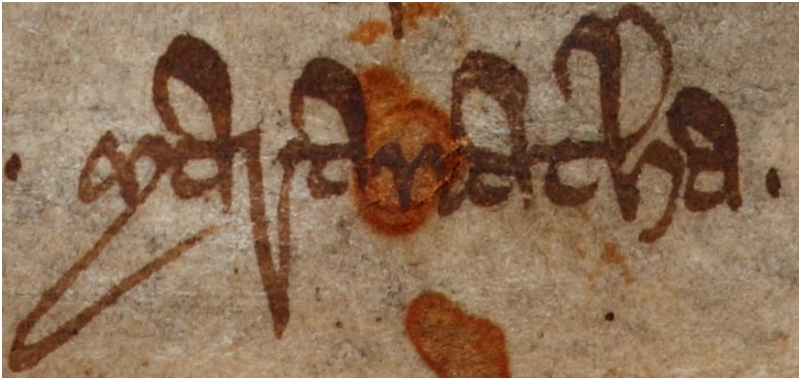


A Maranatha Mindset



Picture from Inscription of "Maranatha" in a medieval text.
Saints in the "dark ages" were looking for the Light of the world!

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THOUGHTS ON A "MARANATHA MINDSET"

A Google search retrieves over 11 million hits for "Maranatha" (many associated with names of churches or ministries), so clearly this word is very popular. A brief informal survey of believers reveals the majority were uncertain of the meaning of Maranatha which prompted this post. Maranatha is used only once in the Bible by Paul who closes his first letter to the Corinthians with the surprisingly strong statement "If anyone does not love the Lord, let him be accursed (anathema). **Maranatha**" (1Cor 16:22-note). Similar to Hosanna, Hallelujah, and Amen which are transliterated Hebrew words, Maranatha is a transliterated Aramaic word, which has one of two meanings: "Our Lord has come" or "Our Lord, come!" Thomas **Constable** notes that "It is strange to meet with an **Aramaic** phrase in a **Greek** letter to a **Greek** Church. The explanation is that this phrase had become a watchword and a password. It summed up the vital hope of the early Church, and Christians whispered it to each other, identified each other by it, in a language which the heathen could not understand." In short, "Maranatha" became the early church's "Mindset!" The apostle John clearly had a "**Maranatha Mindset**" when he prayed "Amen. Come, Lord Jesus" in response to Jesus' promise "Yes, I am coming quickly." (Rev 22:20-note) The majority of modern Bible versions and commentaries interpret **Maranatha** as a prayer beseeching the Lord Jesus Christ to return quickly/soon! Indeed, every time we pray "Thy Kingdom come" we are in a sense crying "Maranatha," asking for the return of the King of the Kingdom (Mt 6:10a-note, cf Rev 19:16-note).

Paul writes that those with a "**Maranatha Mindset**" have a sense of urgency and know "that it is already the hour for us to awaken from sleep (from spiritual slumber, apathy, backsliding!), for now salvation (Our Savior and our final redemption and glorification) is nearer to us than when we (first) believed. The night (spiritual darkness of this present world) is almost gone and the day (of His Return) is near (we are standing on the "edge of eternity"! Therefore let us lay aside the deeds of darkness (including attitudes and actions we think are "secret" but in fact are fully exposed to God, Pr 15:3-note) and put on the armor of light...put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh (thinking of ways to arouse, to indulge or) to gratify its desires!" (Ro 13:11-14-note) **Puritan William Gurnall** (author of the classic: The Christian in Complete Armor) wrote that "Christ hath told us He will come, but not when, that we might never put off our clothes, or put out the candle (Mt 24:42-note, Mt 25:13-note, Mk 13:35-37-note)." "Since He may come any day, it is well to be ready every day." (Hudson Taylor) Amen!

