

Glorious Gospel Publication



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WHO IS THE KING?



There are kings in the history recorded in the Bible, there are kings in the prophecy, and today there are kings in preparation for eternal thrones. The Scriptural teaching concerning personal reigning is in the Bible in type and shadow throughout the Scripture. Many lessons on preparation for reigning gives us great instruction.

King David had gotten old and stricken in years, and seemed to have poor circulation. David's servants brought a beautiful young lady named Abishag, to minister unto him. We read that the king knew her not. Several writers believe that she was the Shulamite of Song of Solomon.

In I Kings 1, we read of a person that tried to usurp the throne, his name was Adonijah. He said, exalting himself, "I will be king." But David had told his wife, Bathsheba, that her son Solomon would be the king in David's stead. Therefore Adonijah was taking a throne that wasn't his. We read of Adonijah beginning to work his plan to take over. But Nathan the prophet and others with him sent Bathsheba to king David to remind him of his promise, and to ask, "Why then doth Adonijah reign?"

This question might be asked and answered, in our lives concerning Satan and or the old creation. David was also told that He should tell the people who was to sit on the throne after him. V. 20.

Adonijah later also asked Bathsheba to go ask Solomon after he had been anointed to reign, to give Abishag to him for a

wife. Since He couldn't usurp the throne, he tried to get that which was nearest to the heart thereof.

Read in Isaiah 14:12-15, of the ultimate usurper and part of his end. "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, which did weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend unto heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit." Shall not the lowly trusting saints, cheer? Even shout for joy?

"God's king"

Shall we not further delight in our Father's answer, as to His choice of the ultimate King? Psalm 2:6. We first see the foretelling of coming would be usurpers with the dangerous attitude fostered by Satan. This Psalm speaks so powerfully as to what their change of attitude should be, as well as their destiny, without that change. Vs. 9-12. He will have said, "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." Shall we shout glory? Shall we not rather be identified with "His anointed?" Ps. 45:3-7; II Tim. 2:11,12.

"For He must reign" I Cor.15:24-28; Isa. 9:6,7. The zeal of the Lord of host will perform it. Can we not sing to our Father in heaven (Mt. 6:10,13). Hallowed be thy name? Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory for ever. Amen."

I Tim. 6:15,16. In his times he will show who is the blessed and only potentate. King of kings and Lord of Lord's.

Personal Kingship Who is our choice?

Now that we know our Father's choice of universal King of kings and Lord of lords, what is our choice as to who reigns in our lives? Who sets on the throne in the kingdom of our hearts? Who is Lord of our life? We are wise to embrace God's choice for us moment by moment, day by day. Since the fall of humanity in the garden of Eden, we, by natural birth are born with a nature that is receptive to our enemy's influence, suggestions and even control toward disobedience to the will of God. When we are saved, by accepting Jesus Christ as our Savior we have a choice as to who runs our life. Thank God we are given a new nature whereby we may choose whether we do the will of God or not.

Therefore we do have a conflict. Our old nature opposes the will of God, and we as a new creation delight to do God's will. It is our heavenly Father's choice for us **to let** Jesus be the king of our hearts, Lord of our lives. To submit, yield unto Him now is to be blessed for eternity. Honoring Jesus as Lord of our life now is gracious preparation to reign with him forever. We are making choices today that will be greatly rewarded tomorrow. We are now determining the measure or degree in which we will reign then.

To go against God's Word, to yield to the old nature will reap corruption, because it is letting Satan influence, rule, control our living. It is letting sin reign in our mortal body. Rom. 6:11-14, let not sin reign. They which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one Christ Jesus. Rom. 5:17.

Who is going to be married to the King? "Wherefore my brethren you are become dead to the law by the body of Christ that

ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. Rom. 7:4.

By J. D.



Overwhelming Joy

*Every day is more joyous than was the last
It's a step nearer to Jesus' return
Shall we stand before Him for our reward
Or is it wood, hay and stubble to burn?*

*We should know by the way we are living our lives
Do we look up and yearn for our King?
Is our life filled with love for Jesus above?
Do our hearts continually sing?*

*When Jesus comes into our heart, He should reign
Our lives should be one with Him
He takes all our worries and troubles away
And puts love, joy and peace within.*

*We live with him and for Him in each passing day
He's the Prize we are running to win
He gives love so abounding and joy overwhelming
With Jesus our new life begins.*

-Grace Livingstone



The Last Days

Anita Clark



IN NOAH'S DAY – Genesis 6:3-7 – God looked down and saw, intermarriage between believers and the wicked (Vs.4), “wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imaginations of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” In Matthew 24:37 says. “ But as the days of Noah were, so shall also, the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.”

