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STAND IN YOUR PLACE



From the
Editor

“Say to Archippus take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it.”

Col. 4:17

The Apostle in closing the letter to the church at Colosse gives some very important last words. In writing to those whose faith in Christ, love to the saints, and hope laid up for them in heaven, produced thanksgiving in Paul’s prayer to God for them. Col. 1:3-5.

“TAKE HEED”

It was important then, and seems even more-so now as the ranks seem to be thinning out, that we each *be watchful*, see to it, look after our God-given ministry, service to the rest of the body of Christ, of which we are members in particular. Especially in preparation for our Lord’s return. Several are unwisely allowing themselves to be distracted. We need one another. We well be warned, to conduct our business with care. The Lord reminds us to not be neglectful nor careless, but to faithfully *fulfill our place*. It is understood that Archippus had been a real conspicuous champion of the Gospel. A meaning given to His name, “master of the horse” should have signified a real zeal that He might be urged to maintain. He very possibly may have been a pastor, there was an assembly in his house.

Paul speaks of Archippus as an esteemed warrior, “Our fellow-soldier.” In spiritual conflict he had been fighting a good fight of faith. But he needed encouragement, and so do we. Each member of the body of Christ has a *service to fulfill*, a function given to us of God for the benefit of rest of the body.

Warfare is going on, and we are admonished, “*Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. Let all your things be done with charity.*” I Cor. 16:13,14. We are admonish, “*Stand, having our loins girt about with truth.*” Eph. 6. Also to *stand fast in the liberty* wherewith Christ hath made us free. Gla. 5:1.

FAITHFULNESS REQUIRED

In the eighteenth year of Josiah was this passover kept. II Chron. 35:19. And there was no passover like to that kept in Israel from the days of Samuel the prophet; neither did all the kings of Israel keep such a passover as Josiah kept...V. 18. This was indeed such a special, outstanding time for the keeping or commemorating divine deliverance, and there is the statement given repeatedly that this was done by *those that were present*. Josiah set the priests in their charges, and encouraged them in the service of the house of the Lord. He had told them to prepare themselves after their courses, and to stand in the holy place according their divisions. So we read that the priests *stood in their place*, and the Levites according to *their courses*. V. 10. We also read that the singers were in *their place* V. 15, and that the porters did not depart from their *service for their brethren*. In the preceding chapter we read that king Josiah, after he heard the book of the covenant read “**stood in His place.**” Oh, the blessed benefits that come as we each *fulfill or stand in our place*.

TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS

When Ahab king of Israel was *charged* with guarding king Benhadad king of Syria, he was duped into letting him go unharmed. The prophet was sent to Ahab and told him the story of a man that had been given the responsibility of keeping a captive of their enemy’s army. To fail to do so would mean his

life. The guard got *busy here and there* and His charge escaped. The king's reaction to this story was to execute severe judgment. The prophet then told the king of God's judgment. "Thus saith the Lord, Because thou hast *let go* out of thy hand a man whom I have appointed unto utter destruction, therefore thy life shall go for his..." I Kings 20:32-42. Many of God's people are *too busy here and there*. Neglect concerning our own old nature, being otherwise distracted, and *let go* out of control, will rob us of God's best, blessings in this present life, and *hinder* our comrade in arms to the fulfilling his full potential. It is our privilege, it is God's will, it is by our Lord's enablement, and our brother's need. We each may be helpful in encouragement to one another as we *stand*. We each must judge our lives according to God's standard, in order to *stand* in and *fulfill our place*. I Thess. 4:4; Col. 3:5-10; I Cor. 9:27; 11:31,32; II Cor.10:5; I Tim.6:20,21.

WHO WILL STAND?

"When Israel had sown, the Midianites, the Amalekites, and the Children of the east came up against them, and destroyed their increase, and left no substance neither sheep nor ox nor ass. They came up as **grasshoppers for multitude**, and entered into the land to destroy it. So Israel was greatly impoverished. Judges 6:3-6.

