

Darkness Is Coming; Keep Looking Up

And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh. Luke 21:28

Every Spirit filled person today can feel a pressure of darkness striking at their soul. Discouragements are seemingly multiplying to sap our victory and to interfere with our prayer life and the will to fight. Spiritual wickedness in high places are seen more than ever (Eph. 6:12) while laxity and spiritual ease are retarding the spiritual growth and development of the church. The voice of God can still be heard in the words of Paul as He says: Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give the light. (Eph. 5:14) These words aren't directed to the ungodly, but rather to the Christian! It is high time for the Church to wake out of sleep and put on the armour of light (Rom.13:11-14). For darkness, yea gross darkness, is to cover the people. (Isa. 60:1-2)

The Christian MUST look up! It is true that in order to look up we must do it often through tears and with a heavy heart . . . yet, we must keep our eyes on heaven and heavenly things lest we sink in the waters of doubt and despair! We must not center our thoughts as Peter did on the roaring waves of life (Mat. 14:29-31). Let us set our affections on things above, not on things on the earth. (Col. 3:2) Remember the scenery around you will dampen your spirit and cause faith to be weakened! When Peter "saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me." He walked successfully on the water so long as his whole attention was on the Lord Jesus! When his mind was diverted from the Savior he started to sink! Today, when our mind drifts from that "upward look" into channels of doubt, we start going down. Therefore, I feel the urge to exhort you to "attend upon the Lord without distraction"(1st Cor. 7:35) and look up regardless of the disappointing circumstances. Jesus is able to turn what seems a curse into a glorious blessing! Look up saints, it can't be long even at the longest. Glory!

Every saint of God must undergo times of test and trial. We know that all these things "work together for good to them that love God . . ." (Rom. 8:28) This no doubt is to show us that "it is of faith, that it might be by grace . . ." (Rom. 4:16) Right now I am made to think of faithful Abraham as God gave him the faith test by telling him to offer Isaac for a burnt offering. (Gen. 22) This man of God obeyed just as every Christian should do today! It isn't recorded that doubt was in the heart of this faithful servant of God. Not one time does the record relate a single question in return! Not one time did he

confer with Sarah or any of the family! He had orders from God and regardless of the "dark outlook" he meant to carry them out. I love the statement recorded in verse four: Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off. He said to the servants, "I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and will come again to you." (Ver. 5) He indicated by this statement that BOTH of them would return! Just how it would happen, he didn't know . . . He knew that in some way and some how, God would make the way! In this dark and dreary circumstance. Abraham was Looking Up! He was right in this thinking, for God did make the way (Gen. 22:13) and He is the same today.

Just any church member can look up when the sun is shining and all is bright and rosy. It takes a Spirit filled life and a real dedicated saint to "Look up" when the outlook is dark! It is so true that "faith will find the way" when seemingly there is no way. I am not speaking of faith in man, but I speak concerning faith in the Lord Jesus Christ! The apostle Paul came to the place of surrender that he could truthfully say: But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself . . . (Acts 20:24). Through weariness, painfulness, hunger, thirst, cold, nakedness, shipwreck, false brethren and the care of the churches (2nd. Cor. 11:23-28) he kept faith in God, he kept looking up because he knew Jesus would fight his battles and give him the victory. Praise the Lord!

This is no doubt the age in which the Beast will be revealed. I am speaking of that man of sin (2nd. Thes. 2:1-12) who will be destroyed by the brightness of the Lord's coming. He will be given power "over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations." (Rev. 13:7) His power shall be mighty, he will magnify himself in heart and by peace shall destroy many. He will prosper and practice, and shall destroy the mighty and holy people. (Dan. 8:23-25) He (Beast) will cause all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. (Rev. 13:16-17) Let no man deceive you beloved, this deadly and ruling system, is on it's way! No doubt a collaboration of "church and state" will usher this man to power! The handwriting is on the wall, the mystery of iniquity doth already work . . . (2nd. Thes. 2:7) Saints it is high time to look up to Him for help and deliverance in this dark hour!

Let no man deceive you into thinking that times are getting better! It is true that prosperity is covering the land but sad to say, people are forgetting God! That great "falling away" is closing in fast. (2nd. Thes. 2:3) Iniquity is abounding and the love of many shall wax cold. (Mat. 24:12) Paul tells us that

evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse . . . (2nd. Tim. 3:13) The time of trucebreakers, traitors, lovers of pleasure and a form of godliness is covering the land. (2nd. Tim. 3:1-7) Churches that one time served as rivers of living water have now turned modern! They are clouds without water, a form without spirituality as they draw nigh with their lips and their hearts are far from Jesus! May God help us to stay "sober" in this pleasure mad, society seeking, money loving world! Hold on to God in the power of the Holy Ghost; keep your face toward the sunshine that all shadows, doubts and darts of the devil might fall behind you. Look to Jesus the author and finisher of our faith . . . Only Jesus is able to carry us through in victory!

As I close this message I want to say to "you" as you read these lines: "Keep Looking Up" for dark and sad things are just around the corner! Truly we are in the last days and few will be able to stand. If you will obey God and keep your life covered with His blood through submission to the Spirit within, no power of Satan will ever move you! The enemy will certainly assail but thank God he will not prevail! If you will furnish "self" I know Jesus will furnish the grace. Let us close with this scripture: Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen. (Jude 24-25)