

Glorious Gospel Publication



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T I M E - DESTINY IN HIS TIME



**Our eternal destination is not a matter of chance,
but of choice to go with God by faith.**

Faith sees the invisible, believes the incredible, and receives the impossible. Such faith produces in us a real sense of destiny. The book of Esther seems to give us to understand that by faith in God, and the providential workings of his almighty hand, that we have indeed a glorious destiny. In this book of Esther, God's name is not mentioned, but gives abundant evidence of His working behind the scenes, performing His gracious purposes. "His hand is not shortened that it cannot save; neither is his ear heavy that it cannot hear." Isa.59:1. As we observe His working it gives us an ever increasing awareness that God can, does, and will make all things work together for our good.

"...Mordecai commanded to answer Esther, Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews. For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and **who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this**?" (for this very occasion) Esther 4:13,14.

Thank God, He has the best timing there is. Let us be aware that our loving heavenly Father has it in control. The times of our life and it's timing has significant bearing. We read in Psalms 31:15, "My times are in thy hand." Jesus wonderfully expressed this attitude as he walked here (not flippant nor causal about it), and yet He pressed on doing the perfect will of God the Father, with great delight, thank God He did!

Mordecai's message sent to Esther warns her against not speaking up on behalf of her people whom were doomed to be eliminated by their enemies plot. It encourages in Esther a strong sense of destiny, that she was there in the palace at this opportune time, that she might be used for their deliverance. Thank God she was!

Someone asked "What on earth are you doing for heaven's sake? We must consider that life is such a precious gift. We may be somewhat aware as to **why** we are here in this tiny point in time. But God's purpose in His great overall program for our being here and now, relates in a large measure to the there and then. What place we occupy and how we fill it and use it, is far more important than we realize. Our victories and defeats have far reaching eternal relations unto "such a time as this."

How we act or react in the conduct of our business and in today's events, may make a far greater difference in time to come, than we could possibly imagine. Most of us seem to vaguely surmise that the everyday things just pass into nothingness, and that no account is ever to be considered later. "**Wrong!**" Well, shall we dream on?

Let us not miss considering these precious moments in the light of eternity. I wouldn't be surprised tomorrow if we have some of today's moments to remember. Only one life will soon be past and that which is done in Christ will last.

It is sad to say that there are some that want to stay in some kind of daze or stupor and may one day wake up and say, "**Hey, what's happening.**" Some seem to crave an irresponsible existence and thinking, don't blame me for all the trouble, I was asleep at the time. This attitude is destined to make it harder on others. But thank God for those that will grow and

overcome in these trying circumstances. It is evident that the Lord at times is crying out to us **“Wake up.”**

Oh our Father and loving Lord, are doing some amazing works with and in humanity today, even in these times of ever increasing indifference. Oh yes, we must realize that in His plan there is great significance for each of our remaining days.
DELIVERANCE IS AT HAND !!!

by J. D.

Great the Yield From a Fertile Field

*The farmer ploughs through the fields of green
And the blade of the plough is sharp and keen,
But the seed must be sown to bring forth grain,
For nothing is born without suffering and pain--
And God never ploughs in the soul of man
Without intention and purpose and plan,
So whenever you feel the plough's sharp blade
Let not your heart be sorely afraid
For, like the farmer, God chooses a field
From which He expects an excellent yield--
So rejoice though your heart is broken in two,
God seeks to bring forth a rich harvest in you.*

--Selected




Paul's Ministry

*Brought up in Judea
At Gamaliel's school
Taught of tradition
And the Pharisees' rule.
The things which were triumphs
Paul counted but loss,
And learned how to glory,
In bearing the cross.*

*Apostle to the Gentiles,
A preacher of Christ.
In labors abundant,
In multiplied stripes,
In perils of robbers,
In perils at sea,
Clandestine pretenders,
And their treachery.*

*Then well known by word,
Where unknown by face,
Declaring with power,
The gospel of grace.
With signs and with wonders,
Paul freely proclaimed,
The truth of the gospel,
Where Christ was not named!
by Rebecca Asbury
(printed by permission)*



THE LAST DAYS



By Anita Clark

“O LORD, how long shall I cry, and Thou wilt not hear!
Even cry out unto thee of violence, and Thou wilt not
save! Why dost Thou shew me iniquity, and cause me to
behold grievance? For spoiling and violence are before
me: and there are that raise up strife and contention.”
Habakkuk 1:2,3.