The famous hymn writer Fanny Crosby although physically blind had a vibrant "Maranatha Mindset" which gave her "vision" and passion to pen words like "Take the world but give me Jesus--In His cross my trust shall be; Till, with clearer, brighter VISION, Face to face my Lord I SEE!" (1Co 13:12-note) **Maranatha!**

One scholar has noted that in the 260 chapters in the NT, there are 318 references to the Second Coming of Christ which means

that about 1 of every 30 verses refers to the return of the Bridegroom (Mt 25:6-[note](#), Jn 3:29-[note](#), cf Rev 19:7-[note](#))! It is also notable that for every prophecy describing Jesus' First Coming, there are eight which look forward to His Second Coming! Surely the Spirit desires to stir up in the Bride (Christ's Body, the Church - Eph 1:22-23-[note](#), 2Co 11:2-[note](#)) a "Maranatha Mindset" which causes us to long for our Beloved, much like Solomon's bride who cried out "**Hurry, my beloved!**" (Song 8:14-[note](#))! And so it is fitting that James encourages us to live with a "Maranatha Mindset" writing "You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand." (Jas 5:8-[note](#)) **Augustine** said "He who loves the coming of the Lord is not he who affirms it is far off, nor is it he who says it is near. It is he who, whether it be far or near, awaits it with sincere faith, steadfast hope and fervent love." Beloved, we can be ready for the last moment by being ready at every moment (Lk 21:36-[note](#))!

Illustration of a "Maranatha Mindset:" In 1950 Florence Chadwick crossed the English Channel in record time and the next year crossed in the other direction. In 1952 she attempted to swim the 26 miles from Catalina Island to California, but after 15 hours a thick fog set in causing her to begin to doubt her ability to complete her course. After telling her mother she didn't think she could make it, she swam for an hour and still unable to see the coastline due to the fog, stopped swimming. It wasn't until she got into the boat that she learned that the shore was less than half a mile away. At the news conference she said: 'All I could see was the fog. I think if I could have seen the shore I would have made it'. Two months later, she tried again, but this time when the thick fog set in, she continued to swim, because she focused on her goal, the shore. Beloved, we all experience "dense fog" from time to time for a variety of reasons, and it becomes difficult to fix our eyes on our goal (Php 3:14-[note](#)), Christ Jesus, the Author and Finisher of the race of faith (Heb 12:2-[note](#)). As this world grows darker, the promised return of the Son grows brighter. **Paul** who ministered with a Maranatha Mindset continually looking "not at the things seen, but the things unseen, remembering that the things seen are temporal, while the things unseen are eternal"(2Co 4:17-18-[note](#), cf Col 3:1, 2-[note](#)), encouraged Timothy (and us) with his very last words (always important words): "I have fought the good fight. I have finished the race. I have kept the faith. In the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have LOVED HIS APPEARING (~living with a Maranatha Mindset)." (2Ti 4:7-8-[note](#)) The great British expositor G Campbell Morgan modeled this mindset writing "I never begin my work in the morning without thinking that perhaps He may interrupt my work and begin His own. I am not looking for death, I am looking for Him." Little wonder that Morgan was so mightily used by God in His Kingdom work!

What we believe about the eternal world to come, shapes how we live in this temporal, passing world (cf Ec 1:2-3-[note](#), Ec 12:13, 14-[note](#)). **C S Lewis** said that "If you read history, you will find that the Christians who did most for the present world, were precisely those who thought most of the next (~Maranatha Mindset). It is since Christians have largely ceased to think of the other world that they have become so ineffective in this (world). Precisely because we cannot predict the moment, we must be ready at all moments." Yes, enjoy life, but anticipate heaven by living with a **Maranatha Mindset** continually "looking for the Blessed Hope (which is) the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ." (Titus 2:13-[note](#)) If we are looking for Christ to return at any time, this "uplook outlook" will be a powerful incentive to spur us on to fight the good fight of faith (1Ti 6:12-[note](#)) necessary for godly living and bold proclamation of the Gospel (cf 2Cor 3:12-[note](#), Ep 6:19-[note](#)). Am I living with a **"Maranatha Mindset?"** Do my day to day choices reflect the reality of my expectant attitude? "Expectant looking" is always a great "antidote" for "apathetic living." "The certainty of the Second Coming should touch and tincture every part of our daily behavior." (Blanchard) Indeed, "Uncertainty about the date of the Lord's return is calculated to keep believers in an attitude of constant expectation and to preserve them from despondency." (Ryle)

John Piper asks "Does your mind return frequently to the truth of Christ's appearing? When your mind turns to the truth of His appearing, does your heart want it—is there an eagerness to see Him? Do you pray for His coming? **Maranatha**, prayed the early church! Come, Lord Jesus!"

