

Prayer List

Sierra
Gene
Veda
Judy
The Williams' Family
Ophelia

Services:

Sunday

Bible Class 9:00 a.m.
Assembly 9:50 a.m.
Assembly 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday

Bible Class 7:00 p.m.

Pinole Tidings

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This Week's Question:

Who caused a riot when people thought he had taken a Gentile into the temple?

Answer To Last Week's Question:

Israel - 2 Chronicles 13:15-16

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The Psalms in Practice The Succession of Life

Brent Lewis

PSALMS SNAPSHOT:

“Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou shalt make princes in all the earth” (45:16).

All of life is a constant succession. This is true of life on the earth. By contrast, the sun, moon and stars continue mostly the same—but the earth shows incessant change. Each year brings the changing of the seasons. The leaves fade and others come in their place. The Bible clearly reveals the pattern of life. “For the living know that they shall die” (Ecclesiastes 9:5). “It is appointed unto men once to die, and after this cometh judgment (Hebrews 9:27). “Your fathers, where are they? And the prophets, do they live forever?” (Zechariah 1:5). The fact is that no man lives forever upon this earth. We are all dying from the minute we are born, and if the Lord allows the world to stand long enough we will all be

replaced by our children, they by their children, and so on. What lessons can be learned from this?

1. A great responsibility rests upon every man while he lives. The living stand between the past and the future. They can learn the lessons of the past (see last month's article) so as not to repeat its mistakes. They can improve the lot of future generations by what they do now. The Lord said, "We must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh when no man can work" (John 9:4). While we live we must realize that fields which are white unto harvest today may be bare tomorrow. Our time is but for the moment, and we must make the best of it. Paul says, "And working together with him we entreat also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain (for he saith, At an acceptable time I hearkened unto thee, And in a day of salvation did I succor thee: behold, now is the day of salvation)" (2 Corinthians 6:1–2). The only time one has to save his own soul, or do anything of real importance, is while he is living. Paul counseled the Ephesians: "Look now carefully how ye walk, not as unwise, but as wise; redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Ephesians 5:15–16). When we understand the psalmist's statement, "Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children," surely we will use our time wisely.

2. Much has been passed on to us by our fathers. What will we do with it? Our parents have provided for us opportunities which they never had. They bring to us wisdom which we have not yet acquired. They give us gifts which we never earned. More important than all of these, however, many of our fathers and mothers have taught us the truth, have brought us up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. What have we done with this?

Have we profited and drawn near to the Lord to follow and worship Him? Or have we spurned and rejected this great blessing and gone the way of the world? Jesus said, "And to whomsoever much is given shall much be required; and to whom they commit much, of him will they ask the more" (Luke 12:48). We are surely responsible, sometimes markedly so, for what our fathers have passed on to us.

3. It is possible to make too much of the fathers. Often the fathers are too much revered. They should be respected but at the same time they are only human. Our fathers made their mistakes; we must not make them larger than life. If the fathers pass, it is only that the children may take their place. No one is indispensable. If Moses dies, Joshua takes his place. If Elijah is carried into heaven, his mantle falls upon Elisha. If Stephen is martyred, God has a chosen vessel named Paul to take his place.

The greatest practical lesson I think we should learn from the statement, "Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children," is that each of us must realize and accept our responsibilities. The future will be the outcome of the present. What we are sowing in the hearts of our children and all other students of the word is the harvest that will be. We must at all costs, brethren, do our duty to those who are to come in our place.