



God Is Government

Isaiah 33:22

*“For the LORD is our judge, the
LORD is our lawgiver, the LORD
is our king; he will save us.”*

TEACHINGS OF YESHUA HAMASHIACH
BIBLICAL AND WORLD HISTORY MASTERCLASS

A Study of The BOOK of NUMBERS
Chapters 10 – 12 “Journey to Kadesh Barnea”
Part 1
April 7, 2024



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Journey to Kadesh Barnea: “What Might Have Been”

Emerson was right: “Of all the words of tongue or pen, the saddest are these, ‘It might have been’”

- The departure from Sinai Chapter 10
- “Quailing” the Rebellion Chapter 11
- Miriam’s Murmuring Chapter 12



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Numbers 10: The Departure from Sinai

Num 10:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

Num 10:2 Make thee two trumpets of silver; of a whole piece shalt thou make them: that thou mayest use them for the calling of the assembly, and for the journeying of the camps.

As described by Josephus and represented on the arch of Titus, these trumpets were straight, a cubit or more in length, the tubes about the thickness of a flute. Both extremities bore a close resemblance to those to use among us. They were of solid silver – so as, from the purity of the metal, to give a shrill, distinct sound; and there were two of them, probably because there were only two sons of Aaron at this time; but at a later period, the number was greatly increased (Joshua 6:8; 2 Chronicles 5:12).



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Numbers 10: The Departure from Sinai

Num 10:3 And when they shall blow with them, all the assembly shall assemble themselves to thee at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

Num 10:4 And if they blow but with one trumpet, then the princes, which are heads of the thousands of Israel, shall gather themselves unto thee.

Num 10:5 When ye blow an alarm, then the camps that lie on the east parts shall go forward.

Two is the number of witnesses – it is in the mouth of two witnesses that a matter is established. These two trumpets were used to move Israel on the wilderness march. The blowing of one trumpet brought the princes together. These trumpets, made of silver, which is the metal of redemption, sounded the call for a redeemed people. This reminds us that there is to be a last trump for the Church in Revelation.



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Numbers 10: The Departure from Sinai

Num 10:9 And if ye go to war in your land against the enemy that oppresseth you, then ye shall blow an alarm with the trumpets; and ye shall be remembered before the LORD your God, and ye shall be saved from your enemies.

Another use of the trumpets was to blow the alarm for war.

Num 10:10 Also in the day of your gladness, and in your solemn days, and in the beginnings of your months, ye shall blow with the trumpets over your burnt offerings, and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings; that they may be to you for a memorial before your God: I am the LORD your God.

The sounding of the trumpets also would denote certain segments of time and special occasions.



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Numbers 10: The Departure from Sinai – The Trip Begins

Num 10:11 And it came to pass on the twentieth day of the second month, in the second year, that the cloud was taken up from off the tabernacle of the testimony.

Num 10:12 And the children of Israel took their journeys out of the wilderness of Sinai; and the cloud rested in the wilderness of Paran.

Num 10:13 And they first took their journey according to the commandment of the LORD by the hand of Moses.

This was only 20 days after the beginning of the instructions to Israel about their move from the Sinai wilderness (Numbers 1:1).



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Numbers 10: The Departure from Sinai – The Trip Begins

Num 10:14 In the first place went the standard of the camp of the children of Judah according to their armies: and over his host was Nahshon the son of Amminadab.

Num 10:15 And over the host of the tribe of the children of Issachar was Nethaneel the son of Zuar.

Num 10:16 And over the host of the tribe of the children of Zebulun was Eliab the son of Helon.

(So, the first trumpet puts Moses and Aaron out in front.) The trumpet blows again, and Judah moves out from the east side, with Issachar and Zebulun marching with Judah under his banner.



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Numbers 10: The Departure from Sinai – The Trip Begins

Num 10:17 And the tabernacle was taken down; and the sons of Gershon and the sons of Merari set forward, bearing the tabernacle.

Num 10:18 And the standard of the camp of Reuben set forward according to their armies: and over his host was Elizur the son of Shedeur.

Num 10:19 And over the host of the tribe of the children of Simeon was Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai.

Num 10:20 And over the host of the tribe of the children of Gad was Eliasaph the son of Deuel.

Num 10:21 And the Kohathites set forward, bearing the sanctuary: and the other did set up the tabernacle against they came.

The trumpet blows again and the Kohathites follow them. They are carrying all the articles of furniture of the tabernacle (except the ark, which has gone ahead to the front of the march). All these articles of furniture were equipped with poles and the Kohathites bore them on their shoulders,.



