumpets, Christ will return to the Mount of Olives with His Bride, already married (Zech. 14:4). This will be the point of their commission (Rev. 11:3)!

Knowing that the commission of the Two Witnesses will last 1260 days, won't God's people in the Great Tribulation be able to figure out the exact day of the return of Christ, if they begin to count from the day that the Two Witnesses come on the scene? Wouldn't the Two Witnesses warn about the time of the return of Christ? Of course they would! This would be the purpose of their ministry! Once the two Witnesses come on the scene and the Great Tribulation begins, everyone will come to know the exact day of the beginning of the last year of Great Tribulation (or Day of the Lord's Wrath), and also the exact day of the return of Christ! If God's people are forewarned of upcoming events through the ministry and prophecies of the

Two Witnesses, would Christ's return come as a total surprise to them, 'as a thief in the night'? ABSOLUTELY NOT! Understand: The people in the Great Tribulation will be forewarned, so the return of Christ would not be an unexpected event! It would certainly not come upon an unsuspecting people 'as a thief' if they hear the prophecies of the Two Witnesses and take heed of the message they deliver. Certainly, God's people in the Great Tribulation should recognize the Two Witnesses and their prophecies, and will know *exactly* when Christ is to return! All they would have to do is listen *and count!* Matt. 25 indicates that at least half of the 'virgins' in the Great Tribulation will wake up and do whatever it takes to make it into the Kingdom. The last year of Great Tribulation (or Day of the Lord's Wrath) and Christ's return will not overtake these people 'as a thief'!

'As a thief' vs. 'every eye shall see Him'?

Notice what Matt. 24:30 states: 'They will *see* the Son of Man coming in the clouds with *power and great glory*'. Rev. 1:7 confirms, 'He comes with clouds and *every eye shall see Him*'. This is talking about the time when Christ will come in the clouds with great fanfare, with a shout (1 Thess. 4:16) and at the sound of a trumpet at the first resurrection (1 Cor. 15:52). On the other hand, Rev. 16:15 discusses an event when Christ comes quietly, secretly, without the sound of a trumpet, unannounced, and 'as a thief': "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed *is* he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame" (Rev. 16:15). Isn't it so very obvious that Rev. 1:7 and Rev. 16:15 are discussing two *separate* events? Christ coming when 'every eye shall see Him' (Rev. 1:7) is discussing one event, while Christ coming unnoticed, or 'as a thief' (Rev. 16:15), is altogether discussing another event.

Let us reason this through and understand what scripture is telling us: wouldn't you agree that Christ coming 'as a thief' (Rev. 16:15) and 'Christ coming in the clouds with great power and glory' (Matt. 24:30; Rev. 1:7) are speaking about two

different events? Without doubt, Christ cannot come ‘as a thief’ if a trumpet is blown to herald and announce His return! If so, it would be a preposterous claim to state that He comes quietly, and secretly ‘as a thief’ (Rev. 1:7, 16:15)! Evidently, this *must* be talking about two different events! Please understand that when Christ comes ‘as a thief’, He comes to ‘take’ His elect to a place of protection (Matt. 24:40-41). He does this secretly and quietly. Christ coming in the clouds when every eye shall see Him is discussing Christ coming for His Bride at the resurrection (1 Cor. 15:51).

“In the spirit on the Lord’s Day”

Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong wrote an interesting article entitled “How the WCG came into being”. This appeared in the Good News magazine of November 6th, 1978. In this article, he wrote the following:

“The apostle John relates, ‘I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day...’ (Revelation 1:10). In other words, John was taken IN VISION, by the Spirit of God, into the far future DAY OF THE LORD. From the time of Adam to now - approximately 6,000 years - we have been in the day of MAN, deceived and led by Satan. The period foretold in more than 30 prophecies called the "Day of the Lord" is the time when God supernaturally intervenes and *begins* taking over the world - starting very shortly, perhaps one to three years, before the second coming of Christ to RULE ALL NATIONS. The apostle John, in vision, was taken into this "Day of the Lord" called "the Lord's day" in Revelation 1:10. This period "the Day of the Lord," especially that phase of it PRIOR to Christ's coming (*although it shall continue through the millennium*), is the THEME of the book of Revelation.”

Read again what Mr. Armstrong wrote and take careful note of what he states. What he was saying was that the theme of the book of Revelation is describing the time period of the *Day of the Lord*. In this article, he also indicated that the Day of the Lord would begin *before* the Great Tribulation! Although from future writings of his we can see that he didn't ever again discuss this thought, what he wrote in this one article was indeed prophetic and is scripturally supported. Since 1997, it has been scripturally explained that Christ coming to His temple 'as a thief' will mark the beginning of the *Day of the Lord*. (Study the following scriptures carefully as support for this important Truth which must be understood without delay (Mal. 3:1-2; Rev. 3:3; Rev. 16:15; 1 Thess. 5:2; 2 Pet. 3:10).

Day of the Lord vs. Day of the Lord's Wrath

Consider further: Matthew 24:38, 50; Luke 12:46 and other scriptures tell us that the *Day of the Lord* will come as a 'thief in the night' *and* at a time when people 'are eating, drinking, and giving in marriage'. In other words, this event is to occur at a time when God's people are least expecting it and when life is going on as usual. However, after two and a half years of experiencing the horrors of the Great Tribulation – at the beginning of the *Day of the Lord's Wrath* – it would hardly be a time when people will be 'eating, drinking and giving in marriage' and carrying on a normal life! At this time the earth will be plagued with chaos and destruction, and not carrying on with normal life as usual. The 'Day of the Lord' will begin at a time when things are going on as normal and when it is least expected (Matt. 24:38, 50; Luke 12:46).

In 1997, God also showed His people that the *Day of the Lord* and the *Day of the Lord's Wrath* are two different events. All seven seals are opened during the *Day of the Lord* (see Rev. 1:10, Rev 4 onwards), while the *Day of the Lord's Wrath* is the seventh seal to be opened within the *Day of the Lord*.

In Rev. 1:10, the apostle John projects himself into the *Day of the Lord*. Here he states: “I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day” (or the Day of the Lord). In Rev. 4, he further continues that same thought and goes on to mostly describe events which are to take place during the same *Day of the Lord*. He clearly states that the seven seals outlined in the Book of Revelation, including the four horsemen (Rev. 6:1-8 – first four seals), Great Tribulation (Rev. 6:9-11 – fifth seal), heavenly signs (Rev. 6:12-17 – sixth seal) and Day of the Lord’s Wrath (Rev. 8:6 to Rev. 16:21 – seventh seal) all take place *within and during* the Day of the Lord. With this said and understood it is evident that the *Day of the Lord* must begin *prior* to the Great Tribulation with the *Day of the Lord’s Wrath* ending the final year of Great Tribulation.

Recapitulation

- When the Bible discusses Christ coming quietly, and ‘as a thief’ (Rev. 3:3; Rev. 16:15), it is discussing a separate event to when Christ comes ‘in the clouds’ and ‘with the sound of a trumpet’ (1 Thess. 4:16; Rev. 1:7) at the first resurrection (1 Cor. 15:52).
- Christ coming ‘as a thief’ (Rev. 3:3; Rev. 16:15) is discussing the same event as the Day of the Lord coming ‘as a thief’ (1 Thess. 5:2; 2 Pet. 3:10), just prior to the beginning of the Great Tribulation (1 Thess. 5:3 etc).
- The *Day of the Lord* begins *before* the Great Tribulation as can be easily proven by the fact that the Great Tribulation is the fifth of seven seals (Rev. 6:9-11), *all of which* are opened *during* the Day of the Lord (Rev. 1:10; Rev 4 onwards).
- The *Day of the Lord* (Rev. 1:10; 1 Thess. 5:2; 11 Pet. 3:10) and the *Day of the Lord’s Wrath* (Rev. 16) are two separate events. The *Day of the Lord’s Wrath* is the last of seven seals which is opened and fulfilled *during* the *Day of the Lord*.

Chapter 2

“As a thief in the night”

As outlined in the first chapter of this book, the Book of Revelation primarily discusses events which are prophesied to occur *during* the *Day of the Lord*. God’s Church has historically and mistakenly believed that whenever the Bible refers to the *Day of the Lord*, it specifically refers to the final year of Great Tribulation. This is clearly not the case when you realize that the *Day of the Lord’s Wrath* is the seventh seal opened *within* the *Day of the Lord* (Rev. 1:10; Rev. 4; Rev. 16).

