

Wake Up Call

Sunday Morning: September 16, 2001

This message is in response to the recent tragedy in New York, Washington DC and Pennsylvania. I kept hearing the phrase "wake up call" over and over given by commentators and officials on TV. This wake up call happened on Tuesday morning when the World Trade Center was rammed by a tow domestic airplanes that had been hijacked. They are saying this tragic event where thousands have been killed by a terrorist attack is a wake up call to our nation that we are at war. Things in our nation will not be the same. The wake up call to our nation happened on Tuesday September 11, but I want to remind us that we received a wake call every day. A wake up call to "to Watch and to Pray." In Matthew 25 we find a wake up call that happens at the midnight hour. This wake up call deals with the those who are preparing for the kingdom of the heavens. Those who are preparing for the coming kingdom of the heavens are looking for the second coming of Jesus Christ.

Matthew 25:1-13 "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. 2. And five of them were wise, and five *were* foolish. 3. They that *were* foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: 4. But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. 5. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. 6. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. 7. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. 8. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. 9. But the wise answered, saying, *Not so*; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. 10. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. 11. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. 12. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. 13. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh."

Text: Matthew 25:1-13 "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.

The kingdom of the heavens will be like ten virgins. Ten is the ordinal number of perfection and thus means all the virgins. The word *virgins* indicates that they were holy, clean and separated. They all had lamps and they all went forth to meet the bridegroom.

WISE AND FOOLISH

2. And five of them were wise, and five *were* foolish.

In the family you are going to find those who are wise and those who are foolish. The wise make preparation and the foolish find other thing to do.

NO EXTRA OIL

3. They that *were* foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:

The foolish did not take an extra vessel of oil with them to replace the depleted oil as the lamp burned. Some think the foolish virgins were not saved but they were all saved because they were all virgins and they all had lamps with oil in them and they were burning.

EXTRA OIL

4. But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

The only difference between the foolish and wise virgins was that the wise virgins had an extra vessel of oil with their lamps.

I am getting a bit side tracted with the lamps, oil, and vessels of oil. The central thought I want to present is that all of them were sleeping and all of them needed a wake up call.

ALL SLEPT

5. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.

The word *all* in this verse tells us that all were asleep. They became drowsy and then they fell

asleep.

WAKE UP CALL

6. And **at midnight there was a cry made**, Behold, **the bridegroom cometh**; go ye out to meet him.

At midnight there was a cry made that the bridegroom was coming and that all were to go out to meet him. The midnight hour was a time that they did not expect a cry to be made.

BOTH TRIMMED

7. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.

The word *all* tells us that all responded to the call to wake up because the bridegroom was coming and they needed to go out to meet him. They all arose and trimmed their lamps.

NOT PREPARED

8. And the foolish said unto the wise, **Give us of your oil**; for our lamps are **gone [going] out**.

The foolish were not prepared because they did not have the extra vessel of oil. The key to what the extra vessel of oil means will be found in verse 13.

NO SHARING

9. But the wise answered, saying, **Not so; lest there be not enough for us** and you: but **go ye** rather to them that sell, and **buy for yourselves**.

It finally dawned upon the foolish that they did not have the oil they needed to endure until the bridegroom came so they asked the wise for some oil. There are just some things that you can not share and the oil of preparation can not be shared with others. It is like working out. Those who work out in the gym, their bodies are strong and fit. The physically fit cannot share their physical fitness with others.

Paul said he was ready for the return of the Lord or his life to be taken in 2 Timothy 4:6-8 "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. 7. I have fought a good fight, I have finished *my* course, I have kept the faith: 8. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." He had made preparation for either of these two events. Paul could not share the blessings that would be his in the crown of righteousness. One must prepare for that crown of righteousness by warring a good warfare, finishing the work the Lord gave him to do, and trusting the Lord in faith all of his days.

The Lord gives counsel in Revelation 3:18 "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and *that* the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye salve, that thou mayest see." You buy the gold, cloth, and the eye salve how can you share those items when they are symbolic rather than intangible items.

The oil is that of preparation. It cost you to get the oil. To be prepared will cost you time and effort. The cost in this case is that of watching.

TOO LATE

10. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and **the door was shut**. 11. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.

The consequences of not making preparation is being shut out of a place you want to be.

DENIED

12. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, **I know you not**.

The phrase "I know you not" is an expression of denial. He knew them and that they had not watched for him. He also knew that they did not make preparation in advance to enter into the marriage feast.

WATCH

13. **Watch** therefore, for **ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.**"

In another place Mark 13:33 "Take ye heed, **watch and pray**: for ye know not when the time is." These verses in Matthew 25 and Mark 13 are verses that should get our attention. They are our wake call to make preparation for the coming of the Lord.

WAKE UP CALLS

I was musing about how people are aroused from their sleep and I came up with a few. One of those wake calls may be a:

BACK RUB – Wonderful wake up call.

