

A New Year ... A New Day ... A New Life...?

Darkness overtakes one part of the world, and light takes over another

Those of us living in the northern hemisphere just passed a milestone in the year which marked the end of the darkest days for this season. The day of the winter solstice is a date marked by many people (though certainly not all) when there is a grand looking forward to brighter days—literally. The earth has passed the point in its orbit when our tilt is no longer at its furthest from the sun, and the daily sunset gets imperceptibly later and later until we begin again to see the nights drawing in at the time of the summer solstice. Of course, in the southern hemisphere, the complete opposite is true; our bright day is their darkest. Only at the equinoxes in the spring and the fall do we share equal night and day times.

To miss the opportunity for drawing a spiritual parallel would be a true shame. In the Book of Luke, chapter 21, Jesus is recorded as saying that there are to be signs marking the end of all things normal this side of the Second Coming, and when these things begin, we should lift up our heads, for our “redemption draweth nigh.” If you

will, there will come a time, not discernable by all, when we shall begin to see the light of eternity extending across the horizon. “Draweth nigh,” said Jesus. Not quite here, but getting closer all the time. It is perhaps not by accident that God has made the dawn to appear a most beautiful time of the day.

For most of us on planet earth, the grand celestial movements of our world pass by without being noticed, just like the track of the sun across the sky; were it not for shadows, we probably would pay very little attention to the movement of the sun.

Among the people who are most interested in the grand celestial clockwork timepiece are farmers—seed sowers. They know when to cast their seed into the soil. Guided, literally, by the movement of heavenly bodies, they know when to sow, when to walk away, and when to harvest. The marvellous miracle of life happens at all the right times, and, we might say, with very little human help, other than the casting of the seed into the soil in the first place.

Perhaps a day will come when there will be no need for these grand object lessons we see in everyday life, though it seems doubtful; we don’t see spiritual realities the same way God does. Perhaps God enjoys sharing with us realities about Himself by calling on things familiar to us.

For now, surely we must realize that the earth has passed its zenith; seriously, how much darker can it get? Surely we are on the way to a great dawn; each day getting a little darker with fewer opportunities for evangelism; each opportunity more challenging than the last, though no less rewarding.

If you are of that ilk that mentally ponders a list of dos and don’ts at the beginning of each year, do include a line that will remind you to reach out this year—to someone, somewhere; near or far. Sadly, we don’t have to look far for a place to shed light; much of the world lives in darkness, even at the height of noon. But remember this: though much of the world is getting darker, at the same time in much of the world the light is growing stronger and yet brighter, because (as the hymn goes) the Golden Morning is Fast Approaching. Lift up your head, and help others do the same. Get involved with, or sponsor, some project which is designed to reach out to our dying world. A minute from midnight is still a minute—use it wisely.

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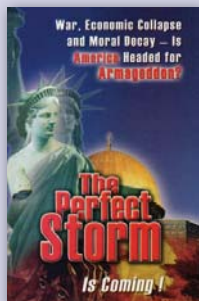
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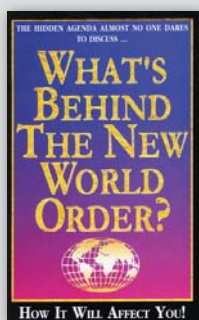


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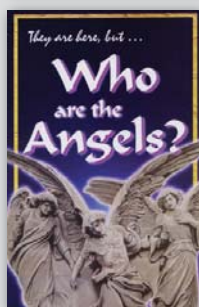
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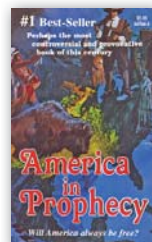
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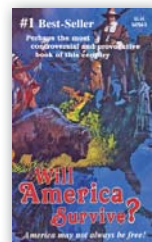


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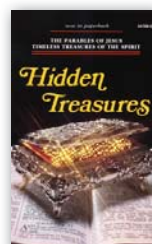
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