The fact that the *Day of the Lord* and the *Day of the Lord’s Wrath* are two separate events is pivotal, deeper understanding which has opened up so many urgent Bible prophecies pertaining to the time which we live in today and the days immediately ahead! However, some dangerously claim that we are already in the *Day of the Lord*. This claim has no scriptural support and carelessly sends a false signal - a false sense of direction nullifies the need for a powerful warning work, which God commands His loyal people to perform, before Christ comes ‘as a thief’ to mark the beginning of the Day of the Lord (see Joel 1:15, 2:1; Mal. 3:1; 1 Thess. 5:2; 2 Pet. 3:10; Rev. 3:3; Rev. 16:15). Teaching that Christ has already come to the secret chambers of His inner court (or Church) translates into a lukewarm attitude towards the Work of God (Rev. 3:14-22)! Take a look at what God states about those who claim Christ is already here:

“Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here *is* Christ, or there; believe *it* not. For there shall arise false Christs, and **false prophets**, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if

it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. **Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not**" (Matt. 24:23-26).

Clearly, after Christ comes 'as a thief in the night' it will be made evident to those in God's Church, otherwise scriptures as Matt. 24:36 wouldn't have been inspired to be written.

In this chapter, we will go on to discuss some crucial scriptures which give context to the scriptures that speak about Christ coming 'as a thief in the night'. We will also demonstrate that when this event takes place, there will be evidence to prove it just happened.

"As a thief in the night"

Scripture states that Christ will come to His temple *suddenly*, 'as a thief in the night' (Mal. 3:1; Rev. 3:3; Rev. 16:15). This indicates that Christ will come to His temple at a time when the majority will not be expecting it. Notice:

- "***If*** *therefore thou shalt not watch*, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee" (Rev. 3:3).
- "Behold, I come as a thief. ***Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments***, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame" (Rev. 16:15).

These verses indicate that **Christ will only come 'as a thief' upon those who are *not* watching and those who do not keep their garments**. However, after the event, there will be little doubt in God's people's minds that this event would have occurred. Notice what God tells us about this in Matthew 24:

"But as the days of Noe *were*, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be*. For as in the days that were *before* the flood they were eating

and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage [*i.e. this is the calm before the storm*], until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be*. Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come*” (vs. 37-42).

[*note: *this is referring to Christ suddenly coming to His temple as a thief (Mal. 3:1; Rev. 16:15)*].

Consider: Before a thief breaks into a building, the lives of the owners of the building would be going on as normal. They would carry on with their routine just as normal. Meanwhile, the thief would no doubt be closely studying his target. Before breaking-in, a professional thief would study the building which he is planning on robbing. He would make it a point to figure out the best strategy to enter the building and then exit it after he has completed his mission. He would ensure the best place and method of entry and exit. He would extensively carry out as much groundwork as possible *beforehand* to ensure he knows the most obvious location within the building to find the item(s) that he plans ‘to take’. Not only would he carefully study the building but he would also study the movements of all the individuals who come in and go out of the building on a daily basis. He would make it a point to know their habits, routines and precise time of their moves throughout a typical day. (Without even knowing it, this would be the ‘calm before the storm’ as far as the owners of the building are concerned).

Suddenly, without warning, the professional thief who already precisely knows his mission, would break-in and accomplish his job quickly and efficiently. Once his mission is accomplished, he will ensure that he leaves his targeted location before anyone can see or catch him. A thief always finds himself in a race against time so that he could accomplish

his mission and leave the scene without being caught in the act. Speed (and secrecy) would be of the essence!

Logic dictates that soon after the event - almost immediately - *all* those having involvement with the robbed building would find out about the break-in. It wouldn't be long before everyone having direct involvement with the building would hastily scurry around in panic and fright to search and see exactly what was taken and what was left. In little time more and more people would find out about what had just taken place because there would be a sense of anxiety and alarm among those who own, or have involvement with, the building which was just robbed. There would be shock and panic that a thief broke in and took various prized possessions. Once the burglary is committed, there would be no doubt in anyone's mind that it would have just taken place.

Notice Luke 17:34-36:

“I tell you, IN THAT NIGHT there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left”.

Judgment now on the house of God

The separation (or ‘taking’) spoken of in Luke 17:34-36 (and Matt. 24:40-41) takes place ‘in *that night*’: “In that night...one shall be taken, the other left”. Which ‘*in that night*’ is this referring to? Isn't it talking about the night in which Christ comes ‘as a thief *in the night*’, marking the beginning of the Day of the Lord (1 Thess. 5:2)? Doesn't the separation take place ‘in that (one) night’?

Brethren of God! **LISTEN to the urgent point God is trying to convey to all His people!** God has been discerning and studying each of us throughout our calling, conversion, baptism and life! He has been - and continues to - closely

watch each of us, evaluating the decisions we make, discerning who is in submission to Him, who is listening to His Voice. He perceives and considers our every action and choice that is made. This is the time when God is assessing our impulses, desires, motives, and spoken words. God is right now judging His people – and He is doing this in great detail! He is no doubt closely watching how husbands and wives fulfill their marital vows, obligations and commitments toward each other within their marriages; how parents tend to their childrearing and children to their responsibilities as they honor their parents and elders. He is keenly watching to see how we react to life’s circumstances including our work ethics, how we handle business decisions, how we deal with associates, friends, brethren and more. He is closely evaluating how we use the Holy Spirit He has made available to us and that we exercise it to where we allow it to produce its fruits (Gal 5:22-23). He wants to see that we are growing spiritually and building the character of God (Phil 2:5; Eph. 4:15)! **Judgment is now upon the house of God (1 Pet. 4:17)! This is our final chance and God is discerning us now to see who He will take to a place of protection** and who He will leave as He comes to His temple suddenly, ‘as a thief in the night’ to mark the beginning of the *Day of the Lord* (Mal. 3:1; Matt. 24:40-42)! We need to be asking ourselves serious and urgent questions! Are we *obeying* Him? Do we *fear* disobeying Him? Do we *listen* to His Voice and *act* upon it? Are we demonstrating total *submission* and *loyalty* to Him? Are we *resisting* the pulls of the flesh and desperately working to *change* our carnal, human nature? We need to fight the strong urge of ‘sitting on the fence’ or getting ‘as close to the edge as possible’ in areas of the ways of the world (1 John 2:16)! We must be so very careful of falling asleep and becoming blinded to the Truth, being led astray by our own human nature, or by ‘well meaning’ men and leaders (Rev. 2:2). It is time to fervently ‘prove all things’ (1 Thess. 5:21) and ensure that all that we believe and accept is coming right out of the mind of God and written within the pages of His Word! It is how well we ‘measure up’ which will ultimately determine whether we are ‘taken’ to a place of

protection or ‘left’ behind! This is what Christ is talking about when He discusses Himself coming ‘as a thief’ marking the beginning of the Day of the Lord! He wants to demonstrate the fact that He is studying and discerning us now, *before* He comes ‘as a thief’. When He comes, He will take one and leave one (Matt. 24:40-41; Lk. 17:34-36), and those whom He leaves will be left to face the fiery trials of the Great Tribulation (Matt. 24: 28; Luke 17:37). It will be too late for them to escape the Great Tribulation but they will then have to prove themselves through death in the trials faced in the Great Tribulation (Rev. 12:11).

Day of the Lord and sudden destruction

Notice further details which God gives us regarding the momentous event of Christ coming ‘as a thief’:

“But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the Day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For *when they shall say, Peace and safety*; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief” (1 Thess. 5:1-4).

This scripture reiterates the notion that the Day of the Lord will come ‘as a thief’. It also gives us further details which we need to take careful note of, so that *we* will not be caught unawares that ‘that day should overtake *us* as a thief’. Verse 3 states, “For when they shall say Peace and safety”. Mr. Armstrong had often taught that this is referring to supposed ‘peace and safety’ in Jerusalem. World leaders will possibly declare ‘peace and safety’ over Jerusalem and then “sudden destruction” will come! **We must be watching Jerusalem! The cue for Christ coming ‘as a thief’ marking the Day of the Lord is when they say ‘peace and safety’!** Once that

happens, *sudden destruction* will come as the first four seals are opened marking the commencement of the Day of the Lord (Rev. 6). The ride of the four horsemen of the Apocalypse will bring about the ‘sudden destruction’ spoken of in 1 Thess. 5:3 and other scriptures. Notice:

- “...*the Day of the Lord is at hand*; it shall come **as a destruction** from the Almighty” (Is. 13:6)
- “Alas for the day! For *the Day of the Lord is at hand*, and **as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come**” (Joel 1:15).