Then God patiently raised up Gideon to lead them to victory. When he had gathered a good size army God cut it down, eliminating those that were fearful and afraid, they wouldn't stand in the heat of battle or be dependable. Also He didn't want them taking credit for their victory. God then gave them another test at the water. Remembering that they were in enemy territory and were under siege by a vastly overwhelming multitude. It was important how they would take care of their thirst. Those that bowed down on their knees to

drink were taking a *less alert position* in readiness for combat, than those that would *stand ready* and lift the water to their mouth. Gideon's three hundred man army needed to be made up of those that would *bravely stand*. So they by Divine direction went into battle surrounding their enemy with otherwise unlikely equipment of trumpets, pictures and lamps. Speak of walking or standing by faith, wow. But captain Gideon had told them to follow him in blowing the trumpets, breaking the pictures, and holding forth their lamps, and shouting the victory. We read next that **they stood every man in his place**, and all the enemy host ran and cried and fled. Judges 7:21.

In times like these we would rather have the few that will *stand* than a multitude that will take flight. Thanks be unto God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. In view of the resurrection we are encouraged to be *steadfast, unmovable, always abounding* in the work of the Lord. I Cor. 15: 57,58. Pray for your weak brother. He can be held up, for God is able to make him *stand*. Rom. 14:4.

In Ezekiel God's word tells of a sad characteristic that may be seen in any age. "You have *not gone up* into the gaps (breaks in the wall) neither *made up the hedge* for the house of Israel to stand in the battle in the day of the Lord." Eze. 13:5. And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but *I found none*." Eze. 22:30,31.

Thank God for those that have *stood in the gap as intercessors*. Abraham stood before the Lord when he was ready to destroy Sodom, with Lot and family in it. Abraham said, wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked." Gen. 18:22,23. It is evident that God's will was most important to him, in a gravely dangerous time, when Lot had been anything but in close fellowship with God.

By J. D.

THE LAST DAYS

Anita Clark



“And I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and I will bring you into your own land. Thus saith the Lord God; In the day that I shall have cleaned you from all your iniquities I will also cause you to dwell in the cities, and the wastes shall be builded. And the desolate land shall be tilled, ...And they will say, this land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden.” Ezekiel 36:24,33,35

ISRAEL GOD’S CHOSEN PEOPLE - One of the greatest signs of the end time is the nation of Israel. For 2,000 years they were dispersed among the nations of the world because of their rejection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Since 1948, when Israel became a nation once again, the eyes of those seeking to understand the end time have been focused upon them. This passage of Scripture in Ezekiel 37 is so precious, speaking of God’s restoration of Israel to their land, which shall blossom as the “garden of Eden.” In these last days Israel has begun to feel the stirring of Jehovah to return from all the nations where they had been scattered. The greatest fulfillment of this will be during the millennium, when Christ will reign upon David’s throne over Israel and all the world. Recently, the Jerusalem Post stated, “More than 100 years ago, Jewish National Fund purchased the land that would become the State of Israel. Since that time 220-million trees have been planted in Israel to beautify the land. Besides the agricultural development over 450 parks and green spaces have been created throughout Israel.” Barren salt swampland has been changed into highly productive agricultural property, which produces great quantities of

produce and flowers for export to other nations, especially Europe.

In spite of this Israel as a whole remains in unbelief. Only about 1 % of the nation are even religious. Judgment will come upon them once again to bring about a change of heart. Ezekiel 36:26 says, "A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes." The United States recently has produced a "Road map" for peace between Israel and the Palestinians. This is a three stage map leading to a Palestinian state in 2005. Israel has not agreed completely to the map, but is willing to negotiate.

EU GAINING MOMENTUM - United Press International states, "In the birthplace of democracy, Europe was reborn Wednesday (April 16, 2003) as 10 mostly former communist states signed up to join the 15 - member bloc at a ceremony in Athens." EU leaders welcomed Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Malta, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia into the European Union. This union will create the "world's most powerful economic power and extend the EU to the borders of Belarus and Ukraine." Recently President Jacques Chirac speaking of the entry of these new members, said, "450 million people are going to be brought together in the biggest integration project ever undertaken in the world by peaceful means."

These nations pledged their allegiance and signed the agreement with the EU in Athens Agora Market place, "where democracy first flourished over 25 centuries ago," alluding to the democracy of ancient Rome. Can anyone doubt that the EU is the revived Roman empire of the end time, from whence the Antichrist will come?

