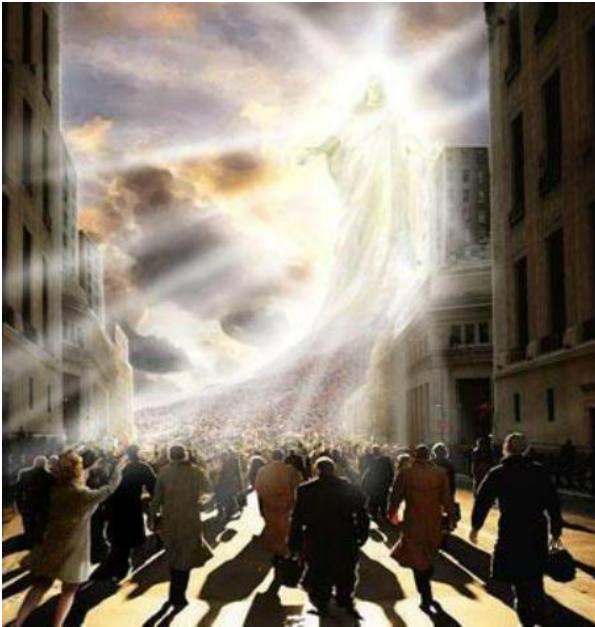


DID JESUS REVEAL THE DAY OF HIS RETURN?

By Pastor Mike Taylor

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"But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father". Mark 13:32

"But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only". Matthew 24:36

For the last 2000 years, there has been much theological interpretations of what Jesus was saying in these verses recorded by the men who sat at Jesus feet when they asked Him,

"And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" Matthew 24:3

As you read either chapter found in the Gospels, Jesus explains to His disciples what the signs will be of the end of

the age and His return. Note one thing, as you read this chapter, Jesus was living as a mortal man, God in the flesh, a Jewish man that was speaking to other Jewish men who had **customs** and idioms that modern men must come to understand, in context, to what Jesus was teaching to His followers. His disciples were going to have to teach these very things to the rest of the world, so they would have to be able to grasp what these signs were. So Jesus used familiar speech patterns or "idioms" that each were easy to understand and convey their meaning to the Jewish brethren of Jesus' day.

I want you to focus on one passage that Jesus spoke of, and it starts the sermon off with what can only be described as this idiom (speech patterns of expression) that any Jewish man of those times would have understood immediately because it was part of their culture, their very life and unless we understand these idioms of speech, then the meaning gets lost in translation. What was Jesus referring to when He made the statement "no man knoweth the day or the hour"? Could our Lord have been saying that He was going to return on a certain day of **the Jewish** calendar that was celebrated each year? It was a phrase that was used to illustrate what the event held to each of them listening. It was a most Holy Day and a special Sabbath of worship that was celebrated in the fall of the year and was signified by the blowing of trumpets, which was to symbolize the "Return of the King." Let us examine this, which I believe, Jesus is giving reference to when all of His church should be watching for as the end grows ever closer.

God's Plan for Mankind

God has given us a plan (signs) to show how He wishes to draw men unto Himself. Many have discarded this knowledge as being Jewish (to their great error) and having no relevance to the modern church, although I see some in the Evangelical movements that are beginning to understand and preach the same thing. But what if I told you that God has used each of these signs to reveal the timing of the first coming of His Son into the world, to die and to be resurrected and will use these signs again to announce the second advent of His Son coming back into this world, leading up to and including Him ruling and reigning for 1000 years? Would you stand up and take notice?

I urge you to take due diligence and study the scriptures and these words I give you. The old saying, "Don't believe me, believe your bible" is what I want you to do. Put this information next to the text. Look in the Strong's Concordance and find the original Greek and Hebrew words and how they are expressed. In other words, do your homework and your own study. These commandments coming from the Voice of Almighty God gave us God's

appointments with the salvation of mankind. They were a typology and a shadow of things to come that ancient Israel did not understand fully, and do not, even to this day. What these appointed days show are exactly what has happened in the past, and will most likely fulfill His plan in the near future. Let us dive right into what God gave us nearly 4000 years ago to reveal His plan for the salvation of mankind.

"Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, Concerning the feasts of the LORD, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even these are MY feasts."

"These are the LORD's appointed feasts, the sacred assemblies you are to proclaim at their appointed times": Leviticus chapter 23:2,4

Note that God says that these are the "LORD's" feast, not belonging any one people, not the Gentile nations, not the Jews, not the Hebrew children, not any other people, but that they belonged to Him. In another scripture it emphasizes, "These are MY feast"...Now some think that the word "feast" denotes something with food. It has nothing to do with food, but denotes a commandment for a gathering of His children, His people to acknowledge and worship Him, as a "Holy Convocation" or commanded meeting time/gathering.

