

**Articles and Sermons :: Pointing Out To Repentance****Pointing Out To Repentance - posted by WatchmanEyes (), on: 2008/8/25 14:17**

Pointing Out To Repentance

(Cursing the Fig Tree)

Matthew 21:18-32

Mat 21:18 And returning early to the city, He hungered.

Mat 21:19 And seeing a fig tree in the way, He came to it and found nothing on it except leaves only. And He said to it, Let no fruit grow on you forever. And immediately the fig tree withered away.

Mat 21:20 And when the disciples saw, they marveled, saying, How quickly the fig tree has withered away!

Mat 21:21 Jesus answered and said to them, Truly I say to you, If you have faith and do not doubt, you shall not only do this miracle of the fig tree, but also; if you shall say to this mountain, Be moved and be thrown into the sea; it shall be done.

Mat 21:22 And all things, whatever you shall ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive.

Mat 21:23 And when He had come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to Him as He was teaching, and said, By what authority do you do these things? And who gave you this authority?

Mat 21:24 And Jesus answered and said to them, I will also ask you one thing; which if you tell Me, I likewise will tell you by what authority I do these things.

Mat 21:25 The baptism of John, where was it from? From Heaven or from men? And they reasoned within themselves, saying, If we shall say, From Heaven, he will say to us, Why then did you not believe him?

Mat 21:26 But if we shall say From men, we fear the people; for all consider John as a prophet.

Mat 21:27 And they answered Jesus and said, We cannot tell. And He said to them, Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things.

Mat 21:28 But what do you think? A man had two sons; and he came to the first and said, Son, go work in my vineyard today.

Mat 21:29 He answered and said, I will not. But afterwards he repented and went.

Mat 21:30 And he came to the second and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir; and did not go.

Mat 21:31 Which of the two did the will of his father? They said to Him, The first. Jesus said to them, Truly I say to you that the tax-collectors and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.

Mat 21:32 For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him. But the tax-collectors and the harlots believed him. And when you had seen it, you did not repent afterwards so that you might believe him.

Repentance is needed in order to see the true kingdom of God. Nothing hinders a man to approach a Holy God but only that a man is hindered by his hardened heart...due to his willful disobedience to his Creator even if man saw the magnificent power of God. God is longing that man might grow in fellowship with God after he was born again, after he had experience the abundant mercy, faithfulness and unconditional love of God towards his life. But what if man after he had receive the grace of God and know his commandments, His statutes and His life through Christ Jesus that he still willfully disobey Him? Let us see it according to the passage, actually God is hungering for the fruits of life (the hidden life of the Spirit) to all of those who have receive Him, but in verse 19 ... seeing a fig tree in the way, He came to it and found nothing on it except leaves only.

There is no fruit found on the fig tree!!! Only leaves... What would you do to a tree growing only leaves but has no fruit? Consider what Jesus Christ did, He cursed the fig tree that it would not bear fruit forever and the fig tree withered. No fruit found and then immediately He cursed the tree? Is our Lord Jesus Christ get disappointed for He is hungry that He haven't eat because there is no fruit on the fig tree? Before we can understand the situation we see in the light of the Scripture what the meaning of what He had done is. There is a spiritual significance of the cursing of the fig tree, but let us first see who is the fig tree He is talking about. Let us see in the Scripture .Jeremiah 24:2,5 and 8

Jer 24:1 Jehovah caused me to see, and behold, two baskets of figs set before the temple of Jehovah (after Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had exiled Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah, and the rulers of Judah, with the craftsmen and smiths, from Jerusalem, and had brought them to Babylon);

Jer 24:2 one basket had very good figs, like the first ripe figs. And the other basket had very bad figs, which could not be eaten, they were so bad.

Jer 24:3 Then Jehovah said to me, What do you see, Jeremiah? And I said, Figs; the good figs are very good, and the bad are very bad, so that they cannot be eaten, they are so bad.

Jer 24:4 Again the Word of Jehovah came to me, saying,

Jer 24:5 So says Jehovah, the God of Israel: Like these good figs, so I will acknowledge the exiles of Judah, whom I ha

ve sent out of this place into the land of the Chaldeans for their good.

Jer 24:6 For I will set My eyes on them for good, and I will bring them again to this land. And I will build them and not pull them down; and I will plant them and not pluck them up.

Jer 24:7 And I will give them a heart to know Me, that I am Jehovah; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God. For they shall return to Me with their whole heart.

Jer 24:8 And like the bad figs, which cannot be eaten, they are so bad; surely so says Jehovah, So I will give to Zedekiah the king of Judah, and his rulers, and the rest of Jerusalem who remain in this land, and those who dwell in the land of Egypt;

Jer 24:9 and I will even make them a horror for evil to all the kingdoms of the earth, for a reproach and a proverb, a gibe and a curse, there in all places where I shall drive them.

Jer 24:10 And I will send the sword, the famine, and the plague among them until they are destroyed from the land that I gave to them and to their fathers.

It is actually pertaining to the nation of Israel. The people are symbolized as the fig tree. This means that tree is full of leaves but fruitless signifies that all that time the nation of Israel is full of outward show but could not satisfy God. The fig tree became withered or dried up. Drying is a process of hardening. It came to my thought that when you mix sand and cement with water and you leave it for a while, what will happen? The mixture becomes hard because it is dried up!!! Oh this is the symbolism of Nation of Israel that until now this nation is hardened because of their unbelief of the coming of Messiah in the person of Jesus Christ. I was amazed this drying of the fig tree. Many Christians today, may be all over the world believe it is the devil who hardens our hearts because of our continuous rebellion to the Lord God, but I will show you passages in the Scriptures that many of you will be shocked for what I will give you about hardening of hearts...

