

Sermon to the Saints which are at Topeka, Kansas -- Sunday, October 8, 2017

"Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. 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." (Revelation 3:3)

Good morning, beloved of God. I was talking with a friend some weeks ago, and the discussion turned on the question of years and months and days within the time period of the Revelation of Jesus Christ. My friend indicated some concern over my proposition that Christ returns precisely at the 3.5 year mark, and yet says to those of the Jews who await Armageddon and His millennial reign:

"Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame." (Revelation 16:15)

The concern, of course, is how can it be that Christ will ***"come as a thief"*** into the battle of Armageddon, if the days can be counted forward from when he appears in power and majesty in the sky at the blowing of the seventh trumpet? After all, since ***"the evening and the morning was the first day"*** (Genesis 1:5), man has known that from sun up to sun up counts as a day -- and therefore one can count the days in a year, and certainly can count ***"a thousand two hundred and threescore"*** of them. (Revelation 12:6)

As I heard the question, I felt at once that it is a critical point to answer, and that my spirit was suddenly pregnant with searching it out. It is the stuff that Satan uses to sow darkness in the spirits of men, and it is my duty as an elder not to darken the counsel of God by using words without knowledge. So, with prayers I hope to draw this matter out to your satisfaction and increase your confidence in speaking with boldness on the matters of Christ's imminent return.

My proposition, which I hope to be examined closely by your sheep's ears, is this: A specific dispensational character for those elect souls upon whom Christ's Revelation will come is that they will see plainly and specifically – with the capacity to intelligently articulate to themselves and to all – the day is coming. Further, and more discretely, all others who live in the earth at that precipitous and precarious hour will be rendered unable to see and to know that Christ's return is to occur *instanter*, though every evident proof – upon which the righteous seed looks and relies – is directly before their eyes and ears! So, let us begin the proofs.

"For thus hath the Lord said unto me, Go, set a watchman, let him declare what he seeth. And he [i.e., the watchman] saw a chariot with a couple of horsemen, a chariot of asses, and a chariot of camels; and he hearkened diligently with much heed: And he cried, A lion: My lord, I stand continually upon the watchtower in the daytime, and I am set in my ward whole

nights: And, behold, here cometh a chariot of men, with a couple of horsemen. And he answered and said, Babylon is fallen, is fallen; and all the graven images of her gods he hath broken unto the ground. O my threshing, and the corn of my floor [e.g., the tiny remnant of Jews]: that which I have heard of the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, have I declared unto you." (Isaiah 21:6-10)

This beautifully poetic piece of historical (and, by adumbration, eschatological) prophecy helps us to begin this examination. It is clearly a time of great distress and significant moment in the affairs of the Jewish nation -- who are a perpetual symbol of Christ's elect precious in the earth. Integral to that condition is the active presence of a watcher. Three beautiful characteristics of that watcher are discovered in this passage.

First, he is faithful in his duty -- for he knows well that if he fails to "***declare what he seeth***" he will be found unworthy of his post and worse, guilty of the blood of those for whom he is instructed to watch and warn:

"When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand." (Ezekiel 3:18)

Second, it is a perpetual duty and this faithful soul is perpetually engaged in it. He stands "***continually upon the watchtower in the daytime***", and is "***set in [his] ward whole nights***". Preaching the Gospel is not a duty of convenience. It is the difference between those who know whom they serve and those who do not. It was a great wickedness done by the Children of Israel that they gave less attention to God's commandments than they gave their earthly masters:

"And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the LORD of hosts." (Malachi 1:8)

How shameful a thing it would be for that man who is appointed a watchman over the people to neglect that office and let those who would destroy the city come in without alarm! Look at the blessed description of those who keep watch over the place where Christ and His bride have concourse:

"Behold his bed, which is Solomon's [the type of Christ in this song]; threescore valiant men are about it, of the valiant of Israel. They all hold swords, being expert in war: every man hath his sword upon his thigh because of fear in the night." (Song of Solomon 3:7-8)

How can one be ready to defend if he pays no attention to the danger? How can one be credibly labeled aware of the danger while he has not made himself "***expert in war***" ... tactics,

weapons, strategy, logistics, training? This watchman on the wall at this prophetic hour is both, which leads us to the third characteristic.

This watcher is called "**A lion**"! How peculiar a placement of a two-word clause in this passage of Isaiah's prophecy! The grammatical placement means that it is a descriptor of the "**he**" who is said to have cried -- as though it said "**he cried, [who is] A lion**"! What does that mean? Is it merely that his cry was like that lion Amos wrote of?

