

Before the Foot Hits the Floor

by W. Frank Walton

"I, O LORD, cry to you; in the morning my prayer comes before you" (Psa 88:13).

I read an article where the author stated that he endeavored to say a morning prayer to God for help, while in bed, "before the foot hits the floor." What a great habit to begin the day with God!

Note that David said, "I remember you upon my bed" (Psa 63: 6). This is a wonderful discipline to immediately start framing our outlook for the day by first turning to God. David, the spiritually-minded man after God's own heart, began Psalm 63 thus: "O God, you are my God, early will I seek you" (v. 1). Before the duties and demands of the day begin rushing in to crowd our mind, we need to fortify our mind by beginning the day with God.

Please note the Scriptures that advocate the morning priority of seeking God by prayer, worship, and meditation on His Word:

"I rise before dawn and cry for help; I hope in your words" (Psa 119:147).

"O LORD, in the morning you hear my voice; in the morning I prepare a sacrifice for you and watch" (Psa 5:3).

"I will sing of your strength; I will sing aloud of your steadfast love in the morning. For you have been to me a fortress and a refuge in the day of my distress (Psa 59:16).

"Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love that we may rejoice and be glad all our days" (Psa 90:14).

"I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and in his word I hope; my soul waits

for the Lord more than watchmen for the morning, more than watchmen for the morning" (Psa 130:5-6).

"Let me hear in the morning of your steadfast love, for in you I trust. Make me know the way I should go, for to you I lift up my soul" (Psa 143:8).

"When you walk, they [the commandments] will lead you; when you lie down, they will watch over you; and when you awake, they [the commandments] will talk with you" (Prov 6:22).

At the beginning of each day, we make choices of how we will conduct ourselves and react to various demands and temptations that face us. When we awake upon our bed, what a marvelous habit we can cultivate by seeking God's help to be faithful and strong, "before the foot hits the floor." ~

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END OF DAYS

[Editor's note: Although this general subject was treated in a recent article here, it has come up again most recently, not only in the media "buzz" concerning the Mayan predictions, but in a news article concerning a group of modern day "prophets" who are going around the US in motor homes promoting an "end of the world" in the near future. It's always a good thing to keep the teachings of the Lord and His servants before us when these things begin to circulate, as they seemingly always will.]

By Mitch Rhymer

I was watching a program on the History channel about the Mayan prophecy of the destruction of the

world and the end of time. This prophecy states that on December 21, 2012 the world will end in destruction. Hollywood has taken to this prophecy and made several movies about the end of our world. Yet it struck me as odd that if one were to simply read the Bible then the hysteria and confusion created by Hollywood and these prophecies would go away. I understand that one needs to see the Bible as the source of true knowledge. However, the Bible clearly states, "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only" (Matthew 24:36).

From this verse Christians need to understand a few things about the end of days or the end of the

world or however one wants to describe it. When the Bible speaks of "that day and hour" it is a reference to the coming of the Son of Man back to the Earth to exercise judgment upon all man.

Matthew 24:37 teaches us that the return of Christ will be a destructive event. It alludes to the flood of the days of Noah. Going back to Genesis 6-8, the Bible student will carefully see that God intended to destroy not only man but everything he created (Genesis 6:7). When Christ returns we should be careful to note that it will destructive to all the living things he created.

It is not enough that we understand that the return of Christ

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destroys all living things. The very essence of the universe will pass away. In other words the physical world and universe will cease to exist. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Matthew 24:35). The only thing that will remain is the spiritual realm of Hades. 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10 describes the flaming fire in which Christ will return to eliminate the heavens and the earth executing judgment upon man.

Additionally, the Bible is clear that no one, not even Christ, knows when that time will come. It is hubris of the grandest sort to try and ascertain when the destruction of the world will be. For from the promises of God we know that the destruction of the world will not occur until Christ returns. We can find hope and safety in the plans of the Lord to sustain His creation until he decides the time for judgment is at hand.

