

WHAT'S THAT I HEAR?

Is it a knocking sound? Perhaps it's a good opportunity just waiting for us to simply open the door. Sometimes, opportunity knocks but we fail to recognize what stands available to us right behind the door. Many sit and wait for something to introduce itself as an opportunity while successful people see every little possibility in front of them as a potential opportunity. Successful people expect wonderful opportunities to show up and knock rather than sit around saying, "if I could only...."

The apostle Paul took advantage of all of his opportunities. "Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: And Paul, *as his manner was*, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ" (Acts 17:1-3, emphasis B.G.). Paul could have seen the synagogue as a hindrance to the teaching of Christ. Instead, he saw an opportunity to speak to a multitude of people already gathered to study religious matters.

Some people are immediately "soured" when they see a bag of lemons. Even the strongest of faithful men can be discouraged if they are not careful. Elijah ran into the wilderness to save himself from the evil Jezebel "and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers...And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away" (1 Kin. 19:4, 10). Elijah was in despair and had come to a point of thinking that there was no more reason to live. However, Elijah's work was not done. God revealed, "Yet I have left Me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him" (1 Kin. 19:18). For a moment, Elijah's eyes had been distracted from the good opportunities that lay ahead.

While some see a bag of lemons, others see a nice, cold glass of lemonade or a new recipe using lemon zest. Rather than lament over what we don't see, let us take what we've been given and see the opportunity for something greater. Let us use the abilities we have been blessed with and realize our greatest potential (Mat. 25:14-30). In doing so, our abilities will grow and strengthen and so will the opportunities.

- *Brad Green*