***"The lion hath roared, who will not fear? the Lord GOD hath spoken, who can but prophesy?"
(Amos 3:8)***

Yes ... that's part of it -- but it doesn't tell us enough about the nature of this watcher. We have to go a bit deeper to find the beauty of this passage and (more importantly) its import for my sermon. Why "**A lion**"? The answer is, that this characteristic will help the soul who pays attention to such matters understand who is this watcher prophesied of!

"As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man, and the face of a lion, on the right side: and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle." (Ezekiel 1:10)

and

"And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle." (Revelation 4:7)

I have preached before about the two witnesses of Revelation 11 -- and their descriptive inclusion in these two passages above as "**ox**" in one and "**calf**" in the other -- as signifying the elect in the role of the elder who treads out the corn for feeding the lambs over whom they are made shepherd. But there are three other characteristics in these visions -- "**man**", "**eagle**", and "**lion**". The lion's nature -- found in the elect children of God -- has at least three characteristics found in Scripture. They are "**bold as a lion**" (**Proverbs 28:1**) in the face of Satan's rage. They carry themselves as royalty, in the noblest sense of that word, as they are "**a royal priesthood**" (**1 Peter 2:9**), they "**fulfil the royal law according to the scripture**" (**James 2:8**), and one of their closest comforts is that they are told by the Spirit that they are "**the children of God**" (**Romans 8:16**) who is King of all! And, they roar! Not only in the sense that they "**cry aloud, spare not, lift up [their] voice like a trumpet**" (**Isaiah 58:1**), but likewise in that when it says "**[t]he LORD also shall roar out of Zion**" (**Joel 3:16**) the preachments of gospel ministers is integral to that roaring.

So these watchmen are the saints, presented in that peculiar character they have in making themselves aware of danger, making themselves equipped to do their duty in the face of it, and making themselves able to effectually warn those who will be warned ... all part of their duty to

study the Scriptures to show themselves approved unto God as His workman with His word (2 Timothy 2:15). With this foundational understanding, we should then move to the next element of this examination: What is this watching concept, as it relates to the great subject of Christ's Revelation and the various events related thereto?

There are watchings commanded of – and fully embraced by – the elect of God while in the earth in every generation. Watching to know what the Lord would require of us (Proverbs 8:32-36), watching the things we say, lest we sin with our lips (Psalms 141:3), watching for the presence of deadly sin in our midst, to warn against it (Ezekiel 3:17), or watching for danger that lurks perpetually to harm the flock of slaughter (2 Timothy 4:5). While all of these have relevance in this analysis – and are components of our daily exercise related to the subject matter – I want to examine what specifically is meant to be watching for His day.

“Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.”
(1Thessalonians 5:6-10)

The context of these words, unmistakably, is relevant eschatology as is evident from the text of the oracle just before this one, which states plainly **“*the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.*” (1 Thessalonians 5:2).** So this example passage helps us to see somewhat of the watching requirement. We are to be (1) sober, (2) our hearts protected with the purity of faith and (3) love (or, charity), and (4) our minds defended with a **“*full assurance of hope unto the end*” (Hebrews 6:11).**

The sobriety with which the Church of Revelation must walk is a little different than the duty of church members generally not to be drunken or undisciplined. This word is the Greek word *"nepho"* (*nay'-fo*). It is used six times (four as "sober", two as "watch") and is always in context of eschatology. It refers to a calm, collected spirit; temperate, dispassionate, circumspect. We're not to be like these hysterical, "chicken-little" clods who profit from manic screeds about planets crashing into planets and numerology tricks that catch the fancy of confused hypocrites. We know, from searching the scriptures, the gravity and significance of this day that is coming. Like Noah, who understood that the whole of the world's population was soon to be destroyed without mercy. Like Lot, who understood that all of his neighbors were momentarily going to be consumed with raining fire. There's no glory for man in that! There's only terror and darkness -- which we are only to escape by the unmerited mercy of God!

The two witnesses who are prophesied of by John the Revelator are said to **"prophesy ... clothed in sackcloth"** (Revelation 11:3). This call to be sober is similar in import to that enigmatic passage tucked into the heart of the description of Antichrist's rise to power:

"He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints." (Revelation 13:10)

In the hour when the heat of the conflict between God and Satan ... Christ and Antichrist ... is reaching a full boil, it is easy to slip into some notion that we can take unauthorized action to force the conclusion. But we must, the rather, stand in that action we've been authorized to take -- preaching the pure and unvarnished words of God from His Record and pray for His deliverance. Stay sober.

