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The Sound of Judgment Day Weeping

There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth , Matthew 8: 12.

A sermon preached by Rev. Ivan Foster

There are three other places in Matthew's gospel where we read of weeping and wailing linked with the judgment day. Matt 13: 42, 50; 22: 13. In each instance it is the weeping of those who mingled with believers but who never received Christ as their Saviour.

Nothing presents the miseries of sinners on that day like this phrase. All that has ever made men weep before will bear down upon the sinner with an unimaginable fullness.

Men have wept at separation. This world is a world of partings and farewells. But oh what a parting will take place on that dreadful day! The lovers of darkness will be parted from light forever and dwell in eternal darkness. Words cannot convey what that will mean. May God impress upon your soul something of the horror of that day.

Men have wept in sorrow. Ulster is used to the sound of weeping--the sound of hearts breaking. But even the sorrow experienced over the last quarter of a century is as nothing to that great day of sorrows.

Men have wept in suffering. Here, amidst our sufferings there is always some distraction, some diversion that lifts the mind and spirit and the misery is forgotten for a moment. The presence of a friend and the words spoken and the memories provoked -- these things ease the burden a little. But there is no easing, no slackening of the eternal sufferings that befall the sinner on that day. It is the weeping of those who must make their bed in hell.

In considering this solemn and awful subject we shall do so under a number of headings.

I. HERE IS UNIVERSAL WEEPING

On that day, the world without Christ shall weep with one voice. The earth has never heard such a sound before. The wail in Egypt was but a tiny whisper in comparison. *And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt; for there was not a house where there was not one dead* , Exodus 12: 30. From every quarter will come the sound.

1. From son and daughter separated from godly mother and father. They went together to God's house but they did not trust Christ together. Now they must part forever. Children often think it a wonderful liberty to be rid of parents' company and influence but not on the dread day of our text.

2. From wife and husband forever parted . In many ways they were united but not in soul. They were divided in their attitudes and affections regarding the Saviour. Now that difference takes on eternal dimensions.

3. From friends and neighbours who refused to heed the counsel offered . There is no greater act of neighbourliness than a sharing of the news of the gospel and an urging to accept God's salvation in Christ. How often it has been counted a good thing to be parted



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from the presence of one who testifies of Christ and presses for a coming to Christ. On that day such a thing will be seen for the folly that it is.

II. IT IS A WEeping BORN OF A REALISATION OF THE JUDGMENT OF GOD.

The repentant weep now as they hear the gospel and its warnings. There breaks upon them a sight of what their sins deserve and which shall surely come upon them if they do not seek refuge in Christ. The blind, unseeing sinner cannot understand such weepings. They stand amazed, believing that some madness has gripped the penitent. But it is much better by far to see now and weep and seek Christ's mercy while opportunity is afforded, than to weep then when no mercy may be obtained, for mercy is passed and only wrath remains. The unrepentant will weep then as that which they refused to heed comes true. They laughed at the idea of judgment. They refused to believe that such a day was coming. Now, *the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?* Revelation 6:17.

III. IT IS A WEeping SWOLLEN BY THE REMEMBRANCE OF WASTED CHANCES

It is *the children of the kingdom* who are weeping here. It is the offspring of holy fathers and mothers who lament. They see those of lesser privilege entering while they are being cast out.

1. Here, among the weepers, are those who grew up under gospel teaching . The child nurtured in a praying, Bible-reading home, the Sunday school scholar. But they refused every opportunity, every exhortation.

2. Here are those who never intended being damned . They believed the gospel when it said that they were sinners, that there was a day of judgment, that those who rejected Christ would be lost forever. They believed it and fully intended getting saved before they died. But now they are lost. Time had slipped by so quietly and death stole up upon them so silently. They were snatched away before they had gotten round to attending to that which they always believed they must do, and fully intended to do, one day. But now all that is left is for them to remember and weep over lost opportunities and curse their deceitful hearts and their folly at not heeding the warnings.

