

HEALING ANGEL

BIBLE STUDY

And the people of Berea were more open minded than those in Thessalonica, and they listened eagerly to Paul's message. They searched the Scriptures day after day to see if Paul and Silas were telling the truth. Acts 17:11 (NLT)

CHAPTER 4

*In our own profound remorse we repent of our sins,
we turn from our own wicked ways, and
in deep contrition cast ourselves upon His amazing mercy and grace.
In the intense brightness of his own beautiful character,
we see ourselves as we really are--defiled.
So in desperate need of forgiveness and acceptance we come to him to be made whole within.
Never, never has He turned anyone away who seeks Him in sincerity.
W. Phillip Keller*

JESUS IS LOOKING AT US WITH EYES AS FLAMES OF FIRE

Revelation 2:29

Anyone with ears to hear must listen to the Spirit and understand what he is saying to the churches.

The warnings given to the seven churches in Revelation can be hard to understand. For me, the one to the church of Thyatira was baffling as to what it really meant. Tolerating false teachings of Jezebel that leads to sexual immorality and eating food sacrificed to idols are not phrases common to present day America. The end of the warning to the church of Thyatira commands us to listen to the Spirit and to understand what God is saying. We can commit sins knowingly and unknowingly. It is our responsibility to understand, God says so!

1 Thessalonians 5:4-8

But you aren't in the dark about these things, dear brothers and sisters, and you won't be surprised when the day of the Lord comes like a thief. For you are all children of the light and of the day; we don't belong to darkness and night. So be on your guard, not asleep like the others. Stay alert and be clearheaded. Night is the time when people sleep and drinkers get drunk. But let us who live in the light be clearheaded, protected by the armor of faith and love, and wearing as our helmet the confidence of our salvation.

We must be clearheaded, just as Paul warned nearly 2000 years ago. We must pay attention to God's warnings. God's judgment falls when his people do not heed warnings, repent, and turn from their offensive ways to God.

Don't rationalize a church's light hearted approach to judgment because we live under grace. The churches in the New Testament are under the same grace as we are today. The seven churches in Revelation were warned by John, they lie in the present day country of Turkey. Paul ministered east of these churches in Galatia. More Christians are being martyred today than in the history of the world. If Jesus Christ had continued to be lifted up in those churches wouldn't those countries be Christian today? The point in this is that the teaching in current American churches, "that we are under grace", coupled with a lack of repentance and obedience is false teaching.

Imagine this picture of Jesus, looking down at you and your church with his feet planted firmly, eyes of fire and his voice thundering--"REPENT!"

Revelation 1:14-15

***And his eyes were like flames of fire.
His feet were like polished bronze refined in a furnace, and
his voice thundered like mighty ocean waves.***

The world is weary of the warnings, the doom and gloomers, the negative thinkers, those that want to throw cold water on their positive thinking, fun loving, prosperous and successful ways. But, in addition to the weariness we see in the parable of the virgins, today attitudes are often accompanied by an arrogant self righteous anger expressing itself in an unwillingness to listen to God's scribes. The anger is not hidden, it is vocal, condescending, and accusing.

The false teachings of Jezebel methodically encourage the church to abandon Jesus Christ. And each time we excuse our compromises, the heart of the church becomes harder. Repentance is a vital part of the Christian's life. The Christian will destroy himself by his prideful, stubborn compromises, brought on by depending upon himself rather than Jesus Christ.

Proverbs 3:5-12

***Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding.
Seek His will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take.
Don't be impressed with your own wisdom.
Instead, fear the Lord and turn away from evil.
Then you will have healing for your body and strength for your bones.
Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the best part of everything you produce.
Then he will fill your barns with grain, and your vats will overflow with good wine.
My child, don't reject the Lord's discipline, and don't be upset when he corrects you
For the Lord corrects those he loves, just as a father corrects a child in whom he delights.***

God has no desire to see the wicked perish, nor does he want to punish and discipline his kids. His kindness is meant to lead us to repentance. Don't take God's patience and perseverance with our sins wrongly. He doesn't approve of our compromises and backsliding. When God's anger is provoked; judgment is rendered.

