

06/15/2022

HEBREWS 6:7-8
(ADDENDUM EIGHT)

INTRODUCTION

We come again this evening and we continue to consider the PICTURE the author of Hebrews gives us in verses 7 and 8 of Hebrews chapter 6.

In our study of this PICTURE, we have considered the GENERAL MEANING that is implicit in it, and we have considered both the NARROW APPLICATION that is intended in it as well the BROADER APPLICATION we are to give to it.

Regarding the GENERAL MEANING you will recall,

- The RAIN is REPRESENTATIVE of the WORD and REVELATION OF GOD and particularly the WORD AND REVELATION OF GOD in the GOSPEL.
- The EARTH is REPRESENTATIVE of the MINDS and HEARTS of MEN to whom the WORD AND REVELATION OF GOD is GIVEN.
- That PART OF THE EARTH THAT BRINGS FORTH HERBS and is BLESSED BY GOD is REPRESENTATIVE of THOSE WHO HEAR AND RECEIVE THE WORD OF GOD and BEAR FRUIT as a consequence.
- That PART OF THE EARTH THAT BRINGS FORTH THORNS AND BRIERS and whose END is to be cursed is REPRESENTATIVE of THOSE WHO REJECT THE WORD AND REVELATION OF GOD THAT HAS BEEN GIVEN TO THEM.

With respect to the NARROWER APPLICATION of the PICTURE you will recall that it has to do with the JEWS IN THE FIRST CENTURY. Respecting this,

- The EARTH REPRESENTS OLD COVENANT, OLD TESTAMENT ISRAEL.
- The RAIN REPRESENTS GOD'S WORD AND ALL OF GOD'S SPECIAL COMMUNICATIONS AND REVELATIONS TO OLD COVENANT ISRAEL AS WELL AS THE REVELATION OF GOD IN THE PERSON, WORDS, AND WORKS OF CHRIST.
- The RAIN FALLING OFT UPON IT REPRESENTS HOW OFTEN GOD CAME TO ISRAEL WITH HIS WORD AND REVELATION AND HOW GREAT THAT REVELATION WAS - AND PARTICULARLY HOW GREAT IT WAS TO THOSE IN THE TIME OF CHRIST AND THE APOSTLES.
- THE EARTH UPON WHOM THE RAIN FALLS THAT BRINGS FORTH HERBS AND IS BLESSED BY GOD IS FAITHFUL OLD COVENANT ISRAEL WHO RECEIVING GOD'S WORD AND REVELATION BELIEVES AND ACCEPTS IT - AND PARTICULARLY THOSE IN THE TIME OF CHRIST AND THE APOSTLES.
- The EARTH UPON WHOM THE RAIN FALLS THAT BRINGS FORTH THE THORNS AND BRIERS AND WHO ULTIMATELY IS CURSED is UNFAITHFUL AND UNFRUITFUL OLD COVENANT ISRAEL WHO REJECT GOD'S WORD AND REVELATION. It is ESPECIALLY UNFAITHFUL OLD COVENANT ISRAEL IN THE TIME OF CHRIST AND THE APOSTLES WHO REJECT THE MESSAGE OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST.

With respect to the BROADER/WIDER APPLICATION of the picture you will recall.

- The EARTH REPRESENTS ALL MANKIND, JEW AND GENTILE, TO WHOM THE WORD OF GOD IN THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST IS GIVEN.
- The RAIN REPRESENTS THE WORD OF THE GOSPEL THAT IS PREACHED IN ALL THE WORLD.
- The RAIN FALLING OFT UPON THE EARTH REPRESENTS THE WORD OF THE GOSPEL BEING PREACHED IN ALL THE WORLD THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRETY OF THE CHURCH AGE.
- The EARTH UPON WHOM THE RAIN FALLS AND BRINGS FORTH HERBS IS REPRESENTATIVE OF MANKIND IN THE EARTH TO WHOM THE GOSPEL COMES AND WHO BELIEVE IT AND BRING FORTH FRUIT UNTO GOD AS A CONSEQUENCE.
- The EARTH UPON WHOM THE RAIN FALLS AND BRINGS FORTH THORNS AND BRIERS is REPRESENTATIVE OF THOSE WHO REJECT THE GOSPEL WHEN IT IS PREACHED TO THEM AND WHOM AS A CONSEQUENCE BRING FORTH NO FRUIT TO GOD.

Beyond this we have also been looking closer at the particular parts of the picture and all that is suggested to us in them.

