

WAR AT WAR

VOLUME XL NUMBER IX Preparing for Persecution I

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 1

Scripture: Romans 5:15-21

Romans 5:17 says, *“For if by the one man’s offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.”* Reigning in life right now is a very dramatic promise being tested to the max. It is easy to assume that this verse promises physical, financial, emotional and social well-being without considering the verses proceeding and following. If we simply focus on verse 17 we can see ourselves ruling and reigning over sickness, fear, lack, poverty and the full spectrum of familiar areas of warfare. And we do trust God for these! Used here the reigning spoken of, however, is first and foremost a byproduct of the empowerment resulting from walking in right relationship with the Father. This reigning in life is about the inner Kingdom within our spirit and a deep abiding relationship with our Father. The heart must be free from condemnation. In a measure, reigning in life is the ability to walk through life with God at our side, being able to serve Him to the fullest regardless of the circumstances or hardship. To reign in life demands a commitment to walk in righteousness, guaranteeing freedom from the dictates of the flesh and living free from the guilt of sin. The context of verse 17 provides a dramatic difference in the interpretation and gives a heightened awareness of the core of reigning.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 2

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 2:14

2 Corinthians 2:14 says, *“Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place.”* This dynamite verse could be pulled out of context and applied according to our outer, worldly needs. In this chapter Paul explained numerous applications for this verse which we face daily in our personal warfare, but once again the context narrows the focus in the affliction of this declaration. In verses 5-11 Paul is pleading for forgiveness, saying that we are aware of satan’s devices and we cannot give the enemy advantage over us. Then Paul speaks of the leadership of the Holy Spirit in the different areas of ministry: regionally, geographically, and nationally. Even though we face a great warfare and resistance from the enemy in each area, Jesus has bought and paid for the victory. Jesus’ Blood bought the path to victory for God’s eternal purposes. Jesus equips us to pursue His eternal purpose to the place where we see eternal fruit. In context the triumph spoken of is over the enemy who would like to push us in the flesh to abort specific assignments that advance the Kingdom in order to stop the flow of the gospel and to prevent and diminish our fruitfulness as God’s agents. The guarantee is that God always comes through with triumph for salvation and redemption in the preaching of His Word with the application governed by His eternal purpose. This verse promises triumph for all of God’s agents assigned tasks that extend God’s rule!

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 3

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 2:12-17

The Holy Spirit continues to add understanding to what is meant when He says, *"...who always leads us in triumph in Christ, defusing, manifesting, or scattering abroad the fragrance of his knowledge in every place."* Verse 15 says, He makes us a dividing line both to *"... Those who are being saved and to those who are perishing. To the one we are the aroma of death leading to death, and to the other the aroma of life leading to life."* Once again we see the triumph in Christ describing the manifestation of a witness from those who yield to the Holy Spirit. Verse 17 says, *"For we are not, as so many, peddling the word of God; but of sincerity, but as from God, we speak in the sight of God in Christ."* When does the Father allow us to carry the triumph of Christ? When we are in the pursuit of His purpose and plan to diffuse His knowledge through the witness of our life. God certainly has a major part to play in our witness since He authors the triumph. Our testimony of God's victory helps people come to and accept the Lord. Triumph is ordained for the establishing of God's eternal will when we choose His plan!

