

INTO THE DARKNESS WHERE GOD IS

Text: Exodus 20:21: "And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was."

II Samuel 22:10-12; I Kings 8:10-12

II Chronicles 6:1: "Then said Solomon, The LORD hath said that he would dwell in the thick darkness."

Psalms 18:11: "He made darkness his secret place; His pavilion round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies."

For decades the words from Exodus 20:21 has captured my imagination, "...unto the darkness where God was." To this day, this phrase has the power to eliminate the fear of unknown. We are in a dark time on this final weekend for perhaps the most consequential election of our time. Across this land chaos is unrestrained.

Sir Winston Churchill gave a speech at Westminster College, Fulton, Missouri on Tuesday, March 5, 1946. It was one of the most famous speeches given in the Twentieth Century. It has been called "The Iron Curtain Speech," so named from his words, "...an iron curtain has descended across the Continent." This was referring to Europe's division of capitalistic freedom and communistic slavery. Churchill said, "A shadow has fallen upon the scenes so lately lighted by the Allied victory. Nobody knows what Soviet Russia and its Communist international organization intends to do in the immediate future or what are the limits, if any, to their expansive and proselytizing tendencies." A foreboding shadow threatens much of what we hold dear if we do not experience a return to the values that made America great.

The Bible says in Ephesians 6:12, "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." Matthew 5:14, 15: "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house." God intends for His people to be that bright and shining light--even in the present darkness. Let's talk about darkness.

1. GOD DECLARES THE DARKNESS GOOD.

Genesis 1:2-5, 18. Genesis 1:31: “And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.”

Isaiah 45:3: “And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel.”

The world has a tendency to look on the dark and the not “knowing” based on previous history. Case in point, read John 1:46: “And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.” The best possible thing that could have ever happened in the history of the world had come to pass. But notice what John, the beloved apostle said earlier in John 1:4, 5: “In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.”

2. DARKNESS IS THE BIRTHPLACE OF SOMETHING GREAT.

Genesis 1:2: “And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.” It was in the darkness of creation that the Holy Spirit, like a parent, hovers over the budding creation in love and favor.

Genesis 15:12: “And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him.” Here we observe God initiating the great Abrahamic covenant by putting Abraham in the dark.

Psalms 139:12-14: “Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee. For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother’s womb. I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well.” In this portion of Scripture, God operates in the early moments of your personal creation. He does some of His finest work in the dark!

3. DARKNESS CAN BE SCARY.

Genesis 15:12: “And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him.”

Exodus 10:21: "And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, even darkness which may be felt."

When I was a little boy, I was afraid of the dark. However, I found comfort when permitted to lay between my parents on those darkest of nights. As a pastor, I have been by the bedside of patients in the hospital who have received the grimmest of diagnoses and prognoses. One of the statements made by the person receiving the news goes something like this, "Well, I know it doesn't sound good, but I am glad I finally know; it is the "not knowing" that has really gotten me down." The "not knowing," can be terrifying, Thank God, we have an all-knowing God who provides comfort in the known and the unknown.

4. GOD GUIDES THROUGH THE DARKNESS.

Daniel 2:22: "He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him."

Isaiah 42:16: "And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them."

Psalms 139:11, 12: "If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee."

5. OUR VERY REDEMPTION CAME IN THE DARKNESS!

Luke 23:44: "And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour." It was in this darkness that the penalty of our sins were deposited in their horrible entirety on the person of the only perfect One who ever lived, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

6. THE DARKEST NIGHT PRECEDES THE ETERNAL LIGHT.

Acts 2:20: "The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come." Darkness will literally cover the earth at the end of the Great Tribulation, just before Jesus returns in glory. In this instance it will indeed be the darkest before the dawn.

Malachi 4:2: “But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings....”

CONCLUSION: TRUST GOD IN THE DARK.

I Corinthians 4:5: “Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.”

II Corinthians 4:6: “For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”

-Pastor Pope-