C H Spurgeon sums up this **"Maranatha Mindset"** declaring "Oh, that the Lord would come! He is coming! He is on the road and traveling quickly. (Rev 22:12-[note](#)) The sound of His approach should be as music to our hearts!"

May the cry of our hearts continually be "Hallelujah! Hosanna to God in the highest. Maranatha (Our Lord, come)! Amen."

Take a moment to sing "Maranatha" as your prayer...

[Maranatha - Maranatha Singers - YouTube](#)

[Michael Card sings another version of Maranatha - YouTube](#)

See related post on "The Blessed Hope" Titus 2-13 Commentary

[See blog post on "Are You Looking For The Blessed Hope?"](#)

**ILLUSTRATIONS RELATED TO A
MARANATHA MINDSET**

What's Ahead? - American theologian Carl Henry gave a thought-provoking lecture with these three major points:

1. The barbarians have come. Evil forces have entered the gates and are tearing down the values Christians embrace as true and good. Many thoughtful people believe that we are witnessing the moral collapse of Western civilization, and they are afraid.
2. Jesus is coming. Christians have lived for 20 centuries with the hope that they will witness the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. The darker the night, the brighter shines that hope. The barbarians may have won a battle, but they will not win the war.
3. The church doesn't know whether it is coming or going. Many of those who claim to know God deny Him by their words and actions. A great number of Christians believe that the hands on the clock of history are nearing the midnight hour, but they don't know just how close. Whether our Lord comes today or in a thousand years, Christians must say no to ungodliness and worldly passions and live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in this present evil age (Titus 2:12).

Let's get our eyes off the barbarians, keep looking for the coming of our Lord, and live for Him today.

Faithful and true would He find us here
If He should come today?
Watching in gladness and not in fear,
If He should come today?

—Morris

**What we believe about the world (One) to come
shapes how we live in the world today.**

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Looking for the return of our Lord Jesus brings great joy and hope to our hearts. It also leads to a numbering of our days to that we might present to Him a heart of wisdom as illustrated by the following story:

A tourist who visited an exquisite garden on a lovely estate in Italy spoke to the caretaker:

"How long have you been here?" he asked.

"Twenty-five years."

"And how often has the owner been to see the estate?"

"Four times."

"When did he come last?"

"Twelve years ago."

"Who comes then to look after things?"

"I am left pretty much alone."

"Yet you keep the garden so spic-and-span that one would think you were expecting the owner tomorrow."

"Today, sir, today! replied the caretaker. **"Perhaps today!"**

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Our Only Hope - An unknown author wrote, "When I was first converted, and for some years afterward, the second coming of Christ was a thrilling idea, a blessed hope, a glorious promise, the theme of some of the most inspiring songs of the church. Later it became an accepted tenet of faith, a cardinal doctrine, a kind of invisible trademark of my ministry. It was the favorite arena of my theological discussions, in the pulpit and in print. Now suddenly the second coming means something more to me. Paul called it 'the blessed hope.' But today it appears as the only hope of the world.

From the human standpoint, there is no solution for the problems of the world. Leaders seem to be completely frustrated in trying to deal with the unrest and increasing violence in society. The only complete and permanent solution is found in the return of Christ. When He comes, He will set up His kingdom. He will rule the nations in righteousness, and "the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Hab. 2:14).

As we await our Savior's return, let us keep on praying, working, and watching, while "looking for the blessed hope"—our only hope for this world.— by Richard De Haan

And for the hope of His return,
Dear Lord, Your name we praise;
With longing hearts we watch and wait
For that great day of days!
—Sherwood

**As this world grows darker,
the promised return of the Son grows brighter.**

The King is Coming!

by Ira Sankey

Rejoice! Rejoice! our King is coming!
And the time will not be long,
Until we hail the radiant dawning,
And lift up the glad new song.

Refrain

*Oh, wondrous day! oh, glorious morning,
When the Son of Man shall come!
May we with lamps all trimmed and burning
Gladly welcome His return!
Rejoice! Rejoice! our King is coming!
And the time will not be long,
Until we hail the radiant dawning,
And lift up the glad new song.*

With joy we wait our King's returning
From His heavenly mansions fair;
And with ten thousand saints appearing
We shall meet Him in the air.

