

A CALL TO DISCIPLESHIP PSALMS OF ASCENT

The Day of Awakening

Text: Psalm 120

Key Word: Danger

Key Thought: There Are Dangers When Walking as a Christian in this World

Every man, woman, teenager, boy or girl must come to a day of spiritual awakening in their life. Without it we will have to accept a life that has lost its true meaning. No one can bypass this truth without disastrous results. It is often the insurmountable problems of life that brings us to this place of being willing to change.

This Psalm begins the pilgrim's pathway on our trek to the place called Zion (city of David). It was the destination of every Jewish believer in the late spring of every year. The roads and hillsides were filled with these devoted families. The heart of God was calling to the heart of men.

Anyone who travelled these roads recognized the danger that was before them. The Parable of the Good Samaritan offers the perilous possibilities that could take place on the unprotected roadways.

Lets walk through this Psalm as we rediscover the place where we must all begin when God's Spirit beckons us to come to Himself. It is the call to higher ground. It is the call that some still need to respond to.

What Are the Dangers That Await the Weary Pilgrim?

I. DEADLY ARROWS (Psalm 120:1-4)

II. DRAWN SWORDS (Psalm 120:5-7)

I. DEADLY ARROWS (Psalm 120:1-4)

It seems like the first few steps on any journey are the most important. These are the steps that set the direction of one's destination. It is here that we determine which direction our lives will go. It is here that we begin to walk a new pathway with God as our guide.

"This is the way, walk ye in it."

I. DEADLY ARROWS (Psalm 120:1-4)

This Psalm reminds me of the days preceding my decision to serve God. My eyes began to be opened to the facade of the world. We seem to first see the reality of the world we live in before our eyes focus upon God (Psalm 121). I could see through the darkened glass that Satan was trying to destroy my life. In my resolution I could see that I would quickly face opposition.

My trouble was causing me to call out to God.

"I call (cried- KJV) on the LORD in my distress and he answers me."

Psalm 120:1

Every one of us begins our journey to God with this step. We must cry out to the Lord to deliver our soul from the hell that it is heading toward.

One of the greatest arrows that are pointed in our direction is a lying tongue.

"Save me, O LORD, from lying lips and from deceitful tongues."

Psalm 120:2

It is better to be the victim of slander than to be the author of it. **An unbridled tongue is the chariot of the devil that he rides to triumph.**

The tongue . . .

Is small in quantity but mighty in quality
Is soft but also slippery
It goes out lightly but falls heavily
It strikes quickly but leave eternal scars
It begins as a spark yet can consume a forest
It ventures forth with no thought of returning home
Once inflamed it can be encouraged with hell's supply
It can begin good and quickly move to evil
It can begin in foolishness and move to bitterness

This Psalm speaks of a person that is sick of lies and crippled by their hateful words and actions. **This Psalm begins with distress and ends in war.** What a picture of the result of living in an unrighteous world.

I. DEADLY ARROWS (Psalm 120:1-4) (Contd.)

The deadly arrows of tongues continue to be shot our way in hope that we will someday allow one of them to penetrate us.

We've had the arrow that says everyone is essentially good and our world is really getting better. We have finally come out of our closets they boast. They tell us the world is pleasant and harmless. We are born free. If we have problems it must be because of what someone has done to us.

We have been told that we are the result of evolutionary process. We are told that we must become oriented to our sexuality. The wise men of our generation tell us there is no God. He is simply the figment of our imagination. We are told to save the whales and abort our babies. We are told to die with dignity. Politicians tell us to tighten our belts while they loosen theirs.

Entertainers tell us to enter their joy (as they struggle in the divorce courts). We must not allow the lies of religionists who "heal the wounds of my people lightly." We must escape the traditions of men and learn to hold fast to the commandments of God. They tell us about our world and refuse to acknowledge our God who created it. They inform us about our bodies and deny the fact that we have been created to be the temple of the Holy Spirit. **They teach us how to love and yet forsake the One who initiated love.**

They are all deadly arrows which must be extinguished. Christian consciousness begins when we come to the painful realization that what we thought was truth really was a lie.

