# **DESTINY BULLETIN**

A commentary sent to the supporters of the ministry of Christian Destiny.

Dear "Special Friend" of Christian Destiny,

**April 2006** 

# THIS LIFE -- THAT DAY The Ultimate Contrast

What is it really that makes life significant?

Every thinking individual, who takes the time to look about himself, is quite aware of the simple truism that this life is not everything. We all know that the fast-fleeting events of our human existence take wing very quickly and are soon but a memory. No reasonable observer of this life can fail to notice that time, like an ever widening stream, bears all her sons away. All who would be thought intelligent must read and heed the Word of God, which says, "For what is your life? It is even a vapor, that appears for a little time, and then vanishes away" (James 4:14).

If this be true, that life is a thin and vaporous thing, how then can it be lived with significance? If we could disappear from this world in a day, if this life is such an expiring thing, wherein lies the substance?

We have the answer to that question in the words of our Lord Jesus Christ. After speaking about the inevitability of His return to judge the world, Jesus said, "Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with dissipation, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that you may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man" (Luke 21:34-36).

Christ says many things in this passage, but we must especially notice that He speaks about "this life" and also about "that day." The wise person will note this statement and will never forget that there is a direct connection between the two, "this life" and "that day."

What is "this life"?

This life -- this pleasing, anxious being -- is a swirling round of activity which is fascinating indeed. It includes the immaturity and joy of childhood, the tests of the teen-age years, the responsibilities of adulthood, the years of sedentary review, the diminishing of our human strength, then finally the appearance at the gates of heaven.

Christ reminded us that it is so very possible to be "overcharged" with the matters that have to do with this life. The Bible teaches on every page that it is a great mistake to let this world and its fascinations become the whole story of life.

#### For the World

We find an answer to that question in the Word of God which says, "But now [God] commands all men every where to repent: Because He has appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He has ordained; whereof He has given assurance unto all men, in that He has raised Him from the dead" (Acts 17:30,31). We see, therefore, that there is a day of judgment for all the world which is an inevitable event coming in a given day in the future.

What a day that will be! That will be the day in which every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. Every person who is a member of a system called "the world" will be judged before the throne of God. This is why Jesus Christ most strongly warned us that every day of this life must be lived in the light of that day. By so speaking, He was surely telling us that every event of life, every action, every thought, every word is constantly under the careful scrutiny of heaven. The recording angel makes careful notes of all that we do and the reasons behind our doings.

Let no man in the world ever forget that there are consequences for every action. There are some who

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may fortunately see those consequences in this life. Fortunately, because such human comeuppance may lead them to repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. To receive in one's life early evidence of the ultimate judgment of God is a most fortuitous occurrence. Such a person may thereby become a Christian.

#### For the Christian

We must also remember that there is a specific day of judgment for the Christian as well. This judgment day is very different from the judgment day which the world will see. The world will stand before the Great White Throne where every person will be analyzed before that great tribunal. About that the Scripture says, "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:15). This is the second death.

What a contrast is the judgment day for the Christian! Of this the Bible says, "Wherefore we labor, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of Him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he has done, whether it be good or bad" (II Cor. 5:9,10).

How gratifying to remember that this day of judgment for the Christian is not a judgment unto salvation or damnation. When we believe the Gospel of Christ, our salvation is settled. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:1). Rather, the judgment seat of Christ has to do with rewards. When a Christian lives this life in the light of that day, he lays up for himself rich rewards in heaven (Matt. 6:20).

What then may a believer do in order to be assured of the inheritance of heavenly treasures? What should his activity be in this life in order to be rewarded in that day?

