

Sermon ~ Sunday, June 14, 2020

Text: I Kings 8: 38-40 “...which shall know every man *the plague of his own heart*...” (38c)

Title: “What’s Wrong with *my Heart*?”

The *context* of this 11-word *text*, is the *completed work* of the **Temple of GOD** in Jerusalem and the *dedication services*, planned and occurs. It was a *grand occasion* and had a high point in the *reign* of King Solomon.

The *context* of this 11-word *text*, comes after, **The Ark** was set in the **Temple**—the *Processional* in transporting **The Ark** from Jerusalem to the **Temple**; —the *Placement* of **The Ark** in the **Temple**; —*The Shekinah Glory of GOD (HIS Presence)* filling the **Temple**; —then King Solomon speaks to the people about the *purpose* of the **Temple** {a place for **The Presence of GOD**, the *worship of GOD*, the *sacrifices unto GOD*}; the *Praise* to **GOD** for the **Temple**; the *Passion* for the **Temple**. Then, King Solomon offers the *dedicatory Prayer* (verses 22-61)—the *longest recorded Prayer in The SCRIPTURES*... I Kings 8: 22, King Solomon stands before **The Altar**... *spreading forth his hands toward heaven*... in the *presence of the congregation*... verses 23, 24, he starts his *prayer* with *Praises to GOD* and then *petitioned HIM* to ‘keep . . . that **THOU** promisedst . . . **THY WORD** . . . be verified, which **THOU** spakest unto . . . David my father, verses 25, 26.’

Lastly, note the *anticipated problems* petitioned to **GOD** in the *Prayer*: 1. *Disputes*... **GOD** will discern who is *right* and who is *wrong* and deal according... 2. *Defeat*... when the people come to the **Temple** and *pray* and *repent* of their *sin(s)*, that caused the enemy to smite them, **GOD** will *forgive*... 3. *Drought*... the lack of rain due to *sin(s)*—when the people *prayed* to **GOD** toward the **Temple** and *confess* their *sin(s)*, **GOD** would *answer* and *forgive*, and, send rain... 4. *Disease*... *sickness afflicts*, and when Solomon *prayed*, **GOD** would *heal* and cause the people to *fear HIM* and *seek forgiveness*. *BUT* nestled in the *context* of these *petitions* are these words, “...*which shall know every man the plague of his own heart*, and spread forth his hands toward this **House**: then hear in heaven **THY** dwelling place, and *forgive*, and *do*, and give to every man according to his ways, ‘whose *heart THOU KNOWEST*’ (then, between the parenthesis (39f), is added for us the reader’s, further understanding—for **THOU**, *even THOU only*, **KNOWEST** the *hearts* of all the children of men); that they may *fear THEE* all the days that they live...”

The *focus* of this message is to answer the question, “What’s Wrong with *my Heart*?” **WHO** best to raise this question to and to answer it, *but GOD*?

“...*which shall know every man the plague of his own heart*...” Many, know the *plague* of other people’s *heart*; talks about him, her, this family, and that person and the other. But let’s let the *scandals* for one hour alone, and think on the *evils of your own heart*. He would be a *bad farmer* who *ploughed* other people lands, and leaves their *own untilled*. He would be a *poor gardener* who used his *hoe* on another’s *weeds*, and *not on his own*. What’s wrong about *me*? *My heart*? ‘For out of the *heart* comes the issues of life.’ (Proverbs 4: 23) It’s *not* the *plague* of another man’s *heart* but the *plague of my heart*, for the text speaks of knowing, “...*every man the plague of his own heart*.”

What's wrong with *my heart*? '...each shall know every man the plague of his own heart...' '...any one of all **THY people** who recognizes what his trouble is in his heart...' '...if anyone should feel remorse in his own heart and pray or make entreaty...' What's wrong with *my heart*?

