

The King Is Coming!

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Near the end of the 1983 film, *Star Wars: Episode VI – Return of the Jedi*, the Rebel Alliance after many years of conflict against the tyranny of the Galactic Empire discovered through its intelligence network the schematics and location of its ultimate weapon: the re-built planet destroyer called the Death Star. Furthermore, they found out that the emperor himself was overseeing the operation of this fearsome battle station. Many in this intelligence network sacrificed their lives to acquire this information.

The Rebel Alliance fleet gathered near the outer rim planet of Sullust. After finalizing their plans and with some words of exhortation, the fleet jumped into hyperspace and arrived at the planet Endor, the location of the Death Star. Though the Rebel forces suffered terrible losses, their ground combat team managed to destroy the shield generator protecting the Death Star, allowing Rebel starships to infiltrate the battle station's main reactor core and destroy it.

As the massive explosion of the Death Star faded in space, on the planet Endor the surviving Rebel Alliance pilots and soldiers set off fireworks in celebration of its destruction and the death of the emperor. The news spread quickly throughout the galaxy. On many worlds there were fireworks, hugs, and shouts and tears of joy celebrating freedom at last from the evil Galactic Empire and the restoration of the Republic.

While we do not have an evil galactic empire with which to contend, we too often go through terrible times and struggles such as illness, unemployment, or the death of loved ones. Corruption and injustice in society more times than not seems to be rewarded while seeking to live with integrity brings punishment.

Despair and frustration are among the feelings we may have as we encounter evil in the world, especially when it is so well-organized and widespread. Sometimes we are tempted to question how God could allow wicked individuals, nations, and other powerful entities to prosper as they oppress those unable to defend themselves against them (Habakkuk 1:2-4).

But the Lord assures all who trust in Him that though it may seem like it at times, evil people and times do not last forever. In His perfect time and way, the Lord will set things right. We just need to trust Him and wait for the outworking of His plan.

“Then the LORD answered me and said, ‘Record the vision and inscribe it on tablets, that the one who reads it may run. For the vision is yet for the appointed time; it hastens toward the goal and it will not fail. Though it tarries, wait for it; for it will certainly come, it will not delay. Behold, as for the proud one, his soul is not right within him; but the righteous will live by his faith.’” (Habakkuk 2:2-4)

“Though the fig tree should not blossom and there be no fruit on the vines, though the yield of the olive should fail and the fields produce no food, though the flock should be cut off from the fold and there be no cattle in the stalls, yet I will exult in the LORD, I will rejoice in the God of my salvation.” (Habakkuk 3:17-18)

But as we wait on the Lord, we should not go it alone. He has given us the gift of fellowship with each other, which comforts and encourages us in our journey on earth. Even if

the world at times is daunting and appears about to overcome and destroy us, together in Jesus we are provided the strength to endure because of who He is. We can patiently face the hardships and challenges of life with a steady, joyful hope because the love and support we have for each other in Christ sustains us.

“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.” (Hebrews 10:23-25)

“You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world.” (1 John 4:4)

In the gospel of Christ, bloodlines, skin color, ethnicity, and national origin do not matter. Only the blood of Jesus shed on the cross for the forgiveness of all who trust in Him matters. In Christ, believers of all nations are united to each other in one body (1 Corinthians 12:12-13; Ephesians 4:1-6) in love of God and of each other.

During the closing ceremonies of the Olympic games flag bearers of the nations come into the stadium together followed by the athletes from the countries those flags represent. The athletes, no longer competitors, come into the stadium as one body singing, dancing, and celebrating their common bond that they participated in the Olympic games, no matter to what nation they belonged.

“After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands; and they cry out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Salvation

to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.'"
(Revelation 7:9-10)

There is a greater unity the Lord grants all true believers from wherever they originate in the world. It is an unending bond of love and fellowship that continues into the greater celebration to come.

"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life." (John 5:24)

Believe in Christ Jesus and enter true rest, joy, and reconciliation with God. It is not only for other people. It is for you, too!

God beckoned Abraham to count the stars in the night sky and promised his descendants would be as numerous as they are (Genesis 15:1-6, 22:17-18). Jesus is the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham that in his seed all the families of the earth would be blessed (Genesis 12:1-3), for from his son Isaac, and his son Israel came the greatest expression of God's mercy and grace -- the Lamb of God who purchased with His blood an innumerable host of human beings from every tribe, tongue, people, and nation (Revelation 5:9-10, 7:9-10).

