

Winter Darkness

by Wayne Goff

There will be approximately 10 hours and 30 minutes of darkness today. Every day until December 21 the darkness will increase. A lack of sunlight can trigger a form of clinical depression we call **Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)**. Some of the more extreme symptoms include mood swings, anxiety, sleep problems and even suicidal thoughts. Fortunately we have fluorescent lights and vitamin D to help, but it still isn't the same as the good, healthy sunlight. A lack of sunlight is one of the reasons I am not a fan of this time of year. However, since God knows best, I accept His wisdom as greater than mine.

Biblically speaking, **"night"** or **"darkness"** symbolizes a lack of opportunity or even sin. *"You are all sons of light and sons of the day. **We are not of the night nor of darkness.** Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and **those who get drunk are drunk at night**"* 1 Thessalonians 5:5-7. So God teaches us that the truth of God's Word is "light" that illuminates our understanding and helps us know how to live righteously.

Jesus also used this symbolism when He said in the gospel of John: *"I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; **the night is coming when no one can work**"* (9:4). *"But **if one walks in the night, he stumbles**, because the light is not in him"* (11:10). So Jesus wanted us to know that the man who lives his life apart from the Gospel is one who does not understand his purpose in life, and does not avoid the sinful steps that lie before him. Ignorance is not bliss when it comes to morals.

An application that we can make of all this is simple: recognize that **spiritual, moral darkness** is caused by *ignorance* of God's Word and a *failure* to walk in God's precepts. In order to *"walk in the light"* (1 Jn. 1:7) one must read, study, meditate and walk according to the standard of the New Testament. *"Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, 'I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life'"* (John 8:12).

Sadly, there are those who **love darkness (sin)**. Jesus said *"And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and **men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.** For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed"* (John 3:19-20). In eternity will be reserved for them the **"blackness of darkness forever,"** 2 Peter 2:17.

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