As we look at the world around us, it seems that these verses are quite fitting. The world is filled with violence. War rages in many areas. Men continue to perpetrate violence on others at an ever increasing rate. The news is filled with story after story of parents mistreating their children, of child predators preying upon children and of even religious leaders taking advantage of children under their authority to satisfy their carnal fleshly desires. Since WW II, there has been an ever increasing trend of evil that is snowballing down a slippery slope toward the judgment of God.

Habakkuk cried out, “O LORD, how long..?” He wondered how long it would be until God would bring judgment on Israel of old. They were offering to and worshiping idols. The Scripture says that Israel offered to idols upon every high hill. The greatest sin was that they offered their children to Molech, a great iron god, with out stretched arms. They would build a fire inside this idol, and then when it became red hot, they would lay their infants across the arms of the idol. How atrocious! This was a stench in God’s nostrils.

The people of the world today are committing despicable things just as repugnant to God as Israel did in Habakkuk’s day. The day of God’s wrath and vengeance will come very soon upon the

wicked of the earth. Paul says to pray for men everywhere, “For kings and for all that are in authority...” (I Tim. 2:2). He says in vs. 4, “Who (God) would have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.” This is what God would rather have, that all would come to know Him. He has given ample time, and opportunity for all to come to salvation. He is a just God. Praise Him forever! I believe that God gives every person the chance to receive Jesus as Saviour. If He did not, He would not be just to judge them.

Some teach that all believers in the world today will have to go through the whole tribulation, and they believe that we are at the present time in the Tribulation of 7 years. How could this be? The description of the tribulation is so terrible. Nothing happening in the world today is as great as that time will be. We do feel in our hearts that we are on the brink of that day of wrath. The Scripture teaches that there will be a gathering of the overcomers to the Lord, before that day of wrath begins. (Compare I Thess. 4:13-18, 5:1-7; Rev. 3:10,11 with Matt. 24:21-22; vs.27-30). There will be a secret coming of Christ for those watching and waiting for Him before the tribulation of 7 years. It will be the “thief in the night” coming. At the end of the 7 years, which shall be shortened, Christ will appear to all the world in power and great glory. It will not be a secret then, but every eye shall see Him. (Rev.1:7). Rev. 19:11-16 records His power and great glory coming as He returns to the earth with the saints of God with Him, riding white horses. Verse 15 shows that He is coming for the final judgment of the unbelieving world and the beast and false prophet. (Vs.20). Rev. 19:1-6 shows that the believers from the church age are already in heaven praising the Lord with great loud worship and praise. Praise God!

CHRISTIAN MARTYRS AT ALL TIME HIGH - According to the World Christian Encyclopedia, “There were more Christian Martyrs in the twentieth century than in the entire previous nineteen centuries. Persecution of Christians communities is greatest

in Muslim-majority countries. In India Hindu militants have turned against Muslim and Christians minorities “...painting a picture of discrimination, intolerance, violence, death, and destruction in areas of India.”

In all Muslim countries Christians are beaten, killed and imprisoned for nothing more than being Christian. Christian meetings have been raided, pastors killed, and people imprisoned in Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Malaysia, Indonesia, Sudan and Saudi Arabia and other countries. We in the USA are blessed with religious freedom. We still have the right to worship God after the dictates of our own hearts. However, we hear winds of rumor such as, the possibility of our rights being restricted in the future. We know that persecution could come. We may not be exempt for long. In the tribulation there will be one world religion. The AntiChrist and False Prophet will demand worship and will not be tolerant of varying religious beliefs. As we hear these reports of persecution in other countries, we should be in prayer for these dear saints of God, and give some thought to the fact that Jesus said, “In this world, you will have persecution.” God’s Word will come to pass. Very soon Christ will come to catch His bride away. We long for that day.