In Biblical history, God used famine, disease, and war to bring punishment to his unrepentant people. Look at America, drought which diminishes crops diminishing our food supply. Our healthcare system falling apart. Threat of Ebola and other diseases brought from immigrants from the south. The threat of terrorists coming onto our land; who come only to kill, steal, and destroy. For America we also see the threat of economic ruin. These warnings are from God.

PARABLE OF THE TEN BRIDESMAIDS

Is the church of America ready for the return of Jesus Christ? Are our hearts on fire for Him; like when we first got saved?

Let's look at one warning from Jesus. The story of the seven virgins found in **Matthew 25:1-13** in the NLT. Quotes come from The Matthew Henry Commentary, page 1333, (Zondervan Publishing, Grand Rapids, Mi., 1961)

1. Matthew 25:1; "Then the Kingdom of Heaven will be like ten bridesmaids who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom."

Matthew Henry says this:

"It was a custom sometimes used among the Jews on that occasion, that the bridegroom came, attended with his friends, late in the night, to the house of the bride, where she expected him, attended with her bride-maids, who, upon notice given of the bridegroom's approach, were to go out with lamps in their hands, to light him into the house with ceremony and formality, in order to the celebrating of the nuptials with great mirth."

The bridegroom is our Lord Jesus Christ and the virgins are members of the church.

2. Matthew 25:2-4; "Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. The five who were foolish didn't take enough olive oil for their lamps, but the other five were wise enough to take along extra oil."

Matthew Henry says this:

"It was the folly of the foolish virgins, that they took their lamps, and took no oil with them. They had just oil enough to make their lamps burn for the present, to make a show with... They have no principle within. They have a lamp of profession in their hands, but have not in their hearts that stock, which is necessary to carry them through the services and trials of the present state."

"The wise virgins had a good principle within, which would maintain and keep up their profession. The heart is the vessel, which it is our wisdom to get furnished; for, out of a good treasure there, good things must be brought..."

Jesus is specific to tell us that some of the virgins were wise, some foolish. Everyone in the church is different in their sincerity or depth of faith. God doesn't play favorites, but he knows the thoughts and intentions of every heart.

The Bible uses the word 'foolish' to describe someone who ignores the commands and precepts of the Bible. The 'wise' are those who follow hard after God; their wisdom is godly; and their faith is not just in their head or their hand. It fills their heart.

3. Matthew 25:5-6: "When the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and fell asleep. At midnight they were roused by the shout, "Look, the bridegroom is coming! Come out and meet him!"

Matthew Henry says this:

"The bridegroom tarried, that is, he did not come out so soon as they expected."

"While he tarried, those that waited for him, grew careless, and forgot what they were attending: as if they had given over looking for him."

"Too many good Christians, when they have been long in profession, grow remiss, their graces are not lively, nor their works found perfect before God; and though all love be not lost, yet the first love

is left.”

4. Matthew 25:7-9; “All the bridesmaids got up and prepared their lamps. The five foolish ones asked the others, ‘Please give us some of your oil because our lamps are going out.’ But the others replied, ‘We don’t have enough for all of us. Go to a shop and buy some for yourselves.’ “

Matthew Henry says:

“It will be a day of search and inquiry; and it concerns us to think how we shall then be found. In the foolish virgins, it denotes a vain confidence, and conceit of the goodness of their state, and their readiness for another world.”

Oil is often a symbol of the Holy Spirit. The wise virgins didn’t give away their oil, because they couldn’t. We each are responsible for our salvation, and for our walk of faith with Christ. When Christ returns, there will be no excuses, no explanations accepted for slothfulness in faith.

