



The Ark Community

96: The return of Christ (Part 2)

In our last 'Food for Thought' we spoke of three major signs Jesus asked us to watch for which would indicate the time of His return, these were: Israel's acceptance of Jesus as their Messiah (***the Messianic Jewish Movement***); Worldwide geographical and metrological catastrophes and global pandemics, (***signs in the sky and upon the earth***), and thirdly, the unity of the Church as a precursor for the prophesied global evangelization prompting His return for His Bride without "spot or blemish"..! ***"Father make them ONE so that the world will believe You sent Me."***

The forth sign of our times I'd like to mention is the point I began with last time, and that is **Love**: - Jesus warns us that in the end times, ***"Because of lawlessness, the love of many will grow cold."*** [Matt 24:12]. The word used for love in this scripture is '**AGAPE**', the God kind of love. This is the LOVE that the Holy Spirit pours into the hearts of **Believers** [Rom 5:5]. Here, Jesus is not referring to the unsaved and their evil ways, as is commonly interpreted, but He is warning us Christians that one of the signs of the end, will be the ***Christians losing their ability to love their unsaved neighbor***, due to their neighbor's "lawless" lifestyle. Instead of being drawn to our prodigal Brothers and Sisters in love, to bring them home, we remain distant, disgusted by their sin, fearful that mixing with them will cause us to be infected by their sinful lifestyles – *as if darkness is mightier than light...?!* We need to remember our mission within the times we live – ***"For God so loved the world, He gave His only Son"*** and we share in this apostolic ministry: to offer Christ to the world. Christ died publically on the street, let's not keep Him locked up in our Churches!

In closing – Jesus shared an image of what we can expect at the end – '***The marriage feast of the Lamb.***' In His parable in the Gospel of Matthew [22:1-14], He tells us a story of a certain King who was a Father, who sent out his servants to invite the family guests (***Israel***), to the Wedding Feast, but they refused to come and so the Father sent the servants out to the streets to invite the strangers who weren't originally invited (***Gentiles***) – they (*us*) came! But the Father of the Groom found one guest not wearing a wedding garment – and judged the man unworthy to remain at the feast – the Father expelled him and sent him into outer darkness..! I pondered on this..."*The man was invited to the feast but was then expelled?*" His inappropriate attire was a reflection of the fact that he was not at the feast to celebrate the Son's marriage – he showed no respect or involvement in the celebration – **he was at the feast for his own benefit** – he was there for the food and drink, not to celebrate the marriage of the Son – he was at the party for what he could get out of it, not because he loved the Father's Son..! This guest didn't have the right motive and reason for partaking in the feast. The apostle James captures this well when he says, ***"I will show you my faith by my works, faith without works is dead."*** [James 2:14-18].

The Guest at the Feast was not dressed in a Wedding garment..! The apostle John writes the following in the book of Revelation, ***"And to her (the Bride of Christ), it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints."*** [Rev 19:8]. Jesus said, ***"Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame"***, [Rev 16:15]. He later says, ***"He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels."*** [Rev 3:5].

Brothers & Sisters, our '**RIGHTEOUS ACTS**' are our Wedding Garment of fine linen – our righteous acts are our '**ACTS OF LOVE**' – us loving our prodigal Brothers & Sister back home..! Let us be mindful of our times – let us be found at the Marriage supper of the Lamb dressed in our Wedding Garments of Faith in God and Love & Charity towards our fellow prodigal Brother and Sister – Let faith guide us home to love – God is love, and in Him there is no darkness. ***"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."*** [Rev 3:6]

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