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Awake, Sober, Alert, Faithful, Ready, Watching…

By Steven J. Hogan

~ A Saturday Morning Post # 378 ~

Jesus Christ is coming again! Our Lord, Savior, and King is returning to earth, and soon! This is an amazing, astounding, unbelievable, incredible, wonderful truth! When Jesus comes back, everyone will know who He is and that He is in charge. Every saint will be glorified, every sinner will be judged, a Jewish remnant will be saved, and the earth will be restored. Jesus will make everything right, and He will be worshiped and exalted like never before! Rev. 6:15-17, 1 Cor. 15:42-44, Rev. 8-9, Rom. 11:25-26, Acts 3:21, Ps. 72, Phil. 2:9-11

So when is Jesus coming? We don't specifically know – He didn't tell us the day or hour (Matt. 24:36). But Jesus did give us a general idea of when it will happen (Matt. 24:4-31, Rev. 6:1-17). He did this because He loves us and wants us to be excited and looking forward to His coming. Jesus wants us to know that our hopes will soon be realized, that we will see Him, and then be with Him forever.

I think of Jesus' coming like the dawn's early light, like sunrays peeking over the horizon. I say this because the signs of His 2nd coming are being realized at this present time. We live in an evil age that began with the sin of Adam and Eve, which was thousands of years ago. Now we live in the last years of this age, what we call the end-times. And we know we are in the end-times because the Jews miraculously came back to their land, and once again became a nation (Ez. 36-37, Lk. 21:20-24). At the end of this age, Jesus will return to rapture the church – and everything will change. Matt. 24:29-31, 1 Th. 4:15-17

Jesus told us many things that must occur before His coming. That the Jews are back in their land and that other prophesied events are taking place is what motivates me to write this blogpost:
* There are beginning birth pains: deception, wars, earthquakes, famines, plagues, and economic problems, and these will increase in intensity and frequency. Matt. 24:4-8, Rev. 6:1-8
* There is lawlessness – hate, crime, lying, stealing, corruption, immorality, murder, a lack of respect, etc. – and this will get worse and worse. Matt. 24:12, 2 Tim. 3:13

* The United States, because of her gross and grievous sin, is being judged, and she will soon lose her influence and status as the world's #1 superpower. This is part of God's sovereign plan, and it will lead to the rise and rule of the Antichrist over 10 nations, and the entire world. Rom. 1:18-36, Dan. 7:23-25, Rev. 13:1-7
* From the United Nations to rich global elites, we have been witnessing the desire for a one-world government and leader, and not long from now we will see that devilish dictator, the Antichrist. Rev. 13:3-5

* We are watching the growth of technology, specifically artificial intelligence, which is essential for the mark of the beast, worshiping his image, and him being able to rule the world. Rev. 13:14-17
* Antisemitism is rapidly increasing in the United States, the Middle East, and all over this planet. In the near future, this will lead to the need for a treaty, and to the Jews building their temple. The

confirmation of this treaty marks the beginning of Dan. 70th week. The breaking of this treaty at its midpoint results in great tribulation, the persecution of the Jews. Dan. 9:27, Matt. 24:15-22
* The increasing hatred of Christians is foundational to them being greatly persecuted during the 2nd half of Dan. 70th week, a persecution instigated and led by the Antichrist. Lk. 12:51, Matt. 24:9

Seeing God's prophetic word being fulfilled in the world around us is clear evidence that Christ's coming is near. But He is not yet *"at the door"* (Matt. 24:33) – we are still in the *"beginning of birth pangs"* (Matt. 24:8). It is in these days, like the forecast of a meteorologist days ahead of a hurricane, that we must *"have insight among the people"* and *"give understanding to the many"* (Dan. 11:33). A very bad storm, a *"Cat 5"* storm, is coming and it's imperative that we help Christians prepare, that we *"Make ready the way of the Lord."* Luke 3:4

What else should prophecy-knowing Christians do? We need to share and discuss with believers all the things that will take place before Christ returns to rapture the church. We must tell them what God wants them to know. Jesus said, *"Take heed, behold, I have told you everything in advance"* (Mk. 12:23, Matt. 24:4-30, Rev. 6:1-17, Rev. 13:1-18). We must also tell them how they ought to live, the conduct and character of a Christian, of a child of God and a soldier of Christ.