{*Do I have 'a terrible memory?' Who of us have *forgot* that... when we did *it* (maybe still doing *it*) again and again. *Am I, dis-satisfied and sick with unrest?' No matter how much I have, what I have is not enough. What's next? Why? Life is *nothing* but *worries* and *dis-appointment*. *At least I'm not like them, but we all have at least one Passion.' The plague of *my Passion*, is not all the time. I can talk to myself and stop it. I don't like doing it and yet, I can't control it. I *vow* to abstain but the *serpent stings* and I *thirst* for it. Though it *degrades* me below the level of the swine. All I can say is, I could not help it! *There's this heart-plague of dreading the future.' I know I want be young forever; I know I can't stay here; I want out right now, but where can I go; I want to try this, but in my heart, I know it want work, or, will it? So, what, we all are going to die with something!}

What's wrong with my heart? JESUS said, "But the words you speak come from the heart—that's what defiles you. For from the heart come evil thoughts: what is *worthless*; a *worthless argument* about an account that just do not balance; murder: an attempt to put to death, what's eternal; adultery: sexual relations in which at least one participant is married to someone else. *Physically* and *Spiritually*; all sexual immorality: every kind of extramarital, unlawful or unnatural sexual intercourse; theft: what's done *undercover*, but known to **GOD**; lying: false statements, untruths; slander: to *accuse*, *defame*, *criticize* to hurt. These are what defile you..." (Matthew 15: 18-20a)

What's wrong with my heart? Solomon says 'a plagued heart' results to haughty eyes: arrogant and full of pride, *looking down on others*; lying tongue: anything devoid of *the Truth* or whatever distorts *the Truth*; hands that shed innocent blood: taking the life of a person who has committed no offense; a heart that devises wicked schemes: a heart that operates on *MY plans* to control *My life*—I *plot*, I *scheme*, I *worry* and *stress* over all the things I *want to do*, *accomplish*, *be*, *pursue*, all to fulfill some sense of *happiness*. And when it does not work out...; feet that are quick to rush into evil: quick to cause *harm* or *irritation* especially; a false witness who pours out lies: speaking *unjustly* against our neighbor; a person who *stirs up* conflict in the community.

My Brother and *my Sister*, Solomon bade those who 'knew the plague of their own heart,' to turn their eyes to *The Great Sacrifice at the Temple*. A plague means, something which brings *pain*; and there is many *a secret heart-aces* in this world where we least suspect it. The Temple at *Jerusalem* was the *one* place of sacrifice throughout all The Holy Land. The **LORD** said, "Whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or strangers which sojourn among you, offereth a burnt offering or sacrifice, and bringeth it not unto the door of the **Tabernacle**, to offer it *unto* **The LORD**, even that man shall be *cut off* from among **HIS** people. According to **GOD'S Law**, there is *one Altar*... *one High Priest*... sacrifices might not be offered anywhere else but *on* the **Altar** at *Jerusalem*... *one Altar*, *one* required *sacrifice*, *one Temple* and **The ONE glorious token of The Divine Presence** which shone over *The Mercy-Seat* within the **Veil**.

So, *the next thing to do*, is turn (*repent*) your eye to **GOD**. You can not help yourself, and nobody on earth can help you. Your case, apart from **Divine GRACE**, is desperate. The heart-plague will not die out of its own accord, *nor* will any *change* of your outward condition *eradicate* it. Turn (*repent*), then, to **The Great Physician** and cry to **HIM**, “O **LORD GOD, THOU** didst *make* me, **THOU** canst *mend* me. **THOU** didst *make* me, **THOU** canst *make* me over again. *I’m lost!* **CREATOR, REDEEMER, SAVIOR, SANCTIFIER, THOU** canst *save* me.”

Look heavenward and **CHRISTward**. Look to **The Bleeding LAMB of GOD**, that taketh away *sin*. *To look within* will breed despair, but *to look* to **CHRIST on The Cross**—there **HE** died... Buried in the heart of the earth for 3 days and 3 nights... **BUT GOD** *commendeth* **HIS LOVE** toward us, and, raised **JESUS** from the grave. Now, seated, at **Right Hand of GOD**, we beget a *lively, living, Hope*. **JESUS** is able to *save* to the uttermost them that come *into GOD* by **HIM** *seeing HE* ever liveth to make *intercession* for them (us) —*to look to HIM* is the main part of *the cure*. Bring **GOD** *into the business*; **CHRIST** *into your trouble*, for here lies your help. Look that **WAY**, I pray you. *Look and Live!*