The moment Christ comes ‘as a thief’, He will take one and leave one (Matt. 24:40-41) and this will immediately be followed by the ‘sudden destruction’ spoken of in the above scriptures. Those ‘left’ of His people will wake up and will know *beyond doubt* that Christ came and ‘took’ the loyal and faithful brethren to a place of protection (Rev. 3:10); the ones left behind will have to face the ‘sudden destruction’ brought about by the ride of the four horsemen and the Great Tribulation! As already discussed, this will be their final opportunity to repent, overcome and prove their loyalty to God through death (Rev. 12:11).

1 Thess. 5:2-4 tell us that the *Day of the Lord* will come ‘as a thief’ (vs. 2). Verse 4 states that those closest to God will not be in darkness and ‘that day’ (or ‘that night’) will *not* overtake them ‘as a thief’ (see also Amos 3:7)! **If we are to be a part of His loyal group – the Body of Christ, that truly has Him as Head – that is not in spiritual darkness, we must be fervently making ourselves ‘ready’ (Mat. 24:44; Lk. 12:40) and ‘watching’ (Matt. 24:42; Matt. 25:13; Mark 13:35; Luk. 21:36; 1 Thess. 5:6; 1 Pet. 4:7; Rev. 3:3).** Notice Matthew 24:43-44, where Jesus Christ tells us to be *ready* for this momentous occasion:

“But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would

come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore *be ye also ready*: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.”

This scripture demonstrates that we must *now* conscientiously and desirously ‘walk in His ways’ and ‘keep His charge’ (Zech. 3:7), if we are to be found building the character of Christ and taking on His mind (Phil. 2:5). These are the things which we must actively be found *doing* (Mat. 24:46; Luk. 12:43). (Please request the booklet entitled ‘*End Time Joshua*’ to read more on this most important and urgent subject).

Recapitulation

- Christ will come suddenly to His temple ‘as a thief in the night’ to open the first four seals, just before the Great Tribulation, marking the beginning of the Day of the Lord (Mal. 3:1; 1 Thess. 5:2-4; 2 Pet. 3:10; Rev. 3:3; Rev. 16:15)
- God is discerning who to take to a place of protection and who to leave. We must be fervently and desirously making the right choices *now* as we make ourselves ready. Judgment is now on the House of God (1 Pet. 4:17)!
- God’s very elect are not in darkness that that Day should overtake them ‘as a thief’ (1 Thess. 5:4).
- As soon as Christ comes ‘as a thief’ to mark the beginning of the Day of the Lord, the four horsemen of the apocalypse will begin their ride (Rev. 6) which will see the beginning of the ‘sudden destruction’ spoken of in 1 Thess. 5:4, Is. 13:6, and Joel 1:15.

Chapter 3

Symbols and the Day of the Lord

Within the pages of the Bible, God uses *weather symbols* to deliver a strong and detailed warning message to His people, which now must be urgently understood and delivered. As He continues to intimately communicate with His loyal people at this time, we must be careful to evaluate what He states through His inspired Word so that we can *closely understand* the powerful message He wants delivered.

In the context of *Christ* and the *Day of the Lord* coming ‘as a thief’, and also in the context of the end-time in general, God uses the words ‘seasons’ (1 Thess. 5:1), ‘winter’ (Mat. 24:20), ‘lightning’ (Matt. 24:27), ‘clouds’ (Mat. 24:30), ‘summer’ (Matt. 24:32), and ‘flood’ (Matt. 24:38). These words are descriptive and vivid and, in most or all cases, He uses them to demonstrate powerful analogies, especially if we note the context in which they are used in scripture. Importantly, we are to see the intent of what is being stated because God is communicating a very urgent message to His people which He wants understood at this time.

Let us take a look at some of these terms as they relate to Christ coming ‘as a thief’ to His temple to mark the beginning of the *Day of the Lord*:

Seasons

“But of the times and the *seasons*, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the Day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night...But ye,

brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief” (1 Thess. 5:1-2, 4).

The Bible gives us enough guidance and direction so we may discern the sign of the times in which we live (Matt. 16:3). We should be able to clearly see and evaluate the current condition, in God’s Church and on the world scene, to be able to discern the *season* of the times in which we live, that the return of Christ is ‘at the doors’ (Mat. 24:33). With deeper understanding given to us by God, we may see and know the specific events that will precede Christ’s coming to His temple; this would ensure that this event does not overtake us ‘as a thief’ (1 Thess. 5:4). God always forewarns His people before events of this nature and magnitude take place (Amos 3:7), which indicates that if God’s loyal brethren follow and understand Him, by closely and carefully listening to His Voice, then they will not be in darkness when Christ comes ‘as a thief’ to mark the beginning of the *Day of the Lord*. Essentially, God does not emphatically state the precise time of the event because He wants us to remain alert and watchful; however He *does* tell us that we should be able to ‘discern’ the *season* by watching and taking note of *the conditions* around us (1 Thess. 5:1). In 1 Thess. 5:1 God is not talking about a literal *season* such as spring, summer, winter or fall. What He is saying is that if we discern the times in which we live, we should be aware of the general time period (or ‘season’) when Christ’s return ‘as a thief’ is at the doors (Matt. 24:33)! Clearly, this is the context in which God uses the word *season* in these verses.

Lightning

“For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be” (Matt. 24:27).

The word ‘*lightning*’ is used to demonstrate that the coming of the Son of Man will be *sudden* and *unexpected*. The point God is making is that Christ coming ‘as a thief’ will take

place with *lightning speed!* After discerning each of us, Christ will come to ‘take’ the faithful ones to the Place of Safety. This event will take place quickly and suddenly - with the same speed and suddenness as lightning! Consider: When a storm comes, you know the strong possibility that there will be lightning. You can discern the ‘season’. However you will not know the exact minute or second that lightning will strike! In a very real sense, lightning comes unawares and quickly! In Matt. 24:27, God is mainly demonstrating the *lightning speed* in which Christ will come ‘as a thief’ to take His elect to a place of protection (Matt. 24:40-41).

Furthermore, when a storm is literally over the location you are at, and as soon as lightning strikes, it is *immediately* followed by the loud rumbles and roar of thunder. It appears that God wants us to compare this with the ‘clamor’ of sudden destruction (1 Thess. 5:3; Joel 1:15; Joel 2:1) to befall the “sleeping virgins” and the world immediately after Christ comes ‘as a thief’. This will be witnessed by all those who are not taken by Christ to a place of protection (Is. 13:6; Joel 1:15; Matt. 24:40-41; 1 Thess. 5:3).

The symbolism of the word ‘lightning’ used in Matt. 24:27 is that Christ will come unawares and He will come quickly – so let’s be ready for that day!

Summer

“Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that *summer* is nigh” (Matt. 24:32).

The point that God is here communicating is that just as budding trees are proof that summer is nigh, so can we see clear proof in the current shameful and degenerate condition in His Church and the World that Christ’s coming is imminent. God wants us to ‘watch’ so that we can discern the ‘sign of the times’, ‘season’ and ‘in what watch’ we are in (Matt. 24:43).

God will light our path and it is our duty to follow that light and abide in it (Ps. 119:105)!

Winter

“But pray ye that your flight be not in the *winter*...” (Matt. 24:20). We are told to pray that our flight be not in the winter. Irrespective of whether God’s elect are literally ‘taken’ to a Place of Safety or whether arrangements will need to be made to get there, we do not know the harsh circumstances which might have to be faced when it is time to flee, and the extra duress of the toughest season of the year would only add to the difficulty of the situation. Even though God knows our needs before we ask Him (Matt. 6:8), He wants us to adhere to the instruction in Matt. 24:20 so that He can see our obedience and attitude toward Him. We would do well to take God at His Word and do exactly what He is asking: to literally pray that our flight is not in the winter.

