

# The Promise & Peril of Summer

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## A SEASON OF PROMISE

### *Divine Order*

Summer is a season of divine order. God established the orderly routines of nature (Gen. 1:14-19).

*Genesis 1:14-19 (NASB95) — 14 Then God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years; 15 and let them be for lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth”; and it was so. 16 God made the two great lights, the greater light to govern the day, and the lesser light to govern the night; He made the stars also. 17 God placed them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, 18 and to govern the day and the night, and to separate the light from the darkness; and God saw that it was good. 19 There was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.*

Promising to never again destroy the earth by water, the Lord said unto Noah, “While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease” (Gen. 8:20-22).

*Genesis 8:20-22 (NASB95) — 20 Then Noah built an altar to the Lord, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar. 21 The Lord smelled the soothing aroma; and the Lord said to Himself, “I will never again curse the ground on account of man, for the intent of man’s heart is evil from his youth; and I will never again destroy every living thing, as I have done. 22 “While the earth remains, Seedtime and harvest, And cold and heat, And **summer** and winter, And day and night Shall not cease.”*

The Psalmist Asaph recognized God’s preeminence: “Yours is the day, Yours also is the night; You have prepared the light and the sun. You have established all the boundaries of the earth; You have made summer and winter” (Psa. 74:16-17).

*Psalms 74:16-17 (NASB95) — 16 Yours is the day, Yours also is the night; You have prepared the light and the sun. 17 You have established all the boundaries of the earth; You have made **summer** and winter.*

The Maker of the world and all things in it, the Ruler of heaven and earth, having created an orderly universe, would govern our hearts as well (Acts 17:24-31).

*Acts 17:24-31 (NASB95) — 24 “The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands; 25 nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all people life and breath and all things; 26 and He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation, 27 that they would seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; 28 for in Him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, ‘For we also are His children.’ 29 “Being then the children of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and thought of man. 30 “Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent, 31 because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead.”*

### *Divine Opportunity*

Summer is a season of divine opportunity. As ants prepare their food in the summer and gather provision in the harvest, so we must be diligent and industrious (Prov. 6:6-11; cf. also 30:24-28).

*Proverbs 6:6-11 (NASB95) — 6 Go to the ant, O sluggard, Observe her ways and be wise, 7 Which, having no chief, Officer or ruler, 8 Prepares her food in the **summer** And gathers her provision in the harvest. 9 How long will you lie down, O sluggard? When will you arise from your sleep? 10 “A little sleep, a little slumber, A little folding of the hands to rest”— 11 Your poverty will come in like a vagabond And your need like an armed man.*

*Proverbs 30:24-28 (NASB95) — 24 Four things are small on the earth, But they are exceedingly wise: 25 The ants are not a strong people, But they prepare their food in the **summer**; 26 The shephanim are not mighty people, Yet they make their houses in the rocks; 27 The locusts have no king, Yet all of them go out in ranks; 28 The lizard you may grasp with the hands, Yet it is in kings’ palaces.*

He who gathers in summer is a wise son, but he who sleeps during the harvest acts shamefully (Prov. 10:4-5).

*Proverbs 10:4-5 (NASB95) — 4 Poor is he who works with a negligent hand, But the hand of the diligent makes rich. 5 He who gathers in **summer** is a son who acts wisely, But he who sleeps in harvest is a son who acts shamefully.*

Let us redeem the time, making the most of our opportunities (Eph. 5:15-16; Col. 4:2-6), courageously embracing even those that are disguised as danger (Luke 21:12-13; Phil. 1:12-14).