Surely, this prophecy is fulfilled in the world today. The world is occupied with war, and weapons of war, terror and of catching terrorists, of homosexual rights, of abortion, of pleasure and recreation, of cloning of humans, snipers, kidnappers, evil doers, and persecution of Christians. If you have your eyes open, you will see and know in your heart that judgment is coming on this evil world. Everyday, we pick up the paper or hear on T.V. more evil imaginings of man. The Lord will not always be longsuffering with mankind. I Peter 3:20 speaks of the wicked in the time of Noah. It says, “..When once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah.” His longsuffering with man in this age is just about finished. He has dealt with man for the 2,000 years of this church age, giving opportunity after opportunity, revival after revival to try to influence men to Christ, who is the Light of the world, from

their wicked ways. Still, man goes his own way and exalts himself above Christ.

TEACHING OF HUMANISM - A DEVICE OF SATAN -

Satan has used this tool to promote evil in the world ever since the fall of man in the garden. It exalts man above God. Didn't he promise Eve when he tempted her, "...Ye shall be as gods?" (Gen.3:5). Humanism greatest tenet is the deification of man.

It recently came to our attention that Humanistic philosophy rests on four major pillars.

The first pillar: Atheism - States: There is no God, no one to whom man must give account. Psalms 14:1 says, "The fool has said in his heart there is no God."

The second pillar: Evolution - Says: If there is no God, then man's existence must be explained. This leads to the belief that man is no better than any other life form. If man is just another evolved creature, then he is not a loftier being than apes or dogs. I can see that this would lead to the idea that man's behavior too, may just be animal like. This thought is acted out in the world today.

The third pillar: Moral Relativity - It reasons that if there is no God, and man just evolved, then, there can be no absolutes for living. It states that man evolved, and is still evolving, and there is no standard for right or wrong.

The fourth pillar: Pragmatism - which means, "a philosophy that evaluates assertions solely by the practical consequences and bearing on human interests." (Dictionary). This pillar relates especially to values and lifestyles. The reasoning is that if there's no God, and we all evolved, and there are no absolutes or standards about anything, then, whatever you like is fine. There is no right and wrong. We see this reflected in sayings and songs: "I did it my way," "Do your own thing," "If it feels good, do it," It's your thing; I can't tell you what to do."

We've all heard these slogans many times in this society we live in. Humanism is a lie that has captured the minds of the majority of the people of the world today. This is contrary to the Word of God, and is the promotion of Satan. We as Christians must be on guard that our minds do not get distorted with this worldly view. Apostle Paul tells us to let our minds be governed by heavenly things. He warns in Romans 12:1-2, "...Be not conformed to the world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind..." How is our mind "renewed?" By the Word of God saturating our minds with the right thoughts, the Spiritual thoughts, as we read it, study it or hear it.. This explanation of what "Humanism" is may be of use to many of you. Our children are taught this in school. The only way to keep them from being overcome by Satan's lie, is to Home School them, or if they must go to Public School, to be careful to reinforce Christian principals in the home. Attend a good church that teaches in plain black and white truths from the Word of God.

The AntiChrist who will be manifest during the tribulation of seven years will float in on a cloud of lies that have been accepted by the unbelieving world. "Because they receive not the love of the truth, that they might be saved...God will send them strong delusion that they might believe a lie; That they all may be damned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." II Thess. 2:11-12. What a sad time is coming on this old world in the near future! Paul warns the believers, "Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle."

The news is full of terrible happenings. Our minds could easily be discouraged., but God's Word encourages us to look up, and go on in victory. We in the U.S.A. are not experiencing physical persecution, but Satan is attacking us none

the less. He is constantly striving to cause us to get our eyes off the soon appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is constantly bringing discouragement before the overcomers, trying to get them to look at the saints who are failing to lay hold of the Word. It is very difficult for church leaders when they see coldness and indifference in the saints. We preach our hearts out, and cry before God for the growth of the saints, and often times we see just the opposite. We know that God is faithful. We know that even this condition is listed in the Bible as a sign of the endtime. "For that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first..." (II Thess. 2:3). The Lord gave me Romans 3:3 one time when I was discouraged about the ministry, and felt like, "Is there anyone who is standing for the truth?" This verse says, "For what if some did not believe? Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?" And our assurance is: "NO!" Praise God! He will have His overcoming people!! You can be one! And, so can I! All by God's marvelous Grace!