To the people of the time of Ancient Israel these "feasts" meant one thing, which was descriptive of their national relationship with Jehovah post Exodus leading into their agricultural life and had specific date of events that were connected to each day or set of days. But to the modern day Church of the Living God, it means something entirely different because our Lord has been sacrificed for the sins of the world. We are not Israel, but each of these days pointed to one thing and One Person, Jesus Christ. To His church, it points to the historically completed events that God has already accomplished or one-half of His plan for the salvation of man. He waits to complete His work and fulfill His plan to redeem His creation to live with Him for all eternity. Note that everything that God wrote down in His Word has a specific meaning, and was not just exclusive for one group of people. God proclaimed them for a purpose as He looked down the annals of time and saw us, His Church. God always has a purpose for everything He does. These are prophetic rehearsals of God's Son coming into the world the first time as a suffering servant and ultimately, our Savior and High Priest, but the 2nd time or noted by the last half of these commanded days, as conquering King and Lord of Lords. He came first as a lamb, but the next time He sets foot on this earth, He will come as a conquering warrior....a roaring Lion of Judah full of wrath of Almighty God.

To describe His plan in language that we can understand, God chose to bring His Son to come into the world to complete the first part of His plan on the exact days of His appointed times the Bible calls "His Feast" that were given to Moses. They were divided up into observances. Four in the spring of the year, and in the fall of the year the remaining three. The spring appointed days were Passover, Feast of Unleavened Bread, First Fruits, and Pentecost. What happened on these days that were completed on the exact date that these times of worship were given by God in the Old Testament and completed in the New Testament that effects the Church?

Passover- Jesus offered Himself as the sinless lamb of God. His shedding of His blood was for the salvation of the world and the payment for our sins.

Feast of Unleavened Bread- His death and burial removed our sins outside of the camp. Jesus took our sins to the grave and buried them there. Three days later, He arose victorious over death, hell and the grave.

Feast of First Fruits-on the first day after the Sabbath on this Passover week, the priest waved a sheaf of barley in the temple as an offering of first fruits of the harvest, and simultaneously, Jesus was offering Himself to the Father in heaven as the First Fruits of those born of the dead in resurrection and full payment for the sins of the world.

Pentecost, or the Feast of Weeks- 50 days from First Fruits, The Holy Spirit came in power exactly on time! 3000 were saved and the Church was born!

Note that Jesus completed His act of salvation by His death and burial on the exact days of these original God given appointed times. He sent God's Holy Spirit, as our comforter, counselor and advocate on the exact day that was given in the Old Testament and the church and the Age of Grace began.

These are called God's Spring Holy Days and they have significant impact on the Christian's life and his understanding of what has happened in the past and what is coming in the near future. Believe one thing, my reader, God is always right on time. He does nothing by chance, but gives His Word in power, to inform us of His plans and to all those He has called in these last days to proclaim His truths. Does it not stand to reason and totally logical and bible based correct, that if He fulfilled His plan of salvation for all men on the appointed times of God's Plan for Man on THE day in these springs observances, that He will most likely fulfill His plan beginning at His return to gather His church to Himself, and then to set up His Kingdom to rule and reign for 1000 years on these EXACT days appointed?

As He completed His redemptive act on the very day appointed, He will be right on time with His second entrance into the affairs of men in the chosen day appointed as noted by the coming fall feast, known as Trumpets, Day of Atonement, and Tabernacles, as God has had a plan. It is a wise man that seeks to understand His ways and His plans by making preparations to be ready when they are "right at the door".

LET ME EXPLAIN SOMETHING

Returning to the phrase "no man knoweth the day or the hour". We still need to answer that question, what was Jesus saying that the apostles were completely familiar with? By the explanation above, I think you can see how these days mean something totally different to the Church, than it did to Israel when they were given on Mt. Sinai. What significance does the remaining Holy Days of God affect you and me?