IV. IT IS A WEeping TO WHICH THERE IS NO RESPONSE

Weeping prompts response. Appeals for aid and relief by various agencies and organisations are constantly heard and answered throughout the world. The most potent appeal is that which features the weeping of men and women and, of course, children. Nations have been moved to acts of great generosity and sacrifice by the sight of one child weeping in distress. The human heart responds to weeping. It is instinctive. Our being goes out at that plaintive sound. But there will be no response in mercy on the day of judgment. The law does not respond to weeping. It is not moved by tears. So it shall be one day, dear sinner. The Lord Jesus has a heart that wept for sinners before they would weep for themselves. But He warned of a day when mercy would be withdrawn and when it will be forever too late for those who refused to heed His call. *Because I have called, and ye refused;*



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I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: for that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD: they would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices , Proverbs 1:24-31.

He Who wept tears and shed His blood to save sinners and was despised has His day of vengeance. The tears of Christ for sinners are prompted by His knowledge of the day of tears that is fast approaching sinful men. Oh! may you be moved to the tears that accompany faith and repentance before that day when sinners shall be moved to tears by the judgment of God.

V. IT IS A WEEPING THAT HAS NO END

It is an eternal weeping that begins. Now, weeping ends when relief comes. Then there shall be no relief so there is no cessation of tears.

1. Sinners will weep because of their company . This world would resemble hell if it were not for Christians. If it were made up of the sort of people whose activities we all saw when they protested outside the House of Commons, during the recent debate on changing the law on sodomy, then it would be as hell. But Christian grace and testimony stave off such a vile atmosphere. Today, society has moved more and more away from those values that spring from a believing of the Bible. What has been the result? Is not the United Kingdom a most wretched place in comparison with its condition a decade or so ago? Our children are not safe on the streets, they are not safe in school! Women dread having to travel at night, we are told in press reports. And why? Why, lest their vehicle breaks down and they are thereby left as a prey to evil men who stalk the night! This is no exaggeration. The daily reports of such things happening testify against the wickedness of this age of libertine values and anti-God pulpiteering. Sinners, left to themselves, bring only misery and disaster upon their heads. Aids and such diseases are the 'blessings' that the wicked bestow on one another. The perverted of this world are capable only of cursing themselves. It is to the world of orthodoxy they must turn for succour.

2. They weep because of mutual recrimination . Each one will see one who influenced him hell-ward. How different then will appear the introduction to wicked practices and pursuits that sinful companions now gratefully accept. The enticed will curse with bitter cursings the enticer. What a cacophony of recriminations will fill the vastness of eternity as victim excoriates culprit, who in turn is venting forth wrath upon another as the long chain of blame-laying and, recrimination is repeated throughout eternity!

3. They weep because it is the very antithesis of Heaven . What do we read of heaven? *For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes , Rev 7:17. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away , Revelation 21:4.* Weeping is over for the believer. It was to this



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that the Saviour was referring when He said upon the mount, *Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted*, Matthew 5:4. It is the mourning of those who feel their sin and grieve that they are sinners and defiers of God and His law. It is the mourning of repentance. Such mourning is the life-long occupation of the true believer. But in heaven their sin is ceased. They are rid of that body of death which vexed them by its evil desires and appetites. Their sin ceases so their mourning and their weeping ceases. For the poor sinner, on the other hand, weeping is but beginning. He laughed at and made light of sin. *Fools make a mock at sin*, Proverbs 14:9. Now the laughter is over, and over forever.

I would appeal to you to consider yours ways for a moment. Take a look down the road upon which you travel, by the assistance of the light that the gospel sheds upon the future. Sinner, see in our text a picture of yourself in the ages to come. Is it not the very height of madness to refuse to heed such a clear warning of the danger your eternal soul is in? Come to Christ in repentance and shed tears now over your sin and be washed in His precious blood. If you do, eternity will have no tears for you -- only the peace and glory of heaven.