

Maranatha

This most interesting word is found in 1Cor. 16:22. It is a compound word and depending on where you break it determines its meaning.

“Maran” means Lord. That’s the easy part. But the latter part of the word is where things get tricky. If we break the word to read ‘Marana-tha’ it means “our Lord comes”, but if we break it to read ‘Maran-atha’ it means “our Lord has come.”

If the word is broken to read ‘Marana-tha’ there is a similar thought as found in Rev. 22:20 where John is praying for Jesus to return quickly. Christians lovingly anticipate the second coming of Christ. This event will mean the end of our earthly tribulations and that we will be gathered together with all the saints to be ushered into God’s eternal presence. With the turmoil of the world and its ever-present dangers it is no wonder that Paul might conclude this epistle and John the Revelation with the exclamation of desire that Jesus return and do so quickly.

However, if the word is broken to read ‘Maran-atha’ the meaning is that the Lord has come. This would have reference to His incarnation. By saying “Maran-atha” you are indicating that the Messiah has come in the flesh, the Savior of mankind has appeared, and we are to rejoice in this fact. The term could be used at the Lord’s Table while partaking of the Supper to indicate that we believe that Jesus did come, die in the flesh, and by his death we may have for the forgiveness of our sins.

Context ends the confusion. So whether we are looking at Jesus in the past or in the future ... “Maranatha!”

See you Sunday! -gls