In the age that we live in, since the ascension of Jesus Christ to the right hand of the Father God in Heaven, and the beginning of the church at Pentecost, we have been living in the Age of Grace, that the harvest of lost souls has been going on for the last 2000 years, approximately. You should be able to see (I least I hope you see and understand) that the time between the spring and the fall observances I have just listed, is the time that we are living in right now. These are the spring and summer months of the growing harvest of the wheat and the tares that Jesus spoke of in parable. (Matthew 13:25-30)

If you are a believer that we are at the very end, the very last moments of the Age of Grace and the imminent return of Jesus Christ, know our Lord is close, even at the door, then we approach a series of events that could be played out in the coming days, and sooner than anyone would anticipate or expect. It is what I believe is what Jesus was alluding to in His "expressions of speech" Idioms that He spoke to His disciples....what are they?

THE FALL FEAST OF OUR GOD

The 3 Fall Festivals start on the first day signified by the new moon in the 7th month:

"Month of Tishrei"

This is the only Holy Day marked by the New Moon and is set apart for that reason as special. All other festivals are set or counted by the full moon as Passover, Unleavened Bread, First Fruits, and even Pentecost are counted from the full moon of Nissan which is in the early spring. So the Spirit of GOD is pointing to this festival as a certain day! . This is separated by months from the last feast and must be carefully witnessed by men of great authority in the land of Israel and even by Christians of our modern era. It was a very involved process that must be guaranteed by two witnesses to it's beginning reported to the Sanhedrin during the time of Ancient Israel. Since it must be authorized, as they called it, "sanctified" before the month's activities could begin, the appointed time is stretched into two days, as "No man knoweth the day or the hour." (emphasis mine). It is the only Feast Day that is named as such, because they just didn't know which day was the correct day. Hence the quote is connected to this day. Why two days? It is because that with the days counted of 29.5 from new moon to the next, no one is sure if it's the 29th or the 30th day of the month, so to be sure, the Jewish people count both. To further explain the reasoning why two days, I went to the internet and looked up further reasons. What follows is an explanation:

“Yom Teruah is the only festival that no man knows when exactly it will occur. This is due to the fact that it begins on the new moon. The new moon was sanctified when two witnesses see the new moon and attest to it before the Sanhedrin in the Temple.

This sanctification could happen during either of two days, depending on when the witnesses come. Since no one knew when the witnesses would come, no one knew when the Feast of Trumpets would start.” (Watch Unto Prayer)!

A new moon is called “rosh chodesh” in Hebrew. As mentioned, new moons must be validated in Israel by 2 witnesses who will watch the dark black sky at the end of the moon cycle for the first glimmer of the moon to reappear. This is the beginning of the 30 day cycle which determines Israel’s months. (Moon is the word from which we get months). As soon as the new moon is sighted and verified (2 witnesses) then the Sanhedrin, or the High Priest will send runners from the east to the west with signal lights to be lit on high mountains to inform the people that the day has been sanctified and they can begin their counting for the month and the Feast of Trumpets can begin and worship God. They are said to run “like lightning” This highlighted and bold statement “like lightning” is another Jewish idiom that any Jewish person of the time would instantly recognize and it is connected to the fall observance of the Feast of Trumpets.

Matthew 24:7 *“For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also be the coming of the Son of man be. “...again, was Jesus making reference to the observance of the Feast of Trumpets?*

Psalm 18:11-14 “He made darkness (the new moon on Feast of Trumpets) His secret place (the day no man knows the hour); His pavilion round about Him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies (describing the Day of the Lord). At the brightness that was before Him his thick clouds passed, hail stones and coals of fire. The LORD also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave His voice (the sound of the trumpet – God’s voice as Jesus voice sounds like the sound of a Trumpet--Revelation 1:10); hail stones and coals of fire. Yea, He sent out His arrows, and scattered them; and He shot out lightning and discomfited them.”

There are numerous passages that use the same Greek word in Strong’s, #796 “astrape, or astropo #797 meaning a bright shining light, a glare, lightning, bright, shining. Other scriptures where the word is used are:

Jesus said:

Luke 17:24 “For as the lightning (astrape), that lightens out of the one part under heaven, shines unto the other part under heaven (the east to the west); so shall also the Son of man be in his day.”

Lightning, as seen from earth in the sky in Israel, usually is seen as going downward/upward, or from east to west. This is in agreement with [Luke 10:18](#), in which Jesus may have used astrape to describe lightning as falling from the sky in the land of Israel, although more than likely Jesus was referring to Satan figuratively as what we often call a “falling star” which falls from the sky. Here Jesus was speaking of Satan being cast out of heaven during the Tribulation.

He said to them, “I saw Satan having fallen like lightning [astrape] from heaven.” Luke 10:18

All could be describing the use of the term “astrape” could be describing how the Son of Man would come as a flash of lightening that comes quickly and is gone when the term is applied to Jesus Christ and is associated with this Feast of Trumpet’s observance.