Since I had the message prepared, I decided to wake up Jean with a back rub. She did not hop out of bed and run the other way. This kind of wake up call causes one to tarry until the back rub is done.

SMELL OF BREAKFAST COOKING – Refreshing call.

CLOCK RADIO – Not too startling.

ALARM CLOCK WITH BELLS – Scrambling for the clock.

This kind of wake up call is one where you scramble for the alarm clock. I remember when on active duty with the Navy, I slept in the barracks on the base. As an air crewman there was a cubical for our crew and I was the only one that slept in that cubical. All the other men were married and lived off of the base. The other crews did not bother men who were on other crews when it came to sleeping. They did not have revelry in the morning either because there were times we flew all night and needed the sleep. Anyway, I did not get up one morning and therefore was late for muster at the hanger. Because I missed muster and I was put on report. I had to go to see the Chief and explain why I did not make muster. I told him about the situation and he understood, so I told him I was going to get a Big Ben Alarm Clock and that way I would not miss muster again, My buddies at the barracks said you do not have to set that alarm, we will make sure you get up in the morning. They did not want hear that loud bell go off in the morning.

SMOKE DETECTOR – Start dialing 911, then the door.

When the smoke detector alarm goes off, is that a wake up call? You had better believe it. You start dialing 911 and heading for the door.

WEATHER SIREN – Head to the basement.

When you hear the weather siren, you head for the basement because a tornado is bearing down on your area.

SEPTEMBER 11 – Wonder and watch TV.

The events on September 11 caused us to be stunned as we saw those planes fly into the Trade Center buildings. This wake up call was telling us that we have been attacked by terrorist and that life in our country will not be the same.

THE WORD OF GOD – Watch and Pray!

The Word of God also give us a wake up call as well. As the ten virgins of Matthew 25 heard the wake up call, some were prepared some were not. The wise had extra oil in an extra vessel. This oil was the oil of preparation. This oil of preparation was probably what the Lord told the foolish virgins to do, "Watch". When we are watching our lives are lived in a different manner.

If we are not watching a praying, we may be convincing ourselves that the Lord has delay his coming and we begin to eat, drink and be drunken. Luke 12:45 "But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken;"

SIGNS OF THE END

Matthew 24:3-8 "And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and **what shall be the sign of thy coming**, and of the end of the **world** [age]?"

Here is Matthew 24 Jesus' disciples began to ask him questions about the end of the age. We are living at the end of the church age and at this time they were living at the end of the age where the Law of Moses was going to be phased out. His disciples asked him what would be the signs or the wake up calls that should alert us to know that the end is at hand.

DECEIVERS

4. And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man **deceive** you. 5. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall **deceive many**.

First thing that Jesus did was to warn them of deceivers. We are living in a day when those in the church are being deceived on every hand. The reason that those in the churches today are being deceived is because the pastors are not teaching the Word of God. No doctrine. The emphasis is on worship which focuses on experience and emotion. The large churches today spend an hour on worship and a ten minute sermon. Do not misunderstand me. I am for worshiping and praising the Lord but that is not the emphasis of the Sunday morning service. Worship will not sustain you in time of trouble, but doctrine will if you apply it.

There will be those who will come saying that they are the Christ.

RUMORS

6. And ye shall hear of **wars** and **rumours of wars**: see that ye be **not troubled**: for all *these things must* come to pass, but **the end is not yet**.

Have we heard of wars and rumors of wars this past week. Yes! What we have been hearing on radio and TV is the very thing that the Lord said would happen, but he said the end is not yet.

WORLD WIDE TROUBLE

7. For **nation** shall rise **against nation**, and **kingdom against kingdom**: and there shall be **famines**, and **pestilences**, and **earthquakes**, in divers places. 8. All these *are the beginning of sorrows*."

We hear in the news over and over that nations rising against nations over their autonomy, over boundaries, and who's land does the land Israel belong to. Again these are just the beginning of sorrows.

ISRAEL AND NATIONS

Luke 21:29-36 "And he spake to them a parable; Behold the **fig tree**, and all the **trees**;

Jesus said that one of the signs of the end of the age is the budding of the fig tree. Not only the fig tree but also other trees. The fig tree is the nation of Israel. Israel budded on May 14, 1948. Not only has Israel become a nation, but there are many other people groups that have become nations in the past 50 years. These people groups were colonies of larger nations like England, France, Spain and Portugal.

SHOULD SEE AND KNOW

30. When **they** now **shoot forth**, ye **see** and **know** of your own selves that **summer is now nigh** at hand.

When you see the fig tree shoot forth and bud, you know that summer is close at hand. Just as you know the summer is nigh, you should know the end of the age is close at hand.

What is summer a reference to? Summer is a reference to the kingdom of God or the millennial kingdom of our Lord where he will reign for 1,000 years.

