

As A Thief In The Night

By Ron Boatwright

"For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night" (1 Thessalonians 5:2). A thief does not call you on the phone and tell you that he is going to rob you tonight. When he robs you, you wake up in the night and he is there. The same will be with the appearance of the Lord at His second coming. No one knows when our Lord will come again. It will be a total surprise. Jesus says, "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of Heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father" (Mark 13:32).

When our Lord comes, it will happen in a split second. "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (1 Corinthians 15:52). We must constantly be prepared for the Lord's coming again. We will not have any time to get ready or change after He does come. "Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you" (Revelation 3:3). We must be ready now. "Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame" (Revelation 16:15). "Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect" (Matthew 24:44).

Our Lord's coming will be a great and wonderful day for those who are prepared, but for those who are not prepared it will be horrible and beyond description, since it will be the beginning of their eternal punishment. "The Lord Jesus is revealed from Heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power" (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9). Everyone will know when our Lord does come the second time, because "every eye will see Him" (Revelation 1:7).

There will be those members of the Lord's church who will then discover they are lost because of their unfaithfulness and other sins of which they have not repented. But it will be too late then to get one's life right. "The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who

has ears to hear, let him hear" (Matthew 13:41-43). Notice there will be those who will be gathered out of His kingdom, the church, and be cast into the eternal fires of Hell. These are members of the Lord's church who are going to be lost in Hell. They are servants of the lord. Jesus is telling us that we had better listen up.

But why are some members of the Lord's church going to be lost? "But his lord answered and said to him, you wicked and lazy servant. And cast the unprofitable servant into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matthew 25:26, 30). These are members of the Lord's church who are going to be lost because they are unprofitable and lazy or they have wickedness in their lives of which they have not repented. We must repent of any sin in our lives and get busy now in working for our Lord.

When our Lord does come, this earth and everything in it is going to be completely destroyed. This world will no longer have a use in God's plan. "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness?" (2 Peter 3:10-11). Let's get ready now and stay ready. Are you ready?