

“THEN COMES THE MORNING”

By Averine Pennington, June 18, 2020

I'm coming to you this morning with just a message that the Lord has laid on my heart. This is not a dream, nor a prophetic word of 'thus saith the Lord', just a series of thoughts that have been being tossed about in my mind for the last three days. Perhaps the Lord wants me to share these things with you, since He will not let my mind rest about this subject.

On Monday, June 15th, I woke up with this tune in my head. It was a song that I have not thought of in many years. God seems to be doing that a lot lately, so much so that I have started writing the titles of the songs down and looking up the lyrics. I don't want to miss a thing that my Lord may be using to feed my soul. The title of this particular song was "Then Came the Morning", written by Dottie Rambo. I would encourage you, if you have the time, to look up a video of it and give it a listen. You will be surely blessed. The song is about 'resurrection morning' when it was discovered that the stone had been rolled away and our Savior, Jesus Christ, was not dead but ALIVE! O glorious day!

Anyway, so I have been going around the house singing this song and cannot for the life of me get it out of my head. Again, this morning (Thursday), I awake with this song on my mind. Well, I made myself a cup of coffee and sat down for my morning Bible study. I opened the scriptures randomly as I often do and my eyes fell upon Matthew 27:1. Let me share with you, I just about choked on my coffee when I read the first few words . . . "When the morning was come . . ." That got my attention, big time! I was off and running, chasing down any rabbit trail the Lord may lead me on.

Well I glanced up to the verses immediately above that verse to get the context of where I am reading. This is what I found. "And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, **Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.** And he went out, and **wept bitterly**" (Matt. 26:75). If you read that chapter, you will find the account of Peter, one of Christ's most devoted disciples, denying his Master three times. Then I read the verses following in Matt. 27. Beginning in vs. 3 you will find the account of what happened to Judas, the disciple who betrayed Jesus. He recognized his sin in betraying innocent blood and tried to return the 30 pieces of silver. His remorse was so great that he took his own life. As I read these words, what jumped out to me was the portrayal of TWO MEN and how their lives had intersected with our Lord with two different outcomes. Their behavior was recorded in the annals of history for all with access to God's Word to read about, to analyze, to teach Bible studies from.

The question crossed my mind . . . How would I feel if my life, especially my failures, were to be written down for all the world to read about? The more I thought about that, I came to the conclusion that I would be okay with it if my Lord could receive any glory from it. Can you imagine how many people may be able to see themselves in the example of Peter's life. Yes, we can mess up terribly! We can forget who we are and take our eyes off Jesus. But all does not have to be lost. Though Peter denied Christ three times, he was forgiven and went on to do great things for the kingdom. He also gave his life for the cause of Christ.

What about Judas? Can we glean any good thing from his life's example? Nobody wants to be associated with him in any way. I think even parents avoid naming their children 'Judas' for fear it may

reflect badly on their child. We know that Judas was zealous of making Jesus into who he wanted him to be . . . the long-awaited Messiah (King) that would rule and reign and 'make Israel great again.' When things didn't play out just exactly the way he thought they should, Judas took matters into his own hands. Perhaps he thought he could force Jesus into the 'box' he thought he should be in. Only God knew his true heart. I have often wondered whether or not events would have played out differently if he had not taken his own life. Could there have been forgiveness offered? Once he drew his last breath, that option was no longer available. We do read in John 17:12 that Judas' life had purpose . . . Jesus himself prayed to the Father . . . 12) **"While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition, that the scripture might be fulfilled."** It is sad to say, but someone had to be the one to betray Jesus so that the scriptures might be fulfilled and we might have eternal life through the One who gave his life on the cross for us.

We know, God has a Master Plan and it will come to pass . . . it is WRITTEN, unchangeable, forever settled in the heavens. Who knows how we all fit into that plan? Do you ever wonder that your life may have to take a certain course so that scripture may be fulfilled? There is so much happening as I type this. Scripture is being fulfilled now at a rapid pace. When God awakened me over a year ago as to the times we are living in, He gave me the scriptures in Ezekiel 12. He proclaimed it loud and clear that His Words would not be prolonged anymore, but the Word would be done! We are out of time! Get ready to do your part if you are not already at it. Perhaps you will be one that is betrayed by a family member during the time of persecution. You may be one that is thrown into prison and tortured. You may be one that is deceived by one of the many false prophets. You may be one that preaches the gospel in all the world for a witness to the nations. You may be among those chosen to do great exploits. You may be a worker in God's great end-time harvest. You may even be martyred for His name's sake. All those words will be fulfilled by someone! Could it be YOU? Are you ready to submit your life to Christ to be used for whatever purpose he so chooses? Folks, this is not a decision that can be delayed. You can't wait until the last moment, while in the midst of chaos, to decide. Today is the day. Are you ready to stand for Jesus?