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 4

Scripture: I Corinthians 15:25-28

The declaration of verses 25-26 is indeed dramatic. *"For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be destroyed is death."* We are told the last enemy that will be destroyed is death. The Lord will put everything that satan has ever brought to incarcerate mankind under our feet. This passage is a powerful view into the heart of God concerning the restoration of His people. The Father has made death itself a target for destruction. We're not only called to always triumph and to reign in life but to reign eventually over death itself. Reigning starts as a victor over fear setting our soul free. God determines step by step to elevate His people into reigning in life through accepting His purpose. There can be little doubt from looking at these passages that salvation starts with the soul. God's purpose is set in concrete! He desires victory for all His children. If we are going to walk in victory as the Scripture promises, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, confess Him as the Son of God and be saved. Only then will we see His purpose clearly. The Holy Spirit witnesses to our spirit we are the sons of God. We first choose Christ, then He chooses us to reveal His eternal purpose and our Kingdom contribution. As we obey, triumph emerges. In I John 5:4-5, as we trace the theme of victory through Scripture, one area spoken of repeatedly as an objective of our faith: *"overcoming the world."* There can be very little victory outside an ongoing application of our faith to our own flesh to overcome worldly temptation as it rages in our hearts. It usually is much easier to use faith for finances than on our flesh and the desires of our heart. It can be easier to use faith for a job than for a victory over an ongoing weakness. What does scripture mean when it says that our faith overcomes the world? Applying this principle usually comes when we are confronted with a choice. The tug of war is between flesh and spirit. When our spirit pulls one way and the natural desires pull another, the war is on. God gives us the victory but sometimes the biggest war is within.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 5

Scripture: I Corinthians 15:52-57

This passage produces more understanding as to our Father's commitment to victory for His people through the cross. What is God's victory for us? God is ultimately determined to deprive death and hell of their dominion! In verse 57 the Holy Spirit says, *"But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."* The major part of the victory bought and paid for at the cross was victory over sin, which when appropriated, gives us a clear conscience when we choose righteousness and acting on God's Word. The Father expects us to pray in authority, in faith believing His promises. Even when we are nose to nose with the devil, we should pray demanding the victory which has already been bought by the Blood. We are told to be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. We can only do that when we use our faith and begin to enforce the victory God has given

over sin in our own lives. The victory proclaimed in verse 57 is not just over the sting of death, it is also our victory over sin which is the root of death.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 6

Scripture: Luke 10

In Luke 10 the 70 disciples returned rejoicing because the demons were subject to them. In this passage God has promised great power and authority for our confrontation with the enemy. He said, in verse 19, *"Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you."* What a victorious passage! Quite possibly it is one of the most all-inclusive statements made concerning what Jesus bought and paid for on behalf of the church. He first gave this authority by direct decree to His disciples, but then, as an eternal work, that is delegated to every believer bought and paid for by Blood covenant.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 7

Scripture: Revelation 1:17-18, Matthew 28:18-20

Jesus paid the ultimate price to acquire the keys of death, hell, and the grave. In Matthew 28 He decreed that *"All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth."* then He told the church to *"Go..."* And use this authority necessary to fulfill His commands, *"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. 'Amen.'"* He promised to be with us even to the end of the age. Even though the issue of authority is settled, we only move forward in this truth by acting on it. We can easily reach a stage where that authority is not flowing the way it should. We are the ones to take the initiative to grow in and appropriate this anointing. Many learned the authority of the believer and acted on it, and to a degree God honored our boldness and brought manifestations through speaking to our mountains. Learning to use that authority to remove sickness and disease, blessed us physically. Some of us have seen the authority promised work dramatically for a season and then wane. Why did we see the change? The issue of authority is very clear in Scripture. Spiritual authority was promised and was given by Jesus to the church, walking in power comes from yielding to the Spirit. Where is the fruit of the authority of the believer? If all authority is given to the church, why do we not see more fruit?

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8

Scripture: Matthew 16:13-19

Matthew 16:17-19 declared, *"Jesus answered and said to him, 'Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.'"* This passage proclaims that the truth of God's authority is in the hands of the church to use for the harvest of nations. There can be no doubt that the keys of the Kingdom have been delivered to the church. How do we use that authority to impact our culture? Perhaps the answer lies in the qualification process demanding the right motivation and character of Christ to do as He wills. It is so easy to talk about our authority and the victories God wants to give if we triumph in Christ, with our foot on the head of every enemy from sickness to lack. We must never forget the very first place authority is to be applied. That authority is to be applied on our own flesh in order to walk in obedience! Have we applied this God-given authority in the primary realm of our personal growth and responsibility?