Speaking along that line, leaders of the EU, such as Javier Solano of Spain and leaders of France and Germany,

recently expressed that they are in favor of a permanent presidency of the EU, rather than the present six-month rotation office in effect at the present. Tony Blair, Prime Minister of Britain voiced his concerns recently, stating that, "The office of a permanent president would give the EU a single more powerful voice on the world stage." He says that the EU needs a "figurehead, someone the White House can call." It is thought that Tony Blair is seeking the nomination of the presidency of the EU, and would resign his place in Britain to attain that position. This is a significant news item regarding the eminent end time. There will be one leader of the Revived Roman Empire, the Antichrist. He will gain control of all the earth eventually. It seems events are pointing toward that day.

European population is declining. In order to be productive it needs 3.4 Million immigrants each year. (Focus Magazine) While parts of the earth are overpopulated, Europe needs to aggressively seek immigrants who can become citizens to maintain what they need to promote prosperity. One can't help but think that natural disasters, plagues and such could very quickly eliminate any concerns of population.

All the world marvels seeing how the nations of Europe have risen out of the ashes of World War II. Nations, who were perpetual enemies, who fought many wars against one another are now joined together in this strong union. The new currency of Europe, the Euro, put in place about a year ago, is valued higher than the U.S. dollar. I am impressed that God moves, and often quite rapidly, when it is His time to do so. Antichrist will soon rise up. He will seem to be a man of peace. He will have the answers for world peace and prosperity. "All the world will marvel after the Beast."

VIRUS GOING RAMPANT - SARS - A deadly respiratory ailment known as SARS is spreading across the world. The disease, which surfaced in November, '02, has killed people in China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Vietnam, Thailand, and

Canada, where quarantine camps have been set up. The United States Federal health officials recently testified before a Senate committee that SARS could further spread in the United States. On April 8, 2003, the U.S. had 148 cases reported, but no deaths. Hospitals are bracing to treat more patients with the baffling disease. More than 2,600 cases and 98 deaths by this virus have been reported around the globe since November. Authorities, like Anthony Fauci of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease says that the disease is unpredictable and that we must take it very seriously.

One theory of what caused the rapid spread of the disease is that it may be spread by cock roaches. However, a Russian medical expert has speculated that it is a man-made biological weapon developed by China. (Reported by the Times of India) It originated in two southern districts of China, and was not reported by Chinese authorities for a long time after its outbreak.

On April 16, 2003 scientists from the World Health Organization have planned to meet in Geneva and by teleconference to review the evidence of the new virus. It is thought to be caused by a new corona virus. This virus takes its name from the prominent “crown of spikes clearly visible by electron microscopy and occurs in cattle, pigs, mice and humans. It is speculated that the virus might have crossed the species barrier and mutated because it looks very similar to several animal viruses. Other instances of viruses that have jumped the species barrier are HIV-AIDS, Mad Cow disease and Ebola virus. Authorities hope that it is seasonal similar to West Nile virus.

This is a great situation for believers to exercise faith in Almighty God. We are safely kept in His care. As the end of all things approaches, we believe that we will witness more and more strange phenomena. We have been warned that in the end there will be “pestilence.” God promised Israel that if they would yield to Him and obey His commandments, “I will put

none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians.” (Ex.15:26)

In the past HIV-AIDS was to the front of the news. It is still rampaging in the world today. Russia has 1.5 million cases thought to be from I.V. drug use. Numbers of sexually transmitted HIV cases are on the rise, as reported by Pokrovsky, head of the Health Ministry’s AIDS Prevention and Treatment Center in Russia. Thousands are dying in Africa from AIDS. It continues to spread in spite of efforts to curb it.

One third of the world’s population is infected with Tuberculosis, and kills almost 3 million people a year. TB is the leading cause of death due to an infectious agent in the world. In mid - 1980’s a resurgence of outbreaks in the United States brought new attention to TB. It is especially spread between those in close contact like hospitals, correctional institutions, homeless shelters, nursing homes etc.