COMING SOON: UN AS THE GLOBAL COP? - The United Nations seems to have taken another step toward becoming a global cop. According to Agape Press a high level U.N. body moved forward recently to monitor the treatment of prisoners inside borders of sovereign countries. “The change is part of an international convention on torture.” While American officials do not endorse torture of prisoners, they “could not endorse the idea of foreign monitors visiting American prisons.” The measure passed by an overwhelming majority (35-8). The European Union gave it strong support, as did China, Iran, Cuba and Libya - the last four who have been charged with human-rights violations in the past.

In the end time there will be a One World Government. We are very close to that time. All the talk of “globalization” and “one world community” in the recent past by American presidents may not seem so wonderful when it comes right down to it. It may take away a nation’s sovereign rights, which is something the U.S.A. has sworn to uphold. We don’t know how soon all this will head up, but we know it will happen in the very near future.

We look forward to Christ’s one world government. What a blessed time that will be! There will be perfect peace on the earth. We will be with the Lord in heaven, ruling and reigning over the earth. Oh, we hope it will be soon. We often feel like asking as Habakkuk did, “O Lord, How long will I cry, and Thou wilt not hear!” We do know that He does hear, but at times, while we are in deep trial, it seems like He isn’t listening. He will give strength to overcome! He will have overcoming saints of God who are keeping His Word with patience. (Rev. 3:10). We want to be in that company of believers.

Today, the U.S.A. is poised to go to war with Iraq. We pray for the leaders of our nation that they will do the right thing, however, God may allow something to happen that will bring judgment upon the nation. We pray for God’s mercy.

Also in the news Israel has surrounded Yassar Arafat’s last remaining building in Ramalah, and demands that the terrorists held up there, come out to be arrested. It seems like another act that will be criticized and give Israel’s enemies more fodder for the fires of hatred against her. We are instructed to pray for Israel, and this we will do. Israel may get herself in such a fix that the nations will force her to comply with their wishes. During the tribulation Israel will be under the authority of the AntiChrist, according to the Scripture. Terrible times are ahead! But, joyous times are ahead also. We are looking for Christ’s appearing at anytime. Our hearts are lifted up as we think of being for eternity with the Lord. Praise His Glorious Name!

IN A MOMENT

In a moment! In a moment!
At the breaking of the day,
Christ shall come with clouds triumphant,
And shall steal His Bride away,
Evermore to reign in glory,
Altogether glad and gay.

In a moment! In a moment!
All our sorrows will be past,
As the Lord shall be descending,
He shall change these mortals fast;
And we'll leave our fragile basket
At the trumpet's bridal blast.

In a moment! In a moment!
At the moving of the reel,
We shall don our heavenly clothing
And mount up at trumpet peal.
All the wounds and stabs of Satan,
Jesus then will quickly heal.

In a moment! In a moment!
In the twinkle of an eye,
We'll be taken up in chariot
To our mansion in the sky,
Where we'll meet and greet our Bridegroom
And will never say, "Goodbye."

--Mary M. Bodie

ROMANS



W. J. Franklin

Chapter 1:13-17

HIS PLANS TO COME TO THEM

“Now I would not have you ignorant brethren, that often-times I purposed to come unto you, (but was let hitherto,) that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles”—V. 13. He was “Let” or hindered by his desire to preach fully the Gospel in all the districts in his area before going on to other fields. He wished fruit among them. Unlike workers of today, he did not have a great financial program for which he was hunting support. He wished to gain souls and enrich saints. He was the apostle to the Gentiles and did not wish to leave any of his field neglected. The modern church of Rome claims the apostle Peter for their minister, but Peter had already left the field of the Gentile church to Paul, even as the Lord had given him that sphere of labor—Gal. 2:9.

“I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise”—V. 14. God had given Paul a message for the world, and for the whole age. He had a message for each sinner and all the saints. He was debtor to all to declare fully the message God had given him. In his life, he felt that everything had to be subject to God’s thought for him.

