

Consequences of Rejecting God's Gift

“A large number of People followed Him, including women who wailed and mourned for Him. Jesus turned and said to them, “Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep for yourselves and for your children. For the time will come when you will say, ‘Blessed are the barren women, the womb that never bore and the breasts that never nursed! Then they will say to the mountain, “Fall on us!” and to the hills “Cover us!” For if men do these things when the tree is green, what will happen when it is dry?” Luke 23:27-31

Who is the deaf? Who is blind? It is not a medical question for the doctor, but a spiritual inquiry to every one of us. You may pass on people feasting their tables are full of foods and drinks. They kick the table by their feet and squandered food over the ground. They are not bothered about where the foods came from or how they may consume or handle. Many things around us are good, but only few of them we can see and recognize. A lot of blessings came from heaven to the earth but many times human cannot discern its origin or to whom it is given.

The ox when its tummy is full and satisfied it will start to thrust and kick. The ostrich when its eggs are hatched it will start to fight her kins. Sad to say that oftentimes, when a human is blessed he will start to blaspheme God, taking the honour and glory to himself without acknowledging that God is the one who blessed him, or when a Christian is gifted he is ignored or denied.

So now the theme is clear: People who are blessed but they are proud. People who are blessed but they are rejected or denied. People who are blessed but they are still deaf and blind and the light has no place in their eyes! These are the common situations of people, and the question is: “What would be their future? What would be their destiny?”

We go back to the above chosen passage of this message. It speaks and portrays an important aspect of Jesus' trial and crucifixion. Let me tell you the background. The event happened while the chosen people of God were under the control of the Roman Empire. They were waiting for their freedom and deliverance from the hand of the enemy as the scriptures in the Old Testament declared God's promised king to rule over them and to lead them in victory. When the time came, God sent His Son Jesus to be their King or what is known in Hebrew language, the Messiah. Jesus is the Messiah but only few believed because while He was here on earth He did not do what the usual kings of this world are doing. He did not live in a palace. He did not use the sword, He did not have servants, and He did not gather an army and did not wage any war. He did not have the world's treasures. He did not marry nor had concubines. But He made miracles, healed the sick and demon possessed, and even raised the dead. Few people recognized Him as the promised Messiah and King, and they took Him as their Lord and their Saviour. But many rejected Him and they despised Him. They even plotted against Him and conspired to kill Him. And from here we will proceed to this week's passage. The people who were against Jesus shouted to crucify Him. So the Roman soldiers took Him toward the place of skull and **“A large number of People followed Him, including women who wailed and mourn for Him.”** The disciples and companions of Jesus followed Him. They were all grieved and the women were weeping. But those who rejected Him, the Messiah, kept mocking Him as the scriptures says, **“He came to that which was His own, but His own did not receive Him.” (John 1:11)**

While on the way to Golgotha or the place of skull, Jesus seeing and hearing the people eager to crucify Him but some mourning for Him, He did not pity Himself but instead spoke about the things that are yet to come:

1) He pity those who rejected Him: “Daughters of Jerusalem do not weep for me; weep for yourselves and for your children.” He was directing His speech to the mothers who gave birth to each and every generation. The implication was for the mothers who must wait for their children because they rejected the Messiah. They did not honour the King sent to them by God.

2) He described the consequences of rejection: “For the time will come when you will say, blessed are the barren women, the womb that never bore and the breasts that never nursed!” A fertile woman is the blessed married woman whose womb carried numbers of children and by her breasts she nursed them. She is considered far better than a barren woman who did not experience to have a child of her own. But Jesus prophesied that time will come when the barren would be called more blessed because they never bore and nursed children. ‘A foolish son brings grief to his mother.’ When mothers see their children astray, lost and even going into the high ways of death, they will detest the time they gave birth and nursed them. Then they will say to the mountains, “Fall on us!” and to the hills “Cover us!” Here, Jesus spoke about the coming punishment and destruction of the city of His people. They will lose all their blessings, they will be desolated, and they will even hate their lives and will desire to be buried under the ground.

3) He explained the reason for these consequences: “For if men do these things when the tree is green, what will happen when it is dry?” If we disobey God and reject His Gift, neither God nor His Gift will lose. It is only we who would be the loser. When the tree is green and is bearing good fruit but we keep stoning it and stepping on its fruits without enjoying them as God's blessing, soon we will say alas! When the tree is dry and bears no more fruit. When God is seeing you rejecting and despising what He is sending to you, the time will come when God will withhold His blessings and at that moment you will start to cry.

God is the best in sending and giving gifts. But one thing common to His gifts is this: They are not well-wrapped. You may despise the cross but this is the way for your salvation. You may ignore a weak man but he might be the best helper for you. You may despise a young person but God's wisdom may dwell in him. You may reject ugly partner but that is God's best for you. Jesus warned the people about what will happen to them because they rejected Him. And this will be the destiny of any one who will reject the King God sent for the whole world.

My Dear and Beloved: It is a warming message for all. The gift of God is more than Jesus. Every good and perfect gift comes down from the Father in Heaven. We should unwrap His gifts from their ugly covers so we can see what He sent us: best family, best home, best friend, best job, best spouse, best children, best workers, best spiritual gifts, etc. And we should accept them as the fruits of the green tree. Otherwise, God will remove His blessings and the tree becomes dry. Let us pray that God may open our ears so we can hear and open our eyes so we can see His blessings for us.

My Prayer: *Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the cross for my sins to give me eternal life. Lord gives me discernment and open my ears and my eyes to hear your voice and see your blessings in my life. Lord helps me to accept your will and what you had given to me. Lord helps me to appreciate all your gifts to me and to be thankful. This is my prayer in Jesus name Amen.*