

"THE TREASURES OF DARKNESS"

TEXT: *Isaiah 45:3-7* And I will give thee **the treasures of darkness**, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel. 4 For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me. 5 I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: 6 That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the LORD, and there is none else. 7 I form the light, and **create darkness**: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things.

THESIS: To show that God can bring light out of darkness & blessings out of blight.

INTRO.: A. What are **"THE TREASURES OF DARKNESS?"** Israel was in exile & had no King, so God raised up Cyrus the Mede to issue a decree to bring the Jewish captives home. He would also enable him to smite the surrounding nations & give him their hidden treasures. He would plunder the nations & enjoy the spoil of victory. Cyrus was an unlikely servant, but God would use him as a proxy King.

- B. God can use anyone or anything, including the dark times in our lives to bring "treasures" to His children. He can give His children riches & blessings in the darkest times of their lives. He can give us **"THE TREASURES OF DARKNESS"** because, as the Psalmist says, **"the darkness & the light are both alike to (Him)."** **Ps.139:12**

I. GOD PROTECTS HIS CHILDREN IN THE DARKNESS:

ILLUS.: When we get saved, our problems don't cease, we just have someone Who will go thru the dark times with us!

Ps. 91:4-6 He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler. 5 Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; 6 Nor for the pestilence that walketh **in darkness**; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday.

A. He Provides Light in The Darkness:

Ps.112:4 Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness: he is gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous.

1. He created the darkness – He IS the Light! Is.45:7
2. We need to remember that the dark times & the bright times are all a part of the "all things" He provides for His children.

1 Sam.25:16 They were a wall unto us both by night and day, all the while we were with them keeping the sheep.

ILLUS.: David & his men had protected Nabal's sheep shearers in the fields where they had camped. They had become like a "wall...by day & NIGHT" to Nabal's shepherds. That's what the Lord is to His children, in good times & bad!

- a. It was the Lord's responsibility to protect His children as they wandered in the wilderness, WHERE HE LED THEM!
- b. He did so by the pillar of cloud by day (against the heat of the desert) & the pillar of fire by night (against the darkness & cold).

Ex.13:21-22 And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night: 22 He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people.

Ex.14:20 And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was **a cloud and darkness** to them, but it gave light by night to these: so that the one came not near the other all the night.

ILLUS.: Not to glorify Hollywood nor anything they do, but they depicted this graphically in "The 10 Commandments" as the Egyptian army pursued the Israelites. They showed the great pillar of fire standing between Pharaoh & the Israelites. *But they mistakenly showed this event as taking place by day, not by night.* It is in the darkness that we are most fearful. The fever rages at night. The pain gets worse at night. The problems look darker at night. But that's just when the Lord provides His protection & light! **Ps.30:5** Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.

II. GOD'S PRESENCE IS WITH HIS CHILDREN IN THE DARKNESS:

A.. He Comes to Us in The Darkness:

Mt.14:25 And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea.

1. In John 6 we have the account of Jesus walking on the water in a raging storm **in the middle of the night.**
2. The account says in v.16,17 that it was **"now dark, and Jesus had not come to them"**

3. Suddenly He shows up **"walking on the water"!** v.19 & it says **"and they were afraid."**

ILLUS.: This is a normal reaction. But when He comes we had better know it is He & do what these disciples did & **"willingly receive Him..." v.21** In Mark's Gospel it says **"He cometh unto them, walking on the sea, and would have passed by them..." v.48** But He stopped when **"they cried out!" v.49** Then, He comforted them with the words, **"Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid."** v.50 Then, it says **"He went up unto them into the ship; and the wind ceased..." v.51**

- a. We need to look for Him in **the darkness** & not just in the bright times!
 - b. We need to call upon Him in **the darkness!**
 - c. We need to "willingly receive Him" in **the darkness!**
 - d. We need to accept His comforting words in **the darkness!**
 - e. Otherwise He will pass us by!
4. Nicodemus came to Jesus in the darkness & found Him willing to respond to His need. (It is interesting that every time Nicodemus is mentioned in the Script. speaks of him as **"he who came to Jesus by night!"**)
 5. It was night & a time of **great spiritual darkness in Israel** when the shepherds found their Messiah in a manger in Bethlehem.

Lk.2:8 And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock **by night.**

6. It was in the darkness that the angel of the Lord opened the prison doors for the Apostles.

Acts 5:19 But the angel of the Lord **by night** opened the prison doors, and brought them forth,

7. After nearly 2 weeks at sea in a horrendous storm, the angel came & stood by the Apostle Paul on board the ship & assured him all would turn out well.

Acts 27:23-24 For there stood by me **this night** the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, 24 Saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee.

III. GOD PROVIDENTIALLY LEADS HIS CHILDREN IN THE DARKNESS:

A. He Leads Us When We Cannot See:

ILLUS.: Mary couldn't see the Lord thru her tears in the Garden after His resurrection. We are often like that. He is there, but because of the tears or the burden, or the pain, we can't see Him! But He IS there & He is leading us thru "all the stormy blast." Be careful that you don't let Him pass by! Call out to Him! Willingly receive Him...and you will receive **"THE TREASURES OF DARKNESS"!**

1. Perhaps it is in the darkness that God is trying to lead you into His perfect will.

Num.9:21 And so it was, when the cloud abode from even unto the morning, and that the cloud was taken up in the morning, then they journeyed: whether it was **by day or by night** that the cloud was taken up, they journeyed.

2. He doesn't only or always lead us when things are bright & happy, but often when things are dark & gloomy.
3. We need to beware ignoring His leading in the darkness or we will miss out on **"THE TREASURES OF DARKNESS."**

Deut.1:32-35 Yet in this thing ye did not believe the LORD your God, 33 Who went in the way before you, to search you out a place to pitch your tents in, in fire by night, to shew you by what way ye should go, and in a cloud by day. 34 And the LORD heard the voice of your words, and was wroth, and sware, saying, 35 Surely there shall not one of these men of this evil generation see that good land, which I swear to give unto your fathers,

4. We may miss out on **"THE TREASURES OF DARKNESS"** because we ignore His leading in the dark times, or we don't believe He is with us in the dark times.

Deut.16:1 Observe the month of Abib, and keep the passover unto the LORD thy God: for in the month of Abib the LORD thy God brought thee forth **out of Egypt by night.**

CONCL.: God may have in mind in presenting you with **"THE TREASURES OF DARKNESS."** Beware lest an evil heart of unbelief enter your life & you cut off **treasures** God wants to impart to you **in the darkness** of your trial, testing or turmoil.

Heb.3:10-12 Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways. 11 So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.) 12 Take heed, brethren, lest there be **in any of you** an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.

Instead, why not do as the Psalmist says in...

Ps.107:13-15 *Then they cried unto the LORD in their trouble, and he saved them out of their distresses. 14 He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and brake their bands in sunder. 15 Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!*

The alternative is found in...

Ps.106:13-15 *They soon forgat his works; they waited not for his counsel: 14 But lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert. 15 And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul.*