More importantly however, we must also understand the symbolism being communicated to us in Matt. 24:20. Just as God uses the words ‘summer’, ‘lightning’, ‘flood’ etc., to demonstrate powerful symbolism, so He uses the word ‘winter’. Let us note Matt. 24:20-21:

“But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter... ***for then shall be great tribulation***, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be” (Matt. 24:20-21).

The section of the verse stating “pray that your flight be not in the *winter*” is written in the context of *trouble and tribulation*. (See also Mark 13:18-19). Consider: It is certain that *nuclear winter* is coming upon the World during the Great Tribulation (Hab. 1:6-17; 3:16), and we must be prepared for occurrences on the world scene to *seemingly* get close to desperate even before then – although it obviously won’t get nearly as bad as it will once the seven seals begin to be opened after Christ comes ‘as a thief in the night’! The ‘beginning of

sorrows’ we are experiencing now will gain in momentum till the point that Christ comes ‘as a thief’ and His elect are taken to a place of protection. At that point in time, the *Day of the Lord* will begin and the first four of the seven seals will be ripped open allowing the four horsemen of the Apocalypse to begin their destructive ride. It is clear that, **in Matt. 24:20 and Mark 13:18-19, God is also asking us to pray that the world situation does not become too harsh or unbearable for His elect to handle at the time of fleeing to the Place of Safety.** We are to pray that the situation will be as mild as possible, yet consistent with God’s will. God wants us to pray that the ‘sky’ won’t get ‘too dark and grey’ and the ‘storm’ doesn’t turn into a ‘tempest’ symbolically speaking with regards to the situation God’s elect may face at the time of being ‘taken’ to a place of protection (i.e. at the time ‘lightning’ strikes, or Christ comes ‘as a thief’). The ‘beginning of sorrows’, which we are now experiencing and which are outlined in the first part of Matt. 24, will increase and get so violent that it will feel like it is the worst storm of the winter months – symbolically speaking. We must plead with God to have mercy on us, that world events won’t get too harsh (or ‘wintry’) for His people to face and have to deal with, before and as they flee.

While we should pray that our flight does not take place during the literal season of winter, it would be very appropriate to pray that the world situation be tolerable up to the point that Christ takes His elect to a Place of Safety.

Flood

“For as in the days that were before the *flood* they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the *flood* came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be” (Matt. 24: 38-39).

Scripture states that in the days of Noah, they were eating, drinking and giving in marriage *until* he entered the ark. When he entered the ark, the door was shut and those left behind

began to realize that they were on the wrong side of God. They completely understood it when the ‘sudden destruction’ or *flood* came, but by then it was too late! They were to be washed away by the flood because of their disobedience. “So shall also the coming of the Son of Man be”. God is here describing the situation in this end-time, which will be witnessed just before and after Christ comes ‘as a thief’. The situation will be very similar to that which was experienced in Noah’s time. People will be eating, drinking, giving in marriage and carrying on with life as usual when Christ suddenly comes upon them unawares ‘as a thief in the night’. However, after that takes place, there will not be an actual physical *flood* resultant from torrential rain. This will not befall mankind after God takes His faithful few to the place of protection because we know that, after the flood of Noah’s time, God covenanted that He will not again punish the earth with another great flood (Gen. 9:11)! Evidently, God is not stating that there will be an actual physical flood after Christ comes ‘as a thief’, but He is drawing upon the term ‘flood’ to demonstrate a powerful analogy for the end time. The point which is being emphasized in Matt. 24:38-39 is that when the Son of Man comes ‘as a thief’, all of God’s people left behind will know it – wherever they are! Those left behind will realize and completely understand the errors of their ways, resulting from having rejected God’s Voice, the moment the *flood* - or the effects of the four horsemen and the Great Tribulation - begin to be felt. Nothing will allow them to escape the Great Tribulation just as nothing allowed those in the time of Noah to escape the flood.

Pray ye that your flight be not...on the Sabbath day

“But pray ye that your flight be not ... on the Sabbath day”
(Matt. 24:20).

Another interesting section of scripture which we have not yet looked at is the last part of Matt. 24:20, where it tells us to pray that our flight be not on the Sabbath day. Since scripture is asking us to do this, we must do it! We do not know the

precise circumstances God's people will face at the time of fleeing, so we must take God at His Word and do precisely what He asks.

If we also look at this from a symbolic viewpoint, the meaning of this part of scripture takes on an important dimension of which we must be aware. The Sabbath day pictures a physical day of rest. It is a day when we take our focus off the physical, stop our physical labor and rejuvenate ourselves. In the spiritual intent of this, we should pray that we do not stop or take a rest from proving all things, watching, praying, keeping close to God and getting ourselves ready (1 Thess. 5:21; Rev. 3:15-16; Rev. 19:7). Taking a rest from any of our spiritual duties and obligations is what has made so many of God's people lukewarm to Him and His Work especially at this time. We must beware of letting our guard down, ensuring that we keep our wits about us at all times and ensure that we are constantly spiritually alert and focused! **We need to do all we can to get ourselves ready as the Bride of Christ – without rest!** We need to be found doing this so that that day, or 'that night', does not overtake us 'as a thief': "Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober" (1 Thess. 5:6).

While we should be praying that our flight does not involve having to maneuver around the Sabbath, we should certainly keep and apply the spirit of what is being stated, and ensure that we pray that we do not give in to the temptation to rest or sleep (spiritually speaking) so that that day does not creep up on us unawares. There is absolutely no room for compromise, sluggishness or spiritual lethargy to set in! We are living in serious Bible times, which require us to have great urgency!

Woe to them that give suck in those days!

"And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!" (Matt. 24:19)

Young children in a family require extra attention and care. The younger the children in a family, the more dependent they are on the adults and the more direct help they require. This situation would pose obvious tests and challenges in urgent and dangerous times. Families with young children will need extra help. Of course, God will provide that help and guidance as long as obedience is met (1 Jn. 3:22). Praying to God for help, in advance of any adverse situations that might be met ‘in those days’, is what God expects from us. This demonstrates a humble attitude and unquestionable obedience, apart from showing God that we totally rely on Him!

Spiritually speaking, Matt. 24:19 is telling us that God’s people must ensure they are studying the Word of God and applying it to ensure they are growing in the character of God. We must be “weaned from the milk and drawn from the breasts” so as to be able to feed off spiritual meat (see Isa. 28:9)! This does not mean we should shift our focus away from foundational doctrines to other subjects. On the contrary! What Matt. 24:19 is telling us is that **we must intensely get into scripture and deeply prove God’s foundational doctrines so that we can know and understand them *beyond doubt* so as to not be blown about by every wind of doctrine.** This should then be coupled with the other teachings in God’s Church – one shouldn’t be abandoned for the other! God wants us to move away from superficial understanding to deep understanding of His word and His doctrines! Matt. 24:19 and Isa. 28:9 are telling us that we must be spiritually strong enough to stand on our own two feet. We are promised tougher days ahead and, to be in a position to get through them, we must be grounded in the Truth so that we are not swayed by every wind of doctrine. God warns that in the end-time there will be men who come in Christ’s name deceiving many (Matt. 24:5). We must be able to discern the spirits and separate the wheat from the chaff – what is of God and what is not. We must be able to confidently stand on our own two feet in the face of adversity. With deep Bible study, heartfelt prayer,

meaningful meditation and help from the ministry, all can be “weaned from the milk and drawn from the breasts” (Is. 28:9)!

Recapitulation

- God uses weather patterns and symbols to deliver a strong and detailed message to His people. This will help us be prepared for the momentous event of Christ coming to His temple ‘as a thief’.
- God uses the words ‘seasons’ (1 Thess. 5:1), ‘winter’ (Mat. 24:20), ‘lightning’ (Matt. 24:27), ‘clouds’ (Mat. 24:30), ‘summer’ (Matt. 24:32), ‘flood’ (Matt. 24:38) and more, in the context of Christ coming ‘as a thief’. These words are descriptive and vivid and He uses them to demonstrate powerful analogies to better prepare us for ‘the night’ in which Christ will come ‘as a thief’.

Chapter 4

God gives a strong warning to His people!