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Camp Joy Haven: June 30th – July 4th at White Memorial Camp, Council Grove, Kansas. Reporting in Monday 10 AM with the first meal at noon and afternoon service. Last meal will be breakfast Friday with clean up and packing to leave before noon. Directions to the camp: Leaving Council Grove on Hwy 177 North, about 6½ miles turn left at the green White Memorial Camp sign on the right side of the road. (which is Ave. K). Go 1½ miles to 1050 road and turn left and go 4½ miles. Road dead-ends in the camp. Registrations must be in by May 30th.

ROMANS

W. J. Franklin



Chapter 2:1-9

THE MORALIZERS

“Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things”—V. 1. Paul now turns to the moralizers and philosophers in the pagan world and shows them to be a guilty as any others. In judging or condemning others, each one sat as his own judge and condemned himself because he practiced the same thing he condemned. The man is more guilty than the one he condemns.

By his judgment he manifests that he knows better but still does the evil. He would excuse himself on the basis of the fact that he can see and condemn the evil, but this very ability makes him to be worse in the sight of God. He had some knowledge but did not walk in it. To be able to see the guilt was one thing. To be delivered from it, or to deliver from it, quite another. Ability to see the sin just shows the responsibility associated with that knowledge. Jesus said, “Let him that is without sin be the first to cast a stone” when the Jews wished to stone the woman taken in sin. Each one of the accusers was as guilty as the woman they brought to Him.

Let us realize that Paul is not speaking here either of a civil judge or of an assembly dealing with the sin of an individual as in I Cor. 5. He is dealing with man as he is before God. He is trying to strip men of every vestage of self-righteousness. It is not the business of one sinner to be occupied

with the other fellow's sin, when they are each guilty before God.

“But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things”—V. 2. In reading this chapter our minds are impressed at the ways and basis in which God will judge man. This verse states the first, it will be “According to truth.” Note that in V. 5 it is according to treasured up wrath. Then again in V. 6, according to deeds. Later in the chapter, V. 11, it is without respect of persons, or without placing one above another as to person. Then it is according to Paul's Gospel—V. 16. Finally, it is according to performance and not knowledge—Vs. 17-29.

God's judgment according to truth will be absolute, and not comparative judgment. Not by comparing one with another, but in exact justice.

“And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?”—V. 3. There is no escape for the sinner. He cannot hide himself by pointing at the other man's sins. Either he will turn to that because they can single out clearly the sins of others that they themselves can escape detection even though they are as bad or worse than their neighbors.

“Or despisest thou the riches of His goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?”—V. 4. “Or despisest thou?” – what and whom do men despise when they continue in hard-hearted rejection of God? The word “Despisest” means to think against, disesteem, scorn, slight, to disregard. But note what this “Againstness” is against. “Goodness” means usefulness, moral excellence in character or conduct, gentle, benign, kind, obliging, gracious. “Forbearance” means patience, self-restraint, tolerance. “Longsuffering” means patient endurance of evil, slowness in avenging injuries, clemency. God is said to be “Rich” in these, and to this, we can testify. Peter said, “God is

longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish.” These graces of God that enable Him to endure men’s wickedness are designed to lead men to repentance. However, God’s forbearance often leads to a hardening of the heart as in the case of Pharaoh—Ex. 8:15; 9:34. Men are ever willing to take advantage of the grace of God and use it for a license. Too often, that which is intended for good is turned into evil by men. Multiplied millions are storing up a great treasure of wrath against the day of wrath.

“But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God”—V. 5. The man concerning whom this is said is a man who believes himself to be righteous. What Paul says is terrible irony. This a treasure? This laid up by man? A man is pictured as amassing and depositing an ever increasing store and stock in the pent-up wrath of God! And this will come upon him in the day of wrath like a deluge of everlasting fire. It will be a full manifestation to every Christ-rejecting sinner of the righteous judgment of a holy and sin-hating God. This will be at the great white throne judgment where every sinner will face the Christ who died for him and will be fully repaid for every evil. And this repayment will be for eternity.

