

Front Page - November 2021

Are We In A Spiritual Coma?

Introduction

In my many years as a believer, (some 60 years), and having heard hundreds of messages on various aspects of biblical truths, yet after visiting and ministering to the saints in twenty-two countries I find a decrease in the outliving of spiritual realities. After World War II one of the major focuses in assembly writings was the coming of the Lord, yet over the years that decreased. From what I have observed, the Lord's coming has come to the fore again due to the Corona Virus. I am thankful that the theme is taking up focus again. When I take a look in my spiritual mirror, I am aware, albeit in a very small degree, the dullness of vision which I have with regard to spiritual things. It would seem to me a very long time since I've heard a message given with tears on the subject of the eternal damnation of the unbeliever. I wonder, is it possible that we who are Christians can live life in a rather atheistic way? We can go through the motions of spirituality, reading our Bibles, praying, going to church, but in the normal day-to-day activities of life and actions it may be there is little of God consciousness or presence. When this happens, the reality of the judgment seat of Christ for the believer, the great white throne judgment for unbelievers, and of the fearfulness of a literal lake of fire is almost like a cold clinical piece of data. Is it possible that there has come very slowly and subtly the lifestyle of the ungodly so that there is very little, if any, outward distinction between them and the child of God? Perhaps the coming of the Lord, either for us or when He comes in judgment, is so remote that we like the unsaved live with the mindset of, "Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation" (2 Pet. 3:4).

- a) How different we can be from Daniel who, when he heard of God's coming judgment, even though he had not heard the message, caused him astonishment (Dan. 4:19). Daniel was greatly perplexed and his thoughts troubled him and this was the discipline of God on a man on an earthly level. To Daniel it was a dreadful thing that this great and glorious person would become like an animal, even though the stump would be left in the ground which would indicate a future hope. It grieved Daniel greatly.
- b) When it comes to myself and with the people of God, if we could only see the unsaved perishing and going into hell for eternity, or see ourselves standing before the Lord of heaven, surely it would cause tear filled eyes because of grief, and an unrelenting burden and zeal for the spiritual welfare and development of people for the glory of God. Just the awareness of a coming message from God caused him to fall and be astonished. Would to God that we, who know what lies ahead both for the believer and those who are not saved, would know what it is to enter into something of the fear of the Lord. In this meditation I am thinking about the coming of the Lord to the earth and the horrorfulness of that manifestation.

The Chronological Order

After the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19:6–10), then begins this section in (v. 19:11) that goes through to (v. 20:3). It is divided into three distinct sections, verses 11–16; 17–21; 20:1–3. The first section deals with the coming of the Lord, the second section deals with the gathering of the birds to eat the flesh of those who die and then the removal of the beast and false prophet, the third section deals with the binding of Satan for the 1000 years.

The subject of the Lord's return in glory is mentioned in many passages of the Scriptures, yet no doubt Revelation 19:11–20 is amongst the best known and most graphic of them all.

- a) The opening clause of Chapter 19:11 causes a thinking individual to draw back in reverential fear. This is the first time in Revelations we read, "And I saw the heaven opened"; chapter 4:1 informs the readers, "A door was opened in heaven"; in chapter 11:19 we are told, "the temple of God was opened"; in chapter 15:5, "the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened". However, in chapter 19 the wording is changed. It is not now something opened in Heaven, as in the previous references, but heaven itself is opened. John wrote, "I saw the heaven opened" (Rev. 19:11).
- b) In some translations the wording is, "the heaven was opened" (ASV; Darby; RV; Young's Literal). In the "linguistic Key to the New Testament", Reinecker and Rogers observe that the tense is perfect past

Front Page - November 2021

Are We In A Spiritual Coma?

participle which indicates, "Heaven has been opened and now stands open". This is not the door of proffered fellowship (Rev. 3:20), nor that of translation (ch. 4:1), but the heavens being rolled like a vesture causing a frightening sight which, despite how one feels, cannot be turned away from. I am sure for some of the ungodly armies of men, they will feel somewhat like a criminal taking the last walk, then they see the open door to the death chamber. It is stark cold, the end is near, no hope of a repeal. The execution of judgment for what they have done near, no escaping. Yet, ultimately in utter defiance humanity will stand against the Lord of Hosts.

- c) Such is the far reaching effects of immediately after the heavens being opened all shall see the Lord coming. Not only those who are alive, but those who are long since dead, those who crucified the Lord (Rev. 1:7), the chief priests (Matt. 26:64) all shall see Him. This is astounding, the very spirits of the lost will be aware of this momentous event.
- d) There had been the "seven golden vials, full of the wrath of God" (Rev. 15:7) and they were severe. In the first a dreadful sore fell on those who had taken the mark of the beast and worshipped his image. In the second the sea became like the blood of a dead man and everything in the sea died (Rev. 16:3). Leaving the third vial, the fourth poured out his vial on the sun and men were scorched with fire (Rev. 16:9). Yet, the worse is yet to come. These were the voice of God in mercy, as through adverse circumstances of which he has no control over, seeks to warn humanity of the foolishness of defying God. The door of salvation was still open for it reads, "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters" (Rev. 14:6-7). All the previous judgments, seals, trumpets, thunders, vials are but the methodical introduction to the unfolding of the great day of the wrath of God.
 - i) Everything has been working up to this point. To this point in time God has been exceedingly long-suffering, but at this moment of time the patient endurance of God has come to an end. There is no longer any mercy from God for those who have taken the mark of the beast. For these individuals, upon them is the wrath of God (Rev. 14:10, 19; 19:15), the wrath of the Lamb (Rev. 6:16) is about to fall .
 - ii) To these guilty Satan worshippers (Rev. 13:4, 8; 19:20) there is no more grace, no more mercy, no more compassion. Never again will God let them hear the blessed entreaties of mercy. Humanity will have refused to bow to the slow steps of God in judgments in the seals, trumpets and vials. Man blasphemes against the God of power over the plagues. There will be no longer any delay, the time has come for those who harden their heart to be "suddenly cut off without remedy" (Prov. 29:1). This is the beginning of the day of the vengeance of our God, the beginning of the day when man will drink of God's wrath, a cup that shall never be emptied.

Conclusion

Do we believe the reality of this, or is it as a tale that is told, interesting but intellectual? Do we not understand that there may very well be millions of people at this moment on the 1st of November 2021 and this is about them? Surely, which of us could say before God, "I am not Laodicean, I have full sight?" Rather would we not confess with brokenness that we are blind, in a spiritual coma?

. . . . Rowan Jennings