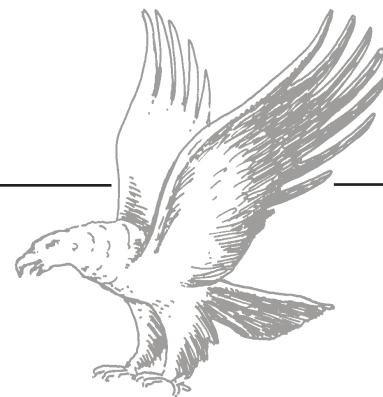


Wings

*"Those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles."
Isaiah 40:31*



October 1, 2017

A Simple Choice

Among all the complex decisions that we wrestle with in this life, there is really only one that truly matters: What role shall we give to God's Word in our decision-making process?

"He who feared the word of the Lord among the servants of Pharaoh made his servants and his livestock flee to the houses. But he who did not regard the word of the Lord left his servants and his livestock in the field" (Ex. 9:20-21).



When Moses warned Pharaoh of the coming plague of hail, he provided graphic details. The hail would be "such as has not been in Egypt since its founding until now" (v. 18). Any living thing caught in this storm would die (v. 19).

This would be the seventh plague that Moses had called upon Egypt. After the six previous catastrophes, any Egyptian paying attention would know that this new warning from Moses was no idle threat. So the servants of Pharaoh had a simple choice: Take precautions to seek shelter from the impending storm, or ignore the warning and take their chances.

Apparently both courses of action were represented among the Egyptians. Some "feared the word of the Lord" and sought shelter. Others paid His warning no mind and got caught in the storm.

Either they were not convinced it was a viable threat, or they thought they could ride it out. Whatever their reasons, we do know that the hail struck "all that was in the field, both man and beast" (v. 25). A number of Egyptians paid the ultimate price for their mistake.

Those who "feared the word of the Lord" had a respect, not merely for the message itself, but for the power of the One who gave it. Those who "did not regard the word of the Lord" brushed it aside as an empty boast. Other translations render this phrase in more descriptive ways: they "didn't take the Lord's word seriously" (HCSB); or "did not pay attention to the word of the Lord" (ESV); or "ignored the Lord's message" (NCV); or "didn't take the Lord's warning to heart" (Beck). However we read the text, the meaning is clear: they had no respect for God or what He said. They blew Him off as a nuisance who could be ignored. Only too late did they realize their mistake.

This story is a microcosm of the simple choice that confronts all of us in this life. God has revealed to humanity a

body of wisdom that tells us how we ought to live, and the consequences of not doing so. We can either "fear the word of the Lord" and build our life on that wisdom, or we can "not regard the word of the Lord" and do whatever we prefer to do. We're free to go either way.

Among a growing segment of our society, the second option prevails. They view the Bible as a dusty old book that has nothing to offer modern society—or worse, pulls us back into the Dark Ages. So they ignore it, choosing to construct their own version of reality based on feelings, fantasies, or fetishes. Their lives are often a chaotic mess, but they cannot see the connection between their poor quality of life and their dismissive attitude toward God's word. They're caught in the storm without protection.

Life is really not that hard to figure out, once we understand how it works. The Master Designer has given us adequate warning of what's coming and how to prepare for it. It's up to us to heed His warning and live our lives accordingly. But that can only happen if we first respect Him and His word.

— David King



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