

Winter

by Wayne Goff

Winter is nature's **death**. What sprang to life a few months ago has now died — trees have lost their leaves, grass has turned brown, animals shiver in the cold and die without proper protection. Farmers have harvested their crops and already plowed their fields in preparation for next Spring. It is cold, dreary, often cloudy, and quietly sad. But there is a certain kind of serenity to winter. If you happen to be outside on a cold, cloudy, winter day, you can feel the brisk wind on your ears and cheeks, you can hear the crunch of snow under your boots, you can smell a nearby fireplace and imagine the warm hearth, and you know the winter's sun will not be around for very long. There is not much to do outside in the winter that is productive. Nature's death has its own serenity.

Americans are a fast-paced people. With all the technology, electricity, and entertainment at our finger tips, you can almost miss winter's quiet, serene calm. But mankind needs a winter's rest every year, and God suggests that a Sabbath's rest is good for the body and soul as well. It's a shame that we have found a way to miss out on this time.

Jesus warned His disciples of the coming destruction of Jerusalem and told them to *"pray that your flight may not be in water or on the Sabbath"* (Matt. 24:20). It's hard to travel in the winter months, and it can be deadly. The apostle John recorded only once that *"Now it was the Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem, and it was winter"* (Jn. 10:22). Paul suggested that he might spend a winter in Corinth (1 Cor. 16:6), and when he was imprisoned in Rome he told Timothy, *"Do your utmost to come before winter"* (2 Tim. 4:21).

Winter is a wonderful time to study and meditate on God's Word. It's a time to reflect over the past year's busyness, and to take stock of one's life. Did you spend this past year wisely, or foolishly? Did you take advantage of your opportunities that may only come once? Do not take life for granted! You never know when **the winter of death** may come upon you.

"...Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you; ... While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light..." (John 12:36).

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