*Ephesians 5:15-16 (NASB95) — 15 Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, 16 making the most of your time, because the days are evil.*

*Colossians 4:2-6 (NASB95) — 2 Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving; 3 praying at the same time for us as well, that God will open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been imprisoned; 4 that I may make it clear in the way I ought to speak. 5 Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. 6 Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.*

*Luke 21:12-13 (NASB95) — 12 “But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and will persecute you, delivering you to the synagogues and prisons, bringing you before kings and governors for My name’s sake. 13 “It will lead to an opportunity for your testimony.*

*Philippians 1:12-14 (NASB95) — 12 Now I want you to know, brethren, that my circumstances have turned out for the greater progress of the gospel, 13 so that my imprisonment in the cause of Christ has become well known throughout the whole praetorian guard and to everyone else, 14 and that most of the brethren, trusting in the Lord because of my imprisonment, have far more courage to speak the word of God without fear.*

Possessors of the mind of Christ will say, “We must work the works of Him who sent Me as long as it is day; night is coming when no one can work” (John 9:4; cf. also 4:34-35).

*John 9:4 (NASB95) — 4 “We must work the works of Him who sent Me as long as it is day; night is coming when no one can work.*

*John 4:34-35 (NASB95) — 34 Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work. 35 “Do you not say, ‘There are yet four months, and then comes the harvest’? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest.*

Heed not the deceitfulness of sin, which invariably counsels delay (cf. Acts 24:24-25), but hear His voice, while it is called “Today” (Heb. 3:7-15).

*Acts 24:24-25 (NASB95) — 24 But some days later Felix arrived with Drusilla, his wife who was a Jewess, and sent for Paul and heard him speak about faith in Christ Jesus. 25 But as he was discussing righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come, Felix became frightened and said, “Go away for the present, and when I find time I will summon you.”*

*Hebrews 3:7-15 (NASB95) — 7 Therefore, just as the Holy Spirit says, “Today if you hear His voice, 8 Do not harden your hearts as when they provoked Me, As in the day of trial*

*in the wilderness, 9 Where your fathers tried Me by testing Me, And saw My works for forty years. 10 "Therefore I was angry with this generation, And said, 'They always go astray in their heart, And they did not know My ways'; 11 As I swore in My wrath, 'They shall not enter My rest.'" 12 Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God. 13 But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called "Today," so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. 14 For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end, 15 while it is said, "Today if you hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts, as when they provoked Me."*

Seek the Lord while He may be found, and call upon Him while He is near (Isa. 55:6-7; cf. Psa. 32:1-7).

*Isaiah 55:1-7 (NASB95) — 1 "Ho! Every one who thirsts, come to the waters; And you who have no money come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk Without money and without cost. 2 "Why do you spend money for what is not bread, And your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, And delight yourself in abundance. 3 "Incline your ear and come to Me. Listen, that you may live; And I will make an everlasting covenant with you, According to the faithful mercies shown to David. 4 "Behold, I have made him a witness to the peoples, A leader and commander for the peoples. 5 "Behold, you will call a nation you do not know, And a nation which knows you not will run to you, Because of the Lord your God, even the Holy One of Israel; For He has glorified you." 6 Seek the Lord while He may be found; Call upon Him while He is near. 7 Let the wicked forsake his way And the unrighteous man his thoughts; And let him return to the Lord, And He will have compassion on him, And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon.*

*Psalms 32:1-7 (NASB95) — 1 How blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered! 2 How blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no deceit! 3 When I kept silent about my sin, my body wasted away Through my groaning all day long. 4 For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; My vitality was drained away as with the fever heat of summer. Selah. 5 I acknowledged my sin to You, And my iniquity I did not hide; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord"; And You forgave the guilt of my sin. Selah. 6 Therefore, let everyone who is godly pray to You in a time when You may be found; Surely in a flood of great waters they will not reach him. 7 You are my hiding place; You preserve me from trouble; You surround me with songs of deliverance. Selah.*

## SEASON OF DANGER

### *Neglected Worship*

Summer is a season of neglected worship. The beach beckons, the mountains call, theme parks are full, but God's house is empty.

Faithful attendance is not a seasonal obligation. New Testament disciples continually devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer (Acts 2:41-47).