“Who will render to every man according to his deeds”—V. 6. Each man will be dealt with as an individual and since men like to boast of their deeds, they will meet God and be judged on the basis of their deeds. God will show them that their deeds or works were not only of no benefit to Him, but were a cause of His wrath. According to Rev. 20:13, the dead will be judged according to their works. If men wish to deal with God on the basis of works, that is the way He will meet them.

“To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life”—V. 7.

Paul tells us in this verse what God will give to those who patiently seek the things above. God will render to such eternal life. We are not told here how they obtain that life, as the Gospel has not yet been unfolded in this book as it is later in this writing. Paul is dwelling on character, but not on the way they obtain that character.

“But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath”—V. 8. To be “Contentious” means to be self-seeking, untowardness. These seem to have a contentious controversy with God. Negatively, they disobey the truth. Positively, they obey unrighteousness. Biblical history affords many examples of those who are contentious, from Cain who slew Abel to Judas who betrayed Christ. They will all share the fate of those who will be the objects of the four terrible words in this and the next verse. The first word used in this verse to describe the fate of such sinners in “Indignation.” It means, violent passion, wrath, a mental bent, vengeance. This is the settled attitude of God toward them. The word here translated “Wrath: means, anger, a strong passion or emotion of the mind, swellings of anger. These are what will burst in fury upon them in the time of the wrath of the Lamb.

“Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile”—V. 9. “Tribulation” means, affliction, to squeeze, press, press upon, encumber, to distress. “Anguish” means narrowness of place, a narrow place, straits, distress, anguish. To the Jew who had more knowledge and the revealed law as to what was right, this would be first in place and measure. His place of light and knowledge carried with it a greater responsibility. His privilege and position worked his disaster because of non-performance. He shall be beaten with more stripes, because he knew his Master’s will, but failed to perform it. This vengeance is also to the Gentile, for all shall meet impartial justice.

Continued next issue

FIRST LOVE

Verta Giddings

Sand Lake, Michigan

My heart reaches out to the Lord and asks, “What is the greatest danger to the believer today?” This would be addressed to those who are in earnest about God’s things. Is it letting down on doctrine, although that is truly important? Is it not allowing false teaching to come in and ruin everything? Is it making sure that the Nicolaitanes, those who would separate clergy and laity, not have a say? It is the fear of not having enough works, labor, and patience? Aren’t these important? Indeed what would take place if none of these things mattered?

Rev. 2:1-7 is the letter to the church in Ephesus. It is the first of the seven churches addressed by our Lord. What was the real problem there? They had left their first love. This is written to the angel of the church, the messenger. Pastors and elders, take special note. Leaders must hear this first, and take the admonition. But in **V. 7** it says, “*He that hath an ear, let him hear.*” It is an individual responsibility.

What about Ephesus? There are several meanings for this name. (1) “City of the moon.” It was the home of the temple of the goddess Diana of the Ephesians. (2) “Full purposed.” (3) “Permitted.” (4) “Desired.”

The meeting in Ephesus started with 12 men being filled with the Holy Spirit. There was much opposition from the Jews, so Paul left the synagogue and went into the school of Tyrannus, where he stayed two years – **Acts 19:10**. The word

really went out from there unto all that area. Then there was Satanic opposition from the makers of the silver shrines for Diana. This was followed by great victory. Altogether Paul spent three years there - **Acts 20:31**.

Then Paul left and went into Macedonia and later to Jerusalem. When he came to the seaport of Miletus, he called for the Ephesian elders and gave them strict warnings - Acts 20:17-38.

Some time later, perhaps four or five years later, Paul wrote these “Full purposed, desired, saints” a letter, which is the Book of Ephesians. It was written from the prison in Rome. What was the burden of the letter? It was not to make sweeping corrections, not to tell them how wrong their teaching had become, but to impart the highest spiritual truths. He told them of their place in the heavenlies, of how to live on earth while maintaining their place in the heavenlies. To them he wrote the glorious fifth chapter which is bridal teaching - **Eph. 5:25-27**. No wonder their name has the meaning of “Desired.” He also wrote them about spiritual warfare in Chapter six. Why was this so important? Because Satan would rob them of their place and their prize. Satan would keep Christ from having a bride, if it were possible. They needed to know how to stand and withstand, having on the whole armor of God.