In chapter one, we discussed and proved that the *Day of the Lord* and the *Day of the Lord's Wrath* are two separate events. In chapter two, we explained that Christ coming 'as a thief' to mark the beginning of the *Day of the Lord* is an imminent event which will take place as quick as a flash of lightning and for which we must *now* be making ourselves ready. In chapter three, we looked at some of the symbols which God uses to help emphasize and deliver a strong message relating to Christ coming to His temple 'as a thief'.

In this chapter we will take a look at the urgent *commission* God has given us to warn His holy mountain (Church, or Zion) of this impending event. This little flock has been given and entrusted with this *intimate* information and thus has the responsible to get this knowledge out to God's people with a great sense of urgency.

Sound an alarm

Notice Isaiah 13:6 states: "**Howl ye**; for the day of the LORD is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty." God tells His loyal flock to 'howl' the message that the Day of the Lord is at hand! This means that He wants us to 'wail' and 'yell' energetically and boisterously so that God's people will hear His warning message! God wants this message to reach His people so that they are amply warned in advance of the coming calamities! He wants deep repentance from His people so that they are saved from physical and spiritual destruction. Sudden destruction is about to befall mankind and **God is giving His people one final chance to take heed,**

repent and avoid disaster! Through this message, God's is showing mercy and His people must come to understand that!

Let us take a look at the message God gives His people through the book of Joel:

“The word of the LORD that came to Joel the son of Pethuel. *Hear this*, ye old men, and give ear, all ye inhabitants of the land. *Hath this been in your days, or even in the days of your fathers?*” (Joel 1:1-2).

God is telling His people to ***‘hear this’*** message written in the book of Joel. He is calling His people to attention; He wants them to listen attentively, to *consider* and *discern* what He is about to tell them. It is important to God that His people hear and understand! Essentially, God is saying, ‘Look at God’s Church today. Look at it and consider the chaos it is in! Look at the hundreds of split and splinter groups! Can you ever remember a time in its almost two thousand-year history when the Church was in the mess it is in today? No, you cannot!’ God’s Church was never in a greater mess than it is at present. God is angry with righteous indignation at what He sees going on in His Church in this end time (Ps. 7:11). Essentially, God’s Church is in chaos because His people have stopped looking to Him (Hos. 4:6). Christ is not their Head (Rev. 3:20)!

Wake up!

“Awake, ye drunkards, Awake and weep; and howl, all ye drinkers of wine, because of the new wine; for it is cut off from your mouth. For a nation is come up upon my land, strong, and without number, whose teeth are the teeth of a lion, and he hath the cheek teeth of a great lion” (Joel 1:5-6).

God’s people are in such a deep sleep that they are comatose or blinded to what is going on around them in God’s Church (Rev. 3:17-18). He desperately wants His people to take heed and is crying out to them to wake up before it’s too

late! This is discussing a warning which must go out prior to the beginning of the *Day of the Lord* (see Joel 1:15), which will immediately bring on the scene the ride of the four horsemen and the Great Tribulation. God is warning that a strong nation is about to come upon and overtake God's land – both *physical* and *spiritual* Israel. He is referring to His nation being taken captive by Europe, which will be led by the Roman Catholic Church and Germany. If God's people don't wake up now and repent, they will have to face the beast power in the Great Tribulation. God wants His people to avoid that, if at all possible. It is now up to them to respond to His warning message!

Lament and repent!

“He hath laid my vine waste, and barked my fig tree: he hath made it clean bare, and cast *it* away; the branches thereof are made white. **Lament** like a virgin girded with sackcloth for the husband of her youth” (Joel 1:7-8).

The word ‘virgin’ indicates that God is talking directly to His people scattered throughout the hundreds of splinter groups (see Rev. 14:4). He is telling them to ‘lament in sackcloth’ – in other words, He is calling for *deep spiritual repentance*. He is pleading with all of the virgins to repent and come back to the Husband of their youth, Jesus Christ. He wants them to seek Him again and come back under His authority since He is the Husband of their youth! Almost all of God's people at this time are not in submission to Christ, otherwise they would be where He is residing and revealing Truth! **God's people need to be where His True Work is, otherwise it would follow that they are not under His authority.** To one degree or another, God's people have gone their own way and He is pleading for them to come back to Him! Verse 8 discusses the putting on of ‘sackcloth’, which is a sign that He is looking for deep repentance from His people. If they fail to do that, they will have to face the coming Great Tribulation! No one should exclude themselves from this warning – including you and me! *We all have to repent and continually seek God and rely on*

Him. There are no exceptions! God wants a loyal bride. If we are to become white and clean, we must demonstrate deep repentance! **God wants to see His people grow spiritually by overcoming and walking in His ways (Zech 3:7). There is absolutely no room for complacency – especially not at this eleventh hour!**

Scripture gives us details of how bad things have gotten among His people:

“The meat offering and the drink offering is cut off from the house of the LORD; the priests, the LORD'S ministers, mourn. The field is wasted, the land mourneth; for the corn is wasted: the new wine is dried up, the oil languisheth” (Joel 1:9-10).

God is telling us that love has waxed cold among many of His people! Few are diligently searching for His Truth while many are happy to simply keep what they have (Rev. 3:17; 11 Pet. 3:18). Most have increasingly rejected Christ as their Head, which has resulted in no new deeper understanding given to them! Many will protest and emphatically state that they are not spiritually asleep or blind. If this is the case, why aren't they where His deeper understanding is? What is keeping them back? Can they not see or understand the message that God is communicating to them, or are they rejecting being under Christ's authority because of the pleasures of life or the easiness and social benefits of being a part of a large group or organization (Matt. 24:38)?

God's people must sit up and take note of what He is saying. He firmly states: “the new wine is dried up and the oil languisheth”. In other words, understanding has been taken away from them, and *their oil has become weak and lacking in vitality*. God's people are neglecting the Holy Spirit given and available to them. The only way to get their attention is through the Great Tribulation, which is a result of their own actions (Matt. 25). This is truly a shame, but it is a result of His people

rejecting His Voice and Truth. The circumstances of the Great Tribulation seemingly provide the only environment in which most of God's people will begin to seek Him, repent, overcome and once again be in a position to 'trim their lamps' and buy spiritual 'oil' (Matt. 25:2; 9-10). **There has to be profound repentance - now - if His people are to be saved from the horrors of the coming Great Tribulation.** They must lament in sackcloth (Joel 1:8). The Laodicean ministry must wake up and begin to serve God, *His way*. They need to anoint their eyes with eye salve before it's too late, and we must sound an alarm to warn them (Joel 2:1; Zeph. 1:16).

God has a strong warning message to the Laodicean ministry:

“Gird yourselves, and lament, *ye priests*: howl, *ye ministers of the altar*: come, lie all night in sackcloth, *ye ministers* of my God: for the meat offering and the drink offering is withholden from the house of your God” (Joel 1:13).

God's people must understand the message being delivered in these scriptures! God wants the Laodicean ministry to lament and weep in prayer and fasting for God to grant them repentance. We must all include ourselves in this, lest we get carried away in some kind of false sense of reasoning and security. **None of us have made it yet! God wants His people to seek Him and turn back to Him!** God wants His people to 'gird themselves' or to 'restrain' themselves from slipping further away from God. He wants His people to 'lament' (Strong's 5594) or mourn in repentance for their sins. God is asking His people to search their innermost thoughts and desires and acknowledge the carnal nature that they are entrenched in. Strong's 5594 demonstrates how God's people must seek deep repentance by 'mourning', 'wailing' and by 'tearing their hair out' and 'beating their breasts', which is indicative of the profound lamenting and repentance God wants to see. The Day of the Lord will see the greatest amount of suffering mankind has ever seen and it is almost upon us. God

wants to help His people while there is yet time, but they must respond to Him. All His people need to WAKE UP from the spiritual lethargy they are in. God has a tremendous future which He wants to share with us, but He needs to be absolutely sure He can count on us and trust us. God spews the Laodiceans out of His mouth because He wants them to repent and turn back to Him (Rev. 3:16). Sadly, only this type of correction will work! In most cases, only the Great Tribulation will wake them up. The good news is that some 50 per cent of those who go through the Great Tribulation will wake up and seek Him (Matt. 25:1-12). **We must all be in *total* submission to Him now, and the way we demonstrate that is by LISTENING TO HIS VOICE, FOLLOWING IT AND ACTING UPON HIS TRUTH!**

Fast!