*Acts 2:41-47 (NASB95) — 41 So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls. 42 They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. 43 Everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles. 44 And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common; 45 and they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need. 46 Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart, 47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.*

Though hastening on a long journey, Paul tarried seven days in Troas so as to assemble with the saints, observe the Lord's Supper, and share the comfort of spiritual association (Acts 20:6-12).

*Acts 20:6-12 (NASB95) — 6 We sailed from Philippi after the days of Unleavened Bread, and came to them at Troas within five days; and there we stayed seven days. 7 On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul began talking to them, intending to leave the next day, and he prolonged his message until midnight. 8 There were many lamps in the upper room where we were gathered together. 9 And there was a young man named Eutychus sitting on the window sill, sinking into a deep sleep; and as Paul kept on talking, he was overcome by sleep and fell down from the third floor and was picked up dead. 10 But Paul went down and fell upon him, and after embracing him, he said, "Do not be troubled, for his life is in him." 11 When he had gone back up and had broken the bread and eaten, he talked with them a long while until daybreak, and then left. 12 They took away the boy alive, and were greatly comforted.*

Therefore, while at home or on the road, let us hold fast our confession without wavering. Assembling with the saints offers great encouragement, both to ourselves and to others (Heb. 10:23-25).

*Hebrews 10:23-25 (NASB95) — 23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; 24 and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, 25 not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.*

## *Immodest Clothing*

Summer is a season of immodest clothing. Modesty seems inversely proportional to temperature: as the thermometer rises, modesty falls.

However, in both the Old and New Testaments, public nakedness has always been counted as shameful. This remains constant, through the Patriarchal Age (Gen. 3:6-11, 21), the Mosaic Age (Exod. 20:22-26; 28:40-43), and the Christian Age (Rev. 3:18; 16:15).

*Genesis 3:6-11 (NASB95) — 6 When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate. 7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings. 8 They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. 9 Then the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, “Where are you?” 10 He said, “I heard the sound of You in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself.” 11 And He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?”*

*Genesis 3:21 (NASB95) — 21 The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them.*

*Exodus 20:22-26 (NASB95) — 22 Then the Lord said to Moses, “Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, ‘You yourselves have seen that I have spoken to you from heaven. 23 ‘You shall not make other gods besides Me; gods of silver or gods of gold, you shall not make for yourselves. 24 ‘You shall make an altar of earth for Me, and you shall sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and your peace offerings, your sheep and your oxen; in every place where I cause My name to be remembered, I will come to you and bless you. 25 ‘If you make an altar of stone for Me, you shall not build it of cut stones, for if you wield your tool on it, you will profane it. 26 ‘And you shall not go up by steps to My altar, so that your **nakedness** will not be exposed on it.’*

*Exodus 28:40-43 (NASB95) — 40 “For Aaron’s sons you shall make tunics; you shall also make sashes for them, and you shall make caps for them, for glory and for beauty. 41 “You shall put them on Aaron your brother and on his sons with him; and you shall anoint them and ordain them and consecrate them, that they may serve Me as priests. 42 “You shall make for them linen breeches to cover their **bare flesh**; they shall reach from the loins even to the thighs. 43 “They shall be on Aaron and on his sons when they enter the tent of meeting, or when they approach the altar to minister in the holy place, so that they do not incur guilt and die. It shall be a statute forever to him and to his descendants after him.*

*Revelation 3:18 (NASB95) — 18 I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see.*

*Revelation 16:15 (NASB95) — 15 (“Behold, I am coming like a thief. Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his clothes, so that he will not walk about naked and men will not see his shame.”)*

From a Biblical standpoint, nakedness involves the public exposure of the thighs, the buttocks and the breasts (Isa. 47:1-3; 20:1-4; Lam. 1:8-9; Ezek. 16:6-14, 35-43).

