

A BOX, A BOTTLE & A BOOK

TEXT: Exodus 25:37-40; 30:7,8; Lev.24:2

THESIS: The rapture is followed by the J. S. of Christ where our works, words & tears will be rewarded.

INTRO.: A. The Rapture is only the beginning of our after-life. We begin phase 2 of our existence & service for our Savior then. Before our position of future service can be assigned, we must go to the Bema or Judgment Seat. There our WORKS, TEARS & WORDS will be rewarded (or we will **"suffer loss"**).

B. God is the infinite Record Keeper. Nothing escapes His notice – not even our "idle words."

Mt.12:36 *But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.*

His memory banks are not in some giant computer but in His omniscience. The records of our WORDS, WORKS & SUFFERINGS are pictured in the O.T. as being stored in **"A BOX, A BOTTLE & A BOOK"...**

I. THE BOX OF WICKS (FOR OUR WORKS): text

A. The Golden Candlestick:

ILLUS.: The Candlestick was intended to give light. If it was used for anything else you would get neither light nor results! Ex.: Suppose the priest tried to use the candle stick or candelabra as a rake! (Like those who try to minister in their own light reason, scholarship, intellect, science, etc.)

1. The central shaft (& lamp) pictures our Savior, **"the Light of the world."**
2. The individual (6) lamps portray our works.

ILLUS.: In Mt.5:14,16 Jesus said we are **"the light of the world"** & our **"good works"** are to **"so shine"** before men that the Father would be glorified. Shining & good works are synonymous. Our primary mission as believers is to "so shine" that we may show His beauty.

Ex.25:37 *And thou shalt make the seven lamps thereof: and they shall light the lamps thereof, that they may give light over against it.*

B. The Golden Lamps:

1. These lamps were to be filled w/ **"pure olive oil."** Lev.24:2
2. The pure oil beautifully portrays the Holy Spirit.
3. These lamps were to be filled daily (!), & the wicks trimmed w/the golden tongs & the wicks placed in the golden snuff dishes (boxes) so they may shine continually.

ILLUS.: We are not just to shine on Sundays at church, but Sunday thru Saturday at church, home, work, shopping, in the classroom, etc.

4. The wicks were to be trimmed daily also.
 - a. This trimming doesn't speak of confession of sin, as some teach, although unconfessed sin will cause a dim light.
 - b. The encrustment of sin comes by doing what we are told NOT to do but these wicks had to be trimmed because of doing what they were *supposed to do* – **"give light over against it."**
 - c. The wick ends are not cast into the dust of the Tabernacle floor, but are placed in the golden snuff box.

ILLUS.: The application is that we cannot live in the thrill of yesterday's service, we must keep pressing on to maturity & perfection & never quit till we arrive in glory.

Like the 6 year old boy after his first day at school. His father asked him how he had done. With some discouragement, he said, "Okay, but I have to go back again tomorrow." So too in the school of Christ, we must **"forget those things which are behind"** and keep pressing on and on.

d. These wicks were not discarded, but collected!

NOTE: We are to forget yesterday's works, but God never does!! We will meet them again at the Judgment Seat of Christ when God's golden snuff box, w/all our "wicks" (works) are examined.

That person you witnessed to who didn't receive Christ when you were weary & discouraged seemed to be a wasted effort, but God hasn't forgotten that work – it is kept in His golden snuff box, w/all your other past works for Him.

II. THE BOTTLE OF TEARS (FOR OUR SUFFERING):

Ps.56:8 *Thou tellest my wanderings: put thou my tears into thy bottle: are they not in thy book?*

A. Our Tears for The Lost:

1. Our Lord is collecting these tears in His bottle of remembrance.
2. When sinners reject the Savior & refuse to hear His lovely voice, our hearts ache (or should)!

B. Our Tears for The Saints:

1. The Savior sees & records our broken hearts as we watch those who once confessed Him, turn their backs on Him.
2. I have forgotten many who broke our Savior's heart, but He felt our sorrow & remembers our tears.

C. Our Tears for Our Friends:

1. The compassionate heart of our loving Lord sees our heart heaviness when friends forsake us because of our stand for Him & He places our tears in His bottle of remembrance.
2. We may have forgotten the pain of rejection, rebellion & ridicule, but the rewards will be there when God's tear bottle is opened at the J.S. of Christ.

ILLUS.: What sickness, sorrow or suffering has stained your pillow w/tears? What broken promises, shattered dreams, frustrated ambitions or crushed desires have opened the floodgates of your tears, till you thought you would drown in your own sorrows, as you entered into the "fellowship of His sufferings"?

One day every *tear* will be transformed into a *treasure*, each *heartbreak* into a *reward*, when His tear bottle is opened.

III. THE BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE (FOR OUR WORDS):

Mal.3:16 *Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name.*

A. Words Of Encouragement:

1. Remember that fallen brother you tried to encourage & restore? Perhaps he didn't listen to your words, but Another was listening & recorded your words!
2. Remember the times of praise & thanksgiving you shared w/another saint which lifted both your spirits? Maybe not, but He does!

B. Words Of Testimony:

1. Remember those words you thought were wasted words as you testified to others of what Christ did for you? They were not wasted, they were stored in His book of remembrance.

2. Remember the clear witness you have to that pitiful sinner, that fallen woman, that rebellious teen, that broken man, that lost loved one & how they seemed to fall on deaf ears? They didn't! God is not deaf!

ILLUS.: He called to the recording angel & said: "*Did you hear that? Isn't that lovely & precious? Hear how he told that sinner all I can be & do for him, if he will just trust me? Record that in the book of remembrance. I will need that at the J.S. of Christ!*"

C. Words Of Fellowship: "*(as they) spake often one to another...*"

1. These are the words we speak as family members one to another.
2. These are those times of fellowship when we don't say much that is deep, but where we just enjoy another believer's company.
3. We will no doubt meet those precious words again in glory & receive our reward accordingly.

CONCL.: In these 3 containers: "**A BOX, A BOTTLE & A BOOK**" we have pictures of how an entire record of a Christian's life is preserved.

The Golden Snuffbox of His memory of our **WORKS.**

The Precious Tear Bottle of His memory of our **SUFFERINGS & PAIN.**

The Book of Remembrance of His memory of our **WORDS.**

What will be found when your 3 containers are opened? Your rewards & position in the Millennial Reign will be determined on what He finds there. No shine – no wicks...***no reward.*** No suffering – no tears...***no reward.*** No witness – no words of encouragement...***no reward.***

The record is complete & 100% accurate. Is that encouraging or discouraging to you today?

Of course, if you are not saved, you will not appear at **the Judgment Seat of Christ**, but rather at the **Great White Throne Judgment** where your work, words and pretended worship will all witness against you and you will simply be sent to the Lake of Fire for *eternal torment*. And while there may be degrees of punishment and levels of torment, it will nonetheless be *pain and suffering forever!* Why not trust Christ today?