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Momentary Crisis With Far Reaching Effects

Introduction

Every so often each of us has to make a major decision. Would we be better to fix the car or sell it and get a newer one, we view two houses for sale, both are in good areas, excellent for schools, and not too far from work. They are within a couple of thousand dollars of each other, which should we buy? When a decision is made there can then come a time shortly afterward when we wonder, "Did we make the right decision?" We cannot see the immediate or long distance outcome of our decision, therefore, sometimes we regret the decision made and sometimes look back on it with joy. We had come to a crisis moment with far reaching effects. The scriptures are full of moments of crisis, and from our perspective we sometimes see the results in entirety and other results are partially seen. As we consider the following it is not hard to see the far reaching effects.

Crisis Moments in Humanities History

While the following is not the full list of crises, they are ordered for ease of reading. In the early chapters of the scriptures we learn of three crisis moments which followed in quick succession.

1) 1st Crisis

a) The crises:

- i) The first crisis moment was when Adam stepped out of his place of leadership and protection, and left his wife alone, and thus open to the temptations of the devil. It is evident he was there all the time for it distinctly says: "Gave also unto her husband with her" (Gen. 3:6).
- ii) The next crisis came when the woman (she is not called Eve until after the fall, Gen. 3:20) communed with the serpent, and disobeying God partook of the fruit.
- iii) At this point, in the reckoning of God, sin had not entered, for the Holy Spirit informs us: "By one man sin entered into the world" (Rom. 5:12). When Adam, as the head of the human race took of the fruit and ate it, sin entered.

b) The resulting consequences:

- i) There are two major passages which record the immediate consequences and long term effects of Adam's sin.
- ii) Genesis records how Adam and Eve were aware they were naked (Gen. 3:7), that is they recognized that the glory they had before was gone, and in their nakedness they sought to cover themselves (Gen. 3:7). There was also a reluctance to meet God for they hid themselves in the garden (Gen. 3:8). When questioned by God they took no responsibility but blamed another. Adam blamed God and Eve blamed the serpent (Gen. 3:12-13). Man died in his spirit and then physically (Gen. 2:17; 5:5).
- iii) Paul, in Romans, takes up the fact that "death" in two levels is passed upon all men (Rom. 5:12) and all humanity were brought under condemnation (Rom. 5:16, 18). Physical death is not the end of humanity for God reveals that due to man's sin in the rejection of Christ, he will be cast into the Lake of Fire, which is the second death (Rev. 20:14).
- iv) Because of Adam's action in the moment of crisis untold millions of human beings will be banished to Hell for all eternity. The lesson is clear, we never know the far reaching consequences in time and how what we do will effect others.

2) 2nd Crisis

a) The crisis:

- i) Another crisis moment came when Sarah, not believing the promise of God to give Abraham a son by her, gave him Hagar to be the bearer of a son (Gen. 16:1-4). It was logical thinking for Sarah was approximately seventy-six years old. When God spoke to Abraham in Gen. 17:17 Sarah was ninety, and at that time Ishmael was fourteen, and past bearing. Abraham took Hagar and she bore him Ishmael (Gen. 16:4) and of him God said: "He will be a wild man" (Gen. 16:12).

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b) The resulting consequence:

- i) From the two sons of Abraham, Ishmael and Isaac, came two peoples, the Jews and the Arabs. When we consider the Middle East today it is easy to see the results of that decision by Sarah. The sons of Ishmael are in constant conflict with Israel, and it is futile for the leaders of the world to seek to bring about peace, irrespective of how many “peace signings” are made, for Ishmael’s son’s hands will be against every man. If only Sarah and Abraham could have seen the result of that momentary decision, it would never have been made.

3) The 3rd Crisis

a) The crisis:

- i) This again concerns Abraham and rationale thinking. Abram had been told by God to go to a land which God would show him (Gen. 12:1). He was seventy-five years of age (Gen. 12:4) and he had great substance. Indeed, he got wealthier and wealthier (Gen. 12:16). While en route there was a famine in the land, and without a word from God, Abram went down into Egypt. That in itself was bad enough but what he told his wife to do was reprehensible. Repeatedly he told her to say she was his sister (Gen. 12:13; 20:2) to save his own life, even if it meant degrading Sarai.

b) The resulting consequence:

