



Gospel Broadcasting and Publishing

The Mission Trail

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“LIFT UP YOUR EYES, AND LOOK ON THE FIELDS; FOR THEY ARE WHITE ALREADY TO HARVEST.” — JOHN 4:35

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Gray Hairs

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"When I would have healed Israel, then the iniquity of Ephraim was discovered, and the wickedness of Samaria: for they commit falsehood; and the thief cometh in, and the troop of robbers spoileth without. And they consider not in their hearts that I remember all their wickedness: now their own doings have beset them about; they are before my face. They make the king glad with their wickedness, and the princes with their lies." Hosea 7:1-3.

Good morning friends. Think of the condition of these people of Israel, Samaria and Ephraim in the days of the prophet Hosea. It must have been great indeed for him to have warned them in terms like these. And they didn't seem to take their wickedness with much seriousness. It seems the king was even glad and the princes delighted. Just think of the corruption when conditions exist like this.

Reading farther on down in this 7th chapter of Hosea we find these words: "As an oven heated by the baker". One commentator puts it this way:

"Hosea makes a twofold comparison of the Israelites; to an oven, and to dough. Jeroboam set fire to his own oven--his kingdom--and put the leaven in his dough; and afterwards went to rest, that the fire might have time to heat his oven, and the leaven to raise his dough, that the false principles which he introduced might infect the whole population. This prince, purposing to make his subjects relinquish their ancient religion, put, in a certain sense, the fire to his

own oven, and mixed his dough with leaven. At first he used no violence; but was satisfied with exhorting them, and proclaiming a feast... All Israel was seen running to this feast, and partaking in these innovations. But what shall become of the oven--the kingdom; and the bread--the people? The oven shall be consumed by these flames; the king, the princes, and the people shall be enveloped in the burning, ver. 7. Israel was put under the ashes, as a loaf well kneaded and leavened; but not being carefully turned, it was burnt on one side before those who prepared it could eat it; and enemies and strangers came and carried off the loaf. See ver. 8 and 9. Their lasting captivity was the consequence of their wickedness and their apostasy from the religion of their fathers." End of quote.

But if you think this is deplorable, hold on a moment. Let me give you a few more verses, beginning with verse 8.

"Ephraim, he hath mixed himself among the people; Ephraim is a cake not turned. Strangers have devoured his

strength, and he knoweth it not: yea, gray hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth not. And the pride of Israel testifieth to his face: and they do not return to the Lord their God, nor seek him for all this. Ephraim also is like a silly dove without heart: they call to Egypt, they go to Assyria. When they shall go, I will spread my net upon them; I will bring them down as the fowls of the heaven; I will chastise them, as their congregation hath heard."

I am made to wonder how much of this sinful condition would apply to the people of our day. And if so, would not the God of heaven find ways to punish the people for their departure from the truth?

Adam Clarke, in commenting on these verses had this to say: "Verse 9. Gray hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth not. The kingdom is grown old in iniquity; the time of their captivity is at hand, and they are apprehensive of no danger. They are in the state of a silly old man, who through age and infirmities is become nearly bald, and the few remaining hairs on his head are quite gray. But he does not consider his latter end; is making no provision for that eternity on the brink of which he is constantly standing; does not apply to the sovereign Physician to heal his spiritual diseases; but calls in the doctors to cure him of old age and death! This miserable state and preposterous conduct we witness every day. O how fast does the human being cling to his native earth!" End of quote.

Dear ones, how sad! It is true that a single night of pain or danger may whiten a man's head, but normally it takes years and years for this to show up. So it is with spiritual things. Sometimes it seems that a good man has gone wrong

suddenly, but if we knew the whole story, no doubt there was a void and a lack in his spiritual life long before this. Perhaps his experience was "honey-combed" with things which were not right. His neglect and carelessness was spread over a period of years. I am reminded of that song: "Wasted Years". Just think of the good years which are being wasted today in the service of sin. But we may be sure there is coming a harvest time. One writer has declared: "It is the plague of many that they are not plagued: even this is their punishment, the want of punishment. The insensible heart is the devil's anvil, he fashioneth all sins on it, and the blows are not felt." End of quote.

