

NO FUTURE IN ONE'S PAST

The normality found in the fact that the past is often thought of and lived diminishes the opportunity to prosper, for no one can see ahead looking back. The many times we dwell in our past, we regress, since we cannot bring it back and be accomplished in the things we desire to do. Someone's talk of his experience of his past, with great pride, gives him a sense of importance and accomplishment, when he is not going anywhere. He has nothing to show forth in the present time, being busy with the past. It is true that some past experience gives us a good sense of happiness. But it only serves to bring good memories in our challenging times. The twelve stones set aside by the Israelites were to remind them of the many blessings God bestowed upon them when bringing them to the Promised Land. It is necessary for us to remember certain past in order to strengthen our faith, knowing that our God is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow. When the past serves to give God the glory, it is profitable to mention, but not in the sense of self elevation of pride. YAHSHUA warned one who wanted to follow Him, wanting to say goodbye to family first, constituted unfit for the kingdom.

Stuck emotion is being stuck in the past which will not let us go freely to be what we were intended to be. bitterness, strong as it is, controls, handicapping our possibilities to be what we were to be, causing insecurity. Content with what we accomplished in the past, we avoid the actions which will take us to a future of success. We become a reservoir, a hole in the ground holding water without let it flow out benefiting others.

When after fishing all night without having caught anything Peter and his friends, were told to "Put out into the deep water and lower you nets for a haul" commanded the Lord. Peter responded saying, Master, we toiled all night and caught nothing. But on the ground of Your word, I will lower the nets (Luke 5:4-5). In the past, that was their situation, but obeying the words of the Lord, their past became present and they were successful in the future. Because it didn't work the first time, it didn't mean it wouldn't do it again the second time, especially at the command of the Creator of all living things. YAHSHUA'S word was powerful enough that at His command nature submitted to Him. When Peter saw this miracle, he was overwhelmed and fell down at YAHSHUA'S knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord. For he was with bewildering amazement, and all who were with him, at the haul of fish which they had made." (Luke 5). The glory of the Lord was visible at that time, because they obeyed and things happened. They forgot the past and pursued the future, when the glory of God was demonstrated in His son, and Peter recognized YAHSHUA for Whom He was and they as sinful men, just as the Prophet Isaiah when he saw the Lord. When the Lord came to Sodom and Gomorrah to destroy them, the instruction given to Lot and his family was not to look back. They were not to see the destruction of the cities behind them. Sadly, Lot's wife looked back and was turned into a statue of salt. What tragedy that was for her and her family! What do we get when we look back at unpleasant experience that deeply affected us? Feelings that cause great emotional disturbances to the soul. We must look away from such past and firm our gaze on the things that focus on the future God is calling us to. The Prophet Jonah kept looking at the past concerning God's mercy in His judgement and instead, of going to Nineveh, he rose up to flee to Tarshish and went down to

Joppa and found a ship going to Tarshish. However, the Lord sent out a great wind upon the sea, and there was a violent tempest on the sea, so that the ship was about to be broken. Jonah was cast into the sea, and the sea ceased from its raging. Now the Lord had prepared and appointed a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights (Jonah).

Looking back constitutes many times disobedience, when we cannot follow the Lord's leadership to accomplish that which we were created to do. There will be no light to guide the way to the future, when we keep looking at the past. The psalmist says, Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. (Ps. 119:105) The light beams forth as a guide to take us where we must to go. When we get stuck on the past, the future will be dark and many have lived their lives defeated, unsuccessful because of that. The future is like spring; beauty everywhere in the flowers, in the songs of birds, sunshine, bees buzzing away while on flowers pollinating "plants, collecting nectar and pollen for food, and support ecosystems by helping crops and wild plants reproduce. They also build and maintain colonies, care for young bees, and produce honey." The sound of spring gives us a sense of a bright and warm future in God's creation. The sounds of young birds, gives us an idea of a celebration of a beautiful and successful future.

Many godly men and women followed the future God called them to and left a legacy for us to follow. Their lives always pointed to obedience and accomplishments for the glory of God. The Apostle Paul was a successful Pharisee, who left all to follow God when called through a dramatic experience. He wrote most of the letters of the New Testament and died as a martyr. He said, "Whatever former things I had that might have been gains to me, I have come to consider as loss for Christ' sake. Yes, furthermore, I count everything as loss compared to the possession of the priceless privilege of knowing Christ my Lord and of progressively becoming more deeply and intimately acquainted with Him" (Phil. 3:6-8). Looking at his future at the end of his life he expressed: For I am already about to be sacrificed; the time of my release is at hand and I will soon go free. I have fought the good fight; I have finished the race; I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the [victor's] crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me and recompense me on that day- and not to me only, but also to all those who have loved and yearned for and welcomed His appearing (II Tim. 4:6-8).

Through repentance, the prodigal son left a life of past feeding hogs and eating of their foods, to a life of beautiful future, forgiven and dressed in the best robe, a ring given to his hand, and sandal for his feet, and a celebration of his return with a feast of acceptance. The future smiled at him, while his past was buried in the ashes of his sins. Without a doubt, often we find ourselves looking back to the things which brought us pleasure and desiring it back in our life. That is a moment when we must reflect where we are in our spiritual walk. The future waits for us to wake up to accomplish the will of God He has for us before the foundation of the world. Moses prayed, "Teach us to number our days, that we may get a heart of wisdom" (Ps. 90: 12). Looking forwardly always where the future is David prayed, "Your eyes saw my unformed substance, and **in Your book all the days** [of my life] were written before ever took shape, when yet there was none of them" (Ps. 139:16). We were born for a purpose that is shining ahead of us and it is not in the past, but in our future. Look out and know the will of God for you!