"To whom then will you liken Me that I would be his equal?' says the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high and see who has created these stars, the One who leads forth their host by number, He calls them all by name; because of the greatness of His might and the strength of His power, not one of them is missing." (Isaiah 40:25-26)

"When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained; what is man that You take thought of him, and the son of man that You care for him?" (Psalm 8:3-4)

This same Jesus, God in the flesh, who created the entire

universe by His powerful word, who sustains it by His might, knows our names. He loves you and me not merely generally, but particularly, personally. He loved us so much that He has delivered us from the wrath of God and has granted forgiveness for our sins. He is the keeper of all who trust solely in Him. Nothing in the universe can separate us from His love (Romans 8:38-39). Listen to Him (Matthew 17:1-8). You will not be disappointed.

In Christ we are not obsolete, deplorable, irredeemable, nonessential, or a pariah. Even if for a little while we suffer persecution or face death, we can do so with patience, hope, and calm assurance, for the Lord has reserved in heaven for us an imperishable inheritance worth far more than any amount of physical wealth or advantage in this life (1 Peter 1:3-9).

Those whom God saves through Jesus Christ will not be thrown away or lost. This certainty is guaranteed by Jesus Himself, who lived, died on the cross, and rose again on the third day to atone for our sin:

“All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day.” (John 6:37-40)

Trust in Jesus' love, complete forgiveness, and redemption have given Christians from millennia past to this day the hope, assurance, and courage to endure persecution and even martyrdom.

We may not know what challenges we will face tomorrow, or the

details of how events will unfold, but we know based on His infallible word that Jesus is coming back for His children. Whether He takes us home through death or at His next coming, Jesus will always be with us. He who by His great mercy has brought us into a living hope will never leave or forsake us (Hebrews 13:5-6).

The apostle John wrote this so that we may know in our hearts and minds that eternal life is ours now since we have accepted Jesus Christ by faith. Such an assurance provides the impetus for joyful prayer and fellowship with one another and provides us with the knowledge that God truly loves us.

“And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.” (1 John 5:11-13)

Throughout the history of God’s people up to current times every generation faces tests to faith and temptations to compromise their fidelity to Jesus. They may be subtle or clear, but whatever those tests happen to be or how difficult they are, God’s grace is sufficient to carry us successfully through them.

Do not give way to even intense pressure or throw in the towel. Bend not the knee to Baal or Molech, or receive thirty pieces of silver, or drop the pinch of incense to Caesar. Do not cast aside the approval of God for the approval of men (John 9:42-43). Persevere, standing firm with hope in the Lord. It really is worth it!

“For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to

be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus, so that with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Romans 15:4-6)

Deeds to property often have a summary, or brief description, on the outside with the details on the inside. If the deed is for allodial property ownership, then absolute possession rather than conditional possession (fee simple ownership) is in view. In Revelation 5, a scroll with writing on the outside and inside, bound with seven seals, is in the hand of the Father sitting on the throne in heaven. It is the title deed for absolute ownership, or sovereignty, of the earth.

When the question was asked who was worthy to break the seals of the scroll and open it, apostle John wept greatly when no one was found worthy. He realized that if no one could open the scroll, the evil rulers and forces of darkness holding sovereignty over the earth as usurpers (Ephesians 6:12) would maintain their rule in perpetuity, with no deliverance or justice for God's people who have suffered and been killed by them.

But John was told to stop weeping because One was found worthy! The Lion of Judah! Jesus is worthy to open the scroll and take absolute possession and sovereignty over the earth. When He takes the scroll, great joy, and singing, and majestic worship break forth in heaven to the One sitting on the throne and to the Lamb.

Jesus breaks open the first seal, and a rider on a white horse appears with a bow. The Greek word for “bow” is toxon, and Revelation 6:2 is the only place in Scripture where it is used. The Greeks used this word to describe arrows their warriors dipped in deadly toxic poisons for use in warfare. English words such as toxic and toxin are derived from the Greek word toxon. This rider is given a crown (Greek: stephanos, Latin: corona), and along with his bow he goes out to conquer the world with his toxic influence, resulting in

widespread warfare, economic collapse, famine, and death.

As Jesus continues to break the seals and open the scroll, judgments fall upon the wicked kingdom of the world. Coinciding with the breaking of the seventh seal, seven angels are designated to sound seven trumpets to herald God's reclamation of His rulership, culminating with the full revelation of the scroll, the allodial title deed of the earth.

