

Fruit-bearing and Joseph's Years of Plenty

Question:

Odi, how now? We are ok. Wife getting better but has to go to office today against my will. The Lord will keep her.

I don't come again o!:

-John 15:2&6 says branch without fruit is cut off, Prof says that those in Mark 4:19 (unfruitful) will be raptured but be at the lowest rung and in fact the majority of those raptured as opposed to those who bear fruit. (Rewards)

Unravel it please!

-With this Corona virus devastation of economies, do you still think that we shall experience "good times" before the trouble (cf. the seven fat years before the seven lean ones in Joseph's vision)

(deleted)

The Lord keep and strengthen you my brother and friend.
Love you in Christ

Response:

The things we must endure in this world, sir! I am praying for you and your family, and I am sure that the Lord will keep you all, including her, safe.

I saw the email o! I guessed it was you. At first, it sounded like something I would have written, but then I saw the bit about the writer's children and reminded myself that time travel is impossible. LOL.

About your first question, Mark 4:19 corresponds to 1 Corinthians 3:15. The unfruitfulness in question is not absolute. It is just not significant enough to be counted. You can see from the description in verse 20 that the minimum yield counted is thirty-fold. That is not to say then that there is no yield below that, but it is just too little to matter on the same level as the production in verse 20.

This is why Ichthys holds that no matter how bad the believer may be in this life, even those who exit this life through the sin into death will have borne some fruit for the Lord. James teaches us that it is impossible for us to have faith that does nothing. If we do believe in Jesus Christ, that is, in Who He is and what He did for us, then we will have a natural response to that faith. We may pray for others or offer a timely word of encouragement or just offer thanks to the Lord for the salvation that we have received. All of this is fruit.

The branch that does not bear any fruit at all actually corresponds to Mark 9:16-17. They do begin to believe, but they do not remain "in the vine." So, what fruit they do bear fails. It does not "abide" (see John 16:4,6).

About the second question, as far as I know, we are not promised seven (or any number at all, in fact) fat years like Egypt and the world of that time was. But, speaking spiritually, we certainly have had more than a hundred fat years already that the Laodicean church has not taken proper advantage of. We have the Bible and proper Bible teaching far more available today than we have ever had it. Whereas throughout the ages, owning a full copy of the Bible in an accessible language has always been something of a luxury, today we have Bibles rotting away on shelves in homes all over the world. Whereas in the past, it would have seemed like a very difficult thing to access a reliable teaching ministry, it costs very little now to find an excellent teacher separated from you by a vast ocean and learn everything that you are willing to learn from him. These things are riches that the Laodicean church has that other eras of the church has never had in quite the same way. That is our "fat season" to which the seven dark years ahead will answer.

Of course, the six-month delay before the Tribulation starts is a time of special tranquility and prosperity that will lead many to think that there can be no more trouble:

1 When he opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.
Revelation 8:1 NIV

... 2 for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. 3 While people are saying, "Peace and safety," destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.

1 Thessalonians 5:2-3 NIV

This is probably what some might think of as our equivalent of the seven years of plenty, and while it could be in some manner of reasoning, if we want to keep with the principle in Joseph's example, then the years of plenty provide for the years of lack. Since the provision that the Lord offers for those years is purely spiritual, I would say that the last more than one hundred years since the Philadelphian church did their part is most certainly our years of plenty in preparation for the terrible times ahead, and we who are being diligent to grow spiritually and store up a vast wealth of Truth are going to be the Josephs that provide for our brethren when the time of their need comes upon them.

Always praying for you and your family, sir.

Your servant in the love of Jesus

Odi