A GRIM PICTURE - We are still fighting the war in Afghanistan and Iraq. We have had success in both places for which we are greatly thankful, but no one knows how long our troops will have to continue be deployed over there. Prospects of the nightmare spread of diseases looms before us. The EU is becoming stronger and will dominate the world stage in the near future. It has been said the U.S. is the world’s only super power, but that is rapidly becoming a myth, as Europe becomes more prominent and more united. Terror is still raging in the world and we in the U.S. are very vulnerable. Again we say, where is your trust? The old song says, “I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus’ name.” There we find “rest for our souls,” peace in the darkest hour and help in our distress. Let us lay hold of the promises of God right now, and be preparing for the soon return of our Lord Jesus Christ. Praise the Lord!



I Will Go

***I hear a sound from glory land,
Of Jesus coming soon;
The trump will blow, and, oh, how grand,
At night, or morn, or noon.***

***I seem to see my Lord arise,
Up from His Father's throne,
And journey t'ward the northern skies,
Where He will meet His own.***

***The signs appear in earth and air,
On sea and in the moon;
And He doth now His saints prepare,
He cannot come too soon.***

***Oh, how I long for that bright day -
The answer to my dream,
When I to heav'n shall flee away,
And reign with Christ supreme.***

***So let me now His praises sing,
At home, or busy mart,
And ready be: His phone may ring,
And call me to depart.***

- A.S.C.

ROMANS

W. J. Franklin



Chapter 3:1-8

JEWISH ADVANTAGES

“What advantage then hath the Jew? Or what profit is there of circumcision?”—V. 1. In this section, Paul continues his probing of the Jewish conscience with pointed and powerful questions, eight of which are found in these verses.

Later in this book, Paul states that circumcision was a seal of Abraham’s righteousness—Rom. 4:11. It was the token of the Abrahamic covenant—Gen. 17:11. Also, an Israelite was cut off from that covenant who did not have the sign of that covenant in his flesh—Gen. 17:14. Jesus was circumcised—Luke 2:21. It served as a type of our death and cutting off at the cross in the death of Christ, called the circumcision made without hands—Col. 2:11. It was necessary as an act toward God in obedience to His command. Therefore, in its place, it was profitable, though along with all other Jewish rites and ceremonies, it has no place in the grace economy.

“Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles, of God”—V. 2. By studying the Word of God we learn that the Jews had many advantages. Rom. 9:4,5 lists a group of those positional advantages. The fact that most of them did not take advantage of their afforded opportunity did not change the fact that they were there. They had the theocracy, the God-given priesthood. They had the tabernacle and the temple services. They had the fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. They had several very godly kings, and some outstanding priests. Theirs were the prophets.

By way of contrast, see the lack on the part of the Gentiles with their complete destitution of the revealed things of God and one can appreciate what Israel had. However, among all these great privileges given directly to them from God, Paul lists the one that is chief, and I trust we can appreciate the fact. The gift of the Word of God is “Chief” among all that God did for them, Theirs was the law of Moses. Theirs were the covenant, theirs were the Psalms and theirs were the prophets. They had a written revelation of and from God. This, no other nation in the entire world possessed. Possession of the “Oracles of God” were their peculiar prerogative. This is the “Chiefly” in Paul’s estimation, and he wrote under the inspiration of God. May the Lord help us to realize that this is the greatest thing God has given us or any other people.

“For what if some did not believe? Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?”—V. 3. This is Paul’s second set of couplets of the pointed questions he directs to his readers. Heb. 4 shows that the early generation that came out of Egypt was kept out of the land of Canaan by their unbelief. Rom. 11:20 shows why the generation of Paul’s time was also out of touch with God, and shows that they were broken off because of unbelief. However, this did not nullify the faithfulness of God toward those who did believe. The word translated “Faith” may properly be translated constancy, truthfulness, etc. Man’s unbelief does not change the character of God. His Word stands true regardless of Man’s unbelief or evil attitude. The Jewish nation failed to take hold of their advantages, but they were there despite the failure of the majority of the nation.

GOD VINDICATED IN HIS JUDGMENTS

‘God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in Thy sayings, and mightest overcome when Thou art judged”—V. 4. We won-

der why the translators used the words, “God forbid” in this text. It occurs ten times in this epistle as well as in other texts of other books. However, the word “God” does not occur in the Greek text at all. It really means, May it not be, may it not come to pass. It is an expression of abhorrence, such as, banish the thought that would imply that God could be unfaithful in His character. A God who could or would do that which is wrong or a God who would change because of men is a repulsive thought.