Refrain

Oh, may we never weary, watching,
Never lay our armor down
Until He come, and with rejoicing
Give to each the promised crown.

Refrain

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Waiting - Our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. (Php 3:20) In the 1940s, Samuel Beckett wrote a play called *Waiting for Godot* which is now regarded as a classic. Two men stand on an empty stage, hands in their pockets, staring at each other. All they do is stand and stare. There is no action, no plot, they just stand there waiting for Godot to come. But who is Godot? Is he a person? Does he represent God? Christian ethicist Lewis Smedes suggests, Godot "stands for the pipe dreams that a lot of people hang on to as an escape." As the play ends, those men are still standing on the stage doing nothing, just waiting. When the 50th anniversary of that play was celebrated, someone asked Beckett, "Now will you tell us who Godot is?" He answered, "How should I know?"

Waiting for Godot is a parable of many people's lives--empty and meaningless, a pointless matter of waiting. And if there's no God of love, grace, and wisdom, then life really is a hopeless waiting for empty time to pass.

How totally different, though, is Christian hope! We're waiting and "looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13). That hope sustains us--a hope that beyond this world lies a life of indescribable blessing.
—Vernon C Grounds

We're waiting for You, Lord, to come
And take us home to be with You;
Your promise to return for us

Gives hope because we know it's true.

-Sper

**The greatest joy on earth is
to the sure hope of heaven**

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Is Your Vision Hampered by the Fog? - In 1950 Florence Chadwick crossed the English Channel in world record time and then in 1951 crossed the Channel again swimming in the other direction to become the first woman accomplish this feat. In 1952, Florence Chadwick attempted to swim the 26 miles between Catalina Island and California, but after 15 hours a thick fog set in causing Florence began to doubt her ability to finish her course. After telling her mother she didn't think she could make it, she swam for an hour and still unable to see the coastline due to the fog, stopped swimming. It wasn't until she got onto that boat that she discovered that the shore was less than half a mile away. At the news conference the next day, this is what she said:

'All I could see was the fog, I think if I could have seen the shore I would have made it'.

Two months later, Chadwick tried again, but this time when the thick fog set in, but she kept swimming because she kept a mental image of the shoreline in her mind while she swam. Beloved even through there may be a dense fog in our life for a variety of reasons, making it difficult to may God's Spirit grant us the power to continually fix our eyes on Jesus, redeeming every moment of this new year, by living with a "**Maranatha Mindset!**"

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Are You Looking Up? - Are you so eager for Christ's return that you hope it will take place today? I wouldn't be honest if I answered an unqualified yes to this question. You see, I'm enjoying life right now. I love what I'm doing. My wife and I are having fun watching our grandsons grow toward manhood. There are still people and places we would like to visit during our retirement years.

Does this mean that I'm not "looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing" of Jesus Christ? (Titus 2:13). No, it doesn't. I believe that His return is indeed "the blessed hope." Earthly pleasures are only temporary and cannot compare with the joys of heaven. Besides, I am troubled by the sin, sorrow, and suffering all around me.

All Christians are thankful for Jesus' promise, "I will come again and receive you to Myself" (Jn. 14:3). But our own circumstances affect how eagerly we anticipate His return. Whether life for us today is a joy or a struggle, we are to deny "ungodliness and worldly lusts" and to "live soberly, righteously, and godly" (Titus 2:12-note).

God wants us to enjoy life. But He also wants us to live each day as if it may be the one in which He will return. Are you looking up?
— Herbert Vander Lugt ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Take the world but give me Jesus--
In His cross my trust shall be;
Till, with clearer, brighter vision,
Face to face my Lord I see.

-Fanny Crosby

Enjoy life, but anticipate heaven

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Today in the Word - Biblical prophecy provides some of the greatest encouragement and hope available to us today. Just as the Old Testament is saturated with prophecies concerning Christ's first advent, so both testaments are filled with references to the Second Coming of Christ. One scholar has estimated that there are 1,845 references to Christ's Second Coming in the Old Testament, where 17 books give it prominence. In the 260 chapters of the New Testament, there are 318 references to the second advent of Christ—an amazing 1 out of every 30 verses. Twenty-three of the 27 New Testament books refer to this great event. For every prophecy in the Bible concerning Christ's first advent, there are 8 which look forward to His second!