*Isaiah 47:1-3 (NASB95) — 1 “Come down and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon; Sit on the ground without a throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans! For you shall no longer be called tender and delicate. 2 “Take the millstones and grind meal. Remove your veil, strip off the skirt, Uncover the leg, cross the rivers. 3 “Your **\*nakedness** will be uncovered, Your shame also will be exposed; I will take vengeance and will not spare a man.”*

*Isaiah 20:1-4 (NASB95) — 1 In the year that the commander came to Ashdod, when Sargon the king of Assyria sent him and he fought against Ashdod and captured it, 2 at that time the Lord spoke through Isaiah the son of Amoz, saying, “Go and loosen the sackcloth from your hips and take your shoes off your feet.” And he did so, going naked and barefoot. 3 And the Lord said, “Even as My servant Isaiah has gone naked and barefoot three years as a sign and token against Egypt and Cush, 4 so the king of Assyria will lead away the captives of Egypt and the exiles of Cush, young and old, naked and barefoot with buttocks uncovered, to the **\*shame** of Egypt.*

*Lamentations 1:8-9 (NASB95) — 8 Jerusalem sinned greatly, Therefore she has become an unclean thing. All who honored her despise her Because they have seen her **\*nakedness**; Even she herself groans and turns away. 9 Her uncleanness was in her skirts; She did not consider her future. Therefore she has fallen astonishingly; She has no comforter. “See, O Lord, my affliction, For the enemy has magnified himself!”*

*Ezekiel 16:6-14 (NASB95) — 6 “When I passed by you and saw you squirming in your blood, I said to you while you were in your blood, ‘Live!’ Yes, I said to you while you were in your blood, ‘Live!’ 7 “I made you numerous like plants of the field. Then you grew up, became tall and reached the age for fine ornaments; your breasts were formed and your hair had grown. Yet you were **naked** and bare. 8 “Then I passed by you and saw you, and behold, you were at the time for love; so I spread My skirt over you and covered your nakedness. I also swore to you and entered into a covenant with you so that you became Mine,” declares the Lord God. 9 “Then I bathed you with water, washed off your blood from you and anointed you with oil. 10 “I also clothed you with embroidered cloth and put sandals of porpoise skin on your feet; and I wrapped you with fine linen and covered you with silk. 11 “I adorned you with ornaments, put bracelets on your hands and a*

necklace around your neck. 12 "I also put a ring in your nostril, earrings in your ears and a beautiful crown on your head. 13 "Thus you were adorned with gold and silver, and your dress was of fine linen, silk and embroidered cloth. You ate fine flour, honey and oil; so you were exceedingly beautiful and advanced to royalty. 14 "Then your fame went forth among the nations on account of your beauty, for it was perfect because of My splendor which I bestowed on you," declares the Lord God.

*Ezekiel 16:35-43 (NASB95) — 35 Therefore, O harlot, hear the word of the Lord. 36 Thus says the Lord God, "Because your lewdness was poured out and your nakedness uncovered through your harlotries with your lovers and with all your detestable idols, and because of the blood of your sons which you gave to idols, 37 therefore, behold, I will gather all your lovers with whom you took pleasure, even all those whom you loved and all those whom you hated. So I will gather them against you from every direction and expose your nakedness to them that they may see all your nakedness. 38 "Thus I will judge you like women who commit adultery or shed blood are judged; and I will bring on you the blood of wrath and jealousy. 39 "I will also give you into the hands of your lovers, and they will tear down your shrines, demolish your high places, strip you of your clothing, take away your jewels, and will leave you naked and bare. 40 "They will incite a crowd against you and they will stone you and cut you to pieces with their swords. 41 "They will burn your houses with fire and execute judgments on you in the sight of many women. Then I will stop you from playing the harlot, and you will also no longer pay your lovers. 42 "So I will calm My fury against you and My jealousy will depart from you, and I will be pacified and angry no more. 43 "Because you have not remembered the days of your youth but have enraged Me by all these things, behold, I in turn will bring your conduct down on your own head," declares the Lord God, "so that you will not commit this lewdness on top of all your other abominations.*

Sexuality is a precious gift reserved for marriage, the private and personal possession of husband and wife (Prov. 5:15-19; 1 Cor. 7:1-5; Heb. 13:4).