"Then the seventh angel sounded; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, 'The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever.' And the twenty-four elders, who sit on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God, saying, "We give You thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, who are and who were, because You have taken Your great power and have begun to reign. And the nations were enraged, and Your wrath came, and the time came for the dead to be judged, and the time to reward Your bond-servants the prophets and the saints and those who fear Your name, the small and the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth.'" (Revelation 11:15-18)

Revelation 17-18 describes the defeat of Babylon the great, the last end time global religious, commercial and political system responsible for the blood of multitudes around the world, especially of prophets and saints. The proud city thinks itself all powerful, the queen of life and death over everyone on earth, and impossible to overthrow. But at the height of its power, pride, and wealth the Lamb in one hour judges Babylon and overthrows its evil system. Those connected to the fallen city weep and mourn, but those connected to Jesus rejoice and celebrate in His victory.

"'Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you saints and apostles and prophets, because God has pronounced judgment for you against her.' Then a strong angel took up a stone like a great

millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, 'So will Babylon, the great city, be thrown down with violence, and will not be found any longer. And the sound of harpists and musicians and flute-players and trumpeters will not be heard in you any longer; and no craftsman of any craft will be found in you any longer; and the sound of a mill will not be heard in you any longer; and the light of a lamp will not shine in you any longer; and the voice of the bridegroom and bride will not be heard in you any longer; for your merchants were the great men of the earth, because all the nations were deceived by your sorcery (Greek: pharmakeia). And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints and of all who have been slain on the earth.'" (Revelation 18:20-24)

The Great Reset of the world's elites and the evil one animating it will be totally and permanently overcome by the Greatest Reset of the Lord Jesus Christ (Isaiah 14:3-17). He can do so because He is the KING of kings, and LORD of lords!

Do not be like Denethor, Steward of Gondor, in Peter Jackson's 2003 movie adaptation of J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King*. During the siege of Minas Tirith in the Battle of the Pelennor Fields, daunted by the overwhelming enemy army coming against the city, he lost hope and gave in to despair. He committed suicide just before Théoden, King of Rohan, arrived with his army, broke the siege, and helped turn the tide of the battle to deliverance and victory for Gondor.

The patriarchs of old, the prophets, the apostles, the early Christians and believers through the centuries cherished their hope in God and His promises. They looked forward to a new and better country – a "new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells" (2 Peter 3:13).

"All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the

earth. For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own. And indeed if they had been thinking of that country from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return. But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them.” (Hebrews 11:13-16)

We, too, who trust in His promises will join them in this new country. Do not lose hope. It is nearly in sight on the horizon!

Remember the promise of the Lord Jesus Himself:

“Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.” (John 14:1-3)

Joy to the World, one of the most famous and beloved Christmas hymns, was originally a poem written by Isaac Watts titled The Messiah’s Coming and Kingdom, which was published in his book The Psalms of David: Imitated in the Language of the New Testament in 1719. He based his poem on verses in Psalms 96 and 98, which reminded him of the joy that will be experienced by the world at the return of Jesus to establish His kingdom. It was set to music by Lowell Mason in 1836.

1) Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King!
Let ev’ry heart prepare Him room,
and heav’n and nature sing,
and heav’n and nature sing,
and heav’n, and heav’n and nature sing.

2) Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let men their songs employ,

while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

3) No more let sins and sorrows grow,
nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow
far as the curse is found,
far as the curse is found,
far as, far as the curse is found.

4) He rules the world with truth and grace,
and makes the nations prove
the glories of His righteousness
and wonders of His love,
and wonders of His love,
and wonders, wonders of His love.

Behold! Not that far away in the distance is the city illuminated by the Lion of Judah, the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world for our sins, the KING of kings and the LORD of lords. It is getting brighter as it draws nearer. King Jesus, who has never abandoned us, and never will, is coming! He is bringing with Him the crown of life to give to all of us who trust in Him alone (James 1:12; Revelation 2:10).

Continue faithfully working for the Lord even in the face of adversity. Your patient hope is not in vain but is steadfast and sure.

Give thanks to God with gladness and joy! The King is coming!
Celebrate the greatest Christmas gift of all! The King is coming!

Look forward not to a new year, but to a new beginning in a new, better, and permanent country. The King is coming!
Maranatha! King Jesus is coming!

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