

Daily Bread with Brother Hwa-Chi (Not reviewed by the speaker, for personal use only)

Luke 21:29-38

Brothers and sisters, peace be with you, this is Hwa-Chi. Thank the Lord, it's time to read the bible again. We continue to read Luke chapter 21. Today we read verses 29 to 38.

Verses 29-30: "Then He spoke to them a parable: 'Look at the fig tree, and all the trees. When they are already budding, you see and know for yourselves that summer is now near.'"

For Jesus' disciples, they surely understood clearly what the "fig tree" represented when Jesus spoke of it. When Jesus said that the fig tree and all the trees were budding, once you see it, you naturally know that summer is near.

The fig tree is a type for the nation of Israel. After the southern kingdom was destroyed by King Nebuchadnezzar, by the time of Jesus, the nation of Israel no longer existed; but Jesus told them that one day, the fig tree would bud again. When the fig tree buds, you must know that summer is near. Summer is the time when all things revive and flourish; here it also typifies the millennial kingdom brought in by Jesus' second coming. Therefore, before the millennial kingdom comes, the fig tree must first bud.

At that time, Jesus' disciples may have found it very hard to imagine: the nation of Israel had already perished, so where was the fig tree? God is the sovereign Lord of history. After Israel had been without a nation for more than 2,000 years, it was miraculously restored as a nation in 1948. When Israel was restored as a nation, some saints who read the Bible seriously were simply overjoyed, because they discovered that God's word indeed does not fail. Never has any nation, after losing its nationhood for more than 2,000 years, still been able to be restored as a nation. Especially also on May 14 of the year 2018, which happened to be the 70th

anniversary of Israel's restoration as a nation, the United States officially moved its embassy to Jerusalem. This sign could not be more obvious: summer is indeed near.

Verse 31: "So you also, when you see these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is near."

When we look at today's generation, injustice and unrighteousness are increasing more and more, and society's moral values are continually deteriorating; on the other hand, the signs promised in the Bible are being fulfilled one by one. In the heart of every saint, we should clearly know that the kingdom of God is near. Once you have this understanding, Jesus then continued by saying:

Verses 32-33: "Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all things take place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away."

When we look at the situation of the world today, when we look at the moral condition of this generation, Jesus tells us that before this generation passes away, these things will take place. God looks at a generation according to morality. When the atmosphere of society becomes more and more corrupt, and moral values pass away day by day, Jesus tells us very solemnly: this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.

In such a situation, we need to recognize that heaven and earth will pass away, but God's word will by no means pass away. Therefore, we need to treasure God's word more, and hold on to God's word more; let God's word be written in our hearts, let God's word be hidden within us, and let our very being be constituted with God's word. In this way, we can live a holy life in this fallen generation and bear an opposite testimony.

Verse 34: “But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly.”

When we live in a fallen generation, if we are not careful, if we are not watchful, very quickly we will follow the current of this generation: whatever the people of the world do, we also do. The people of the world are busily striving for profit, and we also busily strive for profit; the people of the world do their utmost to pursue power, and we also do our utmost to pursue power. As a result, we become the same as this generation.

Therefore, Jesus warns us that we must take heed, and not allow our hearts to be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and the cares of this life. Our hearts should take the Lord as the throne, and should take God’s word as our satisfaction. If we do not separate ourselves from the world, we will fall into the snare of that Day, and that Day will suddenly come upon us. Why suddenly? Because God’s word is not within you, and you do not know God’s word.

Verse 35: “For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth.”

Here Jesus again and again, with earnest and painstaking words, tells His children: you must be pure, you must be separated from this world, and you must be constituted with God’s word. What the people of the world are busy with, we do not need to be busy with; what the people of the world strive for, we also do not need to strive for, because all these things in the world are temporary. When that Day comes, when Jesus returns on the clouds with power and glory, all these things will pass away completely.

How much Jesus longs to see that every one of His people in His house is pure, separated from the world, and not worthy to be possessed by this world. God wants His church to bear an opposite testimony in this world. What is an opposite testimony? The methods used by the people of the world, we do not use; the road

walked by the people of the world, we do not walk; the things pursued by the people of the world, we do not pursue. We would rather be persecuted, we would rather be treated unreasonably, and we would rather suffer all kinds of losses. In this way, we will not allow the lusts of this life to entangle our hearts, and in this way, we can better preserve the purity of God's house and the purity of God's children.