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9

Scripture: 1 Peter 4:1-2

What happens when people get an understanding of God's authority but never come to grips with the place of its primary application? These two verses point toward the primary application. 1 Peter 4:1-2 say, "*Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God.*". When does divine authority work for us? When we are willing to initially apply it toward the dictates and desires of our flesh! The divine authority God gave us will never be manifested fully, until we are willing to allow the Holy Spirit to press us through the desires of the natural man and into a place of deliverance and growth. What does this have to do with preparing for persecution? Prophetically the answer is that we are rapidly approaching the season that God wants to release a greater magnitude of authority than any Christian generation has ever seen. But the preparation and making of a vessel fit for the Master's use demands that we come to a place where we "...*No longer live the rest of our time in the flesh for the desires of a man, but strictly for the will of God.*" Those ruled by the natural man can't hear the Spirit clearly. Psalm 2 declares God will speak to evil ones in His wrath! What will it take to bring the church to a place of growth and surrender where we can appropriately release God's wrath? God assigns peace-keeping authorities the job of executing His wrath on evildoers. We are to prepare to be God's agents of glory!

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10

Scripture: Acts 5:1-16

The Apostle Peter was a New Testament faith giant who walked as an agent of glory! Peter raised the dead, healed the sick and was distinctly mentioned as one whom multitudes sought to get into his shadow. The multitudes knew that healing accompanied Peter, and they knew his shadow, if it fell upon them, would bring healing. Peter experienced a manifestation of divine authority well beyond what our generation has seen. When we read the exploits of Peter there can be little doubt we are looking at a man who learned how to move in the pinnacle of what Jesus promised. It is interesting to note that the Peter who exercised divine authority and anointing in the book of Acts is an entirely different man from the Peter we met in the Gospels. What initiated the transformation and brought his growth to completion?

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 11

Scripture: 1 Peter 4:1-2

1 Peter 4:1-2 proclaims the principle engrafted into Peter by fire. These verses declare the testimony of one of the premier power ministers in the book of Acts. Peter spoke emphatically, "... *Since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with that same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, that he no longer should live the rest of his life time in the flesh for the will of men, but for the will of God.*" Can't we hear Peter saying, 'This is why what happened to me, my fleshly stumblings and failures, had to happen, and through it all I have learned a valuable lesson. I am not the same man seen in the Gospels prior to the cross, and consequently God can now trust me with His authority.' What kind of man was Peter on the other side of the cross? The most descriptive phrase of verse two says, "... *He no longer should live the rest of his chronos in the flesh for the desires of men, but for the will of God.*" Jesus knows what it will take to work that in us!

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12

Scripture: Matthew 16:21-23

Looking at Peter prior to the cross verse 21 says, "*From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.*" Peter had his own plan, his own goals, and he was doing everything possible to get God to bless

it, but God could not. God had His divine plan. It is interesting to note that all along God had chosen a primary place for Peter, but as long as he desired that place for himself and his selfish ambition, it would have totally disrupted and defiled the degree of authority God wanted flowing through him. Peter would have used his position to build his own kingdom instead of the Lord's. Divine authority is an awesome thing to be released through the hands of men, but it requires a pure vessel. How much mixture do we have in us needing to be pressed out?

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

Scripture: 1 Peter 4

Everyone who is going to flow in, dispense or display the power of God must come to a conclusion. The conclusion is: it's not worth doing my own thing any longer! I can almost see Peter being pressed through the wine press of circumstances leaving behind pride, self-exaltation, promotion, preservation, personal power, fame and fortune. We know some of what was in Peter's mind because of his various recorded comments. The man who wrote the epistles of Peter is one who had been markedly transformed in his attitudes and understanding through suffering and persecution. Persecution is the context of 1 Peter 4. Are we ready to make that transition? It is coming! Will we complete the process of surrender and sacrifice to embrace Sonship? What a declaration at the end of 1 Peter 4! *"Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls to Him in doing good, as to a faithful Creator."*