Regarding this we have seen how the EARTH in certain respects represents the HEART OF MAN – particularly how the heart like the earth is barren by nature and apart from the RAIN, the WORD OF GOD, cannot bring forth the FRUITS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS AND HOLINESS TO GOD.

We have also looked closer at the RAIN as representative of the WORD OF GOD AND THOSE WHO MINISTER IT. Regarding this we particularly noted – that as the rain falling upon the earth is AN EFFECT OF THE SOVEREIGN POWER OF GOD SO IS THE PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD OF GOD IN THE EARTH. – Also, in connection with this we noted the SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD in respect to those WHOM GOD SENDS TO PREACH THE GOSPEL, WHAT GIFTS HE ENDOWS THEM WITH, WHERE HE SENDS THEM, AND WHEN HE SENDS THEM. Further, respecting this we also noted the RESPONSIBILITY OF THOSE WHOM GOD CALLS. THIS RESPONSIBILITY ESPECIALLY CONCERNS THE ABILITIES HE GIVES THEM AND THE OPPORTUNITIES HE SETS BEFORE THEM.

We also noted regarding the GIVING AND FALLING OF THE RAIN UPON THE EARTH and THE EARTH DRINKING IT IN that it IS NOT THE GIVING AND RECEIVING OF THE RAIN WHICH MAKES THE DIFFERENCE IN THE TWO TYPES OF EARTH. And in consideration of this we began to look closer at the TWO DIFFERENT TYPES OF THE EARTH. And we started with that part of the earth which brings forth fruit unto God.

Last week we noted concerning that part of the earth which receives the rain and brings forth fruit unto God, that it is described in TWO PRIMARY WAYS – FIRST, by it's FRUITFULNESS, **“AND BRINGETH FORTH HERBS MEET FOR THEM BY WHOM IT IS DRESSED...”**; and SECOND by it's ACCEPTANCE WITH GOD, **“RECEIVETH BLESSING FROM GOD.”**

Further, we noted that the FRUITFULNESS spoken of is described in THREE WAYS – a) from the FRUIT it bears, **“HERBS”**; b) from the NATURE and USE of that fruit, **“MEET FOR THEM BY WHOM IT IS DRESSED.”** And c) from the MANNER in which it produces, **“AND BRINGETH FORTH.”**

Well, all this brings us to our lesson tonight.

NEW LESSON

As we come to our lesson tonight let me remind us of the importance of this closer look and inquiry at the picture given us by the author of Hebrews. It has to do with UNDERSTANDING why part of the earth brings forth fruit and the other part doesn't though both have received rain, and both have **"DRINKETH IN THE RAIN THAT COMETH OFT UPON IT..."** Or why is it some believe, and some do not having equally received the ministry of the Word of God and the Gospel.

In our study last week, we this considered this matter by looking at some of the BIBLICAL BACKGROUND to it. We looked especially at the words of the apostle Paul in Romans 9:6-8, and particularly the words, **"CHILDREN OF PROMISE,"** and the IDEA which they express.

This evening we continue to consider this matter of why SOME BELIEVE and bring forth fruit unto God, and OTHERS DO NOT. And let us remember that though we are looking at it in it's wider application, it's application to all who throughout the church age hear the Gospel and believe or reject it, - the writer of Hebrews is in his immediate use of this picture is explaining why some in Israel have believed and others have not, or have not continued in their belief, AND why he is not going to teach them again the first principles of the doctrine of Christ but rather those doctrines which will take and lead them on to perfection.

One further note at this point as we consider these matters. It has been well written and said that it is not useful nor safe to press pictures to far, beyond their principal scope and intention. But as well we must not neglect to consider what is instructive in them and particularly those matters in them where understanding and guidance is given in other places in Scripture -this is the case with our present picture. Having then this caution and observation let us proceed.

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1. Let us note first this evening the words, **"BRINGETH FORTH."** These words are used most often in the BRINGING FORTH of a woman who has conceived, such as we see with Mary in Luke 1:31, **"AND BEHOLD, THOU SHALT CONCEIVE IN THY WOMB, AND BRING FORTH A SON..."** John Owen wrote that only here and in James 1:15, are they used otherwise in the NT. The idea here is that the earth which bears fruit brings forth that fruit as a woman does a child. As there is a nurturing in the womb of the child so there is in the earth of the fruit that is to be brought forth.

2. Second, note again what is brought forth, **"HERBS."** The word used here signifies green herbs or such as are produced by careful culture, by tilling and dressing. And such that are for USE by mankind, such that may be used for FOOD, MEDICINE, or BEAUTY.