Activities that are commended in the Word of God as having eternal implications are among the following:

- (1) A wise and earnest witness for the Lord. Daniel must have been delighted to be empowered to promise all believers in all time saying, "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever" (Dan. 12:3). How many of the efforts of believers are interesting but have nothing to do with turning many to righteousness? The wise Christian knows that activities are mostly nugatory that do not bring people to faith in the Savior.
- (2) Sincere service for the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ gave us the account of servants appointed with the words "Occupy till I come" (Luke 19:13). The ones who wisely invested the gifts from the nobleman's treasury were told, "Well done, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities" (Luke 19:17). In our time, service for Christ must mean the readiness to respond to His call and to do, give, pray, move as He commands.
- (3) A life of good works. Who cannot help but be inspired and motivated by reading the Word which says, "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, says the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them" (Rev. 14:13). Perceptive Christians know, of course, that we are not saved by the performance of works to God. However, we never forget that the Scripture says, "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10). When we realize that our works will follow us to heaven, we read an admonition like this with great seriousness.

"This life" and "that day," what a contrast! The lessons of these two days is clear. We can only live today this life successfully when it is lived in the light of "that day." No Christian is mistaken to ask of every event in life, "What difference will this make in eternity? How will this be viewed from heaven's point of view?"

Obviously, then, we must flee like the plague any involvement, any concession, any of this world's passing flirtations which do not have the potential of eternal value. This because heaven is not only a place of itself. No indeed, it is also that place and those principles which alone make the days of this life significant. "Will I be proud to answer to God for the things which I have done this very day?" If the answer is in the negative, it is most obviously a time for a change! Remember "this life" and "that day!"

#### WHERE SIN ABOUNDED

These are days in which a tidal wave of iniquity seems to be breaking upon our Western civilization faces the prospect of being overwhelmed by hordes of heathen armies from without and mounting waves of pagan principles from within. One could argue, that, as Churchill said during the depths of World War II, "A cataract of ruin has come upon us." The rise of crime rages in our streets, our prisons are overcrowded, the AIDS contagion ravages our youth, venereal disease grows exponentially, divorce cancels one half of our marriages, staggering debt consumes our patrimony the list of morose developments goes on and on. A generation ago, hardly anyone conceived of the quick and precipitous degeneration which has come upon us There can be no doubt that sin abounds in our world.

The rise of iniquity is made more dangerous by the shamelessness of our time. People boast of iniquity and the promoters publicize it in modern insults to the intelligence called "soap operas" and "adult movies." What men were and once ashamed to do by the darkness of midnight they now practice under the noonday sun. Sin, which is followed by shamelessness, is the prelude to cultural reprobation.

But wait – we have a marvelous promise in Scripture which applies to times like these. It is given to us by the Apostle Paul in his magnificent treatise, the book of Romans, when he says, "But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound" (Rom. 5:20). Here we have a promise that should cause the Christian heart to leap with delight in the midst of the burdens of this world. The promise of this Word from God is wonderful indeed.

It is the promise that God sees, God understands and God responds to a situation such as we see in our time. How does He respond? He responds with an outpouring of grace which is greater in quantity and quality than the sinfulness of our world. It is the promise that, in this period of history, God continues to deal with our world by grace. Despite man's awful iniquity, He gives him "space to repent." Stronger than the moral diseases which have come upon our world, larger than the problems before us is the marvelous grace of Jesus Christ. It is indeed, grace that is greater than all our sin.

More than often, the Bible promises the powerful response of God against a tide of iniquity. Isaiah gave us the promise "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him" (Isa. 59:19). What a promise! That standard, of course, is not simply a flag on a pole. No indeed, it is the lives, the prayers, the sacrifice, the godly living and especially the testimony of believing Christians. We are the divine representatives whom God uses in a world like this to stem the tide of iniquity. Knowing Christ, we are made stronger than all that the world may press against us. "Who is he that overcomes the world, but he that believes that Jesus is the Son of God?" ( I John Therefore, we have the wonderful *5:5*). promise which should be the object of our daily confidence: "Greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world" (I John 4:4).

Therefore, in these days of mounting iniquity, the Christian must not succumb to discouragement or depression. The false lights of our foolish world are blinking out one by one. This means that the light of the Gospel can now shine more brightly with greater effect than ever. Count on it!