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14

Scripture: 1 Peter 4:1-5

In 45 years of ministry, we have never seen the magnitude of pressure that has come against so many people to return to worldly ways and old habit patterns as we have right now in the church. The pressure from the enemy has become nearly unbearable. This is such a season that we have to stay with the growth process and cry out for God's mercy and grace to walk through the pressure so Christ can be formed deeply in us. The deliverance and victory we will receive in this place will serve us well for many more years or decades of fruitfulness in the Lord. Verse three is very descriptive when it says, *"For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles— when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries."* It is interesting in verse three that he would begin by saying, *"For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles – when we walked..."* In all those things we truly find Peter preaching a life-changing experience which came through the pressure and persecution which God turned for Peter's eternal good. Remember that the ultimate day of giving an account is approaching. In that day we desire to stand tall, being a people who have walked through God's preparation and have become a vessel fit for our Master's use.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15

Scripture: 1 Peter 4:12-13

It is no wonder Peter can say, *"Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy."* Peter learned something about the pressure of trial and persecution. He learned that often times it brought a person to the point of readjusting their priorities in life. Look at our culture and the priority many place on prosperity and physical blessing, making idols such as sports, Hollywood, recreation, etc. What will it take to bring such a pampered people to the place where we live for God's purpose and not our own? Lost freedoms and the potential for a loss of our righteous nation? A majority of believers agree that our nation needs revival, yet how many are willing to pay the price for bringing such revival?

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16

Scripture: Luke 18:1-8

Those who yield to God in such an intense preparational season will surely experience the glory. How should we conduct ourselves when the enemy rages? Luke 18 speaks to God's people in such an hour when the enemy's activities seem to be unrestrained. The penetrating question of Luke 8:8 is, "*Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?*" Context determines meaning! The context is asking for judgment. Do our prayers move God's Hand to bring judgment? Can we pray to move God's Hand to affect our generation. Can we pray judgment on evil organizations that have hidden their true agenda, especially those gaining momentum and power to control masses of people? Can we pray judgment on those who want to remove or defund our peace-keeping force. Marxism is an anti-Christ plague and all who propagate it deserve great disgrace, overthrow or termination along with their poisonous strategies.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 17

Scripture: Luke 18:1-8

There is a key word in this passage which is used four times. It may be the heart cry of the believer for the end-times. Over and over again the woman before the unjust judge cried out to the judge, "***Avenge me of my adversary.***" This is the word for revenge, punishment, vindication, protection and defense. There is, I believe, a consistent rising cry from God's people concerning protection and defense from the railing, raging activities of the enemy. When it comes to major warfare, most are seeing a greatly intensified level. Life-threatening situations seem to abound around the world and throughout the body of Christ. What should our response be when we find ourselves living in such an absence of justice? An important answer is in this parable about prayer! "***Avenge me of my adversary!***" Where is this prayer from believers? Do we hear this heart-cry coming from today's church?

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 18

Scripture: Luke 18:1-8

The second key word in this passage is the word for **adversary**. In the Greek it is a compound word, **anti-dee-may**. Anti means opposite, and decay is the root of this Greek word demanding the execution of judgment or a judicial decision. The decay in this context is used of those who oppose divine justice. In this parable, the cry of the woman is for the judge to vindicate, protect, defend and give relief from the civil decay of those who oppose divine justice. She is crying for divine intervention in her dealings with a supernatural enemy who opposes every promise God has ever given to His people. The encouragement is, according to Jesus, God has not gone on vacation. He will certainly protect and defend His elect who cry out day and night to Him even though they may wait for an answer. We find our answer in 1 Peter. In the process of facing critical situations, there is a tendency to reevaluate and re-prioritize one's life. Through it all many of the desires motivated by the flesh fall away, and we determine to be a people who do those things that are pleasing to God. That which is of eternal value becomes clearer. Is this not such an hour? We are inspired to dig deeply, diligently and wholeheartedly into pursuing a dynamic relationship with Father, Son and Holy Spirit coming to know Him and both the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His suffering.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19