“Let God be true.” Let it be this way in your thoughts as it is in fact. Jesus taught emphatically that God is true—John 3:33; 8:26. Many other Scriptures teach the same sweet truth. God’s faithfulness is seen in V. 3; His truth or truthfulness in this verse.

“And every man a liar.” Read Psalm 116:11. Even though David uttered those words in haste, they are just as true as when spoken deliberately. Some men lie as a habit. Others lie when put under pressure. But however or whatever the reason for it, they lie. And we can say, Let God be true even if it makes every man a liar. One of the first things the children of men learn is to lie. Psa. 58:3 states that they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies. It is one of the resources of weakness and men learn to fall back on a lie to support that which truth will not support. Paul quotes from the words in Psa. 51:4 which were being wrung from the lips of David when he was undergoing severe judgment for his sin. Men are prone to judge God in His dealings with them. Not so David. He recognized that killing his child, and sending sore judgments on his family for years afterward were matters of right, and God had just used David’s sin, though He had not sanctified it, to bring David low. He owned that God was right in whatever He did. I personally heard a man say, “I believe God gave Moses a dirty deal.” This man was judging God. Many do so. Not so David. And he records these words that men might see

that God is right, even when they might feel inclined to believe that there is unrighteousness in Him. We agree with Abraham, “Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?”

“But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous Who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man)”–V. 5. Paul’s third set of couplets of questions is before us, and they have to do with the vain reasonings of men. Again we refer to Genesis 18:25, “Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?” The lack of faith on the part of the Jews manifested more fully, by way of contrast, the righteousness of God. Their sin would manifest His righteousness as He in turn judged that sin. They reasoned that the more unrighteousness they would do the more the righteous Judge would be manifest in judgment. It was another way of saying, “Let us do evil that good may come”–Rom. 6. Also, it is like wishing for the night that a light may seem to shine the brighter. My darkness makes God’s light seem brighter.

“Is God unrighteous?” If He is unrighteous in judging the Jew, how will He judge the world? We read, “Surely the wrath of man shall praise Thee: the remainder of wrath shalt Thou restrain”–Psa. 76:10. All ungodly men will be used of God to show forever His hatred of sin. However, God is no more indebted to them for the opportunity to manifest His eternal abhorrence of sin than you and I are to Judas who sold Christ or Pilate who sent Him to the cross. They in no way could claim honour for our salvation, even though they were links in a great chain of events and were instruments in God’s divine and directed providence. Every man who goes to hell, Satan, and the fallen angels are going to be used of God to manifest the fact that all sin will meet justice and that a life of independence of God will come to naught. They will stand as an eternal example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. He will use them as He used Pharaoh. However, He will owe them naught. He will use their sin, but not sanctify it. Nothing that

flows from sin that may in the long run be good can ever make pure the sin. God used David's union with Bathsheba to produce both Solomon and Nathan, respectively, the ancestors of Joseph and Mary. But this was because of the goodness and grace of God, not because the sin could be said to be holy. Though these things that were good came of that union, it could never be said that the union in its initial phase was of God.

“I speak as a man.” That is, I am reasoning as men reason without the truth to guide them. I am talking as they talk in their vain ways and in their satanic philosophy.

“God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world?”—V. 6. If the reasonings of men were true, it would set aside all future judgment. Men seem to be possessed with a great determination to escape that judgment without coming the way God has provided to escape it. Judge the world He shall, but it will not be on the basis of their foolish and vain thoughts, but on the basis of what is right.

“For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto His glory; why yet am I also judged as a sinner?”—V. 7. Paul's words are from the words of his opponents, and continue the unreasonableness of their thoughts from the preceding verse. Again, God's truth stands out more clearly by the falsehood of His creatures. However, God owes such creatures nothing. He has never taken the direct blame for the sin of man, though He provided a substitute for them. He never said He was to blame in any way for their guilt. We have seen God make use of evil and turn it to good, but He owes nothing to the evildoer for the evil, though He may use it to His glory, even as He used Satan in the case of Job.

