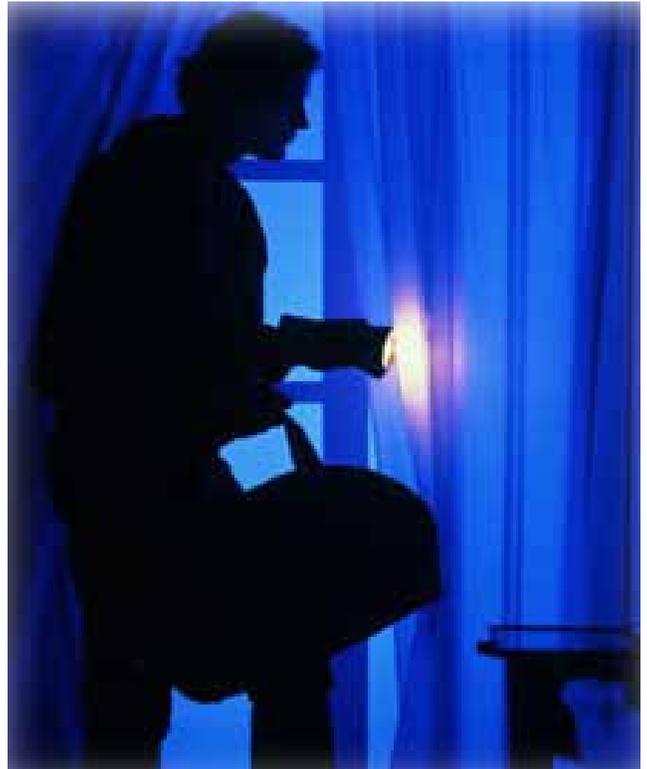


*"For yourselves know perfectly that the Day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, 'Peace and safety;' then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. **But Ye, Brethren, Are Not In Darkness**, that that Day should overtake you as a thief." 1Thessalonians 5:2-4no2 KJV*



Crime is a secret endeavor. Evil loves the night; to work under cover of darkness, because it hides their activity. Bright lights are the best security. Thieves cannot work in the light or open. The biggest fear burglars have is that the homeowner will arrive unexpectedly. They take great pains to prepare their exit and they work as quickly as possible. The average break-in is usually over in ten minutes. Thieves come when least expected and it is the secret of their success. If you knew when a thief was coming he wouldn't have a chance. He depends on the element of surprise and the cover of darkness to succeed. Most are completely devastated by a burglary. Goods are almost never recovered, and if they are, they're usually damaged. Our Lord will come upon the wicked like a thief to take His beloved children home. The wicked will least expect it and there will be nothing they can do about it. Jesus said, *"Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye THINK NOT."* However, the faithful believer will not be caught off guard. He is aware of the many prophecies and predictions of the approaching time of the Lord's Return. He waits, watches, and will be ready. The first snowfall is unpredictable, but as the season ages, it becomes more imminent. We can prepare for snow even though we know not it's arrival. We may not know the day or the hour of our Lord's return, but the season is upon us. His return is more imminent than it's ever been! Many believers are deniers of the signs of the times, preferring not to expect Christ's return for fear of disappointment. It should not be so. We are told to watch and wait. That implies expectancy. To not expect the Lord is unbelief!

Watching, waiting, expectantly,
Working, praying, fervently,
We'll not be taken unawares,
When finally our Lord appears. –CGP

Our Lord's return is near when men's morals are non-existent. Jesus said, *"As the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."* How were the days of Noah? *"The wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that EVERY IMAGINATION of the thoughts of his heart WAS ONLY EVIL CONTINUALLY."* How hard is it to find a righteous person these days with no secret agenda? Are you watching the signs?

"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?' And Jesus answered and said unto them, 'Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in My Name, saying, 'I am Christ;'' and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences (diseases), and earthquakes, in divers (different) places. ALL THESE ARE THE BEGINNING OF SORROWS.' And He spake to them a parable; 'Behold the fig tree, and all the trees; When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the Kingdom of God is nigh at hand.'" Matthew 24:3-8, Luke 21:29-31 KJV