

Wednesday Bible Study

May 6, 2020

**"And the child Samuel grew on, and was in favor both with the Lord, and also with men."
I Sam. 2:26**

This verse occurs during one of the darkest hours of the nation Israel. There were two phrases and three circumstances that serve as a commentary on this era of nation's history.

The two phrases go hand in hand. The first of which is "every man did that which was right in his own eyes"; everyone had their own set of rules and did what they wanted. The second is "the word of the Lord was precious in those days, there was no open vision". The word precious as used here does not refer to something greatly valued, but rather something that was rare.

If these two phrases are descriptive of a culture, it's easy to imagine that the circumstances will be dire.

First of all, they were a predominantly lawless society. Each man was a law unto himself with no regard for people or for God. They had no shame, as Jeremiah would later describe of his culture, they had become a people that had become incapable of blushing.

In such a culture it can then be no wonder that secondly, the Word of God was rare in the land. I used to think that God was not speaking to such an obstinate people, and perhaps withhold His voice to some extent. But now I'm more inclined to believe that the problem lay not with the lack of speaking, but rather a lack of hearing. Paul stated that the Lord is never far from any of us, so if we do not hear a word from God it is because we are not listening. And if we do not hear and heed His voice, the result is no "open vision"; which is a way of describing a people without discernment.

One would think that in such a culture that the priesthood would be the clarion of the hour, calling the citizenry to repentance. But such was not the case because the third condition of the land was a weak and corrupt priesthood. The sons of Eli were "sons Belial" and they "knew not the Lord". As supposed priest they only corrupted the Tabernacle, and their weak and indulgent father Eli only gave them the slightest of rebukes. He was just marking the calendar and managing his position, counting the days to retirement.

How much like them are we today!

We are increasingly becoming a lawless society, and, without a doubt, we have forgotten how to blush. Foulmouthed women and weak-minded men are predominant in our culture. We have, as a nation, legalized, protected and even celebrated sodomy in our land. Once considered among the grossest of perversions, we now have "normalized" such behavior. Added to this indiscretion is the fact that the unborn are daily slaughtered on the altar of "choice"; and there is not only no weeping in Rama, we as a populace elect people who promise to further this malignity that has invaded our shores.

And as for God's Word? It is illegal to teach it to our children in school. Think of that if you will. Evolution, okay. Creation, absolutely not! Shakespeare, certainly. Tommy has two daddies, of course. But the Bible? Oh no, we certainly wouldn't want to influence these little minds. We want them to grow up with a phone stuck to their ear and tattoo's down their arms and legs and rings in their nose and eyelids.

And for all of this, the clergy is for the most part just like Eli...indulgent, fearing the opinions of

man more than the voice of God. Marking time and managing the position; trying to find a way to preach the Word without proclaiming it; while at the same time maintaining enough interest to keep the pews full.

Whether or not it's a ruse or a deadly foe; whether or not our economy collapses because of it; the greatest threat to our nation is not a virus. Our greatest threat is our continual movement away from the things of God as a nation.

But notice this, "**And the child Samuel grew on**". In the midst of desperate times, God's inevitable progress continued on. Their lack of hearing did not impede the work of the Lord. Without their notice God was raising up a vessel of deliverance.

The condition of the world today can be very disheartening. But our hope is not in this world. And the Lord knows how to deliver those that are His!