KINGDOM IS NEAR

31. So likewise ye, **when ye see these things** come to pass, know ye that **the kingdom of God is nigh** at hand. 32. Verily I say unto you, This **generation shall not pass away**, till **all be fulfilled**.

The budding of the nation of Israel and the other new nations of the World have been going on for 50 plus years. The generation that sees the budding of all the tries will not pass away till all these things be fulfilled. A generation can be anywhere from 40 to 70 years. Forty years have already past, so we are between the 40 and 70 year period or even add an additional 10 years because of strength and you have some idea how close second coming of the Lord is.

TRUST ME!

33. Heaven and earth shall pass away: but **my words shall not pass away**. You think heaven and earth are secure, well, there is nothing as secure as the Word of God. Heaven and earth will pass away, but the Word of God will not. You can trust God on the facts about the end of this age. They will come to pass and you and count on it. Trust me, the Lord is saying.

TAKE HEED!

34. And take heed to **yourselves**, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with **surfeiting**, and **drunkenness**, and **cares** of this **life**, and so that day come upon you unawares.

35. For as a **snare** shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.

Do you know what can distract us from the wake up call? Excess. We find Israel overcharged with surfeiting in Ezekiel 16:49 "Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, **pride**, **fulness** of bread, and **abundance of idleness** was in her and in her daughters. . ."

There are all kinds of drunkenness. We can be drunk on power, drugs, and drink. Drunkenness is being out of control and in the control of other things.

The cares of this life have to do with that which is highly esteemed among men. The environment and the political arena are just a couple of the cares of this life.

Being caught up in all of the things that are happening that are important to man will cause to be unaware of the snare that will catch us unprepared. A snare is disguised so that it will not warn the unsuspecting prey. These seemingly important things simply over power the more weighty things that are given in verse 36.

WATCH AND PRAY TO ESCAPE

36. **Watch** ye therefore, and **pray** always, that **ye may be accounted worthy to escape** all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man."

The counsel of God is clear. "Watch ye therefore, and pray always." If we practice this, we will not be caught off guard. Watching and praying is what it takes to avoid the snare of excess, drunkenness, and the cares of this world.

If we will watch and pray and escape the snare of the world we will stand before the Son of man and not be ashamed from before him.

NO REPENTANCE

Revelation 9:20-21 "And the rest of the men which were not **killed** by these **plagues** yet **repented not** of the **works** of **their hands**, that they should not **worship** devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk:

The wake up call went out to virgins who had oil in their burning lamps and not to the defiled. The judgment of God is coming upon all the rebellious of this world, but it will not make them stop their practice of worshiping idols and those demons that are behind every idol. The strong judgment of God will not make them stop worshiping and honoring idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood.

FOUR MAJOR SINS

21. Neither repented they of their **murders**, nor of their **sorceries**, nor of their **fornication**, nor of their **thefts**."

The judgment of should cause them to change their lifestyle, but it doesn't. They will continue in their murders, drugs, sexual habits, and their stealing.

NOAH AND LOT

Luke 17:26-32 "And as it was in the days of **Noe**, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. We can see from is passage in Luke what the days of the Son of man will be like. The days of the Son of man will be like it was when Noah live here on the earth. The days of the Son of man are the days when Jesus Christ is revealed from heaven.

JUDGMENT COMING

27. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and **the flood came**, and destroyed them all. 28. **Likewise** also as it was in the days of **Lot**; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded;

Verses 27 and 28 do not indicated that there was surfeiting, drunkenness, nor cares of this life, but the every day life of an individual. Luke did not mention the fact that the earth was filled with violence and men were corrupt. They did normal things that people do when they have families and make a living to provide for their families. There is one thing that is missing and that is the spiritual side of life. They were not watching and praying. They did not respond to the ministry of Noah which dealt with the impending judgment.

We know from Genesis that the people that lived among were also corrupt yet here in Luke that is not mentioned. I think that it is significant that the gross sins were left out so that we can see that just living life as normal people will cause us not to be ready when the Lord comes. There does not seem to be evidence that there was surfeiting, drunkenness, or the cares of this life where Lot lived. There needs to be more than just living to be prepared for the coming of the Lord.

LOT ESCAPED

29. But the same **day that Lot went out** of Sodom it rained **fire** and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed *them* all.

There is something that is not so evident in the story of Lot and that is where was Abraham? He was with the Lord on a mountain looking down upon Sodom. Lot and his family left Sodom the same day that judgment came.

END OF TRIBULATION

30. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is **revealed**. 31. In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him **not come down** to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise **not return back**.

This is the way that it will be when the Son of man is revealed. Lot, his wife, and his two daughters were pulled from Sodom. Lot and his daughters did not look back but verse 32 tells us where Lot's wife's heart was. It was back in Sodom.

