

THE UPWARD CALL

*Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet;
but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead,
I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God*

IN CHRIST JESUS.

(Philippians 3.13-14 NASB)

#02-0847

AUGUST 1, 2008

THE BRIGHT AND MORNING STAR

“I, Yeshua [Yahshua], have sent my angel to testify these things to you for the assemblies [ecclesias]. I am the root and the offspring of David; the Bright and Morning Star.” (Revelation 22.16 HNV [TSS/CV])

I love this verse, for it speaks the very heart of our Lord. I have chosen to use the Hebrew Names Version to highlight the Hebrew and more authentic name of our Lord, not the Latinized and Greek transliterated name. In the English translations, it reads, **“I, Jesus.”** Names are important, and our Lord’s name is *Yahshua*, which means *Yahweh is salvation*, for **He will save His people from their sins** (Matthew 1.21). Nevertheless, the point I want to make is that this verse is a very personal word to the Lord’s people.

When I read it, it is as if the Lord is speaking it directly into my heart. **“I, Yahshua!” “I, Jesus!”** He is speaking something very personal and loving. Our Lord is speaking to the heart of His people, the ecclesia, which is His body. He wants us to know His heart and to hear His voice.

As the root and offspring of David, our Lord directs our heart to His place as the King of kings. The angel of the Lord spoke to Mary: **“He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end”** (Luke 1.32-33 NASB). The root and offspring of David is the coming King, the King to rule over this earth and to sum up all things in the heavens and on the earth, all to the glory of the Most High God. Do you realize that the very kingdom of God is about to be established on this earth with God’s King seated upon the throne? Praise God!

As the One who saves His people, our Lord declares that He is the Bright and Morning Star, which speaks of the harbinger of a new day, His day, the day of our Lord. A new day, His day, is coming!

Have you ever looked out at the pre-dawn sky when all is dark? There is no moon and the sky seems to be at its darkest point. Yet there is one light that appears. On a cloudless night in the early hours before the sun rises, there is one star that shines so brightly. It sparkles in the dark. It is the bright morning star that appears so brightly before the sun rises. It is the harbinger, the forerunner, announcing that a new day is coming. The sun is about to break forth on the horizon, coming up, as if out of the earth, shining, blazing in a ball of glory. The sun arises, awakens the new day. When we see the morning star, it tells us that the day is not far off. The sun is coming. Wake up, for the new day dawns. Arise and shine!

When this morning star arises in the darkest of the night, it seems so all alone. No other stars are shining around it. It is as if all the other stars have gone to sleep; only one remains. This star is so brilliant, it even sparkles in the night, particularly in those cold morning hours when the entire world is asleep. You cannot take your eyes off this star. It is so all alone, so brilliant, even majestic. Yet, it is so distant, so far away. We only see it in such a small way. At times, as it sparkles in the night, it seems to be approaching us, reaching out to us. Is it moving toward us, or is it standing still? If only we could get closer to it and observe its beauty, its power, its glory.

But then as the sun begins to rise announcing the dawn of the new day, the morning star gives way to the majestic sun. What was all dark now becomes full of light. The sun begins to fill the whole earth with its radiance, shining ever so brightly. This brightness continues until it fills the day with its full light. We find ourselves enveloped with the bright noonday sun. It is so bright that we cannot look directly upon its radiance without being blinded. Oh, what glory we see in God's creation!

However, this is more than a picture of God's glory in His creation. It is a picture of His glory in His beloved Son. After having sent His angels to speak and testify to His people through John's vision on the isle of Patmos, our Lord speaks: "**I, Yahshua. I am the root and the offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star.**" What a tremendous encouragement!

The scenes that were unfolded to John when he was *in spirit in the Lord's day* were quite dramatic as the world was plunged into darkness under the yoke of Babylonian captivity. John saw the seals opened and the earth being ravaged by war, famine, and death. He saw the sun darkened, the moon becoming like blood, and stars of the sky falling to the earth. The earth was in a state of darkness until the glorious declaration went forth: **And the seventh messenger did sound, and there came great voices in the heaven, saying, 'The kingdoms of the world did become those of our Lord and of His Christ, and he shall reign to the ages of the ages!'** (Revelation 11.15 YLT). Then, heaven opened for all to see the King of kings coming to earth to take the scepter of the kingdom (Revelation 19.11-16).

But this was not the end, for John records that after Christ's 1,000-year reign with the conquerors, a new day will come when all is new. So, the world that was in darkness in John's vision began to come into the light of Christ until there was a new heaven and a new earth, and New Jerusalem that has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God illuminates it, and its lamp is the Lamb (Revelation 21.22-26).

It is with this backdrop that Yahshua, our Lord Jesus, concluded the revelation given to John on the isle of Patmos. **I am the Bright and Morning Star!** The great **I AM**, the One who declared that **before Abraham was born, I AM** (John 8.58), is speaking to His people, even this day. What an encouragement to all who find themselves in the darkness of this evil day.

Dear brethren, we are in that day; we are in the evil day under Babylonian captivity, and darkness is all around. But be encouraged; the Bright and Morning Star is shining in the darkness. Look up! Arise and shine, for your Savior is alive and well. He is our beacon to lead us through these evil days until the dawn of the new day when the Light of the world begins to rule over this world.

He is the Bright and Morning Star. He is the brilliant light that appears before the dawn of the new day. He is not just any ordinary luminary. He is Bright! The Greek word for *bright* is *lampros*, which, figuratively, means "magnificent or sumptuous." He is the Magnificent, the Sumptuous Star of the morning right before the dawn of a new day. He is the One who appears in the darkest of the night. He alone can lead us through this darkness. He alone will see us through to the end of this eon [age].

The world is asleep. It is asleep in its corruption and sin. It is asleep to the things of God. It is asleep to holiness and righteousness. It sleeps as the Morning Star shines ever so brightly in the great expanse of heaven, amongst the celestials, waiting for the day in which He will burst through the unseen realm to be manifested for all to see. But before the world at large gets to gaze upon His beauty and majesty and power, there is a select company of believers, Christ's conquerors who will be caught up to His presence to see Him as He is, to be fully conformed to His image, and to become His ambassadors of reconciliation. They are the firstfruits of His kingdom that will be transfigured into His glory.

Have you seen the Bright and Morning Star? Is He a light shining in your heart? Is He your beacon of hope in the evil day? He is coming soon, so hold fast to your hope and fix your eyes upon your Lord and Savior. He concluded the Revelation with these words: "**Yes, I am coming quickly.**"

Be encouraged; the day is coming, for our Lord has promised! Look up!