If it be true that spiritual decline comes slowly and unconsciously, it is also true that the moment of its realization often comes swiftly. When Jesus said to his disciples--"Will ye also go away?" perhaps they then realized in a flash how close disloyalty had come to their ranks. When we fix our eye on Calvary it is then we are revealed to ourselves. So long as the cross suggests no more than history, theory, theology, ritual, churches, and charities, it never pierces consciousness with its shattering, revealing light. But when we stand in honest contemplation of it it tells us, in words we cannot stifle or evade, the story of our own misdoings. Yet the message of the cross is not one of discouragement. It declares that, in the strength of the Crucified, we can be more than conquerors. The cross tests us; it discloses our inmost fiber as it asks: "Will you be a coward and a slacker in the battle for your own soul? Or have you just begun to fight?"

Don't forget this verse about the gray hair. "Gray hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth not." Do we

understand by this that those who are aged and old do not sometimes realize how near they are to the end of the way? Do they not realize their hair is gray? I am reminded of this scripture here in Ecclesiastes, chapter 8 and beginning with verse 11:

"Though sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil. Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him: But it shall not be well with the wicked, neither shall he prolong his days, which are as a shadow; because he feareth not before God."

In speaking of gray hairs, here is a scripture which I like much better. Listen: "The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness." Proverbs 16:31.

So really, it is no disgrace to have gray hair and no disgrace to be old. Old folks are to be esteemed and revered. Especially is this true if they have lived in such a way to gain and hold the respect of those who have known them. Otherwise they don't carry much weight with those who know of all their evil doings.

Let us pray. Our father, bless the message as it goes out over the air waves. May it find lodging in honest hearts who are searching for the truth. Help us not waste our years but spend them in a wise manner which will bring us and others joy at the end of the road of life and thine shall be the praise through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Thanks to every listener for a few moments of your time. If we may be of

help in some spiritual way, be sure to let us know. You may contact us by addressing your letter to The Mission Trail, Guthrie, Okla.

Now this song "My Sins Are Gone". The singers are Bob and Dorall Forbes, Randall Flynn and Melvin Doolittle.

Until we meet again, this is Willie Murphey, saying God bless you and a very cheerful goodbye!

Testimonies

From La.: "Greetings in Jesus dear sweet name. The one who has and is doing so much for us... I appreciate the 'Mission Trail paper'. It's like getting letters from so many of the dear saints. I want to let the saints know I appreciate their prayers, cards and letters while my ankle was so bad. It's much improved for which I do thank the dear Lord and also the saints for their prayers in my behalf. I still need help as I can't walk yet without crutches, but thankful I am able to get around and do my work by the help of the dear Lord. He also helped me to be able to attend part of the Hammond camp meeting, which I enjoyed very much. I am wanting to attend the Monark camp meeting also... Please pray we will get to and nothing will hinder. We trust this finds you dear ones well and happy in the service of the Lord. We hear the message on the air over WFPR most every Sunday and enjoy them. We pray the Lord will bless and keep this good work going on in the future... I have several requests--have unsaved children that I desire prayer for. Many are sick and afflicted I would like to see the Lord heal--so much to pray for, but our God is great and greatly to be praised. Pray for me that I keep faithful at any cost... Your sister in the Lord,"

--Sister Effie Miller

From Arkansas: "Greetings of love to you in the dear name of Jesus. I love that name. It means every thing to me. I love to depend on the Lord. I am alone a lot but my God is here and that is all I need. I am happy in my soul and now I am 80 years old and have no fear or dread of my next move. I'm ready to go up with the church Christ purchased with his own blood. My God comes first. I have enjoyed my children coming and going. We get out and see the pretty country. I have enjoyed the paper so much but my eye sight just won't allow me to read it. The good testimonies mean so much to me... Do remember my lost loved ones and me too that I won't fail my Lord. Keep the good work going and God will surely continue to bless and care for your needs... do keep us on your prayer list. ... Christian love, "

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From Kansas: "Greetings of Christian love to you and family. We enjoy reading the Mission Trail and also hearing the radio broadcasts. We are still praying and we are thanking the Lord for his kindness and mercy..."

