

Scriptural Truths

E-Mail Meditations

The Lord May Come . . . Perhaps Today . . . Behold, I Come Quickly . . . Rev. 22:7

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What Then?

First Thoughts

Some of us may remember the 1963 song that was sung by Nat King Cole, “*Roll out those lazy, crazy, hazy days of summer*”. The last line is “*You’ll wish that summer will always be here*”. Across the northern hemisphere it is “summertime”, but if we stop to consider the big picture we observe that those in the southern hemisphere could only sing this in December, not July. The words of the song and the global observation bring into focus the truth that nothing is the same, time is moving at an incredible rate, and as Bill Gaither sang, “*Yesterday’s gone and tomorrow may never be, we have this moment today*”.

Many of us are the “oldies” and we wonder where have the years gone? It seems like yesterday when we looked at grandmothers and grandfathers as “old” people and mum and dad were just mum and dad. How things have changed. We grew up, fell in love, began a family, we were young, and time passed. Then our children grew up, fell in love, and before we knew it we were the grandparents. Our grandchildren look on us now as we looked on our grandparents. Time has gone and can never be regained. These things cause our minds to consider:

Where Is it All Leading To?

There are four avenues of thought that come to mind:

- a) Where is this whole universe moving?
- b) Where am I as a believer moving on to?
- c) What if I die before the Lord comes?
- d) Where are unbelievers moving on to?

Where Is This Whole Universe Moving?

I am deeply grateful to God for the Holy Spirit who came to “Shew you things to come” (Jn. 16:13), some of which are sketchily dealt with in this paper. Graciously He condescends to communicate to us the knowledge of that which shall be in the latter days. I thank God this is not life, it’s not even living. Real life, which is eternal life, cannot be fully enjoyed now as it is greatly limited by the flesh, the lack of spirituality, and the incapability to comprehend the fulness of the truths one speaks about. The following table outlines some aspects of where the things of this world are moving towards.

Subject	Happenings	Reference
Evangelistically	The Gospel of the Kingdom being preached	Matt. 24:14
Politically	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The rise of the Beast and False prophet The setting up of the image The end of the political/religious leaders of the world 	Rev. 6:2; 13:1-11 Rev. 19:20 Dan. 2:29-45
Religiously	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The suppression of all religion except the state religion Its ending of the whorish religion, Mystery Babylon 	Dan. 9:27; Rev. 13:15 Rev. 17:16
Financially	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No selling or buying except having the mark of the beast The end of the world financially 	Rev. 13:17 Rev. 18:1-19
Socially	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evil called good Rejecting of God's moral principles Untold savagery that almost annihilates man 	Isa. 5:20 Dan. 7:25 Matt. 24:22
Militarily	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The unification of the world superpowers against the Lord The ruin of the armies of the world The great supper of the Lord Almighty 	Rev. 19:19 Rev. 19:21 Rev. 19:17-18
Spiritually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Great White Throne judgment The casting of Satan into the lake of fire 	Rev. 20:11-15 Rev. 20:10
Geographically	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The upheavals of the universe The removal of the heavens and earth The new heavens and earth 	Rev. 6:12-14 Rev. 20:11; 2 Pet. 3:10-12 Rev. 21:1; 2 Pet. 3:13
Regally	<p><u>The millennial reign of the Lord</u></p> <p>A kingdom, which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is indestructible by corruption and age Is non transferable Is literal Is unstoppable Divine Power will inaugurate By Divine Purpose will be accomplished A Divine Person will rule over, Christ the King Righteousness shall reign, for "A King shall reign in righteousness" A King who loves righteousness and hates iniquity, lawlessness. A King who is just, ruling in the fear of God. 	<p>Dan. 2:44</p> <p>Dan 7:13-14</p> <p>Isa. 32:1</p> <p>Heb. 1:8-9</p> <p>2 Sam. 23:3</p>

Where Am I As A Believer Moving On To?

Subject	Reference
The coming of the Lord The resurrection of the dead The living caught up All changed	1 Thess. 4:16 1 Cor. 15:52; 1 Thess. 4:16 1 Thess. 4:17 1 Cor. 15:51-52; Phil. 3:20-21
We shall be like Him	1 Jn. 3:2
We shall have a body like His	Phil. 3:21

Subject	Reference
We shall be glorified with Him	Rom. 8:17
We shall be His bride without spot or wrinkle	Eph. 5:27
We shall be led by Him to living fountains of water	Rev. 7:17
We shall dwell in place of perfect government	Rev. 4:2
We shall see His face	Rev. 22:4
All tears wiped away and no sorrow, death, etc.	Rev. 7:17; 21:4

What If I Die Before The Lord Comes, What Then?

I am sure there would be very few who, with advancing years, pause in the midst of the business of life and ponder “When I die, what then?” I know I am going to heaven, I shall be with the Lord, and with joyfulness I can sing: “There is a land of pure delight”, or “When all my labors and trials are ore”, or “When the trumpet of the Lord shall sound and time shall be no more”, or “Forever with the Lord, Amen so let it be”. The question deep in our hearts is: What is it like “over there”? When I draw my last breath, and possibly imperceptibly to those who may be around me, and I take that last long journey from which there is no return, **What Then?**”

Thank God He has opened the door ever so slightly and given us glimpses into the world beyond. That world is given various names in the scriptures, such as:

- a) “Within the veil” (Heb. 6:19)
- b) “Present with the Lord “ (better “at home” with the Lord) (2 Cor. 5:8)
- c) “My Father’s house (Jn. 14:2)
- d) “The third Heaven” (2 Cor. 12:2)
- e) “Paradise” (2 Cor. 12:4)
- f) “Glory” (Heb. 2:10)
- g) “Heaven” (Heb. 9:24)
- h) “A place of rest” (Rev. 14:13)