The **"breastplate of faith and love"** (charity) introduces, in this uniquely beautiful context, an opportunity to discretely parse this notion of faith. Back on December 1, 2013 brother Steve did a sermon on the subject of faith. Other elders have also culled the scriptures in examination of the subject and brought forth some good thoughts for this body to consume for their edification -- well beyond what you receive while sitting in this house week by week.

The Greek word here used is *"pistis"* (*pis'-tis*), and comes from the root Greek word *"peitho"* (*pi'-tho*) which word emphasizes the energizing force that is framed in the concept of "faith", like when it says of Noah:

"By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house;" (Hebrews 11:7)

"Pistis", the word used to partially define this breastplate we must wear as we prepare for the coming of our Lord, has multiple parts to the meaning when you search out the Greek word in Strong's. [*I'm pursuing this linguistic line, because it will be a double benefit for this body, I trust.*] Here is what you find in Strong's concordance:

AV-faith 239, assurance 1, believe + 1537 1, belief 1, them that believe 1, fidelity 1; 244

- 1) conviction of the truth of anything, belief; in the NT of a conviction or belief respecting man's relationship to God and divine things, generally with the included idea of trust and holy fervour born of faith and joined with it
 - 1a) relating to God
 - 1a1) the conviction that God exists and is the creator and ruler of all things, the provider and bestower of eternal salvation through Christ
 - 1b) relating to Christ
 - 1b1) a strong and welcome conviction or belief that Jesus is the Messiah, through whom we obtain eternal salvation in the kingdom of God
 - 1c) the religious beliefs of Christians

- 1d) belief with the predominate idea of trust (or confidence) whether in God or in Christ, springing from faith in the same
- 2) fidelity, faithfulness
 - 2a) the character of one who can be relied on

So the Greek word itself frequently has flexibility of use for nuanced contexts -- just like the words in our English language. It is important, therefore, when you are examining a word in Hebrew/Chaldee or Greek concordances, that you keep your focus on your context to understand how that particular word is being used by the King James translators.

So the Greek word "*pistis*", in the context of our protective armor during the days leading up to the Revelation of Jesus Christ, must be understood to require that we build up ourselves in the faith that Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God is our Messiah and will most assuredly come! That, my dear friends, is a critical and integral part of our duty to watch! That's my message here. You cannot loaf about in your mind trusting that all will be well when it is time for these things to come to pass. You must be ***"building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost," (Jude 1:20)***

Finally, without repeating the many rounds I have completed in discussing the importance of charity in preparation for that day. Let me just quote our friend and Apostle John, who also wrote the masterpiece on that day:

"Herein is our love [charity] made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment:" (1 John 4:17)

Just as we should become very clear on our duty to be sober and to build up ourselves in the faith that Christ is our Redeemer, we must pursue the knowledge and performance of charity. Finally, in this passage, we have to put on this ***"helmet, the hope of salvation"***. The Greek "*elpis*" (*el-pece*) is a root and is sometimes put for "faith" because it is a close companion to that faith with which we are to protect our heart and loins with the ***"breastplate"***. It is the joyful and confident expectation of eternal salvation. Faith is in Christ as a Redeemer with plenary power to execute that role. Hope is the confidence that He is ***our*** Redeemer and we will receive that salvation agreed to in the Covenant of Grace, sealed by Christ on Calvary, and promised to be delivered when the seventh trumpet sounds and Christ returns to take us to Him. Where faith in Christ dwells in our fleshy hearts, filling us with zeal; hope sets itself in the seat of our intelligence, moving us with certain knowledge that what He has promised, He is able to deliver.

"For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." (2 Timothy 1:12)

So, we have drawn into focus four components of this duty to watch: Sobriety, faith, love, and hope. There is more to learn about this duty. In Christ's parabolic treatment of this subject -- in the midst of His eschatological sermon on the Mount of Olives, he gives us some additional clarity about the nature of this watching:

"Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing." (Matthew 24:45-46)