“And not rather, (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil, that good may come? Whose damnation is just”—V. 8. This is the last searching question in this section. The charge that Paul taught, “Let us do evil

that good may come,” was foolishly brought against him, as it is brought against many who teach that grace alone is a successful opponent of sin. Because “Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound,” and because we say that men are saved by grace alone on God’s part, apart from works or character on men’s part, men presume to take advantage of God’s grace and practice that which is a disgrace, and as the false reasoners taught, practice evil that good may come of it. His conclusion regarding such persons is that their damnation or judgment is and will be just.



Our Security

*While dark clouds increasingly gather,
We feel something tragic is near!
Yet naught of this world can alarm me,
I simply have nothing to fear:
I’m safely secured in my Saviour,
My blessed Redeemer and King:
My faith is established in Jesus;
Just praising my Lord is my theme.
There’s no one so precious as Jesus!
His Word is the joy of my soul:
I wouldn’t trade Him – nor my Bible -
For this world full of silver and gold.
–Selected*



“...but the word of God is not bound” 2 Tim. 2:9

We live in the last days, and certainly the apostasy is reaching its maximum levels in our days. Nothing in this world is aware of God, neither of the closeness of Christ’s coming. The indifference or lukewarmness of the hearts frequently grieve us very much. In our country we had a very difficult year where there were many problems in the government, the economy and the society. But God consoled us with a wonderful experience.

The year that passed, we had some news from brethren in Formosa, a county up in the north. They wanted us to visit them to hear the Word. During several months we were praying to be able to go there, and at the end the Lord opened for us that door to be able to travel.

These brethren were very discouraged and confused with regard to the doctrine. They had some knowledge of the grace, but not the whole counsel of God. During several days we were preaching in that congregation, and something beautiful happened there. The Holy Spirit began to fill the brethren, of all the ages. From old man to small eight year-old children, many were filled with the Holy Spirit, some were healed miraculously and still other ones accepted the Lord. We had meetings that lasted five hours, late in the night, the brethren were filled with joy and hope. They listened with a lot of joy the cheerful news of the bridal message and they began to be greatly interested in the Bride company of Christ. For the grace of God we could give them studies from the brother Copley and the sister Bodie, and the Word began to work great disposition in all. A group of young rose in that place and in these months many

believed in the Lord in that place. We had a camp meeting there in February of this year, and a congregation of a nearby town attended, at least 20 youths received the Holy Spirit there and they began to speak in new languages according as the Spirit gave them utterance. Hallelujah! We had a beautiful experience in the Lord, and truly we feel honored of being able to serve the people of God. Amid so much indifference, this group of saints is cleaving to the “blessed hope.” This is truly a miracle of God.

We don't know how long we will stay in this world, we think that it will not be a long time; but we believe firmly that until the last moment God will have beautiful miracles of His grace. We believe that the last ones are entering through the door of the Gentile. So, although many don't understand us, although this world doesn't know us, although the coming of the Lord be close, with all this, the Word is not bound. Maybe in the last day of our career, some will listen the Truth, someone will be filled with the Spirit, someone will receive Christ as their Saviour, it still can to be here in our last moment in the earth.

A sister began to come to our meeting recently, she was filled with the Spirit the year that passed, she had been a believer for twenty years and little by little she is learning the Pauline message, she told us: “I didn't know that this existed!!.”

This encourages us to continued ahead, without losing our view of the goal and yearning to reach the Prize on time.

Adrián and Carola Bogado

Larrechea Norte 1786
Rosario (2000)
Santa Fe, Argentina
South America

Jeremiah 29

Part 11 (vs 8)

By Debra Isenbletter



The next two verses (vs 8-9) begin the second paragraph of this letter and are a *Warning of Deception*. The Lord begins by using His two titles, the *Lord of hosts* and the *God of Israel*. This is the second time He uses these titles together, the first time is in verse 4 where He shows He is responsible for their captivity. The **second time** is in verse 8, here He shows He is responsible for warning them. In these titles He continues as *Jehovah* to reveal Himself, (Jehovah is the “self-existent one who reveals Himself”). Here He **reveals Himself through this warning**. He reveals **His care** for His people and He reveals **His concern** for them as He warns of the spiritual danger that lies ahead. What they need to do is look behind the warning and see the care and concern. In His second title, the *God of Israel*, He wants His people to see His “Strength” (Elohim) and that strength is seen in several ways. His strength is seen in a Father’s admonishment for He warns His children. His strength is seen in that no matter what men say, His purpose remains unchanged. His strength is seen in His firm hand and firm voice reflected in this warning. But along with His strength is also seen their relationship, He is Israel’s God and like Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel, it is in their weakness that they are made strong and truly appreciate His strength. He then warns His people against being *Deceived by Others* and being *Deceived by Themselves*.