Then thirty years after the assembly was founded, came this letter to Ephesus by the vehicle of John the Beloved, who saw all this by revelation. Paul’s epistle should have served to draw their interests away from the earth and into heaven. Evidently some didn’t heed.

Their argument might be, “See how much we have going for us!” Read this portion, **Rev. 2:1-7**, carefully. Was there anything said about them being lazy, not involved, or indifferent about holding the line on doctrine? No. Apparently they were

still successful in keeping the wolves away. The problem was that they had left (not lost) their first love.

V. 4 - What the Lord had against those in Ephesus was most important. All through the Bible, love is put to the front. Under the law it says, "*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength.*" - Mark 12:30. Then in V. 31, they were to love their neighbor as themselves.

Paul wrote to the Corinthians in I Cor. 13, that even if one had all the gifts of the Spirit, and was very benevolent, it wouldn't count if he had not the Divine, Jesus kind of love. Then it goes on to say what love really is. Jesus had asked Peter, "*Do you love me?*"

This first love is the deepest kind of love. It is bridal love. It is pre-eminent love. It is loving Jesus more than anything or anyone else. It is fervent, first in order of time and importance, and first in value. This the Ephesian church had left.

Can one enjoy this pre-eminent love and later leave it? The answer is found in **II Cor. 11:1-4**. Paul was jealous over the Corinthians because they had been corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. This simplicity means, "singleness, simplicity, plainness." They had been corrupted with false teaching and their minds were taken away from the warmth and purity of that love between Jesus and themselves.

We can say with conviction that Paul the Apostle didn't leave that first love. He spoke of himself as Paul the aged, yet his last recorded words to Timothy were, "*I have - won!*" Others had made shipwreck of faith, turning to fables, turning to the world as Demas did. Paul went on through thick and thin. He loved Jesus supremely.

Bridal love is a response of love to love. It is the subjection of a self-denying love to a love that denies self. It is the abandonment of all for a love that has abandoned all. It boils down to forgetting self and thinking only of Christ.

What did the Lord tell the Ephesians to do about it? **Rev. 2:5** - Remember, repent, do the first works. First works are pre-eminent works, the right kind as in **Eph. 2:10**. These works are those He has outlined for us and would be under the definite direction of the Holy Spirit.

If they wouldn't listen, their candlestick would be removed. The candlesticks were the seven churches. They would lose their church or lose their testimony. All of us who are desiring to be in the bridal company need to consider what was said to Ephesus. We are to be shining lights in this dark world of sin. We need to stay bright in the corner where we are. It isn't important whether we are looked upon with favor by the world because of our accomplishments. It is vital that we continue to shine for Jesus and not have our candlestick removed.



*I know thy sorrow, child; I know it well,
Thou need'st not try with broken voice to tell.
Just let Me lay thy head here on My breast,
And find here sweetest comfort, perfect rest!
And I will gladly take it all for thee,
If only thou wilt trust it all to Me;
Thou need'st not stir but in My love lie still,
And learn the sweetness of the Father's will.
That will was only planned for the best;
So, knowing this, lie still and sweetly rest—
Trust Me. The future shall not bring to thee
But that will bring thee closer still to Me.*

OUTLINES OF PROPHECY

God's self-revelation to Man - Part

2

By Orville Freestone, Jr.

The Latter Prophets

The Latter Prophets, also called the writing prophets, are those who have left works in their names. In our Bible they are the books from Isaiah to Malachi. They lived from the eighth to the fifth centuries BC. They are divided between the "Major Prophets" and the Minor Prophets." The Major Prophets are Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel, although in the Hebrew Bible Daniel is included in the miscellaneous "Writings" instead of with the prophets. The "Minor Prophets" are from Hosea to Malachi and in the Hebrew Canon are one book called "the scroll of the twelve." They are called Major and Minor because Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel are very important for the prophetic revelation and the first three are quite long while "the twelve" are short and their prophecies are more limited in scope. There are in the Gospels prophets of the Old Testament order like the former prophets. John the Baptist was a prophet whom everyone likened to Elijah. Mt 11:13,14 Simeon and Anna, (Lk 2:25-38) were like "the men of God" of the Old Testament whose ministries were brief and directed to particular events. Living and ministering before the cross, they were of the old economy.

