No. 71 “Stay Awake”—Why and How?

PLEASE NOTE: Help listeners recognize the symptoms and the dangers of figurative sleep, and motivate them to stay spiritually awake. If you wish, you may use the provided artwork to illustrate the points indicated

Start with illustration about an (**Alarm**)

No doubt we enjoy sleep as it is a gift from Jehovah.

But notice how the encyclopedia Britainica defines sleep.

It defines sleep as a reoccurring state of in-activity a decreased state of consciousness and the decrees of responsiveness to the events in the environment around us.

Without a doubt, we are living in “the last days” of this system of things. We need to stay spiritually awake(2Ti 3:1-5; Mt 24:3, 7, 8)

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO “STAY AWAKE”? (5 min.)

As in Noah’s day, most people today were not spiritually awake, they did not take note of the events happening around them.(Mt 24:37-39)

Infact, when Jesus disciples wanted to know how close the end of these system of things was… he told them that just as Noah’s day were so will be the end of these system of things will be. People will live a care free life they will take no note or notice what is happening around them.

(Talk about the experience of a young Christian sister)

Jehovah is providing warnings of his coming day of change that is going to happen in our day but many people today are allowing themselves to be lowered into spiritual sleep.

Some ridicule the idea that this system will end (2Pe 3:3, 4)

They feel that there is no change in the system around us, everything seem to be stable, same type of governments, same type of religion, even same type of society, it has been like these for hundreds of years. So people are spiritually asleep because they feel no great changes in these institutions. But we are aware that Jehovah God will bring drastic changes to these things.

We need to “stay awake” in a figurative sense

We can all agree that there is a value in staying awake… The apostle paul was inspired by God to Counsel the early Christians to stay awake in a different sense at [**Read 1 Thessalonians 5:6**] lets consider that verse together. So here the bible is encouraging us to stay awake in a spiritual sense. But what does it really mean to be spiritually awake? Notice the verse says not to sleep on as the rest do.. who are the rest these scripture is talking about? Its talking about those in the world around us who are unaware that very soon God is going to bring about some monumental changes in the world on a global scale.(w12 3/15 10-11 ˚1-5)

EVERY year, thousands die because they get drowsy or even fall asleep while driving a motor vehicle. Others lose their jobs because they do not wake up in time to go to work or because they fall asleep on the job. But spiritual drowsiness can have far more serious effects. It is in this important context the Bible at **Rev. 16:14-16.** says “Happy is the one that stays awake.”​

Some people also imagine that there is no God who will call them to account. (Ps. 53:1) Others imagine that God is not interested in us humans, so there is no point in our being interested in him. Still others feel that belonging to a church will make them friends of God. All these people are spiritually asleep.

As Jehovah’s great day approaches, mankind in general is sleeping in a spiritual sense.

There are three questions I will like us to find answers to. What is spiritual sleep? Why is it vital that true Christians keep awake? How can we help others to awake from such sleep?

SPIRITUAL SLEEP​—WHAT IS IT?

In a literal sense People who sleep are usually inactive. In contrast, those who sleep spiritually may be very busy​—but not with spiritual matters. They may be frantically occupied with the daily anxieties of life or seeking pleasure, prestige, or wealth. With all this activity, they show little or no concern for their spiritual needs. People who are spiritually awake, though, realize that we live “in the last days,” so they are as active as possible in doing God’s will.​—2 Pet. 3:3, 4; Luke 21:34-36.

We must remain alert to the urgency of the times and stay focused on doing Jehovah’s will

WHY IS IT CHALLENGING TO “STAY AWAKE”? (6 min.)

Satan uses the world under his control to distract people, putting them into figurative sleep (1Jo 2:15-17; 5:19)

We can see that the world emits or displays the works of its ruler in the areas of Debasing entertainment, violent sports and even Religion, just to mention a Few…

Jesus warned of things that could distract us from our worship… What are those things? Lets see at the bible account of [**Read Luke 21:34, 35** What are the anxieties of life that Jesus warned about?

“The anxieties of daily life” may include financial troubles, family problems, or health concerns. Lets turn our attention to the screen **(explain [Image 1])**

“ No matter how anxious we are anxiety cannot add even a cubit our life span”

Jesus admonished his listeners: “Never be anxious as to , ‘What are we to eat?’ or, ‘What are we to drink?’ or, ‘What are we to put on?’ That even before we ask these things, our heavenly Father knows that we need them.”

Putting Kingdom interests first in our lives and having confidence that Jehovah will provide for us will help us to be less anxious and stay spiritually awake.

Jesus also warned about “overeating and heavy drinking” (w08 9/15 22 ˚12-14)

He admonished the early Christians to be careful, “that their hearts never become weighed down with overeating and heavy drinking and anxieties of life, as we read in the book of **Luke**.”​

Did Jesus condemn the enjoyment of food and drink? No! Jesus knew that the spirit of the world promotes a lack of self-control in those areas**.(Give example of gluttony and drunken bouts).**

How can we be sure that the world’s spirit has not poisoned our senses as to the dangers of overeating or heavy drinking? We do well to ask ourselves these questions: ‘How do I react upon reading counsel in the Bible or in our publications about gluttony? Am I inclined to dismiss this admonition as irrelevant or extreme, perhaps offering excuses or justification for my ways? What is my view of the advice about alcohol, using it​ in moderation and definitely avoiding “drunkenness”? Do I disregard such advice, feeling that it for some reason it does not apply to me? If others express concern about my drinking, do I become defensive or angry? Do I encourage others to disregard such Bible counsel?’

Yes, a person’s mental attitude is a gauge as to whether he is succumbing to the world’s spirit.​—

HOW DO WE “KEEP AWAKE” (14 min.)

Jesus urged his followers to “keep awake” Let us consider the account of [**Read Luke 21:36**] Note Jesus’ use of the word “supplication,” which is a very earnest form of prayer. By admonishing us to make supplication, Jesus emphasized that this is no time to be casual about standing before him and his Father. Only those standing in an approved condition will have the prospect of surviving Jehovah’s day.

No matter what trials may befall us, God’s love is there to sustain us. Though Satan will not stop trying to discourage us, he will fail if we remain “sound in mind” and “vigilant with a view to prayers.” (1 Pet. 4:7)

We need to strengthen our personal relationship with Jehovah. How can we do that? We can do that by regular prayer, Bible reading, personal study, family worship, and regular meeting attendance. We need to make sure of the more important things.

Avoid getting distracted or ensnared by these present system of things.