Verse 36: "Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."

Because this is a difficult road, Jesus therefore told them: you must watch at all times and pray always; only then can you escape all these things that will come to pass and stand before the Son of Man. Actually, in the translation of the original text, the phrase "that you may" should come before escaping all these things. Whether it is translated as "that you may" or "be counted worthy," it means that we need to watch at all times and pray always, so that we may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and so that we may be counted worthy to stand before the Son of Man.

That is to say, among God's children, only those who watch at all times and pray always are counted worthy to escape all the things that will come to pass, that is, all the conditions of the great tribulation before Jesus' return; and only these people who watch at all times and pray always will be able, when Jesus returns, to stand before Him.

Why does it say "be counted worthy"? Because this is a road that requires paying a price. When you walk a road different from others, usually you must pay a price. Others are enjoying, while you are suffering; others are sleeping, while you are watching. When we are willing to prepare ourselves in this way and live a watchful life every day, we will discover that there are still many things in us that are not pleasing to the Lord. Therefore, this will bring forth prayer, bring forth confession, and bring forth repentance. If we are such watchful and prepared people, when

Jesus returns, He will count us worthy to escape that great tribulation, and He will also count us worthy to stand before Him.

Although Jesus' prophecy on the Mount of Olives was spoken to the disciples at that time, especially this latter section that speaks of His return at the end of the age, it is in fact especially important to His church today. Today, in various places, God has all kinds of churches. How many are separated from the world? How many are willing to suffer loss, willing to suffer unreasonable treatment, and even willing to lay down all kinds of lawful rights, simply to follow the Lord with a focused and pure heart?

May God help us, and also help the church where we are: not to walk the road of the world, not to use the methods of the world to fight for our rights, but rather to put all these things into God's hands. May we focus on preparing ourselves, hold on to God's word, and be able to be bold and without fear at His coming, standing before the Son of Man.

Verse 37: "And in the daytime He was teaching in the temple, but at night He went out and stayed on the mountain called Olivet."

During the final week of Jesus' earthly ministry, every day He went into the temple to teach the people. The temple was originally His royal city, but in such a great temple, He had no way to rest, and He had no place to stay. Therefore, every night He had to go out of the city to a place, the Mount of Olives. We know that He stayed in the home of Martha, Mary, and Lazarus. Although that home was very humble, and although there were not many people, it was a place where Jesus could dwell in peace.

God does not care whether our church building is tall and magnificent. God does not care whether the decorations inside the church building are beautiful and splendid. What God can truly dwell in with peace is when there are a few people who love Him and sincerely receive Him, and who are willing to walk with Him sincerely. But Jesus still had a burden for the great crowds, so He still went into the

temple every day to teach the people. From among these people who were willing to hear His word, He could gain some who were able to follow Him sincerely.

Verse 38: “Then early in the morning all the people came to Him in the temple to hear Him.”

Thank the Lord that even during the final week of His earthly ministry, He still continued to preach the word; but what truly gained His heart, and what truly enabled Him to rest, was one family by the road to the Mount of Olives. The Mount of Olives is the place that produces olive oil, which also typifies that although this place was small, and although the number of people was few, the Holy Spirit was very abundant. Jesus would rather go to a small church, as long as there are a few people who love Him with all their heart and are full of the Holy Spirit; such a church can enable Christ to make His home.

Let us pray together: Lord, thank You for Your reminder. Help us to be people who love You with all our heart. In this last generation, let us learn to watch often, pray often, and often wait for Your return. We know that the day is already near, and all the outward signs have also been fulfilled one by one. We ask You to guard our hearts above all that we guard; do not let us be disturbed by all kinds of things in the world. Let us be able to focus on Your word, to labor in it, enjoy it, and be constituted with it, so that we may become a group of people in whom You can gain a peaceful dwelling. Although what we can do is limited, and our strength is also very small, our heart that loves You and our will to follow You are placed before You, so that You may dwell peacefully in our hearts. Bless my living today so that it may be pleasing to You. I pray in the holy name of Jesus Christ.