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It's springtime 2006--what a wonderful time of year! We are about to celebrate the world's most important miracle, the most glorious event in the history of mankind, the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Happy Easter to you! The resurrection makes possible the great reality of "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27). Christianity is the inner presence of our living Lord.

There are a lot of people who believe that God is basically against us, that He is a sadist, and that He wants to inflict pain upon people. After all, we see war and suffering and sickness and poverty and painful difficulties in most of our lives. As a result, many people have been tempted to misinterpret God and say things about Him that are not true.

First of all, the resurrection means

that you and I are forgiven of all of our sins. The Apostle Paul speaks most pointedly of this when he says that Jesus Christ "was delivered for our offenses, and raised again for our justification" (Romans 4:25). Did our dear Savior simply die as the hopeless martyr for a lost cause? The answer is "no," He is our glorious Savior. He triumphed over sin on Calvary's cross and we have evidence of this-the resurrection. Having been justified by His blood, we are confident of eternal salvation because Christ was raised again "because of" our justification. Christ declares all who believe in the finished work of the cross to be perfectly righteous. The proof of this is the resurrection. How

In the resurrection of Christ there is a new life to live. Speaking about His post-resurrection life, Jesus said, "Because I live, you shall live also" (John 14:19). Make no mistake about it, Christianity is a faith to believe, but it is also a life to live. The life of

marvelous is imputed righteousness!

God in the lives of men is what Christ promised, and the proof of the validity of that promise was His own resurrection. The empty tomb proves it all!

In the resurrection of Christ there is power for all occasions. Stating the great remaining ambition of his life, the Apostle Paul said, "That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection" (Phil. 3:10). Thus the Bible teaches that Christ takes up His residence within us. The Apostle Paul declares that His presence produces power, authority, capability, overcoming strength within us to live a life that is equal to every occasion. The Christian should be a vibrantly alive person indeed!

Therefore, as we celebrate the Easter season once again, we must remember that the resurrection of our dear Savior-the Lord Jesushas awe some consequences in the life of all of us who believe. In these present hours, Christ is our enabling capability for all occasions. As we celebrate this Easter season, let us also consider the millions of our world who do not know the forgiveness and presence of Christ in their lives. We must pray that there will once again be that overwhelming curiosity on the part of the lost to know the Lord Jesus and His life within. Having prayed, let us do what we can in order that others will be brought to the place where they will believe on Jesus Christ and have everlasting life. Remember that the resurrection is a part of the Gospel. The whole Gospel is the marvelous announcement that "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (I Cor. 15:3,4). Think of it, any person who believes that Jesus died on the cross for his sins as the Son of God and rose again, that person is given the marvelous gift of everlasting life. God offers this gift to all!

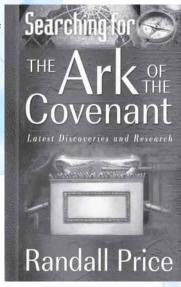
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by Randall Price

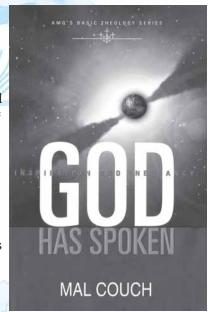
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The Secrets of Megiddo Revealed



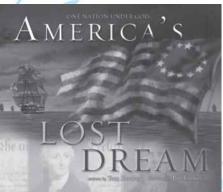
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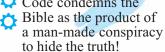
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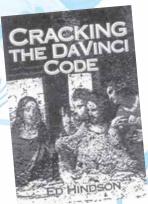


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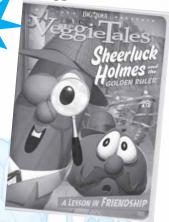
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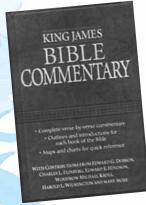


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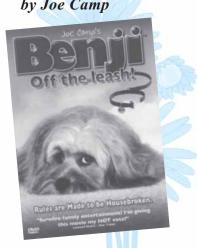


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