We should inform them that the church will not be raptured at the beginning of Dan. 70th week, but during the last half of the week. God will have some Christians still on earth when the Antichrist is revealed, and will enable them to persevere as they go through great tribulation. They will see the darkening of the skies, the global-illuminating brilliance of Christ's glory, and His coming in the clouds. Suddenly, and with all the believers, they will be glorified and gathered to Christ. 2 Th. 2:3-4, Matt. 24:31

For Christians to grow and be godly, we need to tell them several other

things. All the following words (except one) are in the context of the last years leading up to Christ's coming. Let's look at them:

* **Awake** – *"Do this, knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to* **awaken** *from sleep, for now salvation is nearer to us than we first believed… put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh."* (Rom. 13:11, 1 Th. 5:6). The word awake means to rise up, to stand up. We are not to be spiritually sleeping but spiritually awake. We are not to be sinning but to be holy. Only then can we truly serve and wait for the Lord.

* **Sober** – *"Since we are of the day, let us be* ***sober****, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation"* (1 Th. 5:8, Eph. 5:18, 1 Pet. 1:13). Sober means to abstain from wine. A sober Christian is clear-minded, is not controlled by that which is addictive and sinful. He is serious, sensible, discreet, and is living a steady, Spirit-led life in the final years before Christ's return.

* **Alert** – *"What I say to you, I say to all, 'Be on the* ***alert****'"* (Mark 13:37, 33). Being alert is having a spiritual awareness and understanding of what's taking place. The believer is awake, vigilant, watchful, and alert to current events and situations in the world, and it's not just the signs listed in Matt. 24, etc., but also that which personally affects him and others who are with him.

* **Faithful** – *"Who then is the* ***faithful*** *and sensible slave whom his master put in charge of his house to give them their food at the proper time?"* (Matt. 24:45, Matt. 25:21). A faithful person is a trustworthy servant of God. He's dependable and reliable, and is using his mind, gifts, talents, energy, and money for God's purposes. And in this context, we are talking about his end-times' service for God.

* **Hoping** – *"If we* ***hope*** *for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it"* (Rom. 8:23, Rom. 15:13). To hope is confidently

expecting good things to happen. A person with hope believes that God's purposes concerning Jesus' coming and the future of the church will be fulfilled, and he is excitedly waiting and looking forward to seeing Jesus, to being glorified, to being in heaven, and to seeing fellow Christians.

*** Ready** – *"You must also be **ready** for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not expect"* (Matt. 24:44, Lk. 12:40). A person who is spiritually ready is prepared to do God's work. He is organized and equipped, and desires to carry out God's plans for his life, now and forever. In the end-times, God wants His people to be ready to see His Son coming in the clouds, and ready to worship and serve Him.

*** Watching** – *"I have appointed you a **watchman** to the house of Israel; whenever you hear a word from My mouth, warn them from Me"* (Ez. 3:17, Mk. 13:34). A watchman knows what is happening in the world and how it is fulfilling God's prophetic word. And he is telling and warning believers of the troubles they may face but is also comforting them with the hope God has given them.

*** Waiting** – *"You turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God, and to **wait** for His Son from heaven"* (1 Th. 1:9-10, 1 Cor. 1:7). The waiting Christian isn't nonchalant but is longing and looking forward to seeing Jesus. He is convinced Jesus is coming and is eagerly, expectantly, and patiently waiting for Him. More than anything, He desires to be in heaven with Jesus, His Savior, Lord, and King. Phil. 1:21

*** Seeing** – *"When you **see** all these things, recognize that He is near, right at the door"* (Matt. 24:33-34, Heb. 10:25). With regards to Christ's return, you know what to look for, and then you physically observe and watch them when they occur. And you mentally and spiritually realize what this means, that God is fulfilling His prophetic word, and that Christ is coming soon to rapture the church and reign on earth. This verse is most relevant to that last generation of Christians on earth.

