

The Blackness of Darkness

by Wayne Goff

Let me begin by saying that I am still *learning* to appreciate every season of the year, and all is a gift from the wisdom and understanding of God (see Acts 14:15-17). Having said that, winter is a difficult time of year because of its pervading darkness. The winter solstice will be this Wednesday (Dec. 21) and it will be the shortest day of the year. That means there will be less sunlight that day than any other time of the year, and this represents the darkness that I do not enjoy. Even the Bible uses “**darkness**” as a representative of sin and evil!

My wife tries to cheer me up by explaining that every day **after** Wednesday will be a day with more light as we begin to *gain* daylight time again. But in my mind this is offset by the fact that we are also experiencing winter because of the **angle** of the earth **away** from the warmth of the sun (-23.4 degrees)! Now I suppose that the earth is gradually returning back in degrees toward the sun, but January and February are usually extremely cold, dark and dreary! On the average, we receive most of our snowfall in January and February, with the greatest accumulations coming during these months as well. Now that you are probably enjoying this “misery” with me, let’s make an application.

If you and I do not like darkness, then we had better do all that we can to avoid hell! The New Testament repeatedly speaks of the black darkness that pervades hell!

*“For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into **chains of darkness**, to be reserved for judgment;”* (2 Pet. 2:4).

*“These are wells without water, clouds carried by a tempest, for whom is reserved **the blackness of darkness forever**”* (2 Pet. 2:17). See also Jude 13.

Jesus repeatedly described hell as “**outer darkness**” (Matt. 6:12; 22:13; 25:30). Marvin Vincent explains that in the original language the order of words is very forcible: “They shall be cast forth into the darkness, *the outer* (darkness).” The image is that of thick darkness of night!

Before you dismiss this horrible description, be warned that when men have been placed in solitary confinement in prison for days in a chamber without light, they often suffered severe mental and emotional consequences. Now imagine this being your destination for eternity!!

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