Deceived by Others: “*Let not your prophets and your diviners that be in the midst of you deceive you.*” Notice the repetition of the word “your” in connection with these men, they do not belong to the Lord, they are those who have been

chosen by man or are self-chosen. Just because a man has a message doesn't mean he has been sent. The Lord had already stated, "*I have not sent these prophets, yet they run...yet they prophesied...*" (Jer 23:21). Along with that little word "your" is another important phrase "let not." The Lord would have them choose willingly who to believe. They must truly see the deception before they "let go" of these men. What is so disturbing and sobering in this statement is *where* these men are, they are "*in the midst*" of God's people or in the very "*center or heart*" of God's people. Whether it be wrong walk or wrong doctrine, sin must be recognized and judged and certainly not allowed to remain in their midst. The fact that these men are in the midst of God's people shows they have been accepted and are an essential part of the people's lives. They will be hard to ignore and hard to let go of. The danger is that all their hopes "center" around these men and their messages and when their message fails so will the hope of God's people.

It is interesting to note that the Lord has allowed these men to be brought into captivity with the rest of His people and these are those who earlier on denied that they would ever see captivity and judgment. "*They have belied (denied) the Lord and said it is not he, neither shall evil come upon us.*" (Jer 5:12-13). Now we find them in Babylon and they had to adjust their message to fit their circumstances but that same rebellion is seen. Their message is either, "We won't be here long" or "Let's rebel and free ourselves" or "Let's rebel and the Lord will set us free." Why would the Lord allow those same men who lied in Jerusalem to be brought into captivity to again lie to His people? He may have allowed them to remain there to test the people's faith and obedience. Sometimes things remain in our midst **until we judge them**. The danger is the sin that is allowed to remain unjudged or unchecked, like the sin of Achan in Joshua 7. There the Lord saw the sin for he said, "*an accursed thing in the midst of thee...*" Achan when confronted said, "*they are hid in the midst of my tent*" Notice where

Achan was “in the midst” of God’s people and what he had taken was “in the midst” of his tent, and all of God’s people suffered because of his sin. Sin that is unjudged has the power to hurt others around us. When the Apostle Paul wrote the Corinthians and admonished them for the sin they allowed he said, “*It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you...*” or “*in the midst of you.*” There the whole assembly was in danger from that one sin that was allowed in the meeting and was not judged. The purpose of the Lord’s warning to His people in Babylon is to protect them. If they continue to allow these men in their midst they all will be hurt. The false message of these men will stir up rebellion instead of submission and their opportunity for the physical blessings promised will be lost along with all their hopes. God’s people will suffer both physical and spiritual hurt, therefore the Lord warns them against being deceived by others.

The Lord emphasizes the deception of these “prophets” and “diviners” and deception means to “lead astray” or “lead into error” or “to delude, seduce or corrupt.” The Lord would have His people see the *danger of deception*. Deception is a lie and man cannot believe a lie without being hurt by that lie. Their first lie was in saying, “*You will not go to Babylon*” and their second lie was when they said, “*You will not stay in Babylon.*” Later the prophet Ezekiel warns against these false prophets and he describes how they hurt God’s people with their lies: “*Woe unto the foolish prophets that follow their own spirit and have seen nothing...They have made others to hope that they would confirm the word...they have seduced my people...with lies ye have made the heart of the righteous sad...*” (Ezek 13:3,6-10,22). Their deception is seen in that they use a religious mixture of both prophecy and divination. Prophecy was an acceptable way for God’s people to inquire of the Lord but divination was an unacceptable way, it was a pagan way. The use of these two methods together shows their apostasy and how much they have been influenced by pagan prac-

tices around them. Just as in Jeremiah's day God's people used a religious mixture, we see in the day we live in the same acceptance of religious practices, pagan customs mixed with church practices and both acceptable and eagerly embraced by God's people.