The Captivities

From the time of the division of the Israelite kingdom following the death of Solomon, the northern tribes led by the

largest tribe, Ephraim, assumed the name Israel. Hosea calls this kingdom Ephraim. Hosea 5:3,13:1 The southern tribes, led by Judah, the largest of them, assumed the name Judah. Isa 1:1 Over time, as Israel became more and more apostate, the priests and Levites in the north migrated to Judah, as did many of the commoners. II Chron 11:13-17 Thus in the kingdom of Judah were peoples of all the tribes and the term “Jews,” from Judah, came to mean the whole nation after the destruction of the kingdom of Israel by Assyria in 722 BC. The kingdom of Judah lasted for more than a century before it was conquered by the Babylonians. Many people of the northern tribes exiled to Assyria assimilated and lost their national identity. Those who migrated to Judah were among those later exiled to Babylon, but they retained their tribal identities. Acts 26:7 There never were any “ten lost tribes of Israel!”

The New Testament

The third prophetic era is that of the Church. In the Book of Acts we read of “certain prophets and teachers” in the church that is at Antioch. Acts 13:1 There was “a certain prophet named Agabus” at Caesarea. Acts 21:10 Among the offices in the Church (Eph 4:11) was listed that of Prophet. Many prophesied who were not called prophets. The four daughters of Philip the Evangelist prophesied (Acts 12:9) as did the disciples at Ephesus when “the Holy Ghost came upon them.” Acts 19:6 Disciples at Tyre warned Paul “through the Spirit” that he should not go to Jerusalem (Acts 21:4) and Paul himself, prophesied the fate of the ship, and all aboard, that was bound for Rome. Acts 27:25 In I Cor 14:24 Paul writes “but if all (the congregation) prophecy—”There is a difference in the gift of prophecy, which is one of the nine gifts of the Spirit (I Cor 12:10) and the office of Prophet in the Church. Eph 4:11

Just as Moses defined the nature of prophecy for the Mosaic era, so Paul defined the nature of prophecy for the Church. First Corinthians 14:3 says that prophecy is for edification, exhortation and comfort. There is no indication in the New Testament that prophecy should vanish from the Church. Just as in the Old Testament, so in the New, all prophecy must be judged by the Scriptures. Jesus, Paul, Peter, Jude and John (Revelation) all had very much to say about “the last things” concerning the future. Their prophetic writings complete God’s self-revelation. All prophecy in Christian assemblies is for “edification, exhortation and comfort.” It is not to impart new revelation of truth.

Prophetic Themes

Moses was the pattern for all the prophets of Israel to follow. Deuteronomy is his exposition of his law and also states the themes of prophecy. God is the true king of Israel and their leaders are His regents and are answerable to Him. God chose Israel from among the nations, gave them His Law, obedience to His covenant would bring great blessings, apostasy would bring severe judgment and repentance would be met with Mercy. Deut 4

The book of Judges records the repeated cycle of sin, servitude, sorrow (repentance) and salvation (deliverance). This was the pattern of Israel’s history until the Captivities. The same principle governed the relation of individuals with God. A “man of God” pronounced judgment on the house of Eli and on Israel (I Sam 2:27,36) while in chapter seven Samuel called Israel to repentance and God answered their prayer. The prophet Nathan (II Sam 12) denounced David for his great sin and pronounced judgment. When David sincerely repented, admitting his Sin, II Sam 12:13 God forgave his sin, but did not remove the punishment. A “man of God” pronounced doom on the house of Jereboam ben Nebat of the kingdom of Israel for

his apostasy. I Kings 13 Both Elijah and Elisha openly challenged the kings of Israel pronouncing doom that came to pass as foretold. The prophets were the moral and spiritual watchmen of God's people.

With the prophet Elijah a new prophetic theme developed, the doctrine of the remnant. When Elijah was depressed because of the apostasy of Ahab and the people of the kingdom of Israel, God assured him that there were seven thousand that were faithful to Israel's God. After the secession of the ten tribes to form the kingdom of Israel, and as the people and king became more and more apostate, the godly among the northern tribes migrated to the kingdom of Judah and became part of the people later called Jews. These were the remnant of the northern tribes. II Chron 11:13-17

