

THE VALLEY OF DECISION

Joel 3:14 Acts 24:25-26 Acts 26:24-28

Introduction: Today there are multitudes halting between two opinions: be lost or be saved and few expect to be lost. To be saved a decision must be made and this decision is a hard one to make. The multitudes are undecided and they stand in the valley of decision. This valley is an unpleasant place to be for undecided minds are never at rest. All of us know what it is to wrestle with a decision and can identify with the restlessness and uneasiness which surrounds us when trying to make a serious decision. Once again God's Word gives us examples and answers to our situations and this time we look at decisions.

I. JUST WHAT IS THE VALLEY OF DECISION?

(It is not a low place between two hills. It is an undecided condition of the mind and heart. It is the obstacles and doubts with which the inward person is confronted.)

1. The Valley of Decision is the Dwelling Place of the Undecided

- An unpleasant condition of life, an unpredictable state of existence, an uncertain future. It is amazing that a person would live in such a condition. Let those who are tired of such uncertain living arise and declare "enough!" Make up your mind and move out of that valley today.

2. Multitudes Were in the Valley During Joel's Day

- Israel was in a backslidden condition and Joel declared the judgments of God upon them and then proclaimed the blessings of the future, and cried out, "*...multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision...*" In every century and generation, multitudes have lived and died in that valley of decision.

3. The Majority of the People Are in the Valley of Decision Today

- There are some, no doubt, who have given up hope of ever being saved and have come out of the valley of decision on the wrong side. Most people linger, putting off decision from time to time and thus the majority will die in the valley and go from there into Hell.

II. FELIX WAS IN THE VALLEY OF DECISION (*Acts 24:25-26*)

(Felix was a Roman procurator of Judea. He was a mean, cruel judge, accepting bribes. He held Paul in prison for two years, calling him often, hoping that Paul would give him money.)

1. Paul Preached to Felix

- Tertullus, the orator, prosecuted Paul before Felix, bringing many false charges. Paul made his defense, after which Felix committed Paul to a centurion for safekeeping. After certain days, he sent for Paul again and Paul then reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment. He argued about morality, self-control and the coming judgment. Drusilla was one whom Felix had persuaded to leave her husband and marry him and she was present.

2. Paul's Sermon Had an Effect on Felix

- Paul struck where Felix was most guilty. Paul preached morality to the immoral Felix. Paul condemned him for his unrighteousness and intemperance. "*Felix Trembled.*"

Felix became very uneasy. He had heard other great speakers but they never had this kind of effect on him. Felix was brought to realize his lost condition. Judgment was made a reality. The mighty and strong judge trembled in fear of the future.

3. Felix Chose to Remain in the Valley

- He refused to listen to any more from Paul. He was under conviction but was not ready for a decision. Money talked loudly and he hoped that Paul would give him money to let him go. He ordered Paul taken away but promised to hear him again at a later time. As far as it is known, Felix made no decision and died a wicked man and went to Hell. Many are like Felix who hear the gospel and when it condemns their way of life, they fight off conviction and decide to think about it some more, thus choosing to remain in the valley.

III. KING AGRIPPA ALSO WAS IN THE VALLEY OF DECISION

(Paul, before King Agrippa, gave testimony of how he was gloriously converted. Paul brought Christ so real before the king that he was greatly moved.)

1. Festus Was Listening to Paul's Testimony (Acts 26:24-25)

- Festus had never before heard such speaking. He was alarmed and spoke in a loud voice. He could not understand the anointing and learning with which Paul spoke. Festus was moved but did not yield himself to God.

2. Agrippa Was on The Verge of Decision (Acts 26:26-28)

- Paul preached him under conviction, then urged a decision. Agrippa was almost to the breaking point. He admitted, "*...almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian...*" Almost but still undecided; almost but left in the valley; almost but as far as is known it was a final almost and he was altogether lost to Hell.

3. The King Rose Up and Rejected Christ

- He stood all that he could. He had had an ear and heart full. He made no decision thus he remained in the valley. He had nothing to accuse Paul of and he found no fault in the Christ or the religion that Paul had preached. He was convicted, but failed to decide.

CONCLUSION:

(To get out of the valley of decision, one must make up his/her mind, come to a decision for Christ. All who die in the valley are lost forever.)

1. Almost Persuaded To Be a Christian, But Lost.

- There are people in Hell who were almost persuaded but never made up their minds.

2. People Will Die Waiting for a Convenient Time.

- They want to be saved, plan to be saved, but not just right now, later.

3. People May Wait Too Long.

- Some may stay in the valley so long that they are not able to get out. The valley of decision empties into Hell. To escape Hell, a decision for Christ has to be made.