3. Third, note that the HERBS are **"MEET"** for those by whom it is dressed. By this is meant TWO THINGS. First, that they come in their proper season, there is no delay - they come when EXPECTED and LOOKED FOR. Second, that when the herbs come, they are PROFITABLE and USEFUL.

4. Fourth, note the herbs are meet **"FOR THEM BY WHOM IT IS DRESSED"** or for those who own, have tilled and prepared the land, and have sown the seed in it. Observe, that in addition to the falling of the rain upon the land there must also be the dressing of the land. And this was so even before the FALL as seen in Genesis 2:15, **"AND THE LORD GOD TOOK THE MAN, AND PUT HIM INTO THE GARDEN OF EDEN TO DRESS AND TO KEEP IT."** The earth from its nature and the law of its creation must be dressed.

Therefore, this was Adam was to do even in the Garden of Eden. And again, this is the principal concern of the one who owns, till, and intends to live off the fruit of his land. Observe further, as we have so often noted, the falling of the rain is common to all fields. What makes a difference in a particular field is the dressing of it, and the care of the one who dresses and tills it.

5. Fifth, and finally, note that the earth which bringeth HERBS **“RECEIVETH BLESSING FROM GOD.”** By this is meant that there is ACCEPTANCE WITH and FURTHER BLESSING from God. Also, through Scripture this blessing is seen to be threefold. 1.) There is the ACCEPTANCE OF IT. 2.) There is the further CARE of it and a continued WATCHFULNESS over it and a GREATER PRODUCTION FROM IT. 3.) There is A FINAL PRESERVATION of it from all evil. (Isaiah 27:2-3)

Having considered more closely the picture of the author respecting that part of the earth which brings forth fruit and is blessed by God let us now consider his meaning in this picture.

1. First, the ground being spoken of is that of true believers. We see this also in our Lord’s Parable of the Sower in Matthew 13. Consider as well I Corinthians 3:6-7.
2. Second, we also see here the MANNER in which true believers bring forth or bear the fruit God intends. Intimated is that they bring forth that fruit which has first been conceived, then nourished and cherished in their hearts. They have the ROOT in themselves of that which they bring forth. And herein lies the difference between the fruits of believers and the works of false professors. The works and fruits of the false professors are like mushrooms – they come up suddenly, often have a great appearance, but have no root in the earth. There is no living principle of the fruit in their heart. The spiritual fruit of believers is conceived, nourished, and cherished in the heart first, and then brought forth as from a natural principle. (Luke 6:43-45) (Note also, the doctrine of the Gospel as cast in the heart as seen elsewhere in Scripture, and implied here, is both RAIN and SEED.)
3. Third, the fruits that are brought forth are the FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT, FRUITS OF HOLINESS AND RIGHTEOUSNESS. All that we do in compliance with the WILL OF GOD.
4. Fourth, God is great husbandman who owns, dresses and tills the land, plants the seed in it, waters it, and watches over it, John 16:1, **“I AM THE TRUE VINE, AND MY FATHER IS THE HUSBANDMAN.”** And true believers are God’s husbandry, I Corinthians 3:9, **“FOR WE ARE LABOURERS TOGETHER WITH GOD, YE ARE GOD’S HUSBANDRY, YE ARE GOD’S BUILDING.”** This is also seen in our Lord’s parable in Matthew 21:33-40 and in incredible picture God gives us in Isaiah 5:1-7.
5. Fifth, and importantly, the DRESSING of the land represents 1) the MINISTRY OF THE WORD OF GOD AND THE GOSPEL; and THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS OF THE LORD WHICH PICTURE THE GOSPEL AND ITS WORK to the people of God. 2) The EXERCISE OF NECESSARY DISCIPLINE IN THE CHURCH respecting those who profess the Gospel, the PURGING of God’s Vineyard. And 3) God’s chastening of His people through AFFLICTIONS and TRIALS.
6. Sixth, God EXPECTS and LOOKS FOR FRUIT BEARING ON THE PART OF HIS PEOPLE HE HAVING SO MINISTERED TO THEM. (Isaiah 5:2; Matthew 21:34; John 15:8)
7. Seventh, God blesses His people when they bring forth the fruit expected of them. And this He does in three ways, 1) In His ACCEPTANCE OF THEM which he communicates to them, Genesis 4:4, Romans 8:16; Ephesians 1:13. 2) In His INCREASING THEIR SPIRITUAL FRUITFULNESS, John 15:2. And 3) The blessing of them with EVERLASTING REWARDS, John 3:16, I Corinthians 3:14.

And this brings us to OBSERVATION 7 -WHERE GOD GRANTS MEANS HE EXPECTS FRUITS.