The devil is a better theologian than any of us and is a devil still.
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Prayer Study 555

THE LAST DAYS
LESSON 12
WHERE ARE WE GOING?

Where there is no vision, the people perish….
Proverbs 29:18

Where there is no vision [no redemptive revelation of God], *the people perish, but he who keeps the law, happy* [blessed and fortunate and to be envied] *is he.* Proverbs 29:18 (In the context I am using it here, vision refers to seeing events, manifestations, dreams, or revelations, which generally are delivered prophetically from the Lord to a prophet and from a prophet to the Body, although the Lord often gives direct revelation to an individual who is not necessarily in the office of a prophet.) The Message Bible paraphrases Proverbs 29:18 this way: *If people can't see what God is doing, they stumble all over themselves, but when they attend to what He reveals, they are most blessed.*

<u>Steps in the Christian Walk as We Wait for His Coming</u>

The Christian life should always be advancing. It troubles me when we have people who come here for years and outwardly do not seem to be growing in their faith. I think that most of us can say, "I am not where I use to be in my Christian walk (because you have grown and matured), but I am not where I am going to be (because you recognize that we never arrive nor do we have

all we can have of Jesus. The Baptism in the Spirit is a powerful booster in our Christian life, but it is not a stopping place. There is so much more for each of us.)

Walking out our faith while we wait for His coming is very necessary. Without faith it is impossible to please Him (Hebrews 11:6a-*But without faith it is impossible to please Him…)* and faith is the victory that overcomes the world (1st John 5:4b: …*and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith)*. But this thing of faith goes a little deeper. Not only are we to walk by faith and not by sight, but we are to mentor those who are just starting out on this journey of faith. This journey will culminate in either our going to be with Jesus or His coming back for us.

The Bible is such a wonderful guide book to life. The Word clearly shows us the steps we take to walk out our faith as we occupy till He comes (Luke 19:13: ***And he called his ten servants and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, "Occupy till I come."***) Occupy, by the way, does not mean to just sit around. It means to use the spiritual gifts you have been given to advance the Kingdom of God on the earth and to give glory to Jesus.

The steps of the Israelites from Egypt to the Promised Land are spiritually steps we must take as we walk out the Walk of Faith:

1. **We must come out of Egypt**: The brand new believer gets his start by coming out of Egypt (the world) and crossing the Red Sea (being washed by the blood and brought into the family of God by the Holy Spirit and being water baptized, symbolically going under and dying to self and rising with new life to serve the King of kings.) Unfortunately we have many Christians who don't quite break their connection to

the world and many other Christians who do step out but end up wanting to go back to Egypt.

2. **We wander in the wilderness:** After the excitement and newness of being a new creature in Christ, most believers go through a wilderness experience. This is not "fun" and "exciting," but it is necessary for our growth. Surprisingly, this is the pattern our Lord followed: *Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil* (Matthew 4:1). What shocks me about this scripture is the fact that the Holy Spirit was the One who led Jesus into the wilderness for the expressed purpose of His being tempted by the devil.

   The wilderness is a place of testing and a place of strengthening. Because we are called into the wilderness to die to self and because we don't like testings and trials, we, in the natural, find it difficult to praise the Lord there. Thus, the wilderness often becomes a place of murmuring and complaining. Our very murmuring and complaining keep us in the wilderness until we die to self and overcome. Perhaps it is in the wilderness, more so than in any other place, where we learn to walk by faith and not by sight (2nd Corinthians 5:7). The best way to shorten our time in the wilderness is to praise the Lord. Lack of praise makes us very vulnerable to the temptations of the enemy, because the Lord inhabits the praises of His people (Psalm 22:3), and the enemy can never win over us when we stand in the Presence of Jesus and walk in obedience to Him. His presence brings us great joy, for the Word tells us that *in His presence is fullness of joy*

(Psalm 16:11, and the *joy of the Lord is our strength* (Nehemiah 8:10).

3. **We cross the Jordan:** Being baptized in the Holy Spirit is what crossing the Jordan experience does for us. This is a place where the carnal Christian dies to his self-will and is filled with the Spirit. I believe this experience is going to be necessary for believers to stand and to be faithful in the days ahead.
4. **We slay the giants and possess the land:** This types entering into spiritual warfare armed with the full armor of God as enumerated in Ephesians 6 and taking your inheritance in the Lord. That Word tells us that we are joint heirs with Jesus. *The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit, that we are children of God, and, if children, then heirs-heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ-if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together (Romans 8:16-17).*

Many Christians, even spirit-baptized Christians, are satisfied to get fat and lazy spiritually and to enjoy the blessings of God without putting forth any effort to do spiritual warfare. They often join "bless me" clubs instead of joining the army of God. We obviously live in a world where there are many giants that we must slay in order to really possess the land, and today we need mighty warriors, not spectators, who sit and do nother.