Notice the phraseology God uses in Joel 1:14. God *pleads* with His people because He wants to help:

“Sanctify ye a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders *and* all the inhabitants of the land *into* the house of the LORD your God, and cry unto the LORD”

God isn't calling for a fast whereby his people simply go without food and water for a period of time; He is asking His people to *sanctify* a fast. **God wants His people to *cry out to Him in a repentant attitude, begging and beseeching Him for forgiveness and spiritual sight.*** God wants His people to desperately seek Him and come back to the 'husband of their youth' (vs. 8)! He is demanding that His people pull away from the ways of this world, break down their pride and lament in deep repentance over their ways.

God desires His people to have *deep* repentance with real, lasting change that is brought about by fasting, seeking His Will and doing it. This is the type of fast God desires His people to sanctify (see Is. 58:4-7; Jam. 4:1-7). He so hates the

spiritual chaos in His Church at this time and is angry with the hundreds of splinter groups going about their own commission, claiming they are doing the Work of God. God desires unity and submission to Him. He wants His people to test their leaders and to only follow those who genuinely follow Christ (Rev. 2:2; John 12:26). We need to urgently understand this message and act on it, because the Day of the Lord is almost upon us and as a day of destruction it will come (Joel 1:15) upon those who resist and reject this alarm call going out to His people.

God has given us a command to ‘sound an alarm’ in His holy mountain (or Church) before the Day of the Lord comes (Joel 2:1)! **There is only one group of people that understands that the Day of the Lord and the Day of the Lord’s Wrath are two different events, together with the fact that the Day of the Lord is yet about to commence prior to the Great Tribulation.** Who else can deliver this urgent message of alarm to God’s people? Today, who else is explaining that the Day of the Lord is about to come ‘as a thief in the night’, immediately before the opening of the seven seals? **This is a serious message which must not be taken lightly!** It is a message of warning which must be delivered to God’s Holy Mountain (Church) and we will do this with the strength and power that He makes available. God wants to stir up His people to repentance! The question is, ‘will His people respond’? Most importantly, will you, dear reader, respond to this message? You have nothing to lose and much to gain by taking this message and proving it before it becomes too late! This is an awesome opportunity God is giving His people, but we’re fast running out of time!

Blow the trumpet in Zion

In Joel 2:1, God directly tells the faithful few in His True Church:

“Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the

inhabitants of the land tremble: *for the day of the LORD cometh, for it is nigh at hand*”

God’s loyal ministry has a responsibility to blow the trumpet. This was a job assigned to the priesthood in the Old Testament. And this is the way it needs to be done today in spiritual Israael, with the backing and support of God’s faithful begotten children. We need to blow the trumpet, sound an alarm and cry aloud that the Day of the Lord is almost upon us and as a day of destruction it will come to those who don’t repent. We are quickly running out of time. Now is not the time to get distracted or sidetracked! God’s people must hear and take heed because the most horrible times ever experienced in the history of man are coming upon all those who refuse to listen to God’s Voice. **Carefully read Joel 2:2-19 and sketch a mental image of the destruction and desolation that God’s people who enter the Great Tribulation, as well the nations of Israel and the world, are about to experience if there is no repentance!**

Eagles and the Body

The Gospel of Luke mentions the words ‘*body*’ and ‘*eagles*’ while the book of Matthew mentions the words ‘*carcass*’ and ‘*eagles*’ in the context of Christ coming “as a thief” (Luke 17:34-37; Matt. 24:27-28).

What is Luke 17:37 and Matt. 24:28 referring to? Are they referring to the same event? Let us take a close look at both of these scriptures to understand exactly what God is communicating to His people:

“I tell you, *in that night* there shall be two *men* in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Two *women* shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two *men* shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he said

unto them, **Wheresoever the *body*^{G4983} is, thither will the *eagles* be gathered together**” (Luke 17:34-37).

Verse 34 tells us that “in that night”, when Christ comes ‘as a thief’, one will be ‘taken’ and the other will be ‘left’. The question is then asked: “Where, Lord?” In other words, “where will they be taken?” The reply to the question is then given: “Wheresoever the *body*^{G4983} is, thither will the eagles be gathered together” (vs. 37). Clearly, the word ‘body^{G4983}’ in this verse is used in the sense of a ‘*live body*’ (see Strong’s Greek number 4983). The word ‘eagles’ is also used to complete the thought in this scripture. It is important to interject that ‘eagles’ discussed in the Bible are symbolic of good or bad depending on the context in which they are discussed. We will discuss the ‘evil’ use of the symbol of ‘eagles’ later on in this chapter, but for the purposes of this verse we will look at the ‘good’ use of the symbol of ‘eagles’. The Bible discusses how some righteous angels look like eagles, and sometimes even compares certain characteristics of theirs to ‘eagles’ (see Ex. 19:4; Ez. 10; Lam 4:19). It is clear that the ‘eagles’ mentioned in Luke 17:37 are referring to *righteous angels* in the context of the live Body of Christ (or the Church).

Let us notice further: “Two *men* shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord?” (Luke 17:34-36). The answer given in Luke 17:37 essentially states: “Wheresoever the live body (*of Christ*) is, there will His eagles (*or angels*) be gathered”...indicating that righteous angels will either ‘take’ or ‘protect’ God’s chosen people as they go to a Place of Safety, *and also while they are there*. The Body of Christ (or those that are ‘taken’) will be protected in a Place of Safety prepared by God. This fulfills the promise which God makes to the Philadelphians in Rev. 3:10:

“Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep^{G5083} [*maintain, guard,*

protect] thee from the hour of temptation [*Great Tribulation*], which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth”.

Brethren of God! This is good news! It gives us hope! God is telling us that if we do our part - if we repent and live by His ways, look to Christ as our Head, and come under His authority NOW - we will be protected from the Great Tribulation! We must listen to what He is telling us and act before it's too late!

Eagles and the carcass

The Bible discusses bad news for those who refuse to come under the authority of Christ. Notice Matthew 24:28:

“For wheresoever the *carcase* ^{G4430} is, there will the *eagles* be gathered together”.

This verse reeks of death! It is talking about death in the context of those who refuse to listen to God's Voice before the coming Great Tribulation! In no uncertain terms, the word '*carcass*' is referring to a '*dead body*'. Matt. 24:28 certainly cannot be delivering the same message as Luke 17:37 (which talks about a '*live body*')! Clearly, Matt. 24:28 is one verse which *concisely* encapsulates the severity of the condition which will be faced by those members of God's Laodicean Church who are '*left*' and *not* taken to the Place of Safety. This verse describes the harsh, tragic circumstances and effects, which will be felt by those who are '*left*' to face the tough correction, which will be given through the Great Tribulation. The word '*eagles*' in this verse is symbolic of '*evil*' – *or warriors!* Those who get spewed into the Great Tribulation will have to face severe punishment, unparalleled in the history of mankind. This message comes to you in love as God tries to reach His people while there is yet a little window of time!

Back to Matt. 24:28: A basic and minimal amount of research using any good encyclopedia will expose the fact that

the Romans used the image of an eagle on their ensigns and emblems. Images of an eagle with open wings engraved within a wreath are still to be found on many facades of historical buildings in Rome. In the 1930's, Mussolini was known to have made copious use of this ensign. Notice what Clarke commentary states about this:

“The Roman armies, called so partly from their strength and fierceness, and partly from the figure of these animals (eagles and dragons) which was always wrought on their ensigns, or even in brass, placed on the tops of their ensign-staves. It is remarkable that the Roman fury pursued these wretched men wheresoever they were found. They were a dead carcass doomed to be devoured; and the Roman eagles were the commissioned devourers.”

Research shows that the *eagle* is one of the oldest state symbols of Europe and is among the oldest emblems in the world. The Roman and Byzantine Empires used eagle imagery for their god and their emperor. Interestingly, Germany is another nation that makes use of an eagle on its coat of arms. It is referred to, in German, as the *Reichsadler* and dates back to the time of Charlemagne (742-814). By 1200, the black eagle icon on a gold background was used as the imperial coat of arms. The Holy Roman Emperor, Sigismund, began using the double headed eagle by 1433 and it began to be used as the signet for the German emperor and as the coat of arms of the Holy Roman Empire of the German nation! It is also necessary to note that images of eagles were also used by various Roman Catholic popes over the ages (namely Pope Paul V, Pope Innocent III, Pope Innocent XIII, Pope Innocent XI, Pope Alexander VIII, Pope Pius XI and others). It is interesting to study into other groups that use the symbol of an eagle. You will find that there is a network of groups that use the image of an eagle on their insignia. These groups are positioned

throughout the World and most are linked to each other. These may very well form the ‘eagles’ spoken of in Mat. 24:28. This is certainly something to watch!