We are a proud people! We are a comfortable people! Proud, comfortable people begin thinking their well being is because of the works of their hands. This is sin, because all that we are, we have, and we enjoy is from the hand of God. We must repent of our proud self confidence and conceit. Do not be foolish and think you are safe and heaven bound because you have defined yourself as good. There is only one way to heaven and the road is narrow and few find it. We must have an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ--there is no other way!

5. Matthew 25:10-13; “But while they were gone to buy oil, the bridegroom came. Then those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was locked. Later, when the other five bridesmaids returned, they stood outside calling, ‘Lord! Lord! Open the door for us!’ But he called back, ‘Believe me, I don’t know you!’ So you, too, must keep watch! For you do not know the day or hour of my return.’

Matthew Henry says:

“They wanted oil to supply them when they were going out. An external profession well humoured may carry a man far, it may light him along this world, but the dams of the valley of the shadow of death will put it out.”

“They would gladly be beholden to the wise virgins for a supply of their vessels. Those who now hate the strictness of religion, will, at death and judgment, wish for the solid comforts of it. Those who care not to live the life, yet would die the death, of the righteous.”

“Those will see their need of grace hereafter, when it should save them, who will not see their need of grace now, when it should sanctify and rule them. It comes to late.”

““Watch therefore. We had it before and here it is repeated as the most needful caution. Our great duty is to watch. Be awake, and be wakeful. It is a good reason for our watching, the time of our Lord’s coming is very uncertain; we know neither the day nor the hour.”

John warned, Paul warned, and Jesus warned the New Testament believers to be careful, be ready, and to be filled with the Holy Spirit over and over. The church of Thyatira, which is a picture of many American churches and Christians must understand what God is saying. We will face judgment if we continue in our sin. The ten virgins could be living today in the church of Thyatira, putting on a good show with their hands full of light, but their hearts darkened by sin.

It matters not whether Jesus comes back soon or if he tarries and brings judgment on the unrepentant church of Thyatira the five foolish bridesmaids will be left out in the dark, the door

closed between them and Jesus.

We must be filled with the Holy Spirit. We must be ready for Christ's return. He will come when we least expect it. He will not give us a week's notice to get our lives right with Him. We must walk with Him daily, being filled with Him daily, that we might be ready.

God loves us unconditionally, no matter what, all the time. He has gone to heaven and prepared a place for us so that we might be with Him. He gives us everything. We are so blessed! Oh you don't want to miss the ending of God's plan! You surely want to know that you know that you are in right relationship with Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. You don't want to miss heaven. Can you imagine paradise? Can you imagine no more pain, no more suffering, no more tears? Can you imagine that our present suffering will be nothing compared to the glory He will reveal to us? I want to see Jesus! I want to feel Him holding me and welcoming me into his presence. I don't want to miss it!

HEALING ANGEL PRAYER

GRATEFUL FOR MY FATHER'S DISCIPLINE

Heavenly Father,

Thank you for the warnings! Thank you for exposing the sin in the church, that we might have another chance to love you with all of our heart, soul, and mind. Thank you that you love us! Thank you for allowing me to be born in America. Thank you for the opportunity and privilege of reading the Bible, and being able to speak about You.

Lord, I have pride! And yes, I admit, I have been self righteous and stubborn. I repent.

Lord, I repent. I have rationalized my lack of commitment to you! Oh yes, I have come up with many excuses. But as I reflect back and remember them, I have been leaning on my own understanding. I have twisted your word to fit the way I want to live. Lord, I am truly sorry for being like the foolish virgin. I repent of my hypocrisy and pretending to be spiritual.

Thank you Lord that your obedience is black and white in many areas. Help me Lord, teach me Lord to flee from those things you say are wrong and make wiser choices in the future.

Your word says to repent then and turn to God, so that my sins might be wiped away. I eagerly await your promise to send refreshment straight from your throne into my heart! What an awesome, merciful, gracious God you are. Thank you for the gift of repentance. It is truly your grace in action. You are giving me another chance because I have repented. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

In Jesus name, amen