

Some Surprising Scriptures

(By Paul R. Blake)

Introduction: Mark 12:11

A. Occasionally, I come across a passage of scripture that causes me to do a mental double-take.

1. I am freshly filled with wonder at the infinite wisdom of God
 - a. Deut. 30:11-14
2. I am reminded that I will spend a lifetime studying the word and still learn new things at every point along the way
 - a. Psalm 119:148
3. I have discovered that I must grow spiritually before I can uncover and learn deeper matters
 - a. Psalm 119:99-100
4. I have learned that my understanding in the past was child-like; I suspect that years from now, I will view my present understanding as child-like, too
 - a. 1Cor. 13:9-12

B. Let's learn some surprising things from the scriptures

I. Amos 9:9

- A. "For surely I will command, And will sift the house of Israel among all nations, As grain is sifted in a sieve; Yet not the smallest grain shall fall to the ground."
- B. God will disperse Israel all over the earth, but none of the good will be lost
 1. The good are not exempt from scattering; the sieve is impartial
 2. God does not lose track of the least among the good, regardless of how far they are scattered
 3. Gen. 18:25; Jer. 30:11; Amos 9:11-12

II. Numbers 24:13

- A. "If Balak were to give me his house full of silver and gold, I could not go beyond the word of the LORD, to do good or bad of my own will. What the LORD says, that I must speak"
- B. Balaam said all the right things while intending wrong things - Num. 22:38
 1. Balak lost his temper with Balaam - Num. 24:10-11
 2. Balaam tries to excuse the Balak's disappointment.
 3. God restrained him from saying what he wanted to say, and constrained him to say what he wanted to avoid
 4. Balaam tried to make up for it, but it was premature - Num. 24:14.
 5. Instead, he gives Balak the assurance that, whatever Israel should do to his people, it should not be till later, but in his days there would be peace. He then told Balak how to undermine Israel
 6. Num. 31:16, 25:1-3; (1500 years later) Rev. 2:14
 7. Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo - If I cannot move heaven, I will solicit hell.

- C. Balaam was a Gentile prophet under the Patriarchal covenant who knew God and was inspired by God
 - 1. He knew the will of God perfectly well and could repeat it accurately
 - 2. He had the experience of talking with God and witnessing miraculous events
 - 3. But none of these things kept him from temptation and sin
 - 4. "A man may be full of the knowledge of God and yet utterly destitute of the grace of God, may receive the truth in the light of it and yet be a stranger to the love of it." (Albert Barnes)
 - 5. 1Cor. 10:12

III. Exodus 10:26

- A. "Our livestock also shall go with us; not a hoof shall be left behind. For we must take some of them to serve the LORD our God, and even we do not know with what we must serve the LORD until we arrive there."
- B. Pharaoh wanted to negotiate with Moses allowing them to take their families but leave the livestock as if in pawn - Ex. 10:24.
 - 1. It is common for sinners to bargain with God. Some sins they will leave, but not all; they will leave their sins for a time, but they will not bid them a final farewell; they will allow him some share in their hearts, but the world and the flesh must share with him; they mock God, but they deceive themselves. (Adam Clarke)
 - 2. Not one hoof left behind; there will be no compromise

IV. Romans 4:1-8

- A. Doing everything perfectly results in no profit.
 - 1. If I keep every New Testament command perfectly, if I commit no sin in my lifetime, if there is no sin of commission or omission on my record when I stand before God in Judgment, I break even
 - 2. I have no red ink, but I also have no black ink; the end tally is zero; I have nothing to offer to purchase a cardboard refrigerator box under the I80 overpass in the poorest section in Heaven, speaking hyperbolically
 - 3. God must add to my account to make me profitable, even with having lived perfectly
 - 4. Luke 17:10; Job 22:3, 35:7; Acts 17:24-25; Isa. 66:1-2
- B. I am not trying to discourage you from living morally and doing good works
 - 1. I am trying to get you to understand how dependent you are on God to get to heaven, because you aren't going to get there on your good works and righteous acts
 - 2. The most skillful doctrinaires have tried and failed (Pharisees)
 - 3. When you do right, thank God and give Him the glory

Conclusion:

- A. There are many more surprises to be found by reading and meditating on the scriptures. Spend time in the wonder of it