“So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the Gospel to you that are at Rome also”—V. 15. I like the “Also.” He had preached until far and near in his own part of the country men had heard. Now he was ready for Rome also. The words “I am ready” stand out. What a precious and good atti-

tude! He faced great heathen Rome, great pleasure-loving multitudes. He faced a city that gloried in its military might, its pomp, its great parades, but this did not deter him in the least. He was ready for Rome also. He knew his Gospel and who was back of it. He was willing to challenge the whole world with his Gospel, and he did so.

THEME ANNOUNCED

“For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek”—V. 16. Paul was not ashamed of a Gospel that presented a crucified Messiah. This stumbled the Jew and was pure folly to the Greek. Others had turned it down, Jerusalem had killed those who proclaimed it, but it was no source of shame to Paul. He wished to try it on Rome, not that he questioned the results. The Gospel alone is the power of God to salvation. Rome had power to shake the world of mankind, and make all other nations tremble, but they knew not any power to salvation. God had sent Paul, not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel—I Cor. 1:17. The Gospel without baptism saved to the uttermost.

“To the Jew first.” The Jews were the first nation that God dealt with fully. They had the tabernacle in the wilderness, and later built the temple in their land. They had the prophets and to them and of them Jesus came. They had His ministry personally, along with the ministry of the twelve and of the seventy. The Apostles were to begin their ministry after Pentecost in Jerusalem—Luke 24:47. They indeed had the Gospel first. Today, we see the result of turning it down by looking at the Jews. Paul did not mean to set a pattern for the age. God has turned to the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name. No longer is Jerusalem God’s spiritual center.

“For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith”—V. 17. Note what is revealed in the Gospel. Here, it is not mercy, not grace, not love, though these are all in the Gospel and must be. But the righteousness of God, for us and on our side, imputed to us, is fully made manifest. Hallelujah! God’s righteousness in His character as judging sin and answering the sin question completely, and also His righteousness as imputed to the believer is fully revealed. As has been pointed out, this verse along with Romans 10:4 may be taken as key verses to the book. “From faith to faith.” As a testimony is given from faith it awakens faith in many who hear it. So that the Gospel goes on from faith to faith. “The just shall live by faith.” This text, found four times in the Bible, is the first of about seventy quotations from the Old Testament found in the book of Romans. It meets us at the threshold of Paul’s epistles, and also, is recorded in the last of his epistles in our Version, to wit, Hebrews 10. The verse cannot be overemphasized.

The vital truth therein stated was first written to Rome. Now it stands directly against Rome which is a hotbed of legality and of dead works. This is the text that fired the great heart of Martin Luther, the man whom God raised up to challenge Christendom and make an effort to bring it back to God. Note that thus far, we have read of the “Gospel of God,” the “Power of God,” the “Righteousness of God,” and in verse 18, the “Wrath of God.”

In the “revealed righteousness of God,” we may realize that we are forever free from a required righteousness to be produced by us. What is revealed is not a righteousness of man, but a by-faith righteousness, on a principle of faith and not based on obedience to law.



JONAH

Jonah's Complaint Of God Showing Mercy Is Rebuked

As a result of Jonah's message the entire city of Nineveh turned to God, chapter 3. You would think that would be a fitting ending to this book of the reluctant missionary, but God has more to teach Jonah and us also. Sometimes the greatest trial for us follows a great victory we have just experienced. One example is when Abraham had that great victory of defeating five kings and their armies and rescuing Lot. A great fear took hold of him. Why else would the Lord appear unto him and say, "Fear not, Abram; I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward," Genesis 15:1.

Ch. 4:1 - Do we find Jonah rejoicing that the whole city turned to God after he delivered God's message to them? "...it displeased Jonah **exceedingly**, and he was very angry." Even the king of this pagan city set a better example than the selfish, narrow-minded prophet. Jonah goes out of the city, Nineveh and no doubt glad to leave, because he hated the Ninevites. He is angry with God for not destroying this city. We will see how God deals with Jonah's heart attitude. He is going to get an **attitude adjustment**. He will learn to see things from God's view point. Can we sometimes be guilty of such attitudes? Thinking God should judge according to our thinking and our judgment. Yes, I am afraid so, whether we want to admit it or not. But God is faithful to deal with us concerning our attitudes.