Can we begin to see exactly what Matt. 24:28 is telling us? Isn’t it so very obvious that those who are not taken to a place of protection are going to have to face the raging Beast power made up of various global factions and led by a German-dominated Europe and the Roman Catholic Church (*the eagles*)? Eagles are fierce animals which pounce on and violently attack their prey. This is the situation which the Laodiceans will have to face in the coming Great Tribulation (Rev. 3:16). It will be the worst horror imaginable! We all need to urgently take heed of this warning message of alarm, and repent (Joel 2:1). Time is short and we now cannot say that we haven’t been warned!

Recapitulation

- God commands His people to listen and take note of the alarm that the Day of the Lord is almost upon us (Joel 1:15; 2:1).
- God’s people are warned to wake up, consider the chaos in His Church today and deeply repent (Joel 1:1-2; 5-8). God aggressively pleads for His people to ‘return to the husband of their youth’ (Joel 1:7-8).
- Those ‘taken’ to a Place of Safety will be protected by God’s ‘*eagles*’, or ‘*righteous angels*’ (Luke 17:37; Rev. 3:10).
- Those not taken to a Place of Safety will have to face the barbaric onslaught of the ‘evil eagles’ in the Great Tribulation (Matt. 24:28).

Chapter 5

“Keep the Word of My Patience”

Revelation 3:10 is an encouraging scripture for God’s Philadelphians, however it could also be seen as a stern warning of caution for all of us. Notice:

“Because thou hast *kept*^{G5083} *the*^{G3588} *word*^{G3056} *of my*^{G3450} *patience*,^{G5281} I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation...”

Evidently, there is a group in this end time - *a Philadelphian group* - that ‘keeps the word of His patience’ and that group is spared from the hour of temptation, or the Great Tribulation! This scripture is one which we must *take note of*, and *apply*, if we are to be a part of the group offered protection during the Great Tribulation.

In order to accurately understand what is being communicated to us in this scripture, let us take a close look at a few of the words which appear in this verse. The word ‘kept’ is 5083 in Strong’s and could be translated as **‘to keep an eye upon’**. Furthermore, ‘word’, which appears in Rev. 3:10, is 3056 in Strong’s and could be translated as: “something *said*; by implication a *topic* also *reasoning* or *motive*; by extension a *computation*; specifically **the Divine Expression (that is, Christ)**”

Follow the Head of the Church

Essentially, what this scripture is telling us is that we need to keep our eyes upon Christ, the Word of His patience (Rev.3:10). As we piece this together and understand what is being communicated to us, we can clearly see that God is specifically telling us to follow Christ. While Rev. 3:10 tells us that God will reward the Philadelphians with protection during the Great Tribulation, it must also be taken as direct admonishment for us to individually do ‘something’ if we are

to be included in this group! **Philadelphians need to be very carefully watching and following Christ if they are to be ‘kept from the hour of temptation’, or from the Great Tribulation.** Keeping our eyes on Christ, or the God of Patience, and all that He says and asks us to do means LISTENING to His Voice, FOLLOWING His Truth, and DOING what He says without wavering or hesitation!

Notice Luke 17:34-36 one final time:

“I tell you, in that night there shall be two *men* in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Two *women* shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two *men* shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left”.

The phrase ‘the one shall be taken and the other left’ is repeated *three times* in three consecutive verses! God is evidently trying to communicate an important and urgent message to His people. Strong’s Concordance can help us get the depth of the intended meaning and, as we do this, we shall see how closely connected Luke 17:34-36 is with Revelation 3:10! Remember Rev. 3:10 is admonishing the group of Philadelphians to keep their eyes focused on Christ and His Truth! In Luke 17 we see the phrase: “The one shall be taken... the other left”.

The phrase ‘shall be taken’ is 3880 in Strong’s and could be translated as follows: ‘*to receive, to learn, or to take unto*’. Essentially, Luke 17:34-35 is stating:

“...Two men in one bed, the one shall *RECEIVE (or learn)* and the other shall be left...two women shall be grinding together, the one shall *RECEIVE* and the other left”.

That word ‘left’ is 863 in Strong’s and could be translated as: ‘to forsake, **to lay aside**, to leave, let (alone, be, go, have), omit, send away, yield up’. The clear impression given is that the individuals who are ‘left’ usually belong to one of the groups who God labels as being ‘rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing’ (Rev. 3:17) – those whose actions demonstrate that they believe they already have it all spiritually. This attitude leads them to outrightly reject any deeper understanding of God’s Truth (see Hos. 4:6)! “Two women shall be grinding together, the one shall RECEIVE and the other will FORSAKE (or LAY ASIDE)”.

Luke 17:34-36 is discussing a group of people being taken to a Place of Safety when Christ comes ‘as a thief’ to be protected from the Great Tribulation (Rev. 3:10). The other group is spewed into the Great Tribulation to face the wrath of Satan (Rev. 3:16). These verses clearly define the fact that the group which is ‘*taken*’ to a place of protection is ‘the one (that) receives TRUTH’! If a group (or an individual) receives Truth, it would mean that the group (or individual) is in submission to Christ and following Him by supporting the group through which He is working. On the other hand, the group which is ‘*left*’ is representative of the group that ‘lays aside’ the Truth of God, even as it is delivered to them. This latter group ignores and takes no notice of His Voice, which means that they reject Him (Hos. 4:6). As a result, they will have to suffer the consequences!

God’s Truth must be received and heeded (Jn. 10:16, 27; Rev. 3:20). It is the Philadelphians who will be kept from the hour of temptation (Rev. 3:10) BECAUSE they *follow Christ, receive His Truth* and *follow it*! What are you, dear reader, going to do now that you have read the Truth which has been set and presented before you? Will you accept it, or will you reject it (Hos. 4:6; John 10:27)? Will you form part of the group that *receives* His Truth? Our future is in our hands! Through God’s mercy, we have now been warned (Joel 2:1). We have no excuse! Our actions will ultimately help determine

whether we are ‘taken’ or ‘left’ when Christ comes ‘as a thief in the night’ to mark the beginning of the Day of the Lord which will see the release of the four horsemen of the apocalypse, closely followed by the Great Tribulation, heavenly signs and the Day of the Lord’s Wrath! Sudden destruction will come upon those who reject God and His Voice (1 Thess. 5:2-3).

Brethren of God – please meditate upon these words, prove them and think of your future! Judgment is on the house of God *now* (1 Pet. 4:17)! Please don’t wait, compromise or hesitate. Instead, **listen to God’s message, take heed and take the necessary action to be ready** and be a part of God’s elect so that, when Christ comes ‘as a thief’, you will not be caught unawares!

Recapitulation

- We must keep the Word of His Patience (Rev. 3:10)
- We have a responsibility to keep our eyes on Christ, (the God of Patience), which means we must listen to His Voice, follow His Truth, and do what He says - without wavering or hesitation!
- We have a responsibility to support the Work of God!
- Those who submit to the spiritual Head of the Church will be those who are ‘taken’ to a Place of Safety (Rev. 3:10; Matt. 24:40-41).

Chapter 6

Day of the Lord begins...

Midnight Cry goes out!

To understand Matthew 25 and the Midnight Cry spoken of in this chapter (verses 1-12), we need to take a look at the original Passover and see the possibilities and parallels that could be drawn as *possible* fulfillment in this end-time:

“And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you. Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, *In the tenth day of this month* they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house...*Your lamb shall be without blemish*, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats: *And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month*: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening. And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it. And they shall eat the flesh **IN THAT NIGHT**, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the LORD'S Passover” (Ex. 12:1-3, 5-11).

Could it be that just as the setting apart of the lambs took place on the tenth day of the first month, God's elect will also be 'set apart' as the *spiritual lambs* on a future soon-coming tenth day of the first month to then be 'taken' to a Place of Safety?

