

TRAVEL TIPS (2)

Book in advance

Rev. G.H. Grose

The task of booking in advance is always somewhat tedious. I can remember one person who said that to reserve a seat was such a harrowing experience that he preferred not to go away on holiday. Even so, it obviously saves a great deal of trouble on the day you are travelling. It gives a certain sense of security; it enables you to prepare other details of the journey; it even permits a certain sense of happy anticipation, you can plan more confidently what you intend to do when you arrive.

Despite the booking in advance facility, however, some people do not seem to be built that way. They seem never to have the slightest desire to look ahead or book ahead. If you've heard the song "*Manyana*"—tomorrow is good enough for me—it describes such an attitude. Perhaps they have a deep inner feeling that they are more than ordinary mortals and that somehow the ordinary rules of life do not apply to them.

This sort of attitude is possible in spiritual things, too. There are so many things to which we have to attend—Studies, Domestic chores, Qualifying for promotion—all seemingly concerned with this world only. There are so many desirable things that concern us in the '*Here and Now*' that it is all too easy to forget the '*There and Then*', or, if not to forget it, at least to shelve consideration indefinitely,—both having similar outcome. One of the strange tendencies of us human beings who have not only a physical and mental dimension but also a spiritual part of our makeup, is that we neglect the last part. We go through life eager to learn, eat, dress decently and enjoy reasonable accommodation, but careless of spiritual development. To pay attention to one's spiritual development is what I mean by '*Booking in advance*'.

I see this present life not as an end in itself but as a preparation for future life. By my readiness to take God seriously '*Now*' I am prepared for Him '*Then*'. In other words, by our decisions and affirmations here, we either make our reservation—or neglect to do so.

In one of the parables we find in the New Testament there is the story of the ten maidens whose task it was to wait for the bridegroom. Each of the girls had a lamp, but some had neglected to fill their lamps with oil. The bridegroom arrived all of a sudden and while those who had oil were able to light their lamps and escort him, the others had to rush off to find oil and through their delay found they were debarred from the wedding feast.

In other words '*Book in advance*'. The reservation office is open at the moment.

A PRAYER

Eternal and Infinite God, for Thee it is always Now.

In thy presence is Life, and we depend upon thy daily provision that we may be sustained each day.

We are creatures of Time, O Lord; created by thine hand, yet set in Time. For us there is a beginning and an ending of the day; sunrise and then sunset.

Yet for all our mortality there is that set within us that teaches of eternity. We learn from our day which has a beginning and an end, a sense of that Day which has no end, but only Thyself as centre.

We thank Thee for all the experience through which have been conveyed to us some insight, some awareness of Thyself, some impression of thy love, some assurance of thy design and infinite resources.

In thy mercy, draw us to Thyself, to contrition and obedience, to appreciation and worship, and tune our hearts to thine one pure note. Assist us, Lord, that in the '*Here and Now*' we may often catch a glimpse of thine eternal Day.

And so, in thought and purpose, in intention and in act, help us to follow faithfully, that we may serve Thee now, and, by thy grace, may serve Thee ever.