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Numbers 10: The Departure from Sinai – The Trip Begins

Num 10:22 And the standard of the camp of the children of Ephraim set forward according to their armies: and over his host was Elishama the son of Ammihud.

Num 10:23 And over the host of the tribe of the children of Manasseh was Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur.

Num 10:24 And over the host of the tribe of the children of Benjamin was Abidan the son of Gideoni.

The trumpet sound again and Ephraim moves out with Manasseh and Benjamin under his standard.



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Numbers 10: The Departure from Sinai – The Trip Begins

Num 10:25 And the standard of the camp of the children of Dan set forward, which was the rereward of all the camps throughout their hosts: and over his host was Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai.

Num 10:26 And over the host of the tribe of the children of Asher was Pagiel the son of Ocran.

Num 10:27 And over the host of the tribe of the children of Naphtali was Ahira the son of Enan.

Finally, Dan moves out with Asher and Naphtali, under the standard of Dan. Bringing up the rear is the mixed multitude, folk who were part Israelite and part Egyptian. They didn't know whether they should stay or go. Each one was mixed up. As a result, they were stragglers who came along on the wilderness march. The young men who blasphemed (whom we read about in Leviticus 24:10-23), who had an Egyptian father and an Israelite mother, had been part of this group.



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Numbers 10: The Departure from Sinai – The Order of March

1. *Moses and Aaron* *10:33*
2. *The Camp of Judah* *10:14*
3. *Gershon & Merari* *10:17*
4. *The Camp of Reuben* *10:18*
5. *Kohathites* *10:21*
6. *The Camp of Ephraim* *10:22*
7. *The Camp of Dan* *10:25*

Did you notice how many trumpets were sounded? (Revelation 8 ... The blowing of those trumpets in the Great Tribulation period will move the children of Israel from all corners of the earth back into that land. (The “last trump” may be the voice of God! [1 Thessalonians 4:16, Revelation 1:10-11. The “Trump of God” only appears twice; in 1 Thessalonians 4 and Exodus 19, at the giving of the Law of Sinai.)



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Numbers 10: The Departure from Sinai – The Order of March

Num 10:28 Thus were the journeyings of the children of Israel according to their armies, when they set forward.

Num 10:29 And Moses said unto Hobab, the son of Raguel the Midianite, Moses' father-in-law, We are journeying unto the place of which the LORD said, I will give it you: come thou with us, and we will do thee good: for the LORD hath spoken good concerning Israel.

Here we have recorded an encounter with Moses' father-in-law and Moses' invitation to him. This could be applied to the church. We are strangers and pilgrims going through this world today. We are in a wilderness here, but we are on the way to the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. Our invitation is the same invitation that Moses gave, “Come thou with us.”



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Numbers 10: The Departure from Sinai – The Order of March

Num 10:30 And he said unto him, I will not go; but I will depart to mine own land, and to my kindred.

Num 10:31 And he said, Leave us not, I pray thee; forasmuch as thou knowest how we are to encamp in the wilderness, and thou mayest be to us instead of eyes.

Num 10:32 And it shall be, if thou go with us, yea, it shall be, that what goodness the LORD shall do unto us, the same will we do unto thee.

God had made it clear to Moses that the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night would guide them and that the ark was leading them, both of which speak of Christ. He is the leader. [Unfortunately, the church is listening to the voices of the “expert,” men without real spiritual discernment. What a responsibility rests upon the church leaders today, the ministers and the church officers! **Are you sure Christ is the Head of your church, your life, your household?**]



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Numbers 10: The Departure from Sinai – The Order of March

Num 10:33 And they departed from the mount of the LORD three days' journey: and the ark of the covenant of the LORD went before them in the three days' journey, to search out a resting place for them.

Num 10:34 And the cloud of the LORD was upon them by day, when they went out of the camp.

Num 10:35 And it came to pass, when the ark set forward, that Moses said, Rise up, LORD, and let thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate thee flee before thee.

Num 10:36 And when it rested, he said, Return, O LORD, unto the many thousands of Israel.



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Numbers 11: “Quailing” the Rebellion

The children of Israel now have left Mount Sinai, and Chapters 11 and 12 tell of the march from Sinai to Kadesh. We will find that when problems arose, the people fell to murmuring. This was a very serious thing, and it carries important lessons for us.

Num 11:1 And when the people complained, it displeased the LORD: and the LORD heard it; and his anger was kindled; and the fire of the LORD burnt among them, and consumed them that were in the uttermost parts of the camp.

We can be sure that the Lord is displeased with many of the criticizing, complaining saints today. They are everlastingly finding fault, and nothing seems to please them.



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Numbers 11: “Quailing” the Rebellion

Num 11:4 And the mixt multitude that was among them fell a lusting: and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat?