Christ comes 'as a thief'... then 'sudden destruction'

“For *I will pass through the land of Egypt THIS NIGHT*, and will **SMITE** all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to **DESTROY** you, when I **smite** the land of Egypt” (Ex. 12:12-13).

Could it be that after God's elect partake of the Passover at the beginning of a future fourteenth day of the first month, Christ will come 'as a thief **in the night**' to 'take' God's elect to a Place of Safety, which will be imminently followed by **smiting** or **sudden destruction** on those 'left' behind and the rest of humanity (1 Thess. 5:1-3)?

Midnight Cry

Notice what Exodus 11 states:

“And Moses said, Thus saith the LORD, *About MIDNIGHT will I go out* into the midst of Egypt: And all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall **die**, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maidservant that is behind the mill; and all the firstborn of beasts. And there shall be a great **CRY** throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there was none like it, nor shall be like it any more” (vs. 4-6).

Could it be that Christ coming ‘as a thief in the night’ will take place at **midnight** on a soon-coming future Passover night, which will imminently be followed by ‘**sudden destruction**’ (1 Thess. 5:1-3)?

*“About **MIDNIGHT** will I go out ...and there shall be a great **CRY** throughout all the land of Egypt” (Ex. 11:4, 6).*

Could it be that immediately after Christ comes ‘as a thief’, the **Midnight Cry** will begin to go out urging the Laodiceans to ‘get themselves ready’ and announcing that the Bridegroom is coming on a future Day of Pentecost (Matt. 25)?

*“And the LORD said unto Moses, Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you; that my wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt. And **Moses and Aaron did all these wonders**^{H4159} before Pharaoh: and the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let the children of Israel go out of his land” (Ex. 11:9-10).*

Could it be that, just as **Moses and Aaron** did in Old Testament times, the **Two Witnesses** will begin to perform **wonders**^{H4159} (miracles, signs and wonders – see Rev. 11:5) as soon as Christ comes ‘as a thief in the night’, when the clock will strike ‘midnight’, thus beginning to fulfill their commission of the **Midnight Cry** (Matt. 25; Rev. 11:3-4)?

Understand! Scripture tells us that the Two Witnesses will come on the scene 1264 days before Christ’s return on a future Feast of Trumpets (Rev. 11:3). This means that they will be on the scene 4 days prior to Christ coming “as a thief in th night” and the beginning of the Great Tribulation. Every Biblical indication is that not many will believe them or follow their message before Christ comes ‘as a thief in the night’! Understand further: These two men will help the Church of God to warn all of God’s scattered people that Christ is about

to come to His temple ‘as a thief’ to ‘take’ those who are accounted worthy (Matt. 24:40-41). Once Christ comes ‘as a thief in the night’, midnight will strike! The Two Witnesses will then immediately prophesy *with much more power and intense alarm* as they begin to sound the Midnight Cry (Matt. 25). Their message will now be that the Bridegroom is about to come at the Pentecost resurrection. Perhaps this is the time that they will begin to perform miracles, signs and wonders to gain the attention of God’s people. However, by this time, it will be too late for God’s people to escape the Great Tribulation. While it will now be easier for God’s people to recognize the Two Witnesses, they will be recognized by sight and not by faith and, as a result, will not have a chance to escape the fiery trials of the Great Tribulation! Brethren of God – **WE HAVE NOW BEEN WARNED! Prove this message and don’t take it lightly!**

Get ready and watch!

God’s elect must be *watching* and fervently working at *getting themselves ready* so that Christ coming to ‘take’ His faithful few will not overtake us ‘as a thief’ (1 Thess. 5:4). Scripture warns us to be ready for this momentous event ***which could take place at any time*** (Matt. 24:36). However, as the situation has become more urgent in this end-time, God has given His people deeper understanding on a number of pertinent prophecies, which has helped to clearly light up our path for the days immediately ahead (Ps. 119:105). Scripture indicates the *Day of the Lord* may *possibly* begin on a soon coming *Passover* night (Ex. 12:3-13). Although this is a possibility, *it is highly probable!* Of course, we must be busy getting ourselves ready as though Christ is going to return at any moment, and under no circumstance should we let up on our spiritual preparation! We must be ready for *any* scenario. When Christ comes ‘as a thief’, the faithful ‘lambs’ which form part of His elect will then be ‘*taken*’ to a place of protection, while the rest will be ‘*left*’ behind to face the Great Tribulation in a final attempt to help God’s people shed their rebelliousness and turn back to the Husband of their youth

(Joel 1:8). ‘In that night’, Christ will come ‘as a thief’ (1 Thess. 5:2; 2 Pet. 3:10; Matt 24:37-39; Rev 16:15 etc), not to collect His bride for the marriage, but simply to take the elect to a Place of Safety. It is important to understand that *Christ does not come as a Bridegroom when He comes ‘as a thief’!* When He comes ‘as a thief’, the Son of Man will come to ‘take’ those that have ‘kept the Word of His Patience’, or those who received and accepted God’s Truth and have been loyal to it by acting upon it (Rev. 3:10). The ones who are ‘left’ will walk naked and will have their shame exposed, as it says in Rev. 16:15 and Matt. 24:28!

The moment Christ comes ‘as a thief’, sudden destruction will ensue (1 Thess. 5:1-4). Panic will no doubt strike many of those of God’s begotten children who realize they have been ‘left’ to be corrected in the Great Tribulation. It would seem that *midnight* will strike at that precise point in time. Notice Matt. 25:6:

“And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh [*is coming*, see Matt. 25:6, 10], go ye out to meet him”.

When the elect are taken to a place of protection, the Two Witnesses will shout aloud the Midnight Cry, which will wake up all ten virgins (Matt. 25:5-6). This is where they will have their final opportunity to ‘trim their lamps’ (vs. 7). The indication is that the five wise virgins will make it, while the five foolish virgins will not (vs. 2, 8-12).

Our commission as God’s Church is to sound the alarm within the Church that Christ coming to His temple ‘as a thief in the night’ is imminent (Joel 1:15; Joel 2:1; Mal. 3:1; 1 Thess. 5:2; 2 Pet. 3:10; Rev. 3:3; Rev. 16:15). As soon as that event takes place, the Two Witnesses will begin to sound the *Midnight Cry* - a warning to the Laodiceans, who would have just been spewed out of God’s mouth into the Great Tribulation (Rev. 3:16). The Two Witnesses will warn the ‘*ten virgins*’,

urgently admonishing their repentance toward God. They will cry aloud that the Bridegroom is about to come on a Day of Pentecost to resurrect/change His Bride to immortality as God beings (Matt. 25:1-12; Matt. 24:30-31; 1 Cor. 15:52), as they rise to meet Him in the clouds. They will exhort the '*ten virgins*' to look to Him, repent, overcome and prepare for the coming of the Bridegroom at the sound of the last trump. Then will come the marriage of the Lamb, and His wife will have made herself ready (Matt. 25:10; 1 Cor. 15:52; Rev. 19:7)!

Recapitulation

- It is highly probable that events which took place on and around the fulfillment of the original Passover (Ex. 12), will be mirrored in the end time when Christ comes 'as a thief in the night' to protect His faithful elect from the sudden destruction to befall mankind at the beginning of the Day of the Lord, which will see the release of the four horsemen, closely followed by the beginning of the Great Tribulation, then the heavenly signs and Day of the Lord's Wrath.
- We must watch and get ready so that the Day of the Lord does not creep up on us unawares (1 Thess. 5:4).
- As soon as one is 'taken' and one is 'left', the clock will strike midnight. It seems that this is when the Two Witnesses will begin to prophesy with much more power and intensity as they fulfil their commission of shouting aloud the Midnight Cry (Matt. 25).

ENDNOTE

The alarm is sounding! You are now receiving a warning that Christ is about to come ‘as a thief in the night’, which will mark the beginning of the Day of the Lord (Joel 2:1). What will you do with this message? How will you respond in the little time left? Will it stir you to action, to turn to God and come under His authority as you help Him get this warning message to as many of God’s begotten people as possible? Your future is in your hands, while others may depend on your help.

You have now been warned!

We are here to help! Please feel free to contact us should you have any questions. Our address is: Faithful Church of God in Laodicea, P.O. Box 311021, Capitol Heights, Maryland 20731, USA. Email: info@fcogl.org. Our web address is: www.fcogl.org

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