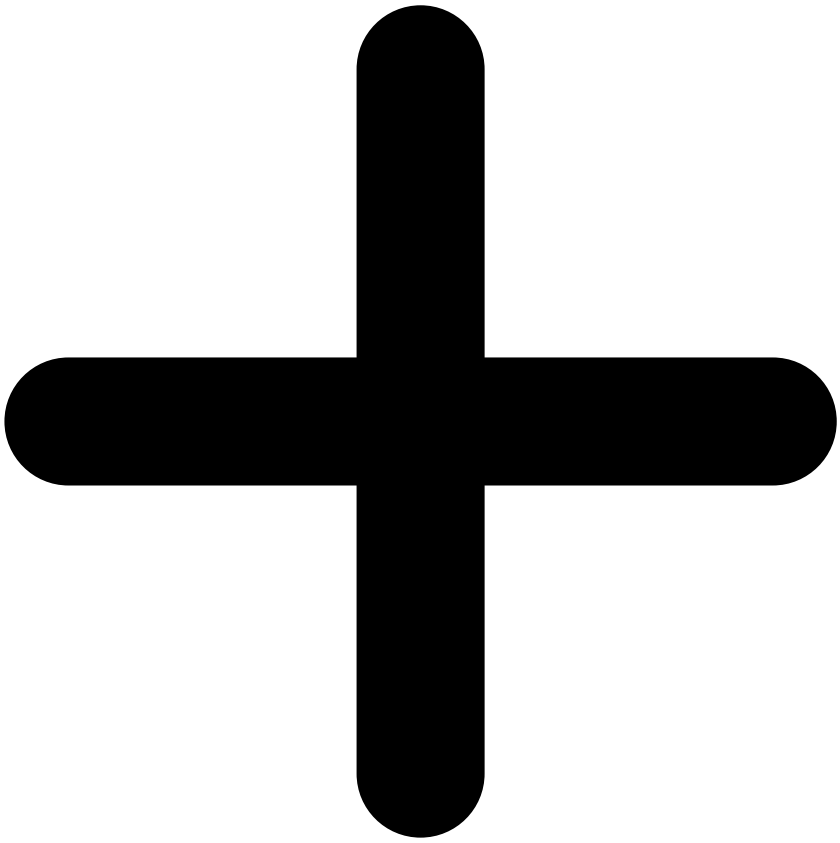
*** Encouraging** – *"… **encouraging** one another, and all the more as you see the day drawing near"* (Heb. 10:25, 1 Th. 5:18). In the end-times, God wants His children to see the day drawing near, to know that the prophetic events being fulfilled signal the soon return of Christ to rapture the church. God also wants them to encourage other believers with this good news. Encourage can mean many things – comfort, implore, counsel, urge, exhort, or stir up.

For some people, the present time is peaceful and comfortable. They are saying, *"take it easy, eat, drink, and be merry"* (Lk. 12:19). For others, this is not so. But all of us must wake up to the truth of God's word, and to the physical and spiritual realities in our world. When we rightly see God's word and the world we live in, we can only conclude that we live in difficult times – and it's going to get worse.

"Watchman, how far gone is the night?" (Is. 21:11). We must wake up to the fact that the night is far gone, that we are not in the first or middle watch, but the dawn watch, and we are fast approaching the end of this last watch. There aren't many years left before the Son rises, before He returns to rapture the church, take us to heaven, judge the world, and rule over the world.

Isn't it wonderful that God has us alive at this time in history? It's a great time to live for Him. With all my heart, I encourage you to learn what God says about the last years of this age, and how He wants you to live, which is what this and two recently published posts (375, 376) are about.

"The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus." Titus 2:11-14





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