Scripture: 1 Peter 5:8-9

Peter had a revelation of persecution and the activities of the enemy as he attempts to derail and destroy the purposes and working of God. Because Peter walked through it, he could say with wisdom and compassion, "*Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.*" God never intended that we be devoured by the devil. Jesus' prayer for Peter was that he would not fail even in a

severe trial. The result was even though he denied Jesus and erred, he repented, turned and was restored. Peter developed a compassion for people who were under assault because he had been there. And for a season it appeared the enemy had won. But in the hour of need, Peter got another revelation of repentance and he turned with steadfastness wholeheartedness away from the flesh and toward his walk of faith. What is our attitude toward those who are having a difficult time right now and have failed in one way or another? Can we extend grace for restoration? Giving mercy ensures getting mercy when we need it!

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

Scripture: 1 Peter 5:5-10

How do we resist the enemy, or our own flesh? First we have to submit to the Lord Jesus Himself as a demonstration of humility and then to those around us, especially to those who are in authority. When we submit to Christ's purpose, plan and refining for our life, the promise is that the grace to resist will be there when needed. This causes the enemy to back off. The promises of verse 10 is that *"...The God of all grace, who called us to his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after we have suffered a while, will perfect, establish common strengthen and settle us."* Peter could speak that by the Holy Spirit because he had experienced it. He knew the heart of God in such an hour and season. Because Peter walked where many of us may soon walk, his words can be foundational for taking a stand against the onslaught of the enemy. We can rise up in faith knowing our deliverance is soon to be manifested!

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 21

Scripture: Luke 13:10-17

When we are battling death, that darkness often takes on various faces, some of which are cunning and surprising. In this passage we see the enemy at work subtly resisting the ministry of Jesus in the form of a religious spirit which came to stop the flow of God's divine purpose. It is amazing how warfare can rage in religious circles over issues of tradition that when torn away allow the Holy Spirit to have a free hand to setting those who have been in captivity completely free. Our own religious tradition and heritage can at times be a major obstacle to finding the real release we desperately need. The very institution God ordained to bring deliverance, freedom and blessing to His people can often cooperate in extending incarceration and bondage. God consistently raises up places of freedom and blessing for those who seek Him with all their heart. Finding such a place and getting in it by the leadership of the Holy Spirit is a necessary part of victory for the end-time church. The enemy is so clever and his ability to deceive so pervasive, that at certain times the very institution God ordained for our training can in fact have the opposite result. There is a desperate need for discernment! God gives it to all who faithfully cry out to know His ways and will.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

Scripture: Luke 21:10-19

Persecution of the true church will grow and develop dramatically in the days ahead. Jesus prophetically outlined for His disciples an unholy alliance they would have to face and stand against. He says in verse 12, *"But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons. You will be brought before kings and rulers for My name's sake."* The alliance I'm referring to is the counterfeit church with political government. Worldly beliefs and behaviors have captured large segments of government. Many aspects of the legislative process are beginning to use material provided by the counterfeit church in the promotion of anti-Biblical laws opening the doors to greater levels of enslavement and deception. We are coming to a time when the counterfeit exists side-by-side with the true. The war is over the hearts of the people in our cities, neighborhoods and nation. This is an hour when the defending, protecting Hand of God is needed for survival. And God's Word, His wisdom, His counsel and voice are essential! Are you girding up the loins of your mind to face such a season, or are you expecting a quick escape. Wisdom says, **prepare!**

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23

Scripture: Luke 17:20-30

The Bible warns us about the hostile culture that faces us in the final days. 'As it was in the days of Noah' will become prevalent now. How do we navigate this? We face it with courage and might and divine resolve. We witness against it. God asks us to walk in righteousness. Our values on marriage, and the sanctity of human life as well as other areas of the Biblical standard of right and wrong will be maligned and mocked. Hell is real and the evil, vile and perverse will go there. Our assignment is obedience to the Word and to stand for truth and righteousness. Noah moved forward in practical preparation from year to year without quitting. When the rain came he was ready. Certainly God will give us our families as He gave Noah his. Because it is an entirely different season in the winding up of the age, I believe God will give us nations for our inheritance. Nevertheless, the persecution, intensity, animosity, bitterness and mockery will parallel, if not exceed what Noah and Lot endured. To faithfully stand in such an hour we need to strengthen and prepare ourselves for confrontation.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 24