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It's Late! - A young boy was playing in his grandmother's house near a large grandfather clock. Noontime was approaching, and when both hands of the old timepiece reached 12, the chimes began to ring.

As he always liked to do, the boy counted each gong as it sounded. This time, however, something went wrong with the clock's

inner mechanism. Instead of stopping at 12, it kept right on chiming--13, 14, 15, 16 times.

The boy couldn't believe his ears! He jumped to his feet and ran into the kitchen, shouting, "Grandma! Grandma! It's later than it's ever been before!" In his excitement, the youngster expressed a truth we all would do well to consider.

It is later than it's ever been before--in the history of the world, in the days allotted to man, and on God's calendar of events. With each passing hour, the words of James 5:8 take on added significance: "**The coming of the Lord is at hand**"

This fact is both comforting and sobering. It is reassuring to know that the day our Savior will come for us may be near. But at the same time, we must honestly ask ourselves, "Am I living in a way that will bring His commendation?" Think about it!

Remember, "It's later than it's ever been before!" — Richard De Haan ([Our Daily Bread](#), Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

May I live so that I will be ready
With joy my Savior to meet,
And feel no alarm at His coming
But hasten His heralds to greet.

-Anonymous

**Be ready for the last moment
by being ready at every moment.**

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[The Hope of the Coming of the Lord](#)

By Daniel Whittle

A lamp in the night, a song in time of sorrow;
A great glad hope which faith can ever borrow
To gild the passing day, with the glory of the morrow,
Is the hope of the coming of the Lord.

Refrain

*Blessèd hope, blessèd hope,
Blessèd hope of the coming of the Lord;
How the aching heart it cheers,
How it glistens through our tears,
Blessèd hope of the coming of the Lord.*

A star in the sky, a beacon bright to guide us;
An anchor sure to hold when storms betide us;
A refuge for the soul, where in quiet we may hide us,
Is the hope of the coming of the Lord.

Refrain

A call of command, like trumpet clearly sounding,
To make us bold when evil is surrounding;
To stir the sluggish heart and to keep in good abounding,
Is the hope of the coming of the Lord.

Refrain

A word from the One to all our hearts the dearest,
A parting word to make Him aye the nearest;
Of all His precious words, the sweetest, brightest, clearest,
Is the hope of the coming of the Lord.

Refrain

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Donald Campbell told the story of

Two men left the factory where they worked and approached a car belonging to one of them. "What does that mean?" asked one man, pointing to a bumper sticker that read, "**Maranatha!**" The owner of the car, a Christian, replied, "It means **The Lord is coming!**" "I don't believe that!" his companion snapped. "Well," said the Christian, "I've got news for you. He's not coming for you!" That blunt reply awakened the man to a sense of responsibility and concern regarding the future and his preparation for it. ([Daniel- God's Man in a Secular Society- Donald K. Campbell-Excellent Commentary!](#))

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After World War II there was a sign on the shore of New York harbor facing all incoming troop ships, which read:

**WELCOME HOME.
WELL DONE.**

When the Lord Jesus Christ appears in the air, He is going to "WELCOME HOME" every saint, for at that time He shall come to take us home to heaven. Our entrance into heaven is solely on the basis of our faith in His shed blood and death on the cross, and every believer shall receive the same "WELCOME HOME." But, how many of us will receive His "WELL DONE," and the "crown of righteousness"? (2Ti 4:8-note, Mt 25:21, 23, Lk 19:17)

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THE EARLY EDITION - THERE was a show I used to watch a couple of years ago called Early Edition. The host of the show would get the next day's newspaper, read it, and then do a show about the upcoming news. He'd read a newspaper about the morrow and related it to his viewers today. Because he had tomorrow's newspaper today, he had information nobody else did. Most of our coworkers don't have the information. Most of our neighbors don't have the information. But as Christians, we've got an Early Edition. God has given us the Early Edition. We can function today in light of what we know about God's plan for the future. ([Tony Evans' Book of Illustrations](#))

Source: Chart by Tim LaHaye and Thomas Ice - click to enlarge - Millenium on Right Side