WHICH TRUMPET ARE WE TALKING ABOUT?

There is a direct connection with this God ordained observance that Paul alluded to in 1st Corinthians and many people do not understand that Paul is talking about the Feast of Trumpets when during this time it is historically noted that 100 trumpets were blown and then a long, louder blast of the shafor and a silver trumpet called the “last trump” then the “Great Trump” respectively.

“Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.” (1 Corinthians 15:51-53) and again in 1st Thessalonians,

“For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” (1 Thessalonians 4:15-17)

We cannot go to the Book of Revelation and say that the trumpet of the seventh angel is what Paul is referring to (Revelation 11:15) as John had not even wrote his testimony yet when Paul wrote his in these two passages. This is the last trump (of the 7th angel) that many people try and make this connection in error, because they don't understand the context. One they labor to connect the two, as they believe that the church will experience the same horrors that the rebellious nations will be subjected to right along with everyone else. I speak it again as in past messages posted , and to further drum home this truth, since the tribulation is designed to purge and refine Israel as silver is in the fire because of their centuries of unbelief, and the nations are destroyed because of their rebellion and unrepentant lawlessness, what is the point of refining the Church during the same period? Was the blood of Jesus not good enough? Did He not do what God intended His perfect sacrifice to accomplish? Then why the conflict? Answer is there is no conflict, only a lack of understanding on our part. The concept of a post Tribulation return of Jesus to save what is left of mankind, is akin to Catholic purgatory, that the church must be refined as she just needed a good whuppin' before Jesus marries her. Right, and what lady in waiting would marry a groom who allowed that to happen to her?

No, Paul is speaking of a trumpet that will herald an emotion of joy unspeakable and full of glory for His church redeemed and starting the judgment upon the nations left upon earth, but the seventh angel who blows his trumpet signifies the fulfillment of unspeakable horror and untold death and destruction. They are two separate references to a trumpet and not the same one. Some call the doctrine of the Pre-tribulation return of Jesus an escape route, but I prefer to think of it as “VICTORY IN JESUS” and our Blessed Hope. Where is the hope, if you knew that you were going to be tortured and eventually killed because “you must be refined”...does it make sense to you? Titus 2:13,

“Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.” Jesus is our blessed hope of coming glory and being protected from the coming wrath of Almighty God.

WHAT WAS PAUL ACTUALLY REFERRING TO?

In further explanation of Jewish history, in the first century when Paul wrote these words, the last trump (shofar) meant a specific day in the year, as he was describing. In Judaism, there are three trumpets that have a name. They are the first trump, the last trump, and then the great trump which is a silver trumpet blown. Each one of these trumpets indicates a specific day in the Jewish year. The first trump is blown on the Feast of Pentecost (Exodus 19:19).

It proclaimed that God had betrothed Himself to Israel. The last trump is synonymous with Rosh HaShanah, according to Theodore Gaster in his book, *"Festivals of the Jewish Year"*, in his chapter on Rosh HaShanah. Herman Kieval also states the same thing in his book, *"The High Holy Days"* in the chapter on the shofar.

The great trumpet is blown on Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement), which will herald the return of Jesus back to the earth to rule and reign and put down all rebellion (Matthew 24:31). In between these two events of Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur are the 10 days of awe, which in Jewish tradition are the days God judges mankind. These would correlate possibly to the tribulation period and a time of intense judgment on the earth. Got that? First and last trump on Pentecost, then Rosh HaShanah or Feast of Trumpets respectively, followed by a period of 10 days of judgment, and then the great trumpet blown on the Day of Atonement, or AT-ONE-MENT with God or the return of Jesus Christ with His saints to reign and rule.

The first and last trump relate to the two horns of the ram, which according to God's Word, was caught in the thicket on Mount Moriah when Abraham was ready to slay Isaac and offer him up as a burnt offering. This ram became the substitute for Isaac even as Jesus became the substitute for us and provided life for us through His death. These two horns blown bookend the time we are living right now and the plan of salvation given to all who will believe by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. The right horn was prophetically blown at Pentecost at approximately 33 AD, and we await the blowing of the left horn or the last trump that ends this age we are living.

The last Feast day to be completed is the Feast of Tabernacles, which God has said in His Word, Zechariah chapter 14, that all men would come to the Jerusalem to worship Him at HIS Feast of Tabernacles.

"And it shall come to pass, that all who are left of the nations who came up against Jerusalem, shall go up year to year to worship the LORD of host , to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. "

It is the only Feast observance left, as all have been completed and fulfilled by our Great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.