Should we, then, be complacent and sit upon our hands? Should we care little about what the Lord has given us? Certainly not. Because we do not know when the time will come we must always be ready to act and do what God commands us to do. The end of time, end of days, or however one wants to understand the Day of Judgment are there as a time period for us to establish our goals and work for the prize of our calling (Philippians 3:14). God expects man to utilize what he has been given by God for the glory of God. This means that we need to use every available resource to work for the increase of the kingdom of God.

Proverbs 6:6-11 explains our attitude toward the judgment. "Go to

the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, Provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest. How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep? Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man." By examining this passage of scripture the Bible student should see that God expects us to be busy providing for ourselves in spiritual matters. For the question is asked of man how long we are asleep to the day God has given to us. Certainly we do our secular jobs, have our fun, and are entertained. But those whose lives are dedicated to these things are asleep to the plans that God expects.

The ant is better than the sluggard. For they have no one to guide them or demand that they work. God has given to us elders, overseers, to guide the church in the proper direction. It is necessary then that the work of the elders not be limited to simply making business, economic, or landscaping plans. Rather the overseers need to rule over the work of the church. They need to come into the homes of Christian ants and kick them out of bed, waking them, for there is work to do.

Verse 11 illustrates this point in two ways. Laziness is the key to understanding this verse. For through habitual idleness the "thief in the night," which is the meaning of "the one that travelleth," comes and creates poverty. The "armed man" is the "man with the shield" implying that one's

want comes because someone barges in taking by force which was once ours. Laziness is worse than the poverty and want that comes from having one's stuff stolen because laziness produces nothing of value. So when the thief in the night or armed robber comes there will be nothing to steal. Neither is there anything of value. The spiritual application is that laziness neither causes one to protect what he has obtained nor does it provide anyone with the value God is offering to give.

Christ will come as a thief in the night are we prepared or are we too lazy hoping the Christ will pass us by. ~

Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, {12} looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? {13} Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. {14} Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless...

(2 Pet 3:11-14 NKJV)

The Law Of Prosperity - Don't Buy It



Whatever your financial condition of the moment – even if, like the Children of Israel, you are in a financial wilderness or a state of financial dissatisfaction – you can be prosperous. You need not wait until "things get better" or until you "get out of debt" to begin living under the prosperity law of tithing. (Sterling Rose Press, Inc.)

You don't have to look far to discover a belief among professed Christians that God works to make us physically rich. The idea is that if we "keep our part of the deal" – including regular, generous contributing – God will keep His part of the deal and produce capital for us from unexpected sources. This is not a scriptural concept, and we should be careful not to absorb any of this belief.

Those who believe in this law of prosperity focus our minds on the few righteous wealthy in scripture as examples of this law at work. Abraham, for one, was a wealthy man, "very rich in livestock, silver and gold (Genesis 13:2). Jacob also was blessed by God. Many God-fearing people down through the years would be quick to credit God for giving them an abundance of wealth and blessings.

Job had. There were people like Joseph and Mary who lived very humble lives. There were poor saints in Jerusalem, who were counting on the Gentile Christian to provide to them food (Romans 15:26). The church in Smyrna was rich toward God but physically poor (Revelation 2:9). Paul makes it clear there were few wealthy Christians in 1 Timothy 6:17 by saying, "Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy."

There are unnumbered blessings available to those who would serve God, but they are not earthly blessings. We will find these spiritual blessings "In Christ" (Ephesians 1:3). And we will have these spiritual blessings forever instead of only our short lifetimes. God truly will take care of us abundantly while on this earth (2 Corinthians 9:6-8). But be careful not to associate fortune with godliness and misfortune with wickedness. ~

(By way of Sunnyside Church of Christ bulletin, November 14, 2004.)

What people who believe in this spiritual law of prosperity don't tell you is there have been many righteous people down through the years that never saw the financial capital that Abraham and