I read a post on this site a couple of days ago by our sister Judy Reynolds entitled "Hold Fast." It so pricked my heart that I researched and wrote down four pages of scriptures pertaining to the subject. It was eye opening! The word 'fast' in this context, has nothing to do with speed, but everything to do with tenacity, being firmly fixed (deeply rooted), securely attached (for a few examples from scripture, see Hebrews 3:6, 4: 14, 10:23). We are in the time **NOW** where we must be **'holding fast.'** I literally weep for my fellow believers who are still sleeping. They want to stick their heads in the sand and pretend that things will go back to what they perceive as their 'normal.' They like being in their complacent 'happy place.' I am so grieved that people I love and respect will not listen, will not open their eyes. I am not the only one that weeps. Our Lord weeps. His church, His beloved, cannot be shaken from her slumber. In His mercy, He must send judgment. Only when judgment comes will many be awakened.

I believe it is imperative that we as Christians stay informed on current events. If you just glance at the headlines, you will know that Bible prophecy is being fulfilled on a moment by moment basis now. The more I research, the more I see just how far along we are, how deeply the enemy has infiltrated into every area of our lives. Satan is so subtle, just as he was with Eve. He's using the same bag of tricks and we do not even recognize his deception. Many are falling away, accepting his delusions. We all know

that in God's sight, ALL LIVES MATTER. To that end, many good and upright people of all faiths and walks of life are hopping on the bandwagon to support what they see as social injustice. God knows your hearts if you are truly hoping to make a difference, but please be cautious as to the wiles of the enemy. It is his plan to cause chaos and offer the solution to the problem that he started in the first place. This is the way he will bring in his man for the hour, the Anti-Christ. Satan hates humanity! He is laughing as he watches God's precious children, all created in God's image, fight each other. This battle in the streets of our cities right now, is not about the color of anyone's skin. It is about good versus evil, righteousness versus wickedness, light versus darkness! It is the battle of the ages, nothing new, it began in the garden of Eden! "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places (Eph. 6:12)." Our enemy is not our brother, but Satan and all his minions. We are commanded to love our brother as ourselves! That is not a suggestion! If you are obedient you will follow God's commands. As children of the living God, we must be careful that we do not unknowingly drink the 'Koolaid' that our enemy has placed before us. Satan would like nothing more than to see a child of God stumble and fall and not rise again. We must guard our hearts, our tongues, our steps and make sure that we are remaining on the narrow path. Now is the time to seek God's counsel and guidance in all things, no matter how big or small.

Don't be like Peter, thinking you can handle anything. There may come a time when you will face something insurmountable. You may come to the realization that you are not as strong as you think. Don't rely on your own ability to 'hold fast'. Ask for God's help. He will be there for you anytime, and every time, you need Him. HE WILL NEVER LET GO OF YOU! One of my favorite verses is Deut. 31:8. I read it every morning as I have placed it on a post-it note on my bathroom mirror. "And the Lord, he it is that doth go before thee; he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed."

Neither should we be like Judas, trying to fit God into the little box we have made for Him. His ways are so far above our ways. Why don't we just trust and obey, knowing that He has everything under control. Nothing happens that OUR GOD does not allow. Need proof? Read the book of Job. He is even allowing Satan to have his allotted time upon the earth to make war against the saints. God Almighty knows who wins in the end. Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son, has already won the victory! Yes, we are heading into some very difficult and uncertain times. The Bible says that the events that are to come will be unprecedented . . . never happened before in the history of mankind, and never will again! But when all is said and done, Jesus said in Matt. 24:35 . . . **"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."**

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men." ----- "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." (John 1:1-4, 10-12) "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea (Rev. 21:1)." **"And, behold I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.** Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city (Rev. 22:12-14)."

We are approaching the time when creation will have come full circle. Every jot and tittle of God's Word will be fulfilled. If you are a part of God's bride, it's time to get your invitations out to everyone you know. "And the Spirit and the bride say, COME. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely (Rev. 22:17)" No, we cannot send a 'save the date' announcement as the date is unknown to anyone but God the Father. But we have already heard the cry that went out at midnight saying, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him." Will you be ready when the bridegroom comes? There will come a day when it will be too late to accept the invitation to spend eternity in heaven. Your choice will have been made by your lack of response. "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still (Rev. 22:11)."

Oh, my dear brothers and sisters, whoever you are, wherever you are . . . please, please seek the Lord now. He will meet you right where you are. All you have to do is call out to Him. If you are worried that you don't know what to say or how to pray, just call out His name, **J-E-S-U-S**. He will hear your heartfelt cry. I promise, He is waiting for you with open arms. If you make that choice, you will get to see what John the Revelator saw in Rev. 22. "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. And **there shall be no night there**; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever."

Truly, truly . . . THEN COMES THE MORNING! Forever and ever! Amen!