- i) The result of the specifically recorded times when Abram had Sarah tell lies resulted in the house of Pharaoh being sent a great plague (Gen. 12:17); the nation of Gerar being in danger of the judgment of God (Gen. 20:2, 4); shame and a lost testimony for Abram (Gen. 12:18-20); and Sarah being rebuked by Abimelech (Gen. 20:16).
- ii) However, the going of Abram down into Egypt affected Lot for there came a point of time when the herdsmen were in conflict. Abram gave Lot a choice, and he also had much cattle. Following the footsteps of Uncle Abram he thought and judged rationally. He “lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan . . . like the land of Egypt” (Gen. 13:10). How did he learn what Egypt was like? From where did he learn to act independently of God? He was following Abram who had left the example, and the younger man followed. What was the result? Lot lost his wife, sons, daughters-in-law, and ended life in a cave and his daughter committing incest with him (Gen. 19:30-36), and their offspring, the Moabites and Ammonites, were a source of trouble for Israel.

4) The 4th Crisis

a) The crisis:

- i) The build up to the next crisis under consideration was when the Egyptian Princess walked by the banks of the Nile, and seeing the little ark in the bulrushes she sent her servant to fetch it. Then came the moment of crisis. She “saw the child: and, behold, the babe wept” (Ex. 2:5-6). What would her reaction be, obey Pharaoh's command and kill it, or let it live? At that precise moment the babe wept and she was moved with compassion. Then Miriam came forward and offered to get a nurse for the baby (Ex. 2:7).

b) The resulting consequence:

- i) Glorious is the reality that the compassion of an Egyptian Princess, due to the tears of the baby in all its weakness, in time spelt the destruction of the Egyptian army and the liberation of the children of Israel.
- ii) Moses was trained in all the wisdom of the Egyptians (Acts 7:22), spent forty years on the desert (Ex. 7:7), and then was used by God to not only deliver the people of God, but to bring them through the waste howling wilderness (Deut. 32:10) to the edge of the promised land. That baby’s tears and compassionate princess spelt the fall of the nations of Canaan and the fulfilling of the blessings of God on Israel. What a tragedy if Moses’ parents had not seen that he was a goodly child (Ex. 2:2) and trusting God put him in the ark of bulrushes at the bank of the river.

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5) The 5th Crisis

a) The crises:

- i) When we consider Pilate and His judging of the Lord, he faced at least two crises. The first was Pilate when at the Judgment Seat received the word from his wife: "Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him." (Matt. 27:19). It was evident she knew something he either did not know or had suppressed the knowledge of, but now a decision had to be made. Would he listen to his wife or reject her counsel? It would seem that the pressure was so great from the chief priests that he ignored his wife's pleas.
- ii) The next crisis came when he knew Christ was not guilty of any wrongs, and knowing what was the right thing to do, he declared three times: "I find no fault in this man" (Jn. 18:38; 19:4, 6). The Jews were not satisfied and demanded his blood. Pilate knew a decision had to be made. It seems that decision was finalized when the crowds cried: "If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar" (Jn. 19:12). Then he delivered Jesus to be crucified (Jn. 19:16).
- iii) This had been a crisis for the leaders of Israel representing the nation for they cried: "His blood be on us, and on our children" (Matt. 27:25). Little did they know the results of those words.

b) The resulting consequences:

- i) Pilate made two bad decisions that night. He failed to listen to his wife and he feared losing his favour with the emperor. It was not long after his decision to placate the Jews that Pilate acted four times over in such a way as to infuriate them and was called back to Rome. By the time he got there Tiberius had died and Caligula was emperor. We do not know how he died but he was never again reinstated to a position of power.
- ii) For the Jewish people the consequences have been dreadful. If only they could have seen the dark results of their cry, the many slain through the centuries, and even in our own time by Hitler when six million was slaughtered.

[Application To Us](#)

Taking the truth of a crisis moment and considering the far reaching effects, and considering its relevance to the believer. I find it interesting that saints have no trouble in telling sinners the truth but do not like the truth to be told to them. I was told for years that a believer does not want to sin and it only happens occasionally, and is an accident. Such is blatant error and we need to face the truth. Never in the scriptures is sin viewed as an accident. It can be done in ignorance, but a thing done unwittingly is not the same as an accident. The opportunity to sin arises constantly, daily, and each time is a crisis moment. A decision will be made. Sadly, oftentimes the consequences of that decision are not seen for a long time, nor how far reaching they are. They are not called "crisis moments" without a reason, for the decision made will have consequences on ourselves and others. May God help us to watch the crisis moments in life.

. . . . Rowan Jennings