Scripture: Luke 17:20-23

Jesus began the teaching on the end-times with an answer to a question He posed. The question was from a Pharisee who asked, "... *When will the kingdom of God come?*" The surprise answer was, "*It is here. For behold the kingdom of God is within you.*" Kingdom is simply the territory over which a king rules. The degree to which we are in the Kingdom of God is the degree to which we allow the Most High King who dwells within to rule in the affairs of our life including our choices, desires, motivations and possessions. The depth of our entry into the fullness of the Kingdom is directly determined by the degree of our yielding ultimate authority in every aspect of life to the Indwelling King. Once again we must see a primary principle lived out to the fullest, "*Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it and whoever loses his life will preserve it.*" If we lose our life by relinquishing and surrendering all to Him now, certainly in the day of maximum persecution for a witness about the Lord, God will save it! What we do right now in yielding to or rejecting the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives has tremendous bearing on our fruitfulness in a season that may very well be at the door. Will we be warriors and overcomers, or will we be casualties?

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25

Scripture: Matthew 24:1-14

The clear, consistent testimony of the prophetic scriptures, especially those which were spoken by Jesus, declare that in the end-times counterfeits will multiply if not precede the real in order to confuse and discourage the saints. Lawlessness and rebellion will increase and multiply. Hatred of the church will rise rapidly and murder will be rampant. The pressure will be so intense that commitment of heart will be tested to the nth degree. Many will not be able to stand the test and will betray those who truly love the Lord. The counterfeit church will ally itself with the perverse and degenerate wicked ones. But God has an army, a people grounded and committed to His Kingdom, who preach Jesus crucified in all the world as a witness to the nations, to bring in a great end-time harvest. And only after this harvest can the end come. I believe one of the greatest privileges in the world is to be counted worthy to live in such an hour. Finishing an era, season or age is always much more dramatic and intense than the beginning. If the beginning of the church age was full of glory, how much more shall the end of the church age proceed forth in the flaming fire of God's power! What we choose now in the shaping of our attitude, motivation and path as God deals with our flesh, determines the measure of glory we can flow in later!

SATURDDAY, SEPTEMBER 26

Scripture: Luke 17:34 - 18:8

Usually in the study of Scripture we let the chapter divisions break our continuity which can be at times a mistake. Such is obviously the case in Luke 17 and on into Luke 18 as we study the end-time scenario painted by Jesus. In chapter 17 He winds up His characterization of the end-times by reminding us of a season where ‘...Two people will be in one bed: one will be taken and the other left, two will be grinding together, the one will be taken and the other one left, two will be in the field: the one will be taken and the other left.’ This is followed by the parable of the woman and the judge which gives us a proper context for understanding those who were taken. Her cry was, “*Avenge me of my adversary,*” which speaks to the nature of the warfare existing in the end-times. The point of the parable was, God will surely avenge His elect who cry out continually. Then Jesus said “*Nevertheless when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?*” How many will be able to face the intensity of the persecution of the last days and continue to walk faithful and courageous? How many will receive divine provision and deliverance because their attitude has been right? I am convinced only those who have chosen the Holy Spirit’s pathway of the cross will be able to stand in such an hour. It is time to personally embrace the surrender of the cross, we must deny self and take up our own cross and follow the Lord. We would do well to yield ourselves to the will and plan of God for purification, readiness and maturity. Our future in God may very well stand or fall based on the decisions we make in this season.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27

