

Pam and Bob Learn the Seven Times



Six o'clock came quicker than the Fredericks expected. They had retired early that night but for a reason unknown to them they were tired. Simone and Jeremiah, parents of the house, hugged their covers the tighter as the alarm sounded within their room. Pam and Bob were in their room hearing their own alarms. It was soon to be time for worship and all needed to be awake and dressed for the occasion. Lazily they drew themselves from their bedrooms to the family room, where all, saved Simone, sat heavy eyed. She had prepared long in advance for this morning's worship and she made sure to have something to awaken the interest of her children in the lesson.

The hymn was sung and no change was made in the drowsy looks. Simone wondered at what to do; the lesson to be taught today needed to be understood. The thoughts of her head became many as she saw Bob nod himself awake; Pam's mouth was open, her head reclined on top the sofa and her eyes closed. Jeremiah looked at them pitifully; himself fighting what his children had fallen prey to: sleep. A change of environment was needful, Simone decided and hitting her hand upon the coffee table she startled all out of sleep. "Everyone, get in the car!" she commanded with a smile. "The car?" questioned the others of the family. The car had never been a part of worship before. But the car was needful this morning and when the family got to their favorite section of the beach, this fact was very evident. All face was aglow and awake; none seemed inclined to sleep and upon realizing this Simone began her lesson animatedly:

"The day was hot and sweat stood on the faces of all that listened to Moses as he spoke. Most of what the leader said was limiting and told of good and bad things to come in the future. No idolatry and the sanctuary should be revered, were some of the orders Israel received. Obedience to these commandments would result in them being a mighty and prosperous nation and people. Rain would be on time, food and peace would be in the land and countless other promises were made to them of good. But obedience was the condition on which these would be received. We may well imagine that all faces showed pleasure as the blessings were told them. But no sooner had they been spoken than the curses were named and these curses told of conditions opposite to what the blessings promised. Famine, death, diseases and slavery were the rewards of disobedience and the faces of the people must have reflected worry as they heard these things.

"Wow!" One must have thought, "disobeying God doesn't sound very fun when the results are what Moses just said." The words Seven Times must have been all they remembered from the curses their leader named. Sevenfold punishments and the amount of time to be spent in punishment were what they understood from the words seven times. After he told them all God told him to tell Israel, Moses left for his duties. But he was to tell his people the same thing three more times and we find these words in Deuteronomy chapters 4, 28 and 30. Four times Israel was warned of God as to the results of disobeying and obeying Him and after each warning they vowed to do as God commanded.

"Many years passed since Moses last spoke to Israel and died but the counsel God gave him was still important during the time of Daniel. Daniel and his companions were taken to Babylon, as captives, during the reign of king Nebuchadnezzar and his father Nabopolassar. Can you believe that what happened to Daniel was based on what Moses told Israel in Leviticus 25 and 26? Nebuchadnezzar in the later years of his reign, had a very weird dream. The dream was about a tree. This tree was very well liked and envied but as the dream continued it was cut down to the stump and left in the open fields with a band of iron and brass over it. What made the dream even stranger than what I've said so far are the last two verses that talk of the dream. It says:

Daniel 4: 16, 17- Let his heart be changed from man's, and let a beast's heart be given unto him: and let seven times pass over him. This matter [is] by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men.

Nebuchadnezzar, like Israel, was promised a punishment from God through the phrase Seven Times. And he, like Israel, disobeyed the commandment of God and received that punishment of Seven Times. Let us learn for these two examples and do as God instructs us to do. Let us pray to close worship."

Following prayer the children were allowed to swim and on the car ride home they all talked freely on what they learned in worship.

The End!