

The Light of Life Never Goes Out



by Rolaant McKenzie

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One of the occurrences of midwestern winters in the United States are ice storms, which are characterized by freezing rain that accumulates and forms a heavy, icy glaze on virtually all exposed surfaces, causing hazardous conditions for driving and walking, and road obstacles in the form of tree branches and electrical power lines falling from the weight of the ice. Such weather conditions can disrupt electrical power for several days or longer.

A severe ice storm took place on February 22, 2023, in southeastern Michigan. It was quite a sight to see the ice forming on the tree branches and a transparent film growing on the vehicles parked on the street and in house driveways. The beauty of it all was quite extraordinary.

However, the following day the increasing weight of the ice started causing tree branches and power lines to snap and fall, causing power outages for hundreds of thousands of homes in the area.

Many of the things we take for granted and use throughout the day depend on consistent electrical power. Losing it even for a little while may seem to some like temporarily losing the use of an arm or a leg. It can be a very humbling situation not to be able to do the usual tasks of the day or to have to engage in workarounds to do basic things.

The power in our neighborhood went out shortly after 11 a.m. While some homes intermittently ran gas-powered generators, most had to endure freezing temperatures and darkness for days. The focus of home activities changed from the routine to doing whatever could be done to keep warm and preserve food.

What helped keep our spirits up during this situation was prayer and being thankful. We were reminded of the Scripture, "Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)

Notice that it does not say to give thanks **for** everything, but **in** everything. We did not give thanks for the power outage and the inconvenience that caused, nor the suffering and loss it caused others. But we did give thanks that we still had each other, warm blankets, running hot and cold water, a functioning gas stove to cook food, and that perishable food could be preserved by loading them in securable bins and placing them outside overnight in the below freezing temperatures.

On the third day, while away from home having lunch, our neighbor texted us to let us know that the power was restored. We finished our food as quickly as we could and rushed home. We joyfully thanked God for the restoration of power as warmth and light started to fill the house again.

It must have been a great shock and dismay to the disciples of Jesus when, in the Garden of Gethsemane, they witnessed their beloved Master betrayed by one of their own and taken away by armed guards to the chief priests and members of the Sanhedrin for an illegal night trial that could only lead to one terrible outcome.

When Jesus was condemned and handed over to the Roman authorities to be crucified at the behest of a mob howling for blood, it must have been like everything going dark for His

disciples. The power that fueled their hopes and dreams of the restoration of the kingdom of Israel with Jesus as its King went out. Freezing cold sorrow and despair filled their hearts as He was taken off the cross dead and buried in a dark tomb.

But on the third day, the first day of the week, the disciples received word from Mary Magdalene that the tomb of Jesus was empty. Peter and John ran to the tomb to see this incredible sight for themselves, but they did not see Jesus.

Later that day, out of fear of the religious authorities who condemned their Lord to death, the disciples were huddled together behind secured doors at an undisclosed location. But Jesus appeared in their midst, much to their joy. The Light of Life was restored to them (John 20).

Then the Son of God Himself gave His disciples the greatest Bible study of all time:

“‘These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.’ Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and He said to them, ‘Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day, and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.’” (Luke 24:44-49)

After Jesus ascended back to His Father, His disciples were granted from God the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, who empowered them to proclaim the gospel message to the world (1 Corinthians 15:1-5). We who believe their witness regarding Jesus and His resurrection from the dead are the fruit of their ministry and will enjoy the light and life around the

throne of God that never fades or goes out (John 8:12; Revelation 7:9-17).

We were overjoyed and thankful when we returned home to find the power restored, but we were also thankful for the reminder that the resurrection of Jesus assures the power of true life that no storm can extinguish.

“I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?” (John 11:25-26)

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