V. 2,3 - "And he prayed unto the LORD...was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled...unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou art a **gracious** God, and **merci-**

ful, slow to anger, and of **great kindness**, and repentest thee of the evil. Therefore...take, I beseech thee, my life from me...it is better for me to die than to live.” At least Jonah talks to the Lord about this matter even if it is in anger. (The Last time we read of Jonah praying it was inside the fish.) Jonah tells God, “When you called me to preach to the Ninevites, I knew you would save them if they repented. That is why I fled from you to Tarshish.” Sounds like a poor excuse for his running away. It also tells us about the prejudice state of his heart. Jonah did not seek their repentance, but to announce their doom. He didn’t want God to save them, he wanted God to judge them.

Instead of thanking the Lord for blessing his ministry and saving this people, Jonah wants to die. Well, Jonah had been through a lot, three days and nights in a fish, preaching throughout that large city, faithfully giving God’s message. But since his message of judgment is not going to come about, Jonah doesn’t want to go on. I’m sure we have all been there or will be there sometime, wanting to just quit. God was not only gracious to Nineveh, but we will see how graciously He deals with Jonah.

V. 4 - “Then said the LORD, Doest thou well to be angry?” In other words, “Is my grace displeasing to you?” Sad to say it is to some, today. God sent His messenger with His Word to save these sinners. God is not willing that any should perish - II Pet. 3:9. In Luke 10:7,10 Jesus says, there is joy in heaven in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth. This was a large city of people. God asks Jonah, “Does it displease you that I have saved these Ninevites?” Jonah is in a huff and pouting.

V. 5 - “...Jonah went out of the city...sat on the east side of the city...there made him a booth, and sat under it in the shadow, till he might see what would become of the city.” He gets a

good spot that overlooked the city. Why? He didn't trust the Ninevites and thought if they went back to sinning that God would destroy them. Jonah wanted to see the fire of God fall on them. God is going to teach Jonah a lesson by an illustration.

V. 6-8 - "...the LORD God **prepared** a gourd...made it to come up over Jonah...a shadow over his head, to deliver him from his grief...Jonah was exceeding glad of the gourd. But God **prepared** a worm when the morning rose the next day...it smote the gourd that it withered...it came to pass, when the sun did arise...God **prepared** a vehement east wind; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted, and wished in himself to die..." We read before that God prepared a great fish - Chapter 1:17. Here we read, He prepared a **gourd**, a **worm** and a **strong east wind**. This gourd, worm and wind is just as miraculous as the fish and yet we don't hear people saying, I just can't believe the story of the gourd, the worm and wind. Jonah was made glad for the shade, but when the sun beat upon his head and made him feel faint he again wished to die.

V. 9-11 - "...God said to Jonah, Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd? And he said, I do well to be angry, even unto death. Then said the LORD, Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for...which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it grow; which came up in a night, and perished in a night: And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?" A gourd is nothing and you had pity on it. It doesn't have a soul. Men have a soul that is either going to heaven or hell. "I spared this great city of 120,000 thousand persons that don't know their right hand from their left. This refers to the children. If you can love a gourd, can't you love the Ninevite children."

You may know someone or ones you don't like. They may be very vile sinners. Do you think that God would have you show them love and grace and testify of God's love to them or do you think you can only talk about God to nice refined persons? **Mt. 9:10-13; Rom. 5:6-8; I Tim. 1:12-16.** God would have us give His Word to the lost because He loves them and gave His Son for them. God loves all His creatures, even the dumb cattle. Don't you think Jonah left that dead gourd and went down to the people of Nineveh and rejoiced with them that they had come to a saving knowledge of God? I do. Consider chapter 2:9, Jonah thought He learned this in the belly of the fish and in a sense he did, but **now he knows "Salvation is of the Lord."** God knows where to touch us that we might learn more of Him and His ways. I trust we are paying attention.

The End

by Earlene Davis



Let Go and Let God!