Deceived by Themselves: *“Neither hearken to your dreams which ye cause to be dreamed...”* The self-deception is seen in that the phrase “your dreams” and the “your” and “ye” can refer to both the prophets and the people. The admonition is not to listen and not to give heed to these dreams. There are those who deceive others (the prophets) and those who deceive themselves (the people). Those who believe these dreams *after* hearing Jeremiah are counted just as guilty as those who presented the dreams as truth, for they have crossed the line from deception to self-deception. Once revealed truth is turned down then the same penalty and judgment applies to those who turned away from truth as those who prophesied falsely. Jeremiah has presented reality, he says *“Submit and Serve,”* but these false messengers have presented fantasy (dreams) for they say, *“Resist and return.”* Just because the majority says one thing doesn't make it true, faith must take a stand. Jeremiah is a minority compared to these many prophets, yet he takes a stand for the truth. The Bride is a minority compared to the innumerable company yet she too takes a stand for the truth. The many voices of these prophets and diviners was pleasing and yet their words were empty, Jeremiah's words were more an admonition and rebuke and his message was both hard on the ear and hard on the flesh. (Ecc 5:7) *“For in the multitude of dreams and many words there are diverse vanities. (Ecc 7:5) It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise than for a man to hear the song of fools. “*

There is a very real danger in being deceived and in deceiving ourselves. The prophets generated these dreams and the people made those dreams their own. They “dreamed” of returning home, and of not having to submit to Babylon. Two

groups are guilty, those who deceive others and those who deceive themselves. **Deceivers** hurt God's people, and **self-deceivers** hurt themselves. The sad truth is that there is no real comfort in vanity or vain words or dreams that have no substance. (Zech 10:2) *"the idols have spoken vanity and the diviners...have told false dreams: they comfort in vain."* The consequences of believing a lie and the charge laid against these men is that they cause God's people to "err" or "sin" and cause them to forget the name of the Lord. (Jer 23:27,32) *"They are prophets of the deceit of their own heart...to cause my people to forget my name and cause my people to err."*

Humility Will Teach

Truth and humility God wants to see
Living in you and living in me
Making us wise and making us free
For the glory of Jesus our Saviour.

Each revelation is taking it's turn
As we by circumstances learn
God's Will we will forever yearn
For the glory of Jesus our Saviour.

Come Holy Spirit and teach us all
To see the reason why we fall
And heed the lessons of Apostle Paul
For the glory of Jesus our Saviour.

-- Grace Livingstone

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Memorial Day Fellowship Meeting: May 26th at *Grace Christian Assembly*, 2309 Blue Ridge Blvd. Kansas City, Missouri. Meeting begins at 10:00 AM, lunch at noon and afternoon meeting.

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.

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 6 1/2 miles turn left at the green White Memorial Camp sign² (which is Ave. K). Go 1 1/2 miles to 1050 Rd. and turn left. Road dead-ends in the c²amp. Registrations must be in by May 30th.

Commentaries and tracts: The following are available on a freewill offering basis. Please write: Paul Fellers, 15601 E. 42nd Pl., Independence, MO 64055-5006 or phone: (816) 373-9498.

Books:

Genesis
Leviticus

I & II Corinthians
Galatians

Joshua	Ephesians
Judges	Philippians
Ruth-Esther	Colossians - Philemon
Song of Solomon	I & II Thessalonians
Daniel	I & II Timothy
Ezekiel	Hebrews, James, and Titus
Matthew	II John
John	Sermons on Jude
The Acts	Revelation
Romans	
Minor Prophets -Ezra, Joel, Nahum, Habakkuk, Malachi	
Paul's Gospel in Song of Solomon by Alice Mooneyhan	
The Tabernacle in the Wilderness by Orville Freestone Sr.	

Tracts:

Water Baptism
A Problem, A Solution, A Triumph
Arrangement At End Of Ages & Ranks In The Resurrection
The Gospel Records
Caught Up With Paul
Cherubim And Seraphim
The Five Much Mores - Romans 5
Preparation Of The Bride
Pauline Sanctification
Paul - The Superlative
Is God In Everything
Law or Grace - Which
Diamonds In The Rough
Not Legislation But Revelation
Women's Ministry
Phoebe - Woman's Official Place
The Holy Spirit
Dying Daily
Why Am I Not Healed
Death, Hell and the Lake of Fire
Predestination