Deu 29:2 And Moses called to all Israel and said to them, You have seen all that Jehovah did before your eyes in the land of Egypt to Pharaoh and to all his servants, and to all his land.

Deu 29:3 Your eyes have seen the great trials, the signs, and those great miracles.

Deu 29:4 Yet Jehovah has not given you a heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, until today.

Isa 63:16 For You are our Father, though Abraham does not know us, and Israel does not acknowledge us. You, O Jehovah, are our Father, our Redeemer; Your name is from everlasting.

Isa 63:17 O Jehovah, why have You made us wander from Your ways. You harden our heart from Your fear? For Your servants' sake, return the tribes of Your inheritance.

Joh 12:37 But though He had done so many miracles before them, yet they did not believe on Him,

Joh 12:38 so that the saying of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke, "Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?"

Joh 12:39 Therefore they could not believe, because Isaiah said again,

Joh 12:40 "He has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, so that they should not see with their eyes nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them."

Rom 9:14 What shall we say then? Is there not unrighteousness with God? Let it not be!

Rom 9:15 For He said to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion."

Rom 9:16 So then it is not of the one willing, nor of the one running, but of God, the One showing mercy.

Rom 9:17 For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "Even for this same purpose I have raised you up, that I might show My power in you, and that My name might be declared throughout all the earth."

Rom 9:18 Therefore He has mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will, He hardens.

(Compare with Exo. 9:13-16)

2Th 2:3 Let not anyone deceive you by any means. For that Day shall not come unless there first comes a falling away, and the man of sin shall be revealed, the son of perdition,

2Th 2:4 who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, setting himself forth, that he is God.

2Th 2:5 Do you not remember that I told you these things when I was still with you?

2Th 2:6 And now you know what holds back, for him to be revealed in his own time.

2Th 2:7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already working, only he is now holding back until it comes out of the midst.

2Th 2:8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the breath of His mouth and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming,

2Th 2:9 whose coming is according to the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,
2Th 2:10 and with all deceit of unrighteousness in those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, so that they might be saved.
2Th 2:11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie,
2Th 2:12 so that all those who do not believe the truth, but delight in unrighteousness, might be condemned.

Rom 11:22 Behold then the kindness, and the severity of God; on those having fallen, severity; but on you, kindness, if you continue in the kindness. Otherwise you also will be cut off.
Rom 11:23 And those also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in. For God is able to graft them in again.
Rom 11:24 For if you were cut out of the natural wild olive tree, and were grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree; how much more these being according to nature will be grafted into their own olive-tree?
Rom 11:25 For I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers, lest you should be wise within yourselves; that blindness in part has happened to Israel, until the fullness of the nations has come in.

Should we have a reverential fear before our Lord God that in His Sovereign Will, He can harden our hearts as what He pleases to execute His own purpose for us, that we may know that in His hands all things are possible? Should we go in our own prayer closet and plead with God day by day to know His counsel and have a heart's desire to know Him and absolutely obey Him no matter what happens unless we go otherwise in the opposite direction that we may be cut-off in His presence? **GOD CAN HARDEN OUR HEARTS AND THIS IS A WARNING FOR US TO CONSIDER THAT WE ARE NOT OUR OWN PROPERTY BUT OF THE LORD!!!** ...for you are bought with a price. Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's (1Cor 6:20). Our own self is His valuable property, it is His!!! He can do all what He pleases for our own good. Flee from unbelief and trust God right now. You don't know what your life will be without Him.

You may say that it is written in 2Cor. 3:3-4 that it is the devil (god of this age) that blinded the thoughts of the unbelievers. I will emphasize that you misinterpret what I mean that we are talking about here is not unbeliever but the house of Israel that God chose for His own glory. They are believers of God yet they did not allow receiving the life of God through Christ Jesus. They have great passion and devout service to God but the inner life is lacking because of their unbelief. We can see it in their history until now that they have passionate desire of worshipping God in their outside religious ceremonies but in reality without the presence of Jesus Christ in their life. They are believers in the name and appearance only but they don't come to our Lord Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior (John 5:39-40). I am saying that after we receive Jesus Christ as our Lord And Savior but the life of Him is not manifesting in us because our constant unwillingness to hear and disobedience to God, even in our daily circumstances God is speaking to us to the smallest things pertaining to spiritual life we reject it for we consider it unnecessary, there will come in time in our life that our hearts will be hardened because we are now use to it because God do not punish right there and then. Please consider this that God would allow this to happen!!! (Hebrews 3:7-13). Note that the Holy Spirit repeated these words again in Hebrews 4:7. **WHAT A WARNING!!!**

Now let us continue with the passage in verse 21, If you have faith and do not doubt... that's the point what Jesus is saying that hardness of hearts will be removed if we believe and do not doubt which is the contrast of hardness of hearts which is unbelief. Actually God is showing that we must remove our unbelief to Him and trust God fully. Be cast out!!! It will happen. The mountain will be taken up for you have faith in Him who knows what is better for you than what you know. Trusting God will remove the obstacles that we might see, hear, perceived what the good God is in store for us .
Eph 2:10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them.

But we must ask it by prayer for He says , if you believe you will receive. Do we believe it? Maybe you will say, In thy name we will ask yet you do not practice what you have ask for to have faith in doing His will, it is useless. Hardening of our hearts is contagious; it is deadly as a poison for we do not know it that we are in that state of heart unless God revealed it to us by His Holy Spirit. **"DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS"**-Chris

To be continued.....