Those who have died in Christ have entered “within the veil”, that is into Heaven itself where “God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus” (Heb. 12:23-24). It is a place where there is “fulness of joy . . . and pleasures for evermore” (Psa 16:11), things are heard which are unspeakable (2 Cor. 12:4) that is, cannot be expressed in human language for everything there is “far better” (Phil. 1:23). It is a sphere where they and we shall know as we are known (1 Cor. 13:12), there will be the knowing of those we never met on earth, for the disciples knew Moses and Elijah (Matt. 17:4). Those who were husband and wife down here, know each other but not as they were for death closes that relationship, and indeed all earthly relationships. There will be no employers and employees, no princes and paupers, no children and aged for we will no more be dealing with the limitations of time and relationship. It is a place of life in its fulness (1 Tim. 4:8); glory (2 Cor. 4:17), beauty (Rev. 21:1-8); holiness (Rev. 21:27); service (Rev. 22.3), worship (Rev. 19:1-3), and rejoicing (Rev. 7:9-10). Those who are already there are being led unto fountains of living waters wherein they have:

- a) A deeper appreciation of all the wonders of God’s wisdom
- b) A deeper appreciation of the models of God's grace and message and love
- c) A deeper appreciation of the richness of the person of Christ
- d) A deeper appreciation of the fullness of expression

Where Are Unbelievers Moving On To?

We live in a world which loudly proclaims “God is love”, a truth endorsed by the scriptures by explicit words and deeds (1 Jn. 4:8, 10). In men’s loud proclamation of this truth there is a deliberate ignoring that “God is light” (1 Jn. 1:5), that God created man for a purpose (Rev. 4:11), and the justice of God demands that the individual is accountable for their works (Rev. 20:12, 13). We cannot insult God by idolatry or calling him a liar. Some time ago I sat with an elderly lady who was exceedingly religious. I asked her: “If God was to set you before Him right now and ask you, give me one reason for letting you into heaven, what would you tell Him?” With an air of dignified assurance she told me how she

was very religious in her ordinances and rituals. I looked at her and told her she was one of the greatest idolators I have ever met and she ought to tell God straight to His face He was a liar. Suddenly her dignified air was gone and she forcefully asked me why I should say such a thing. I replied: "Madam, an idol is anything I depend on other than God, and you are depending on your works to get to Heaven. Secondly, God has said that eternal life is in His Son, and you are saying 'it is in my ordinance keeping and religious rituals'. God has said the only way of salvation is in the finished work of Christ without any rituals, ordinances or any works of mine." This lady was throwing God's invitation of salvation back in His face, she was living as if her works could satisfy God. Tenderly I told her that God is the God of love and sent His Son to be the Savior of all who would depend completely on Him for salvation. I told her of how she could know her sins forgiven and have peace with God and the blessed relief of knowing with assurance that Hell is a place she would never enter. I also had to warn her that if an individual rejects God's offer of forgiveness through the finished substitutionary work of Christ, then God's justice must run its course. God has done all He can do when He put the penalty for my sins on His Son, and as a free gift, offers salvation. If I reject that offer then God has no alternative but to punish the individual for their sins. There must be no mistaking this, every individual, irrespective of clime, color, creed, or culture, must face the reality that it is:

Heaven or Hell for all eternity - *which?*

The moment an individual dies having rejected God's salvation, at that split second they are aware they are condemned to hell forever. Some years ago I was down at the ovens in a crematorium. Two bodies were being cremated. As I looked into the ovens the thought came to me, what if I went into a deep coma, void of any life signs, and was to be cremated. The service is finished and the casket with my body is slid into the oven. The moment the oven door closes, I suddenly snap out of the coma and realize where I am and what is about to happen. What would my response be? Unspeakable terror!! Then I thought, the moment an unsaved person dies they are immediately in Hell and have gone from:

Opportunity to no hope
Theory to reality
Laughter to weeping and wailing
Life to eternal and spiritual darkness
Satisfaction to unconsolable grief

May this meditation be used to cause many to stop and think, to consider their latter end, and ask "**What Then?**"

When the great factory-plants of our cities
Have turned-out their last finished works,
When our merchants have sold their last products,
And sent home the last of the clerks;
When our banks have transacted their business,
And paid out the last dividend;
When the Judge of the Earth calls a reckoning,
And asks for a balance - ***WHAT THEN?***

When the Church choir has sung its last anthem,
And the preacher has made his last prayer;
When the people have heard their last sermon,
And the sound has died out on the air;
When the Bible lies closed on the pulpit,
And the pews are all empty of men,
When each one stands facing his record,
And the Great Book is opened - ***WHAT THEN?***

When the actors have played their last drama,
And the mimic has made his last fun,
When the film has flashed its last picture,
And the billboard displayed its last run;
When the crowds seeking pleasure have vanished,
And gone out in the darkness again,
When the trumpet of ages is sounded,
And we all stand before Him - ***WHAT THEN?***

When the bugle-call sinks into silence,
And the long marching columns stand still;
When the captain repeats his last orders,
And they've captured the last fort and hill;
When the flag has been hauled from the mast-head,
And peace seems to reign among men,
When those who rejected the Savior
Are asked for a reason - **WHAT THEN?**

To die without hope – have you counted the cost?
To die without Christ and your soul would be lost?
Renounce every idol, tho' dear it may be
And come to the Saviour, now pleading with thee.
The door of His mercy is still open wide
So gracious, He's pleading, "Do come now inside"
For death is approaching, you know not quite when,
The last breath is coming, I ask you - **WHAT THEN?**

The poem is anonymous. Rowan Jennings wrote the last half of the last verse.

. . . . Rowan Jennings

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you spend
ETERNITY?**

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