When you're troubled and worried and sick at heart
And your plans are upset and your world falls apart,
Remember God's ready and waiting to share
The burden you find much too heavy to bear--
So with faith, "LET GO" and "LET GOD" lead the way
Into a brighter and less troubled day.

--Selected

Jeremiah 29

Part 4 (vs 2)

Debra Isenbletter



Vs 2: This verse shows the *Date* that this letter was written and specifically who were taken into captivity. It begins the first parenthesis of this letter, and points our eyes backward in time to when they were taken into captivity. For greater details on exactly who and when this captivity occurred read 2 Kings 24:8-17, Jeremiah's description of this group can be divided into two classes (*Upper Class and Middle Class*) and in these two groups are seen the best of God's people, these were the most educated or the wealthiest, they are the "residue" that Jeremiah speaks of in vs 1. Also seen in this group is the order and organization the Lord used in bringing His people into captivity. The Date of this letter is seen in the phrase "*After that*" meaning *after* these captives were taken to Babylon this letter was written. Zedekiah, the current king, will send this letter with messengers and later (the fourth year of his reign) he himself will go to Babylon (Jer 51:59). Jeremiah is possibly writing this letter sometime between the first and fourth year of Zedekiah's reign.

Upper Class: "*After that Jeconiah the king and the queen and the eunuchs, the princes...were departed from Jerusalem.*" The *Upper Class* is seen in the *king*, the *queen*, the *eunuchs* and the *princes*. In each there is a lesson for us.

The King: Jeconiah (Jehoiachin or Coniah) is the king that who has gone into captivity. His name means "Jehovah Establishes" and he was the 19th ruler in Judah (the 18th king because there was one queen). He reigned a very short time, three months and ten days. 2 Chron 36:9 says he was eight

years old when he began to reign and he reigned three months and ten days; 2 Kings 24:8 says he was 18 years old when he began to reign and he reigned three months- Unger's Dictionary explains the difference in the two ages as follows: "*He reigned ten years with his father (a joint-reign) until he was 18 (2 Ki 24:8).*" It is while he is in captivity that the meaning of his names becomes a reality to him. The Lord keeps him safe while in captivity and finally blesses him at the end of his life and makes him fruitful. He spent 36 years in prison in Babylon until Nebuchadnezzar's death, but then Nebuchadnezzar's son, Evil-Merodach released him, and gave him a seat at his own table and an allowance for his support. (Jer 52:31-34). "*Jehovah Establishes*" is finally made a reality after a time of suffering. While he was in Babylon he had five sons, his eldest son is called Shealtiel or Salathiel which means "*I have asked God.*" He asked God for fruit and he was answered of the Lord. Salathiel's son (Zerubbabel) means "*seed of Babel*" and there **fruitfulness is seen, even in judgment.** It is this son who returns with the captives to Jerusalem and restores worship. These two men (Zerubbabel and Salathiel) are mentioned in Matthew in the genealogy of Christ (Mt 1: 12- 13), what wonderful fruit the Lord brought forth, how He did indeed "establish" this king and his seed. The Lord's care for this king along with the remnant is seen for even in judgment His mercy is seen in their protection and fruitfulness.

The Queen: "*and the queen...*" The queen here is Nehushta, the mother of Jeconiah (See 2 Ki 24:8). Nehushta means "from brass" and brass was something hardened and tempered and was used for weapons and other cutting instruments. Brass also speaks of judgment and that judgment can be seen in the brazen serpent (Nu 28:8-9) which was later called "Nehushtan" (2 Ki 18:4). Brass was used in the vessels for the tabernacle and the temple in connection with their worship (the

altar of burnt offering, vessels of the altar, the laver made of brass, etc.) Her name pictures the judgment they are undergoing but it also pictures the positive outcome of that judgment, because through this judgment they will be “hardened” and “tempered” like steel.