Isn't it encouraging to know that God will deal with all liars and deceivers?

God's judgement to those who walk in falsehoods is long-lasting. The Juniper or Broom tree is noted for its long burning coals. They are also the hottest of all coals.

A story in the Hebrew Midrash tells of two men who sat down under a Juniper tree after gathering some of its branches. They cooked their meal over its flame and went on their way.

A year later they returned and walked fearlessly upon the dust and had their feet burned by the coals.

“. . . all liars - their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death."

Revelation 21:8

The tongue is a deadly weapon but it is not the only weapon that we must recognize in order to protect ourselves. The Pilgrim Pathway is littered with many tombstones of those who were unaware of the devil's scheme's.

II. DRAWN SWORDS (Psalm 120:5-7)

The second weapon which the Psalmist addressed is that of a sword of war.

*** We've probably all watched the pictures that replayed V-E Day of May 8, 1945. Only God knows what would have happened if our allied forces had not stopped the German war machine.

The Moscow radio proclaimed that more than 4,000,000 people died by the Germans in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp in Oswicim, Poland. 2,319 days of agony and bitter confusion ended with the destruction of this Satanic movement. The atrocities are too horrible to even mention.

We must thank God for the unconditional surrender of the Nazi movement. ***

As Christians and those considering becoming a Christian we have become targets of an even more wicked regime. The Psalmist had to withstand the attack from two sides. On the north were the inhabitants of **Meshech ("tall")**. These are the descendants of the Russian and other Slavic people. According to Ezekiel 27:13 they were traffickers in slavery. In Ezekiel 38,39 they will join the northern confederacy in an attempt to overthrow Israel. They were a barbaric tribe.

Those of **Kedar ("mighty or dark")** are decedents of one of the 12 sons of Ishmael (Genesis 25:13). They were a nomadic tribe who raised sheep. They would frequently intrude and invade smaller villages for plunder.

These two tribes symbolize the **barbaric and hostile** opposition we often face in our desire to become closer to God. **If the tongue does not succeed then our enemy turns to violence in an attempt to produce fear.**

When the storms of life come our way we can either foolishly look up and be blinded by the lightning or wisely catch a brief look at the pathway that is illuminated before us. Every true pilgrim will find the path of peace and righteousness leads past the battlefield of falsehood and violence. We must leave aside the world to arrive at heaven's door.

We must continue to strive for peace in a time of spiritual warfare. We can know the peace of God in the midst of our enemy's assaults. Our Day of Spiritual Awakening brings us to the reality of life.

II. DRAWN SWORDS (Psalm 120:5-7) (Contd.)

7196 When Should the Charges Stop?

*** At the end of WW I, Herbert Hoover was the chairman of the American Relief Committee for Europe. He received a cable from Admiral Williams S. Sims.

The cable was a question about when will the cost of service be transferred from the Army service to the Food Administration.

Herbert Hoover understood what such a change would entail. The budget for the war was two billion per month. Once they switched to the business of saving lives through food administration the budget was drastically reduced to two million a month. ***

Why is it that we can find all kinds of resources for war but little for peace?

"I am a man of peace, but when I speak, they are for war."

Psalm 120:7

The Day of Spiritual Awakening brings us not only closer to God but also more aware of the enemy's schemes around us. Lets set out with full assurance that God is with us.

Have you recognized for the first time what has been happening to you? Perhaps you've started the journey but have faced many forms of opposition that have worn you down. You may want us to pray for you. Make a point right now of declaring your need by stepping out of your seat and coming to the altar for prayer.

C:\My Documents\WPWin(X7)\Sermons.2016\Psalms\Ascent\Psalm 120.wpd

Date: Apr 10/16

Place: FCA

Time: 10:30 Am

Song: "I Want to See You" - D

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Ezekiel 27:13; Ezekiel 38,39; Genesis 25:13

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