

Sunday, August 4, 2013

Remember (2)

We continue our meditations on the word “Remember” in the New Testament.

First Verse: “Remember Lot’s wife” (Luke 17:32) – Continued.

4- **Lot’s wife is an example of a wife who was a burden on her husband instead of being his helper.** She did not give him a good counsel when he separated from Abraham because of the dispute between the shepherds of both men. If she were a good wife, she would have said to her husband something like: Why do we leave your uncle Abraham, the man of God? The blessings and riches that we have today are because of him, and being close to him is invaluable! To the contrary, materialism and the love of the world were the driving force for this woman to the extent that she was blinded from seeing anything else.

When she went with Lot to live in Sodom and found out that the people there are very wicked, she didn’t retreat nor did she try to escape from the abomination of the city, especially that she had children, rather she favored riches, positions, vainglory, and extravagance. Contrarily, her husband Lot was tormented by this place as it was described in the Bible, **“For that righteous man, dwelling among them, tormented his righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds.”** (2 Peter 2:8). This means that Lot, the righteous, was longing to leave this poisoned environment that torments him every day. Nonetheless, he was unable to do so because of his wife’s desire to stay there. It is puzzling how she had the desire to live in such horrific environment of adultery and homosexuality!

5- **Lot’s wife did not possess any spiritual understanding and did not comprehend God’s many warning to her.** God sent her a serious message that relying on riches is a dangerous thing, for **all her riches can vanish in a moment and that she can go from an honorable lady with many positions to a disgraced slave who owns nothing.** This was evident when God allowed Sodom and Gomorrah to be conquered and ransacked by neighboring kings (Genesis 14). They looted Sodom and Gomorrah, and seized all of Lot’s positions and took him and his family into captivity and enslavement.

Thus, man will lose everything, at any moment. We must be attentive to this fact because it will happen to every one of us. We will lose materialistic positions sooner or later. Therefore, the Bible warns us, **“Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God... Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come...”** (1 Timothy 6:17-19).

The interesting thing is that Lot’s family was delivered out of this serious predicament by the hand of Abraham. As soon as he heard of the captivity of his nephew, Abraham went, with the help of God, and saved all the captives and the loot (Genesis 14). This was a clear message to Lot’s family that leaving Abraham, the man of God who represents the presence of God, is a serious danger to them. This also delivered a clear message that **true security is found when we are close God and not in money or positions.** When Abraham returned, security and safety came back and Lot and his family regained their peace and honor. Nonetheless, Lot’s wife didn’t understand this clear lesson and insisted on returning to live in Sodom once more.

6- **This woman is an example for those who don’t benefit from the men of God, the saints, around them.** She didn’t benefit from being close to Abraham, the man of God, although she had lived near him for a long time. She had seen faith and obedience to God in all his steps; she experienced his love for God and his temperance in life. She observed how he prayed and how he built altars everywhere he went and how he offered sacrifices to God.

We cannot say that she perished without ever experiencing God’s grace. To the contrary, she lived close to a great source of faith, and saw with her own eyes an unprecedented model of Godliness. Nonetheless, she did not benefit from it because she was blinded by the love of the world. Rather than spiritually benefiting from her proximity to Abraham, instead it became a judgment upon her.

Also, we should not forget that God gave her a righteous husband but she did not benefit from him spiritually.

Therefore, unlike this woman, we should benefit from all the positive influences that God places in our ways... Open churches, daily liturgies, prayer and praise meetings, live and recorded sermons in churches and satellite channels. We should also benefit from the great treasures of the saints biographies and Fathers quotes that the church preserved for us. Additionally, many of the contemporary church fathers can be good role models in their strife, perseverance, love, faith, humility, and chastity.

We truly need to look around us carefully, we will find many good examples that we can learn from. Perhaps we can remember this beautiful Fathers’ quote, **“A wise man meditates upon the virtues of others to attain them for himself, and the foolish meditates upon the vice of others and judge them.”**

To be continued.

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