The Eunuchs: “*and the eunuchs.*” The word “eunuch” comes from a root meaning to castrate, but a eunuch by implication also meant “a valet, a minister of state, a chamberlain or an officer.” According to Josephus castration was not practiced by the Jews upon either man or animals and the law dealt severely with this kind of treatment of any Israelite. This type of a man could not enter into the congregation of the Lord (Deut 23: 1) and this type of an animal could not be offered upon the altar (Lev 22:24). Therefore there is a strong possibility that these eunuchs were “ministers of state,” “officers” or “chamberlains,” they were part of the royal household. There are many examples of eunuchs in the Word that show they were in positions of authority or in military positions. Potiphar was an officer (same word as eunuch) and captain of Pharaoh’s guard (Gen 37:36; 39: 1). He was married, for it was his wife that accused Joseph of the crime for which he was placed in prison.

The Princes: “*and the princes of Judah.*” In this one word we can see not just members of the royal family but all those men in positions of leadership and authority that surrounded the King and were an essential part of their society. The word “prince” though it often denotes royalty, was also used to refer to those in positions of leadership. It means “a ruler, a leader, a chief, an official, a captain, a noble, an official, a general, a commander (military), an elder.” The king and queen were surrounded by a close knit group (ministers of state and officers/eunuch) and going out a little further from that circle we find the princes. I found six different categories of “princes” that could be included in this group that went into

captivity: *Royal Princes, Political Princes, Religious Princes* (priests), *Military Princes, Merchant Princes* and *Ruling Princes*. Each shows how that every part of Jewish society was taken into Babylon, and although the best away from Jerusalem, in reality the Lord was preserving the best. When their captivity ended after 70 years all aspects of their society were preserved and while in captivity those same essential aspects of their society operated and functioned and helped preserve their national identity.

Middle Class: *“and the carpenters, and the smiths”*

This is the final group mentioned and they were just as essential as the king, queen, eunuchs and princes. The carpenters were those who were craftsmen, artists, engravers, and the smiths were those who were locksmiths, builders of bulwarks, both were craftsmen, workers in wood or workers in stone and builders. Babylon took those who were skilled to serve them but God allowed this to preserve their skills. That present generation would pass their skills on to their children, who would pass on the same skills to their children and it would be these children who returned to Jerusalem after 70 years. When they returned to Jerusalem their skills would be needed to repair the house of the Lord (Ezra 3:7).

There is such a wonderful order seen in who is taken into captivity, the Lord looked ahead and saw the need of all these groups, those seen in the first verse and those seen in this verse. When we see them all together we can see that the whole of Jewish society was preserved and that they went down as a cohesive group that would be able to minister one to another. All their skills were preserved and would be passed on to a generation who would return and use those skills for the glory of the Lord. There would even be a descendant of the present king who would return and become a great leader along with Ezra and Nehemiah.

LEARNING THE HIDDEN TRUTHS

Proverbs 25:2

“It is the glory of God to conceal a thing but the honor of kings is to search out a matter.”

How then are we to search out a matter? The Lord has quickened eight ways to me on how this is done:

1) BY THE WORK OF THE PROPHETS

Read **I Peter 1:10-12** and notice - “the prophets... who prophesied of the grace **that should come unto you;**” and “...when it **testified beforehand** the sufferings of Christ,” and also “...but **unto us they did minister** the things.” I believe there would be a serious lack without the **the prophecies, the testimonies, and the ministry** of the prophets. These things are very fundamental and necessary to understanding God’s Word. We receive the good from their preaching. **II Peter 1:19-21**, especially verse 21, “For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” These prophets spoke by the Holy Spirit, and don’t we need to listen to what the Spirit has to say also? **Rom. 15:4**, “For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for **our learning;**” and **II Timothy 3:16-17**, “All scripture is given, by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God **may be perfect.** thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” We need to understand the work and the ministry of the prophets if we are to learn from them. Their lives can and should profit us. And as we learn from them we are being built up unto a perfect man - the new man- the life of Christ within. Read **Rom. 16:25-26.**

“...according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began. But **now is made manifest**, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith.”

2) BY THE MINISTRY OF THE APOSTLES

Remember in **Mark 16:15**, Jesus said, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.” And this was a work that the apostles did. This was their responsibility. Certainly others had a part and do have a part, but they laid the foundation.

