



Pastor's Note

No More Night

One of the peculiarities that sets practicing Jews apart from the rest of the world is different understanding of time. For God's people Israel, the new day starts at *sundown*. We notice this especially when we remember the Jewish holy days; for example, the Sabbath officially begins at sundown on Friday, and ends at sundown on Saturday. Yom Kippur, Rosh Hashanah, and all other special days begin at sundown, as well. The easiest way to explain this is that it comes from God Himself. If you read the creation account in Genesis 1-2, you find Moses continually writing statements like: "And there was evening, and there was morning, the first day" (Genesis 1:5, ESV). Israel read that, and from it took their understanding of time – of each day beginning with evening, and then moving to morning. Rather than understanding a day as beginning with light that eventually fades into darkness, God's people Israel have always seen things the other way around: a movement from darkness to light.

We, of course, have reversed that – and we have taken this paradigm and applied it to all of life. We all probably believe on a subconscious level that everything is moving not from darkness to light, but from light to darkness, from day to night, from youth to aging, from strength to weakness, from life to death. You can see it in most of our futuristic movies – they all tend to be dystopian these days, an imagined future in which everything is worse than it is now, when everything is falling apart. You see it also in so many older folks who despair at the thought that there isn't much left to live for – that all the best days and years are behind them. This idea of moving from light to darkness pervades all of our thinking, and it's a terribly hopeless way to think.

This isn't God's view of the world, though. Listen to what Messianic rabbi Jonathan Cahn writes on this:

The world moves from day to night. But in God, it is the opposite. It goes from night to day... from darkness to light...And if you belong to God, then that is the order of your life. You are to go from darkness to light, from weakness to strength, from despair to hope, from guilt to innocence, from tears to joy, from death to life. And every night in your life will lead to the dawn. So live according to God's sacred order of time...that your entire life be always moving away from the darkness and to the light.¹

This is how God views our world – and this is how God invites us to view our world, as well. We live in the darkness of sin, but now a light has dawned upon us in Jesus Christ, our Savior, the Light of the World (see John 1). And one day, that light will completely conquer all the darkness around us, just as a rising sun puts darkness to flight. When that day comes, when God finishes His re-creation of the new heavens and the new earth, there will be no more darkness – we will live with God Himself as our light (Revelation 21:23-24). To borrow some lyrics from a song I sang in college, we will have:

*No more night, no more pain,
No more tears, never crying again!
Praises to the great, "I am!"
We will live in the light of the risen Lamb!²*

This is our future, my friends – and this is our hope. Things may be dark and murky now, but God is at work in our world, moving things from darkness to light. We may be in the Valley of the Shadow of Death now, but one day, there will be no more night – the darkness will be behind us, and we will live in God's light. This means that the best is yet to come; it also means that we have all we need to stay faithful, to stay hopeful, and to stay joyful in the Lord, no matter what happens. Hallelujah!

So, the next time you are tempted to despair, or to believe that there is nothing left to live for, or nothing left to hope for, remember this truth: in Jesus Christ, we are moving from darkness to light! To Him alone be the glory!

In Christ's Love,
Joshua

¹ Jonathan Cahn, *The Book of Mysteries*. (Lake Mary, FL: FrontLine, 2016), day 15.

² Walter S. Harrah, "No More Night". Recorded by David Phelps. Copyright Warner/Chappell Music, Inc.