*Proverbs 5:15-19 (NASB95) — 15 Drink water from your own cistern And fresh water from your own well. 16 Should your springs be dispersed abroad, Streams of water in the streets? 17 Let them be yours alone And not for strangers with you. 18 Let your fountain be blessed, And rejoice in the wife of your youth. 19 As a loving hind and a graceful doe, Let her breasts satisfy you at all times; Be exhilarated always with her love.*

*1 Corinthians 7:1-5 (NASB95) — 1 Now concerning the things about which you wrote, it is good for a man not to touch a woman. 2 But because of immoralities, each man is to have his own wife, and each woman is to have her own husband. 3 The husband must fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise also the wife to her husband. 4 The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does; and likewise also the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. 5 Stop depriving one another, except by agreement for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer,*

*and come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.*

*Hebrews 13:4 (NASB95) — 4 Marriage is to be held in honor among all, and the marriage bed is to be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge.*

Therefore, Christians must adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly (1 Tim. 2:9-10). Our dress and demeanor must be chaste and respectful (1 Pet. 3:1-4).

*1 Timothy 2:9-10 (NASB95) — 9 Likewise, I want women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments, 10 but rather by means of good works, as is proper for women making a claim to godliness.*

*1 Peter 3:1-4 (NASB95) — 1 In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives, 2 as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior. 3 Your adornment must not be merely external—braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; 4 but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God.*

## CONCLUSION

The oppressive heat of summer symbolizes the burden of unacknowledged sin (Psa. 32:3-7).

*Psalms 32:3-7 (NASB95) — 3 When I kept silent about my sin, my body wasted away Through my groaning all day long. 4 For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; My vitality was drained away as with the fever heat of summer. Selah. 5 I acknowledged my sin to You, And my iniquity I did not hide; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord"; And You forgave the guilt of my sin. Selah. 6 Therefore, let everyone who is godly pray to You in a time when You may be found; Surely in a flood of great waters they will not reach him. 7 You are my hiding place; You preserve me from trouble; You surround me with songs of deliverance. Selah.*

The harvest of summer also symbolizes the day of reckoning when we must give account of ourselves to God (Amos 8:1-2; Matt. 24:32-35; 2 Cor. 5:9-11).

*Amos 8:1-2 (NASB95) — 1 Thus the Lord God showed me, and behold, there was a basket of summer fruit. 2 He said, "What do you see, Amos?" And I said, "A basket of summer fruit." Then the Lord said to me, "The end has come for My people Israel. I will spare them no longer.*

*Matthew 24:32-35 (NASB95) — 32 “Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near; 33 so, you too, when you see all these things, recognize that He is near, right at the door. 34 “Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. 35 “Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.*

Procrastination is perilous: “Harvest is past, summer is ended, and we are not saved” (Jer. 8:18-22).

*Jeremiah 8:18-22 (NASB95) — 18 My sorrow is beyond healing, My heart is faint within me! 19 Behold, listen! The cry of the daughter of my people from a distant land: “Is the Lord not in Zion? Is her King not within her?” “Why have they provoked Me with their graven images, with foreign idols?” 20 “Harvest is past, **summer** is ended, And we are not saved.” 21 For the brokenness of the daughter of my people I am broken; I mourn, dismay has taken hold of me. 22 Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why then has not the health of the daughter of my people been restored?*

Now is the acceptable time, behold, now is “the day of salvation” (2 Cor. 6:1-2).

*2 Corinthians 6:1-2 (NASB95) — 1 And working together with Him, we also urge you not to receive the grace of God in vain— 2 for He says, “At the acceptable time I listened to you, And on the day of salvation I helped you.” Behold, now is “the acceptable time,” behold, now is “the day of salvation”—*