

Scriptural Truths

E-Mail Meditations

The Lord Will Come . . . Perhaps Today . . . Behold, I Come Quickly . . . Rev. 22:7

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The Danger of Procrastination

Introduction

There can be no doubt that every reader of this devotional has sung a hymn, a little song, or repeated a poem. No doubt it was noticed that the first verse gave an idea which each succeeding verse was built upon. The individual who wrote it did not repeat some little piece of information to fill a line but to contribute to the poem's overall message. So it is with the scriptures whither one is considering a book, a chapter, or section within a chapter. They are not just a collection of pieces of data randomly put together but have developing truths. For instance, Luke's gospel chapter thirteen.

Chapter Summary

To save the reader from reading the chapter (which would be beneficial), I give the following thought flow of it.

- a) The narrative begins in the previous chapter with the Lord telling a parable of servants who are waiting for their Lord, the groom, to return from the wedding (Lk. 12:36). Much like today, when the wedding party goes for pictures we know they will return, but we do not know exactly when. The Lord says this is typical of many people. Procrastination is a way of life. Ignoring the reality the Lord, who is typified as the groom, will come at an hour they are not aware of. Then immediately chapter thirteen tells of sudden deaths of the Galileans and the slaughter by Pilate and those on whom the tower of Siloam fell killing them. The lesson was, do not delay in getting ready to meet the Lord for we know not the day of His coming (Matt. 24:44) or of our death (Jam. 4:14).
- b) The second part (Lk. 12:6-9) was a parable about a fruit tree which produced no fruit. The owner said, "Stop nourishing it and cut it down," and he had every right to do so. However, the dresser of the tree asked for one more chance for it. He would put the best fertilizer around it, would give it the best of soil and plant it in the best place. If after one year it still did not produce fruit then cut it down. The lesson is clear. Despite God giving humanity ample opportunities to accept His salvation and it being constantly rejected, means God would be fully justified in saying enough is enough, cast them aside. Yet, because He is longsuffering and not willing that any should perish (2 Pet. 3:9), He gives another opportunity through lengthening life of the individual. If such a one still fails to accept Christ as Saviour, then He will cut him down.
- c) The third section (Lk. 12:23-30) is about the danger of thinking that religious activities were the guarantee for getting into Heaven.

Rethinking The Lessons

When I was a boy and a young man, we often had gospel meetings which would last for several weeks. Four themes convictingly were spoken on:

- a) The imminency of the Lord's return
- b) The great salvation provided by the Lord on the cross
- c) The warning of a hell to shun
- d) The unknown day of ones death.
 - i) Sadly the deepening deadening effect of the sinful environment in which we live has affected the gospel message. As the day of the Lord's return draws closer, as does the day of our death, how urgent this message is.

The Lord told of these two instances (Lk. 13:2-4) when the cold hand of death came suddenly and without warning. As I write this (Dec. 2020), the corona virus has either directly or indirectly been the cause of 1,322, 963 deaths universally. In British Columbia where I live 299 people have died, even the tiny Island of Guam has had 98 deaths. How many of those individuals woke up in the morning without a thought of death, yet within hours or minutes they were aware something was wrong. Several years ago my own dad had a coffee with my mother, then walked to the car, sat down and died instantly. Did he think that it was to be his last walk with mother, or the last coffee he would ever have, or that he would be in eternity in a matter of minutes? We are limited in our knowledge and no one knows how, where, or when that hollow death rattle will come as slowly life ebbs away. For thousands it comes in an instance. Since we do not know if our dying will be long or instantaneous, it is wise to be prepared for that last journey each of us will eventually take.

- a) As it write this, I am 76 years of age and there are many of the readers who are a great deal younger and perhaps older. To those who have never accepted the Lord as Saviour, depending on Him alone for salvation, I wonder how many times has death been at your door? In the parable of the fig tree it bore no fruit and the owner gave it another opportunity. Lifting this to the spiritual lesson the Lord was teaching, for some there have been many opportunities to accept the sacrifice of the loving Saviour but it has been rejected, there was nothing for God. The opportunity may have been through a gospel meeting, a tract, a verse of scripture, a hymn being sung or played, a sickness, a death of someone close, but there was no response in the heart. After all those times of an individual rejecting the divine offer of salvation, would God not be within His rights to let the individual die? But He gives another chance, and for some this could be the last chance for God alone knows when you give your final answer. The individual might not know, there will be no thunderbolts of warning, but the most important decision is being made, "Will I at this moment accept the gift of salvation or shall I wait knowing there might never be another opportunity?" There is a line that is crossed by rejecting the Lord, and the call of His spirit is lost, at that point the patience of God will have run its full course. If God takes this "No, not today" as my final answer, then such an individual will live the rest of their days knowing there is no salvation for them.
- b) The sad, no the tragic reality is, untold millions are listening to a man telling them how to feel good, get wealthy etc., and God is too loving to send anyone to hell. It is a lie from Satan Himself. God sent plagues upon Pharaoh in Egypt, speaking very loudly, and He does the same today. It may be because of a death when one ponders, "If that was me in that casket, where would my soul be?", or perhaps an accident or a dark time in life when this individual acts like Pharaoh. His repentance was superficial when he said he was sorry, he promised to do what was right. However, his repentance was only to have God remove the plague. Many an individual has in a dark day repented and promised God to be a better husband, father or wife, etc. and get saved. Then when the dark season is past the trusting Jesus is all forgotten about. It is superficial believing to deliver the individual out of the situation. There was no repentance. Pharaoh did this, making empty repentances until it was too late. Many seek to be like Pharaoh in trying to make a compromise with God. How arrogant of any human to try to make a deal with God. It goes something like this, "If I do my best, if I try to be honest in everything, if I go to church and reverence God, if I . . . then if God does His part through Christ and we come to an agreement then I will repent and accept His offer of salvation". Let it be clearly said, God is not in the compromising business. He is not in "the you do this and I will do that" business. Salvation, Heaven, escape from hell is all on God's terms. Those who do not agree with His terms of salvation will never enter Heaven but will be cast into eternal blackness of darkness. God's terms are very clear, you do nothing except accept the free gift of salvation procured through Christ, His Son, at Calvary. God did everything. That is God's terms and it is a take it or leave it situation. Pharaoh learnt that God does not play games. When it comes to the accepting or rejecting the sacrifice of His Son it is "an either or or" situation. Either one accepts the finished work of Christ or rejects it and accepts the reality that the glories of Heaven they will never see. The decision is that which only the individual can make.
- c) This is the readers opportunity to make the wise decision and prepare to meet God.

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