Though many of Judah's kings were godly, others were not and gradually the people became idolatrous. The prophets pronounced doom on Judah by the Babylonians as they had pronounced doom on Israel by the Assyrians. Once again, there was "a very small remnant." Isa 1:9 & 10:22 This remnant returned from Babylon and rededicated themselves to the covenant (Ezra & Nehemiah). But by the time of our Lord they had again apostatized and Paul wrote (Rom 11:5) that at that time there was "a remnant according to the election of grace." It was that remnant that evangelized the Gentiles. Another of the themes of prophecy is that of "the last days" (Gen 49:1 & Isa 2:2) and "the latter days." Dan 2:28 "The last days" for some of these prophecies is the Gospel age. Heb 1:2 For many others it is after this Gospel age. I Tim 4:1; II Tim 3:1 The theme of the Messiah (Christ) is closely associated with "the last days" in both his first advent (Isa 53, Heb 1:2) and his Second Advent. Isa 61:1,2, II Thess 1:7-10 The restoration of Israel in faith is "in the last days (Isa 2:2) and "in that day." Zech 13:1

Jesus made it clear that before the prophet's promised golden age there would be "great tribulation" (Matt 24:21) before His return to Israel. Paul wrote of "that man of Sin" (II

Thess 2:3) who is also “that Wicked One.” II Thess 2:8 This is John’s “Antichrist” who would be revealed and whom the Lord would destroy at His coming. The Revelation also describes these events. It should be apparent that nowhere does the Bible predict automobiles, airplanes, battle tanks or dates to calculate calendar dates for these events.

The Revelation

The Revelation is a special case of New Testament prophecy. Like Ezekiel, Daniel and Zechariah, Revelation is an apocalypse. An apocalypse is a kind of writing that expresses truth by symbols, which are not meant to be understood literally.

The key to understanding Revelation is to note that all of its symbols are taken from the Old Testament. John knew those scriptures intimately and we must also be thoroughly familiar with them if we are to understand his symbols. Nowhere does John quote directly from the Old Testament but nearly every sentence is an allusion to it.

It is also important to understand that Revelation was not intended to be charted or to be presented pictorially. As pictures these scenes are grotesque but the hearing of this book is beautiful. “Let him that hath ears hear!” These chapters are “word pictures.”

The most important thing to remember is this book was not written to satisfy curiosity, but to vindicate and glorify Jesus! Thus we see the beginning of prophecy in Eden Gen 3:16 when the prophecy of a redeemer was given, the progress of God’s self-revelation over the ages of time and its conclusion in paradise restored. Rev 21-22 Eden’s tree of life Gen 2:9 is now the **trees of life**. Rev 22:2 Eden’s river Gen 2:10 is now the **river Of life**. Rev 22:1 The severed fellowship with God Gen 3:8-11,24 is restored: “The Tabernacle of God is with man.” Rev 21:3 Instead of a wife for Adam Gen 2:21,22 we see “the Bride, the Lamb’s wife.” Rev 21:9 Redemption is completed!

Jeremiah 29



Part 8 (vs 5)

By Debra Isenbletter

In verse 5 we previously looked at the labor and rest that is part of their captivity. Part of what they are to learn is seen in the meanings for “garden” which is what they plant. A garden is a place that is enclosed, protected, stationary, dependent, cultivated and fruitful. There are wonderful lessons in these meanings for God’s people.

They are enclosed and protected, this is their condition while in Babylon because they are kept from greater judgments (war, famine, pestilence). Once they see this aspect of their captivity they will appreciate where the Lord has placed them. How many of us plant gardens and put a border of some type around the garden? The border or enclosure in those days was a wall of stones or a hedge that had some height to it. Before they went into captivity they were the Lord’s vineyard that He had planted and fenced in but because of their disobedience the Lord took away the hedge and broke down the wall (Is 5:2,5). The result is that Babylon was able to come in and take them into captivity. The purpose of an enclosure for a garden is to keep the animals out and keep the garden in. One year I planted wild strawberries as a ground cover in my garden, not realizing how they would take over if not contained. The next year they were everywhere and I had to put a border around them to keep them in one area. That border made it harder for them to get out into other parts of the garden. That is part of the reason the Lord encloses His people, He doesn’t want them getting out of the area He has placed them, and the enclosure that keeps them in also keeps the enemy out and is for their protection. In cap-

tivity by faith they can rest in a “city of refuge” though there be no physical city. One of the cities of refuge was “Bezer” (fortress) and Bezer was in the “wilderness.” (Josh 20:8) They are in the wilderness, yet even in captivity the enemy is shut out and they are shut in. In Babylon they are protected because Babylon isn’t touched by the judgments that fall on Jerusalem (war, famine and pestilence). While they are shut out (protected) they are also shut in (enclosed), and this is the place the Lord would have all His people. One of the unique descriptions of the Shulamite is that she is enclosed, shut up and sealed: “A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.” (Song of Solomon 4:12) It is in that enclosed space that all the richness and fruitfulness of that garden are seen. He can go into his garden and enjoy it. It is in that enclosed and protected place that the Lord can carefully control what is done to them and what is seen in their cultivation and ultimate fruitfulness, but first they must accept where He has put them.

