

## Stay Awake!

Happy New Year! According to our modern calendars tonight at 23:59:59 the year 2016 will make its way to the graveyard. We won't see it again; it will be history. Last week in the news they reviewed the main events of the year. For Turkey it was a dramatic year. War and terrorism left its mark. But as a country and as individuals we look forward to our new year with more positive expectations.

Generally at this time of the year we make plans for the coming year. What do we want to do? For some of us business is on the front burner. How will I make money? What business will I make? It isn't wrong to plan thus. We have to do it. But the Bible tells us that while we are planning for the coming year we should plan with an eternal perspective.

James 4:13-15 Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit"; <sup>14</sup> whereas you do not know what *will happen* tomorrow. For what *is* your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. <sup>15</sup> Instead you *ought* to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that."

Yes, the Inshallah concept is in the Bible. O.K., we already know that if the Lord doesn't permit something nothing will happen. But the subject is not only about whether a project will be successful or not. There is stewardship in the topic. How will we use our time and our money? Jesus spoke thus on this topic:

Luke 12:15-31 And He said to them, "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses." <sup>16</sup> Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. <sup>17</sup> "And he thought within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?' <sup>18</sup> "So he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. <sup>19</sup> 'And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, *and* be merry." ' <sup>20</sup> "But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?' <sup>21</sup> "So *is* he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

While you are making money are your thoughts from the Lord and His work? After you have spent all your money do you come here and forget God who has given you everything you own? Don't say, "When I get rich then I will give to God and His cause." Tomorrow has not been guaranteed to you.

The topic includes fear. Will we have enough money? Jesus continued:

Luke 15:22 Then He said to His disciples, "Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; nor about the body, what you will put on. <sup>23</sup> "Life is more than food, and the body *is more* than clothing. <sup>24</sup> "Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap, which have neither storehouse nor barn; and God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds? <sup>25</sup> "And which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? <sup>26</sup> "If you then are not able to do *the* least, why are you anxious for the rest? <sup>27</sup> "Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. <sup>28</sup> "If then God so clothes the grass, which today is in the field and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more *will He clothe* you, O *you* of little faith? <sup>29</sup> "And do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind. <sup>30</sup> "For all these things the nations of the world seek after, and your Father knows that you need these things. <sup>31</sup> "But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you.

In this last sentence there is a promise and a condition. Put God's will first in your plan. He will take care of you. But if you forget Him, perhaps to wake you up He will send you a reminder. Stay awake!

Perhaps relationship is in the forefront of your plans. You are single. Your whole life is in front of you. It will be well for you to keep an eternal perspective in this situation as well.

Matthew 24:37-51 "But as the days of Noah *were*, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. <sup>38</sup> "For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, <sup>39</sup> "and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. <sup>40</sup> "Then two *men* will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. <sup>41</sup> "Two *women will be* grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. <sup>42</sup> "Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. <sup>43</sup> "But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. <sup>44</sup> "Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect. <sup>45</sup> " Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? <sup>46</sup> "Blessed *is* that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. <sup>47</sup> "Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods. <sup>48</sup> "But if that evil servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming,' <sup>49</sup> "and begins to beat *his* fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, <sup>50</sup> "the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for *him* and at an hour that he is not aware of, <sup>51</sup> "and will cut him in two and appoint *him* his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

But we don't know when Jesus will come! True. This is why the apostle Paul said the following:

1 Thessalonians 5:1-28 But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. <sup>2</sup> For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. <sup>3</sup> For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. <sup>4</sup> But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. <sup>5</sup> You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. <sup>6</sup> Therefore let us not sleep, as others *do*, but let us watch and be sober.

Stay awake! Not for the new year but for Christ's second coming!

<sup>7</sup> For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. <sup>8</sup> But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and *as* a helmet the hope of salvation. <sup>9</sup> For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>10</sup> who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. <sup>11</sup> Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing. <sup>12</sup> And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, <sup>13</sup> and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. Be at peace among yourselves. <sup>14</sup> Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all. <sup>15</sup> See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all. <sup>16</sup> Rejoice always, <sup>17</sup> pray without ceasing, <sup>18</sup> in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. <sup>19</sup> Do not quench the Spirit. <sup>20</sup> Do not despise prophecies. <sup>21</sup> Test all things; hold fast what is good. <sup>22</sup> Abstain from every form of evil. <sup>23</sup> Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>24</sup> He who calls you *is* faithful, who also will do *it*. <sup>25</sup> Brethren, pray for us. <sup>26</sup> Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss. <sup>27</sup> I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read to all the holy brethren. <sup>28</sup> The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. Amen.