Those who have entered into the promised land find a new way of living in a land flowing with milk, the foundational truths of God's word (1st Corinthians 3:2) and honey, the sweet Word of God which brings divine

blessings and turns our mourning into joy (Psalm 119:7-11). Notice that the land is *flowing* with these things. That means there is great abundance there for all to enjoy.

We can defeat the power of the enemy, i.e. slay the giants, with the *Rhema* of God (Ephesians 6:17). *Logos* is the whole of the precious Word of God. *Rhema* is when the Lord gives individual scriptures specifically for a person and specifically for a time and place. Sometimes there Rhema words are prophetic in nature and brought to our remembrance by the Holy Spirit for use in our time of need to defeat the power of the enemy and thus live in victory over the kingdom of darkness. Sometimes Rhema words are for the right now in chronological time. Other times we have to put them on the shelf, so to speak, and wait for their fulfillment. At the proper time, we must make the choice to speak in faith the Rhema word that will not return void (Isaiah 55:11), if we are to slay the giants and live victoriously. This will, however, put us on the enemy's hit list, but our praise will give us strength to resist.

5. **We make disciples:** *So God created man in His own image in the image of God He created him; male and female he created them. Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; Have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth"* (Genesis 1:27-28). We know that Genesis 1:27-28 has spiritual application from the Biblical principle "First the natural and then the spiritual": *However, that was not first*

which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual (1st Corinthians 15:46).

Therefore, we are to spiritual multiply, as well as physically multiply, and thus make disciples a commanded by our Lord:

> *And He said to them, **"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover"*** (Mark 16:15-18). ***"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth"*** (Acts 1:8).

6. **We continually grow in our knowledge of the Lord and give our earthly lives to the goal of knowing Him.** This is a lifelong quest. I certainly know him better today than I did years ago, but the more we know of Jesus the more we realize how little we have experienced of His Presence and His love and how little we really know Him. The word *know* in the Bible is a term of great intimacy, as Adam *knew* Eve, and they had a son. Paul wrote that the goal of his life was to *know* the Lord (Philippians 3:10). This was written from Rome to the Philippians. It was near the end of Paul's life, and he was awaiting execution by Nero. Yet his letter,

written from prison, is full of joy and rejoicing. He had had a wonderful ministry over his adult lifetime and had some very close and intimate encounters with Jesus. Yet he recognized that there was more to know about Jesus. Unlike some of our television evangelist today, he did not come across as better than others or knowing more than his peers. This theme of humility is reflected in his life and is an evolution from where he started ministry. His own estimation of himself in scripture is very telling: 24 years after his conversion, he said, "I am the least of the apostles" (1st Corinthians 15:9). 30 years after his conversion, he said in describing himself, "Who am less than the least of the saints"(Ephesians 3:8) 39 years after his conversion, he said, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief" (1st Timothy 1:15).

7. **We bring the Kingdom of God to the earth:** ***"Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom"*** (Luke 12:32). The first and the last thing that Jesus spoke of was concerning the Kingdom of God. ***"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand"*** (Matthew 4:17b). Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" And He said to them, ***"It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."*** The goal of every Christian should be to bring the Kingdom of God *on earth as it is in heaven* in its

fullness. In heaven there is no sickness, no lack, no heartache, no sorrow, etc. God created the earth and put the first inhabitants in a beautiful garden with the perfect temperature and all needs met. Ezekiel calls Eden the Garden of God (Ezekiel 28:13). It was here that God walked with Adam and Eve in the cool of the day. Eden was the closest mirror of heaven that has been on earth. We will walk in a greater measure of the Kingdom than we are walking in now. The fullness of the Kingdom, however, will not come until Jesus returns to set up His Kingdom on earth. Then the heavenly host-the angels and all those loved ones who died in Christ-will proclaim Revelation 11:15…*The kingdoms of this world have become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever*. We advance the Kingdom of God on the earth through prayer, through scriptural confession, through worship, through faith, through spiritual warfare, through repentance and holiness, through believing that all things are possible through Christ. To help usher in the Kingdom Age is probably the most important thing we are called to do. It starts today with us making the enemies of Jesus His footstool (Psalm 110:1, Matthew 22:44, Mark 12:36, Luke 20:43, Acts 2:35, Hebrews 1:13, Hebrews 10:13).

While We Are Waiting for the End to Come

John Torrell

- He who wins souls is wise. (Proverbs 11:30)
- Let us lay up treasurers in heaven. (Matthew 6:19-21)
- Let us not worry about tomorrow. (Matthew 6:25-34)
- Let us do the work of Jesus. (Luke 10:1-2)
- Work while there is still day. (John 9:4)
- Tithe while you still have money. (Malachi 3:6-12)
- Pray and fast for the light to break forth. (Isaiah 58:6-9)
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God has given you a limited amount of time on earth. If you die before the Antichrist comes to power, you are still going to leave all your earthly possessions behind, and there is nothing you will be able to take with you except what you invested in the kingdom of God.