They are Stationary and Dependent; this is the condition they are forced into through their captivity. They are like a garden that is dependent upon the one who waters it; it is in a fixed position. God’s people have come to a place where they must learn to wait upon the Lord, they must let Him deliver them, provide for them and bless them. This position forces them to exercise their faith. When we wait upon the Lord there is the promise of a blessing, it is that “he shall strengthen thine heart.” (Ps 27:14) Often the flesh may be tempted to look to and wait upon other sources, but the Lord is the only One we are to trust in this utterly dependent manner. “My soul wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from him.” (Ps 62:5). Jeremiah also learned this lesson of waiting upon the Lord for deliverance and he tells us in what manner we should wait. “It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord.” (Lam 3:26) There is a difference

between waiting impatiently for the Lord to do something and patiently waiting for Him to move in our behalf True faith can see the good in “quietly” waiting upon the Lord, knowing that He knows the best time to deliver. Sometimes the greatest lesson isn’t the deliverance it is the lesson in learning to wait, it is the lesson we learn as we are made aware of our dependence and made glad in that dependence. Isaiah tells us of the promised blessing that comes to those that wait, it is that they “shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be wearing; and they shall walk, and not faint.” (Is 40:31)

They are Cultivated and Fruitful, this is the final stage of their development in captivity and this is God’s real purpose for them. The Lord would cultivate them and make them fruitful. Cultivation is seen in the plowing and tilling of the soil, and pictures the trials and hardships they endure. It is an uncomfortable process but one that is absolutely necessary in order for the fruit to come forth. Fruitfulness is seen in their yielding to the Master’s hand as He begins and finishes this work. The Lord had instructed them to “break up your fallow ground” (Jer 4:4) speaking of the neglected ground of their hearts. It is their captivity that begins this process and when the process is complete and the final fruit is seen they will swear “The Lord liveth, in truth, in judgment and in righteousness...” (Jer 4:2) They will be able to look back at their suffering and say that all that the Lord has done is founded in truth and all his judgments are righteous, and finally that the Lord that they serve is a living God. First they are enclosed and protected, and then they are made to see they are dependent, and in this dependent condition they are cultivated so that they finally produce fruit.

The Lord’s promise is that they will enjoy the fruit or rewards of obedience for He says that they shall “eat the fruit”

of that garden. The word “eat” means to “feed freely” and “fruit” means “reward.” When they become fruitful they will begin to truly satisfy the Lord and He can begin to truly bless them. Their blessings are seen in their fruitful gardens that picture how they have become fruitful. Even in trials there can be small blessings but it is only afterwards that we can truly see them. Jeremiah has already promised them a time when they shall be fruitful; it is the time of their restoration. The Lord says, “I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds, and they shall be fruitful and increase.” (Jer 23:3) Their fruitfulness begins where the Lord places them whether it is in Babylon or in Jerusalem and so does our fruitfulness. We don’t suddenly burst into fruitfulness in a moment, there is a gradual development of that fruit over a period of time and it comes from being enclosed and protected, we realize we are stationary and dependent and willing to be cultivated so that the final result is fruitfulness. It is His Word worked in our lives in every circumstance of our lives (good and bad) that produces this fruit.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Fellowship Meeting: March 15th at *Grace Assembly*, 796 N. St Paul St., Wichita, Kansas. Breakfast 8:00 AM, meeting begins at 10:00 AM, lunch at noon, and afternoon meeting 1:30 PM.

Oklahoma Youth Camp: Sunday night June 8th through Friday 13th at *War Eagle Resort* which is 2 miles East and 5 miles North of Tahlequah on Hiway 10. Those wishing to register may call Harley Hunt: 918-224-3540. Those who want to reserve a motel room should call: 800-722-3834.