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“Whom I Shall See For Myself”

“For I know that my Redeemer lives, And He shall stand at last on the earth; And after my skin is destroyed, this I know, That in my flesh I shall see God, Whom I shall see for myself, And my eyes shall behold, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!” Job 19:25-27

“There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever.” Revelation 22:5

“Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is”. 1 John 3:2

One day we will see the Father, His Son and the Holy Spirit. Heaven is the dwelling place of God. To be in heaven is to be with God and to see our Creator, our Savior, our King and our Redeemer.

Judgment day is coming (2 Corinthians 5:10) and we will all make our appearance at the judgment seat of Christ. That day will be a great day for the faithful but a very sad and terrifying day for those who are unfaithful or evil.

Our study of the last days of Jesus have reminded us of the importance of being prepared for the end of time. We are to be sober. We are to be watching. We are to be praying. We are to be ready.

With each passing day, we are that much closer to the judgment day. May our hearts yearn for the day that we can meet the True and Living God, our Father in heaven.

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When God Leaves the Serpents

- by K. M. Smith

The story of the Israelites' lack of faith is one even our small children know. Over and over again, God's people refused to trust Him to take care of their needs, and insisted that they had it better in Egypt – the very place they were once so desperate to escape.

This attitude continued even after the sin at Kadesh, where God's patience finally ran out and the people were condemned to never enter the land of promise. And yet, He continued to take care of them.

In Numbers 21:1-3, He delivered them in battle from the Canaanites. And in the very next verse, it says, “the people became impatient because of the journey.” They even asked God why He bothered to bring them out of Egypt in the first place, if all they were going to do was to eat manna and die in the wilderness. (v. 4, 5).

God responded immediately, and left no guesswork to His displeasure. He sent fiery serpents among the people, and many of them died from the poisonous bites. And naturally, they turned to the only One they could under those circumstances.

“We have sinned, because we have spoken against the LORD and you; intercede with the Lord, that He may remove the serpents from us.” (v. 7).

What I find so interesting is that while God was not deaf to their entreaty, He didn't give them what they wanted. Surely, in our minds, no serpents at all would be much better than having a way to be healed just in case one bit you. And yet, as is often the case, God did not follow human logic. He gave the people what they needed, instead of what they wanted.

Rather than take the serpents away, and remove the suffering they caused, God left them and allowed them to cause injury and even death. He placed His people in a situation where they were forced to realize that their only option was to trust Him.

But His lesson did not stop there. From a medical perspective, looking at a metal serpent would do absolutely nothing for a snake bite. The people had to choose to believe God when He said they would be healed by looking upon it, and then they had to *act* on that belief.

Of course, they could very well have gotten angry with God instead, claiming that a bronze serpent wasn't what they asked for. They could have refused to look at the serpent, insisting on getting exactly what they wanted instead of what God knew they needed. But I imagine if any Israelites were so foolhardy, they did not live to regret it for very long.

There are a lot of things I want in life. Good things, wholesome things, things that I know would make me very happy. I try to pray about all of them. And yet it can be so easy to think of my Father as nothing more than an ATM. I decide what I need, and I get exactly that much out. Nothing more, nothing less, and it usually happens pretty immediately.

When I go to God with my desires, my hopes and dreams for my future, am I informing Him of what I want? Or am I asking with the knowledge – and acceptance – that He has total control, and that if I don't get what I want, that means He knows I don't need it?

And when He gives me what I do need, do I grow angry, as if the waiter brought me the wrong meal? Or do I accept His will, and obey it in the simple faith that He will take care of me if only I relinquish control?

Walking by faith and not by sight is a daily, strenuous exercise. Let us not grow weary of the journey, and instead thank our Lord that we will always have exactly what we need – and that He knows better than we what those needs are.

It Just Slipped Out ... Of What?

by Bryan Matthew Dockens

When excusing themselves for uttering profanities or curses, the kind of words which should never escape our mouths (Ephesians 4:29), many will say, "I'm sorry; it just slipped out". But what did those corrupt words slip out of, exactly? Jesus explained, "*For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things*" (Matthew 12:34-35). That is to say, bad words don't "slip out" of good hearts; they come from bad hearts. Therefore, "*Purify your hearts!*" (James 4:8).