Ephesians 4:11-12, “And He gave to some, apostles; and to some, prophets...for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.” These have a part in that perfecting work that God is doing in our hearts. Praise God for them! In **Ephesians 2:20** we see that we “are built Himself being the chief cornerstone.” Can we do without this foundation? Not if we are to stand and withstand and come to a place of maturity. The foundation is a very important part of a building. A building is only as good as its foundation. The superstructure depends upon it. If the foundation is weak and crumbles over time, the building will weaken and eventually be ruined. Thank God we have a good, strong foundation that has stood the test of time.

3) BY PAUL’S REVELATION

Read **Col. 1:24-29**. God gave Paul the revelation - the interpretation - to these mysteries that had been hidden in ages past. Also consider **Gal. 1:11-12**. Paul labored and strived according to the grace of God that was at work in him to preach, to warn every man and to teach them so that all who

lay hold of their opportunities would be perfect in Christ Jesus. We need Paul's gospel!

4) BY MINISTERS, PREACHING GOD'S WORD

Ephesians 3:2-10, God has given grace to faithful ministers "to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery." Again in **Eph. 4:11-12**, "He gave...to some, evangelists and to some, pastors, and to some, teachers; for the perfecting of the saints." I believe that it is very important to sit under the ministry of the Word. If our heart is right before God, **He will quicken something** to our heart that will help in that perfecting work He is doing in our lives.

5) BY DAILY STUDY

Acts 17:11, "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that **they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily**, whether those things were so." I believe that we need to receive the Word that God is speaking to us with a readiness of mind (in the NIV - "with great eagerness"). But also it is important that we search the Scriptures daily ourselves to see whether what we are being taught is true. We need a personal daily study on our own to come to an understanding of God's Word. Paul told Timothy in **II Tim. 2:15** "Study to show **thyself** approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." We need to know the Word of God for ourselves, in part so that when we are asked questions regarding our faith we can give a scriptural answer. Not what our pastor said, or our teacher said, or an evangelist said; but this is what God's word has to say!

6) BY MEDITATION

I Tim. 4:15-16 “Meditate upon these things, give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all.” God can and does bless those who meditate on His Word day and night; consider **Psalm 1**. God promises to make us **prosperous, successful, and victorious** as we learn to meditate on His Word, **Joshua 1:7-9**. We need to meditate on what we have heard taught and preached upon and on what we have studied and read.

7) BY PRAYER

Eph. 1:15-19, Paul prayed for the Ephesian saints “that God...may give unto you **the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him; the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know** what is the hope of His calling, and **what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power** to us-ward who believe.” Paul realized that despite the most gifted ministers preaching under the anointing of the Spirit it would not be enough to bring the saints to maturity. Personal study, though vital, is not enough. Meditation, though very important, can not bring a child of God to maturity alone.

It also takes prayer. We learn to ask God to help our understanding, to quicken His Word to our hearts and to reveal these precious truths to us. If we ask, He will answer. He is faithful to do so. I love the song “**My Precious Bible.**” Verse five reads; “**I love my Bible; may I ne’er consult it but with faith and prayer.**”

8) BY THE QUICKENING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

I Cor. 2:7-12, “But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God.” Often as we are reading, studying or listening to the Word given forth, the Spirit will quicken a portion to us, we never saw or noticed before. The Word will become clear and make sense. The Scriptures will come together. It is the Holy Spirit that gives this understanding to us.

All of these are beneficial in coming to a full knowledge of God. All of these are instrumental in the development of the life of Christ within and to enable us to come to the measure of the stature and fullness of Christ, that the new creation life might be fully developed in us. We will not come to perfection overnight or to a complete understanding of God’s Word instantly, “For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line; **here a little, and there a little.**” May we be willing to grasp a little here and a little there. **Rev. 19:7**, “Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and **His wife hath made herself ready.**” She learned His Word and to do those things that are pleasing in His sight. Praise His name!

by Phil Wainright



* Correspondence Lessons for Children: “Cookies on the Lower Shelf” also “Bible Teaching for Kids.” Write Anita Clark, P O Box 89, Carbondale, KS 66414 or e-mail: raclrk@juno.com

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