

The Reality and Practicality of Divine Intervention (1)

Introduction

- A. The Bible records a most wonderful and unusual story – God took the initiative and came seeking man!
 - B. If God had not chosen to come to man – the human race would not know God or even know about Him. We would have been left with only a profound sense of guilt, alienation, fear and an indescribable loneliness.
 - C. But God did come in the person of Jesus Christ. He came as the Way, the Truth, and the Life to give us the Light of Life. Through believing on Him we receive eternal life, pardon, righteousness and the rights and privileges of adoption into God's family.
 - D. The story is not over with salvation. The Christian can live in fellowship with God. In this walk with God there is the promise that He will intervene in our daily affairs to protect, strengthen, bless, guide, sanctify, supply our needs and to use us.
 - E. The Bible records incidents of this divine intervention. By use of the conjunction, "But" we are shown the reality and practicality of God's promise. A rather complete list of these verses may be found in the book But God, by Raymond Edman (Zondervan).
- I. The Christian – in Prison – But God ... Genesis 39*20,21.

And Joseph's master took him and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were bound and he was there in the prison. But the Lord was with Joseph and shewed him mercy and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison.

Observation: Joseph, through no fault of his own, had been sold into slavery. And now, for doing good, he was thrown into prison. The divine intervention into these affairs is boldly stated in the words, ... But the Lord was with Joseph God rescued His child, gave him an exalted position in the government, and used him for His glory. In whatever prison-type situation we find ourselves, wait, pray for and expect the intervention of God.

II. The Christian – in Egypt – But God ... Genesis 48:21.

And Israel said unto Joseph, Behold, I die; but God shall be with you, and bring you again unto the land of your fathers.

Observation: This verse describes a strange situation indeed. God had promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Israel) that He would give them and their descendents the Land of Canaan. But in this chapter of the Bible they are all in Egypt. Israel knew the answer to that and he expressed it in ". . . But God" He knew that God would fulfill His Word. The believer has been given the privilege of trusting God. It is not necessary that all of those things for which we have prayed and worked be realized in our lifetime.

III. The Christian - in Jeopardy - But God . . . Genesis 50:20.

Put as for you, ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.

Observation: Joseph's brothers, if believers, were in a serious situation. They were now subject to the brother they sold into slavery and were liable for punishment. Joseph recognized how God had intervened in his affairs and chose not to punish his brothers. God may use even our sins, but this is no excuse for a slothful manner of life. God protected these men in spite of themselves.

IV. The Christian - in Trial - But God . . . Job 23:10.

But He knoweth the way that I take, when He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.

Observation: In his trial Job had lost his possessions, his children, his health, his friends and finally the understanding of what God was doing. The book records the depths of Job's suffering. This verse summarizes this believer's expression of faith. He believed God would intervene. It was this aggressive declaration and choice of faith that achieved God's goal in the trial. Job, in his trial could say, "But God"!

V. The Christian - in Weakness - But God ... Psalm 3:2,3.

Many there be which say of my soul, There is no help for him in God. But Thou, O Lord, art a shield for me, my glory and the lifter up of mine head.

Observation: The believer often feels abandoned and in the place of weakness. The Psalmist gives us the key - our strength is to be measured by the promise and power of God - not of man.

VI. The Christian - in Question - Put God ... Psalm 75:6,7.

For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge, He putteth down one, and setteth up another.

Observation: The priorities, values and promotions of men may not be acceptable with God. The believer knows, in regard to all these human values, that God is in control. To be pleasing to God is worth more than promotion. His promise to the humble is that He will exalt him, I Peter 5:6.

VII. The Christian - in Transition - But God . . . Psalm 103:15-17.

As for man, his days are as grass, as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it and it is gone, and the place thereof shall know it no more. But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him and His righteousness unto children's children.

Observation: All mature men and women recognize the inexorable demands and toll of time. The human race is born, flourishes, weakens and dies. But - for believers this life and time does not end all -- it is only the beginning. Through God's mercy we will live forever.

Conclusion: Express your faith today. God is there and His promise is secure.

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