This solemn mandate relates to the duty of the pastors -- those made to be rulers or stewards over His household -- to be rightly dividing this blessed Word of God, and feeding the sheep with the parsed out and prepared meat. The requirement that it be that meat "**due**" for the "**season**" intimates that those pastors are to be providing what is needed for the season in which the members of that little house of faith find themselves situated. It is good, my friends, for members of this body and her elders to consume the things written by the faithful in preceding generations. It is good to build your foundation on sound examinations of scriptural expositions to develop a working knowledge of the doctrines of grace that make up our most holy faith. But this parabolic exhortation requires more from the elders -- and by extension, the members being fed. We must move on to a full preparation for the fight we're in! We must move on to meat that is due for this season! This -- ! THIS ! -- is what the Apostle Peter, when writing in the prophecy of eschatology, meant by these words:

"Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?" (2 Peter 3:11-12)

These are two critical elements of the watching required of us. When the elect of God are given to understand by gracious providential indicators to see "**then**" -- not hundreds of years distant or thousands of years distant, but "**then**" -- that it will be very soon when the switch is tripped and the earth, with her inhabitants will be on a mad rush to dissolution, they must take stock of themselves! They must have their lives reckoned holy -- separate -- sanctified. Yes. They must have themselves living godly. Yes! But that is true in every generation of God's servants. Additionally, however, their spiritual outlook shifts forward -- intently and aggressively forward ... "**looking for and hasting unto**" what they see coming. That's not passively listening to others talk about established doctrinal and practical divinity. That's energized searching things out. That's rapidly and aggressively building upon their knowledge of prophecy; searching out what God's prophets have told them about the hows, the whens, the wheres, the whys ... the whats!

When I was growing up, it stung like a dart every time I heard a man say something like "Christ could return today, or a thousand years from now." Ahhhh! What is such a thing supposed to

mean? Is this Holy Book so devoid of information on Christ's Revelation that we are left with nothing more edifying than that? It's too squishy -- like taking a high-speed turn on the suspension of an old Yugo. No! I want the suspension of an Indy Car. I want to feel the road! I have to feel the road -- every ripple in the surface, every pebble that might reduce the grip or grasp I have of my path. Such a loose notion is inconsistent with our duty to hasten unto that day with the vigilance that Paul prescribes:

" I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air:" (1 Corinthians 9:26)

Now that we've examined what constitutes "watching" as intended in eschatological passages. What remains is to return to my proposition: The elect of God will -- because they by His mercies and strength fulfill their duty of watching -- know when these end times have come and when Christ's second advent is upon them and when Christ is to come into the Valley of Megiddo. The reprobate will be constitutionally incapable of knowing, even though all the same signs and passages of scripture are available to them -- and God's servants are constantly telling them ... warning them.

Let us closely consider what is written regarding what the watching saints will be given to know. Sometimes it is put in the negative (e.g., what will happen if they do not watch), and sometimes in the positive (e.g., if they watch, then...).

"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 Thessalonians 5:1-4)

This passage says more than that Christ's return will be "***as a thief in the night***", since the context makes a sharp distinction between those who are in darkness and those who are "***not in darkness***". Furthermore, Paul is plainly saying -- directly after talking about those who "***are alive and remain***" (1 Thessalonians 4:17) being taken up with Christ -- that he does not need to tell those blessed souls "***of the times and the seasons***" ... because they are those who we read about in Revelation 11 as "***affrighted, and [giving] glory to the God of heaven***" (Revelation 11:13). Paul is helping the beloved of God to know that even while they will know the times and seasons and therefore will not be surprised by that event, the remainder of the population will still be deceived into believing that they have "***[p]eace and safety***" at that same hour that the elect saints are giving glory to the God of heaven in anticipation of what they know to be the imminent return of Christ.

Again, Paul continues the dichotomy between the disposition of the saints toward the preparation for Christ's day of revelation and the disposition of the reprobate, as he continues his letter to the Thessalonians:

"Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. ¶ Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night." (1 Thessalonians 5:5-7)

By four distinct metaphors, Paul completes this message of distinction between the saints who prepare themselves for Christ's return and the reprobate who do not -- who **cannot**: Light/darkness; day/night; awake/asleep; sober/drunken. Each of the negative characteristics compel the conclusion that those afflicted are not simply weakened in capacity -- but utterly ruined by incapacity! They have no *light*; they enjoy no *day*; they cannot *awaken*; and they cannot be *sober*.

Those of you who search the scriptures daily know there are many more such presentations of this narrative throughout Scripture. As it is with their spiritual state, it will be for their capacity to be aware of and prepare for Christ's revelation or His march into the Valley of Megiddo. It simply does not matter how clearly these blessed words have been ***"written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come"*** (1 Corinthians 10:11), the reprobate do not get to be admonished about them, and the ends of the world will come upon them as a thief!