WIFE DID NOT

32. **Remember Lot's wife.**"

We are not to forget what Lot's wife did. She looked back and was judged for that. Lot's wife was out of Sodom but Sodom was not out of Lot's wife. Her treasure was in Sodom.

NOAH, DANIEL, AND JOB DELIVERED

Ezekiel 14:20-21 "Though Noah, Daniel, and Job, *were* in it, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, **they shall deliver neither son nor daughter**; they shall *but* deliver **their own souls by their righteousness**. These three men give us examples of how a man of God should respond in a time of trouble. Verse 21 tells us what the conditions were where these men might be living. When the words sword, famine, wild beast, and pestilence are mused upon, they give a vivid picture of what these men experienced.

IN TIMES OF TROUBLE

21. For thus saith the Lord GOD; How much more when I send my four sore judgments upon Jerusalem, the **sword**, and the **famine**, and the **noisome beast**, and the **pestilence, to cut off** from it **man** and **beast**?"

The phrase "to cut off from it man and beast." shows how bad times can be come, yet, Noah, Daniel,

and Job would make it through them. The phrase "to cut off" simply put means to be killed. These men deliver themselves by their righteousness. They can not give this to any one. They prepared and had the spiritual strength to endure hard times and they could not give the results of preparation to any in their generation.

NOAH WARNED

Hebrews 11:7 "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; by the which he **condemned** the world, and **became heir** of the **righteousness** which is by **faith**."

We have been warned with a wake up call, in a sense, by the tragedy that happened on September 11. God gave Noah a wake up call when he told Noah that he would destroy the earth by a flood. Noah responded to the wake up call but doing something about it. First thing that Noah had that moved him into action was the fear of God. He believed God and moved to prepare for the coming judgment. Will we continue to eat, drink, marrying and giving in marriage with no regard to the fact that we need to make some adjustments in our spiritual life. Will our vigilance in watching be increased so that it will change our life style? Will our prayer life increase? These are all questions that we need to be asking ourselves and then start making adjustment to comply with this exhortation.

JOB ENDURED

James 5:11 "Behold, we count them happy which **endure**. Ye have heard of the **patience of Job**, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy."

Job is a good example to us because he was a man that did not quit, he endured. The word *endure* and the word *patience* are the same Greek word. Again, Job was a man that would not quit even in hard times. He would not let his dear wife discourage him in the things of the Lord. He did not let his friends discourage him in the things of the Lord. We need to endure, living by the counsel of the Lord and not giving in to the counsel of our friends, even though they sound very spiritual.

DANIEL PURPOSED IN HIS HEART

Daniel 1:8 "But Daniel **purposed in his heart** that he would **not defile himself**"

Daniel is a good example of one who purposed in his heart to do the right thing. There was no debate as to his life style. He was not going to let the life style of a king change him so that he could live a separated life so he would not become defiled.

DANIEL STUDIED THE WORD

Daniel 10:11-12 "And he said unto me, O **Daniel**, a man greatly **beloved, understand** the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling.

Daniel was a man that studied the Word of God. Daniel desired to understand what the Word of God meant so he could respond to it in obedience.

SET HIS HEART

12. Then said he unto me, **Fear not, Daniel:** for from the first day that thou didst **set thine heart to understand**, and to **chasten thyself before thy God**, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words."

Verse 12 gives us insight in to the fact that Daniel wanted to understand the Word of God and he set his heart to study and pray until he did. What Daniel was studying was the signs of his day prophesied by the prophet Jeremiah. He read about 70 years in captivity. He put some figures together and saw that 70 years seemed to be coming to an end. Daniel wanted to know what that meant and what that would mean to him.

Daniel chasten himself before God. What this means is that Daniel forced himself to do things that would be pleasing to the Lord. Being a man of the Word and disciplined he would not be carried away by the deceivers of his day.

It says in verse 12 that “thy words were heard.” This simply means that Daniel was a man of prayer. We know that Daniel prayed three times a day whether it meant spending the night in a lion’s den or not. All of would enjoy a lion’s den experience. I know I would, especially if we knew that it would turn out the way that it did. Daniel did not know that the lion’s would have a bad case of lock jaw even though they were starving. They could not even lick Daniel to death.

IN THE DAY OF TROUBLE

Nahum 1:7 "The LORD *is* good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him."

I want the Lord to know me. The Lord is going to say to many in that day, “I never knew you.” I need to convince myself that the Lord is good and that he is a strong hold in the day of trouble. We are living in a day of trouble and strongholds are places of safety and being with the Lord is going to let him know that we trust is strong hold.

The, so called, wake up call has been given. What are we going to do in these days. Are we going to be like Noah, Daniel, and Job or are we going to go about our business of sowing and reaping, marrying and given in marriage; eating and drinking; or are we going to be watching and praying. May God give us grace to do the right thing. Watch and Pray!