--H. E. and Etta Martin
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From S. Car.: "This finds me still pressing on to make heaven. You know last week I sent in a request for prayer of affliction on my body. It sure was a serious thing, but God was so good to answer prayer. Now I am healed, praise God for it... It is so good to trust God for our healing... I still enjoy reading the little Mission Trail paper. I love all of the testimonies of the saints and the good message you bring each Sunday. Still pray much for me and I will remember you when I pray that God will supply your needs in this good work for the Lord... Your brother in the faith, "

--Bro. Eddie Driggers

From La.: "We trust you dear ones are well and encouraged to fight the good fight of faith. We are well as usual--able to be up and about. Still saved and happy in the Lord. Happy redeemed and free as the song says. ... We had a real good camp meeting, but not very much altar work... We were glad to hear the good report of your camp meeting there at Guthrie. We trust the Lord will encourage each one to settle down in the things of God and be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, be real examples... Bro. Steve Henry was over on the last Friday night of camp meeting. He testified and is still encouraged... Saints that go to see him say they go to try to encourage him and they come away encouraged themselves. It is wonderful how he and Audrey keep encouraged. They just don't let the devil discourage them... The Lord gave me special strength to get all my spring cleaning done. I had my 70th birthday on June 25th... We enjoy the messages each Sunday morning and enjoy the testimonies of the saints. We thank the Lord for every blood washed soul. Christian love, "

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From La.: "Greetings in Jesus dear name. We thought maybe we would see you at camp meeting here but since we didn't we want to send you a small offering for the Mission Trail. We enjoy it and want it to continue... The dear Lord gave us a good meeting. Much good truth went forth but such few are willing to take all the truth. We thank the Lord for the love he has given us for the truth and we want to be faithful to the Lord who has done so much for us. We are made to realize more each day how necessary it is for us to watch and pray. So pray for us. We pray for the work there and your family. Christian love, "

--Elva and Neva Joiner

at press time

we understand:

National campmeeting of Church of God begins today, Friday, July 21 and continues through July 30. All nations are invited. The campground is about five miles east of Neosho, Mo. in the community known as Monark Springs. Services daily under the tabernacle.

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From Okla.: "We do thank the Lord for all His blessings to us. We are surely happy to have Charles home from school. The Lord blessed us with a safe trip to and from Akron...I do hope this finds you and family well...Yours in Christ,"

--Frances Chandler

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Don and Juanita went to Hammond last Friday and stayed until Sun. night. Juanita hasn't been well again and we would like for you to request prayer for her. We don't know just what her trouble is, but could be something serious."

--Ruby Williamson

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From Okla.: "Just a few lines so you hear from me this morning. I'm still saved and living for Jesus. These few lines reach out to your loving hands. I hope you all reach out to the hand of Jesus...people need to know this truth all over this world. The devil is loose on this earth. People don't want the truth. It is too straight for them. A man shot a woman in Tulsa one night right through the back. She is in the hospital. I want you to pray for her--the Lord to spare her life to raise her little children...You all pray that I'll get to the meeting in Missouri."

--Sister Lizzie Jordan

From Calif.: "I will write a few lines to say I am still saved and trusting in my Lord who has done so much for me. I still love the Mission Trail and all the good things God is doing for all the ones who trust him. Well, this is camp meeting time again but I won't get to go. Bro. and Sis. Harmon and Barbra went to the Oregon meeting. It is real warm in Calif. now. I thank the good Lord I am doing as well as I am and know God can complete the healing. I have a request I want you to pray about. My little great grandson is a little over a year old and one side of his neck is shorter than the other. He has to hold his head to one side. God can heal it I know...Keep praying for me, bye bye,"

--Sister Ada Leach

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Pray for Sis. Gladys Morgan of Fort Worth, Texas. She is not well in body, desires to come to the Monark meeting.

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From La.: "Just wanted to let you know how much I appreciate your prayers and want you to continue to pray for me and mine. I am feeling pretty good only last week I got a virus and that set me back a little. Don't know when I'll be able to go back to work. Hope soon with the Lord's help. Keep us on your prayer list please."

--Evelyn McKenzie

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It was a pleasure to be in service with the Garfield, Ark. saints Sunday, July 9. Bro. Jimmy McMillian brought a short, encouraging message. Sunday night we spent in our son-in-law and daughter's home near Harrison, Ark.