Scripture: Luke 6:27-38

Luke 6:27-38 is a passage that comes from the Sermon on the Mount and it specifically deals with the principles which govern Kingdom life. One such principle is that we pray for our enemies and that we forgive as God has forgiven us. But that in no way negates the cry for justice and judgment which comes from the heart in a season of persecution. Many times we have used verse 38 in our churches when receiving an offering. “*Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, Shaken together and running over will be put into your person. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.*” This is a great promise, but in this context it is not necessarily used for the financial blessing of giving, but extending mercy and grace toward those who are doing their best to rip us off, take advantage, and disenfranchise. The Lord promises if we give grace, mercy, love, compassion and forgiveness these will be given back to us in ever greater measure when we need them. The end-time church is a church which takes persecution in stride as warriors not victims and still knowing that the breath of our lips in prayer moves God’s Hand to slay the wicked! Consequently we bring in a harvest. As we pray for our enemies and forgive, God will manifest justice and judgment in our behalf, and we will rejoice with an abundance of eternal fruit.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

Scripture: Romans 12:19, Psalm 2:3-9, Psalm 149:9

Romans 12:19 explains Psalm 2:3-9, “*Beloved do not avenge yourselves but rather give place to wrath;...*” Romans 12:19 commands us to create a path for wrath. The verb is 2 aorist active imperative meaning it’s not optional but a command! We are commanded to give place to or better said, to create a path for wrath through prayer, identifying the judgment written through the instruction of the Spirit for the sin committed. Psalm 149:9 says, “*To execute on them the written judgment...*” Avenge me of my adversary. Proclaim God’s written judicial for sexual sin, idolatry, murder, looting, lying and destruction. We pray, that is our part! It is God Who saves, afflicts in order to save or terminates. God is the One Who gives counsel and direction. It is He Who directs the course and content of prayer. Let’s keep in mind as my wife says, “The heart of the Lord precedes God’s Hand for each victorious prayer to stand.”^(jayne h) The Lord rewards man; according to his works and God knows in every case how to move people forward in each life! how to move each person forward to their eternal destiny and their eternal reward. God knows in every case what is in each heart!

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 10:1-6; Luke 18:8

When is God going to move in our behalf? The scripture clearly tells us in 2 Corinthians 10 that our Father is ready to “...punish all disobedience when our obedience is fulfilled.” The key to the end-time outpouring is the obedience of God’s people, His church. When our obedience is fulfilled God will give us deliverance and avenge us of our enemies. When the Son of Man comes will He find faith on the earth? I believe He will find faith in His true church to walk in love, pray in unity, agree with the Word and extend compassion and salvation even to those who hate them. Consequently the church will reap the precious fruit of the earth, multiple souls joining God’s Family. Jesus is talking about faith to take a stand in a season that is almost here, to pray continually, knowing that even when it doesn’t appear so, that God will have His way. God’s plan and purposes shall prevail and in the process we will stand as pure vessels fit for the Master’s use. It is time to be in full preparation for bringing in the end-time harvest. Eternal rejoicing awaits our affirmative answer to God’s dealings today!

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30

Scripture: Isaiah 33:6, Hebrews 13:5

Those who fear in the natural are aligning with the wrong kind of fear. There is a destructive kind of fear that paralyzes and cripples the mind and emotions and when left to run rampant will short circuit our walk with God and our destiny. In contrast, there is a healthy fear that embraces deep awe and reverence for our Father, Creator and the Most High God. It is the fear of the Lord that is the beginning of wisdom and that Godly fear will give us a hatred for evil. God tells the saints in Scripture to fear the Lord for there is no want to them who fear Him. In the midst of all turmoil and deep darkness, God has promised to be our sure foundation. We have to dig into the Word, stay focused on Him and disciplined in our resolve to serve Him and hear from Him and to obey. Isaiah 33:6 says, “*He will be the sure foundation for you times, a rich store of salvation, wisdom and knowledge; the fear of the Lord is the key to this treasure...*” It is the time for unprecedented discipline and resolve. It is crucial for the true church to stay in a place of supernatural attentiveness and readiness!

*God’s purposes we’re running toward.
Divine salvation our reward
And He pours forth wisdom and His strength,
Empowering us to walk the length.*

Jayne Houghton