That leaves us with one final and critical question, as I understand the Book on this analysis. Why? I don't mean to be presuming that God owes us an answer for how He chooses to dispose of His creation, because that answer is clear: ***"Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?"*** (Romans 9:20) Further, I know that the mysteries of God are revealed to His servants and kept from the reprobate, which is why -- Christ Himself tells us -- He speaks to us in parables (Matthew 13:11)

I mean, does the Scripture help us to understand why it *absolutely must be* that the reprobate cannot find the plain truth about when Christ will return, how that will look, who will be the players on that stage, what will be the engagements between those players, and why those amazing conflicts and resolutions are fashioned the way they are fashioned? Let us consider the words of this 11-verse oracle in Paul's letter to the church at Corinth.

"Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought: But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ." (1 Corinthians 2:6-16)

There is no serious reading of this passage that does not compel the conclusion that all of this blessed mystery of God is hidden -- in all relevant respects, completely undisclosed -- from the reprobate masses of humanity. They can read the very same words we read. They can look at the very same obvious cues all around them. Nevertheless, they come forth as though they've done nothing but read a curious fable and then go right on with their lives as though it means zero!

Here's the true beauty of it, though. If they understood it, they would have the capacity to interfere! Just like they were unable to leave the Saviour unharmed -- though the prophecies were utterly filled with the clues that He would come to pay for the sins of His people and secure His claim to the Kingship of the earth. Similarly, if they were able to see what His servants see, understand what His servants understand, they might would:

"[S]ee with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them." (Acts 28:27)

So, we need not concern ourselves that the plain words of our love note might be taken and those blessed promises contained therein would be taken from us by the Great Whore or her vile devotees. These promises, these timelines, these clues about what things to observe the times and seasons, these certainties of safety and help from heaven's occupants -- they're all ours and none others'.

That leaves us with a closing analysis, so that nobody here will fret that I'm speaking beyond what Scripture has commanded.

"When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power." (Acts 1:6-7)^

and

"But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only." (Matthew 24:36)*

and

"Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh." (Matthew 25:13)^

and

"But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is." (Mark 13:32-33)*

This collection of passages are those to which persons have long used for the conclusion that nobody knows -- or ever will know -- when Christ is coming. You'll note that I placed symbols next to the site references, a carat symbol "^" and an asterisk "*". The passages with the carat symbol are referencing Christ coming into Armageddon. The passages with the asterisk are about Christ's second advent at the sound of the seventh trumpet. There are other passages referring to these two events, of course, but these make mention of specific time references -- "times", "seasons", "day", and "hour".

What either just precedes these passages or what closely follows each in the text is contextual discussions that demonstrate them to be relative in application. So, for example, when it says in Matthew 24 that no man knows ***"that day and hour"***, the very next verse begins with ensuring us that the limit on that knowledge is to the day and hour, but we'll have plenty of cues to determine when the day and the hour is coming shortly upon us! We are not required to conclude that because we don't know the day and hour, we therefore cannot know the year, the month, the week!

Further, if we will not know with some certainty that it is upon us, why would we be repeatedly told the coming of Christ is near and ***"even at the doors" (Mark 13:29)***, see also Luke 21:20, 31. We will know when our Christ is coming. We will know when His day has dawned, and because of that knowledge, we will know that His day star will shortly arise in our hearts (2 Peter 1:19).

We in this house know -- with very certain, experience and scripture-based knowledge -- that this earth and her inhabitants have reached a degree of comprehensive moral ruin that has not been recorded in any former time, and yet are nearly unanimous in their belief that they are evolved past any need for God's Word or presence. To conclude in this climate that we are still centuries or millennia away from Christ's return would be blasphemy as a denial of the clearest meaning in His express words of warning.

"The best of them is as a brier: the most upright is sharper than a thorn hedge: the day of thy watchmen and thy visitation cometh; now shall be their perplexity. Trust ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide: keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom. For the son dishonoureth the father, the daughter riseth up against her mother, the daughter in law against her mother in law; a man's enemies are the men of his own house."
(Micah 7:4-6)

I am advancing the position that we must spend our best energies in searching out the best possible understanding of how we should be living, what we should be saying, and what we should be doing to prepare ourselves to face a raging world who will very shortly be inundated with unrequited earth-judgments as the seals begin to be removed from that blessed Book of Redemption (Revelation 5) and the horses begin to go forth to their work (Revelation 6).

I love you all. Amen.