WE ARE CHILDREN OF THE LIGHT

Paul makes a reference that we are not in darkness, in 1st Thessalonians,

"But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.

2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

6 Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.

7 For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night."

We are not in darkness, so as we see the day approaching, we will not be surprised as the rest of the world is, being in the dark. We are in the light, as God has shined His Light on our hearts through His Holy Spirit. God gave us signs in His Word and signs in the heavens that will alert us, that the time is at hand.

Remember the words of Jesus in Matthew 24?

37 "But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

38 For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark,

39 And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

40 Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

41 Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

42 Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.

43 But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up.

44 Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."

Only Noah knew of the appointed time. He didn't know the day, but he knew the season, so he worked on the ark as God commanded. God says that they were all surprised and swept away by the flood, but Noah was not surprised. Also, in this passage as the goodman of the house, we are to watch. We may not know the hour, but we know the season. But note one thing concerning Noah and his family...when he and his sons began to build the ark, some 100+ years prior to the beginning of the flood, they had no idea what day the rains would come, but as the time grew closer and closer and they were a week out from the rains starting...what did God say to Noah?

Genesis 7:4 "For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth."

God made it known to His servant when the time was right for him to know...He would know even the day.

Now Noah had not known for all those years what day it would be that God would fulfill His judgment on the earth but he believed. But when it was only 7 days hence, God told Noah straight out the exact day He would bring it to pass, just not the hour. What is my point in this reference? Some 2000 years ago, when Jesus our Lord and Savior made these statement "no man knoweth the day or the hour" identifying that He would return on a future Feast of Trumpets that all these men surely recognized, they had no idea what year it would be...just a day in the season of a future year. Now 2000 years down the annals of time, we are as Noah, children of the light who see the day approaching, and God is telling us to expect Him to even narrow it down to a small window of time. How will He do that? He told us that there would be signs in the heavens...in the moon, in the sun and in the stars.

Revelation chapter 3:

"Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. "

As the day approaches, the gathering of God's people to keep them from the hour of temptation as John wrote above, will trigger the Day of the Lord preceded by the church's removal from planet earth. Some feel that it begins latter in the chapters of Revelation when Jesus is physically present, but God will bring judgment upon this earth and rebellious mankind beginning with the opening of the 1st Seal loosed in Chapter 6. God will begin the process of preparing the earth and the heavens for the reign of His Son, Jesus Christ and removing the defiling rebellion of wicked men and the polluting of His creation. As God in His grace attempts to bring man to repentance, the destruction will grow worse and more intense Joel described it as such chapter 2,

1 "Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the LORD cometh, for it is nigh at hand;

2 A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations."

On down in verse 30,

"And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke.

31 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come.

32 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call."

Could it be that God is trying to get our attention with the signs in the heavens that we saw this last year?...And not to mention all the volcanoes that spew ash and clouds of smoke into the heavens. We've always had erupting

volcanoes in our history, but not to the extent that has been happening in the last few years. Earthquakes are everywhere all over the planet, and the loss of life and property keep rising as the earth shakes from earthquake after earthquake. America has been waiting for the big ONE that will either be catastrophic for the west coast or in the middle of the country with the New Madrid fault...we're long over due for another horrific quake that will change the land mass of California, or the Mid-Western states topography. Let us not forget the super volcano that lurks under Yellowstone National Park that if it erupts, life in America will be destroyed due to blocking out the sun and destroying all plant life. At least that is what I've read scientist are predicting will happen someday in the near future.

When this finally happens, this will be only the beginning of the sorrows of unrepentant man and his wickedness, not the end. It will continue until the full measure of His wrath is poured out by the seventh angel and the bowl judgments.

God has given us clear examples and words that point to a time in the near future when He will begin fulfilling His past prophetic rehearsals of God's plan for man, and beginning the Trumpet call to announce the coming of the King. Each year when the Feast of Trumpets comes to pass, especially in the last several years, I am keenly aware and listening for the sound of a trumpet and the shout of our God Jesus Christ proclaiming victory for His Church. Will it be this year, next year or some year after that? God knows, because He has not told me, but I know He is close and I will be ready...Will you be ready?

This is Pastor Mike Taylor, praying God's salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord, comes into your life. Should you need counseling, prayer, or just a listening ear, email me at realteam1999@sbcglobal.net, or visit me online at www.churchofgod-usa.org. God bless you all,

TILL WE MEET AT JESUS FEET