

WASTED OPPORTUNITIES
1 Kings 20:35-40
(Jack Thompson 11/20/1949)

INTRODUCTION:

1. AHAB and BENHADAD – Benhadad led the Syrians against Israel, twice defeated. The second time Benhadad begged for his life, Ahab made a covenant with him and released him.
2. Prophet disguised himself as one injured in battle, related incident bout prisoner who escaped, "Thy servant was busy here and there, he was gone.."
3. NOTE: Not idle, not asleep, busy, busy, but not concerned enough about the necessary thing.
4. This description, in many ways, fits the church today!!!

BODY

1. WE ARE GIVEN CERTAIN RESPONSIBILITIES BY THE LORD:
 - A. Obligations, a charge to keep...
 - B. But so often, "busy here and there" – opportunity gone.
 - C. Not done on purpose--servant did not mean to let him escape Just had other things to do--BUSY.
 1. Not a hardness of heart, but thoughtlessness. Disposition to allow important things to go unheeded.
 - D. Those about us are under our care, but we become so entangled in the cares of the world (here and there) that souls are being lost (he was gone)
2. Busy here and there until our neighbors, friends, relative even our own loved ones, are taught by false doctrines thrown on the world to flounder in mire of deception.
 - A. Christ taught concerning our responsibilities:
 1. Mt 5:15-16--"Ye are the light of the world..."
 2. Mt 13:33----"Ye are the leaven..."
 3. Mt 28: ye therefore and teach all nations..
3. BUT, WE ARE TOO BUSY HERE AND THERE IN EVERYTHING ELSE:
 - A. Some are so busy that one can never tell what they are doing.
 - B. Work lacking in persistence and thoroughness in God's service.
 - C. We go about here a little, there a little, doing our daily duties, allowing God's work to slip away, err long the opportunity shall be lost forever.
 - D. Often we sit idly by till sooner or later we are going to awake from our sleep by the cries of those whom we let slip through our opportunities, TOO LATE
4. GOD GIVES OPPORTUNITIES TO MANKIND: BUT MAN MUST USE THEM:
 - A. In nature--a suitable time for sowing seed, gathering the fruit. (Farmer may be too busy here and there with other things to sow the seed, neglect, GONE. May not be the time when farmer wishes to gather the crop, but if neglected, spoiled.
 - B. It might be that the things he is doing are good, but the grain continued to spoil.
 - C. It might be that the things we do are good, within themselves, (the servant was busy

enough doing possibly good things, needful things) but they became wrong when it led to the neglect of the most important.

- D. The advantage gained by other activity becomes of no value when it leads us to be too busy to serve God.
- 5. HOW BUSY ARE WE??? Let me challenge each of us.
 - A. Are we too busy to attend the Bible classes?
 - B. Are we too busy here and there to attend Sunday evening worship?? (Time and effort put into lessons, how discouraging when members care little for it.)
 - C. Are we too busy to attend ladies class?
 - D. Are we too busy to attend Wednesday evening worship?
 - 1. (We can go other places when we desire to.)
 - 2. (We have those who are not members who attend these services. Are you TOO BUSY TO ENCOURAGE?)
 - E. Are we too busy to attend the business meetings?
 - F. Are we too busy to look toward those who have quit attending
 - G. Are we too busy to pray and study God's Word?
- 6. How great a Salvation: Heb. 2:1-3--Neglect, too busy. Acts 24:25--Felix sought a more convenient season. Luke 14:16-24--The Great Supper, wife, oxen, field. – Too Busy.
- 7. YOU HAVE OBLIGATION:
 - A. Ezekiel 33:1-9--Watchmen on wall warns people--does not warn.
 - 1. Are you blowing the trumpet?? Or are you too busy. "Thy life shall go for his life...."
 - B. God is going to require our souls if we think we can go to heaven while letting people remain in a lost condition while never seeking them for Christ.
- 8. ILLUSTRATION:
 - A. As each day comes it says, "Here is something for you to do for God," then it falls back into the darkness of night. Again and again the message comes in vain, until the last day approaches, then vanishes, and eternity is at hand.
 - B. MAN GATHERING SEASHELLS. High on beach, beautiful shell, "It is safe enough, I'll pick it up later, on my return." But a higher wave it, carries it back to bosom of the sea
 - 1. HOW MANY SHELL have we allowed to be carried into eternity not prepared to meet their creator.

CONCLUSION:

- 1. If you have never obeyed the gospel, do not let the shell slip from your grasp. NOW is the accepted time, TODAY is day.
- 2. Do not be TOO BUSY to obey God.
- 3. None shall be too busy to die. We need to prepare for that event.
- 4. Child of God, do not be "too busy to neglect the work of God."