Num 11:5 We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick:

Num 11:6 But now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes.

There are “mixed multitudes” in every church: still with one foot in the “world,” not fully committed, indefinite pedigree.... And, complaining is contagious...



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Numbers 11: “Quailing” the Rebellion

Num 11:7 And the manna was as coriander seed, and the colour thereof as the colour of bdellium.

Num 11:8 And the people went about, and gathered it, and ground it in mills, or beat it in a mortar, and baked it in pans, and made cakes of it: and the taste of it was as the taste of fresh oil.

Num 11:9 And when the dew fell upon the camp in the night, the manna fell upon it.

And when the dew fell upon the camp in the night, the manna fell upon it. Deuteronomy; their feet did not swell; they did not get beriberi from eating the manna; manna had all the necessary vitamins in it; it was God’s food; a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ.



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Numbers 11: “Quailing” the Rebellion

Manna

- Man hu’, “What is it?”
- It was in thin flakes, white like coriander seed (an herb), looked like resin, tasted like honey wafers: like “something made with olive oil.”
- An omer (two quarts) kept in a jar in/near the Ark of the Covenant in the Holy of Holies
- Manna was supplied until the nation came to Gilgal, where they began to eat the produce of the land (Joshua 5:12)

The only contents in the ark were the two stone tablets of the Law (2 Corinthians 5:10). The author of Hebrews wrote that the ark also contained Aaron’s rod and a pot of manna (Hebrews 9:4). This is nowhere attested in the Old Testament (Exodus 16:33-34 and Numbers 17:10 state the rod and manna were placed in front of the tabernacle, not in the ark).



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Numbers 11: “Quailing” the Rebellion

Num 11:10 Then Moses heard the people weep throughout their families, every man in the door of his tent: and the anger of the LORD was kindled greatly; Moses also was displeased.

Num 11:11 And Moses said unto the LORD, Wherefore hast thou afflicted thy servant? and wherefore have I not found favour in thy sight, that thou layest the burden of all this people upon me?

Num 11:12 Have I conceived all this people? have I begotten them, that thou shouldest say unto me, Carry them in thy bosom, as a nursing father beareth the sucking child, unto the land which thou swarest unto their fathers?

Num 11:13 Whence should I have flesh to give unto all this people? for they weep unto me, saying, Give us flesh, that we may eat.

Num 11:14 I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me.



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Numbers 11: “Quailing” the Rebellion

Num 11:15 And if thou deal thus with me, kill me, I pray thee, out of hand, if I have found favour in thy sight; and let me not see my wretchedness.

Num 11:16 And the LORD said unto Moses, Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and officers over them; and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may stand there with thee.

Num 11:17 And I will come down and talk with thee there: and I will take of the spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone.

These 70 ultimately may have become the Sanhedrin (which has recently been again established in Israel.) This “committee” later crucified their Messiah!



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Numbers 11: “Quailing” the Rebellion

Num 11:18 And say thou unto the people, Sanctify yourselves against to morrow, and ye shall eat flesh: for ye have wept in the ears of the LORD, saying, Who shall give us flesh to eat? for it was well with us in Egypt: therefore the LORD will give you flesh, and ye shall eat.

Num 11:19 Ye shall not eat one day, nor two days, nor five days, neither ten days, nor twenty days;

Num 11:20 But even a whole month, until it come out at your nostrils, and it be loathsome unto you: because that ye have despised the LORD which is among you, and have wept before him, saying, Why came we forth out of Egypt?

Psalms 106:15: “And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul. ”



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Numbers 11: “Quailing” the Rebellion

Num 11:21 And Moses said, The people, among whom I am, are six hundred thousand footmen; and thou hast said, I will give them flesh, that they may eat a whole month.

Num 11:22 Shall the flocks and the herds be slain for them, to suffice them? or shall all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them, to suffice them?

YOU NEVER NEED TO ASK GOD – “HOW”



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Numbers 11: “Quailing” the Rebellion

Num 11:23 And the LORD said unto Moses, Is the LORD'S hand waxed short? thou shalt see now whether my word shall come to pass unto thee or not.

Num 11:24 And Moses went out, and told the people the words of the LORD, and gathered the seventy men of the elders of the people, and set them round about the tabernacle.

Php 4:6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.



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Numbers 11: “Quailing” the Rebellion

11:25 And the LORD came down in a cloud, and spake unto him, and took of the spirit that was upon him, and gave it unto the seventy elders: and it came to pass, that, when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, and did not cease.

Num 11:26 But there remained two of the men in the camp, the name of the one was Eldad, and the name of the other Medad: and the spirit rested upon them; and they were of them that were written, but went not out unto the tabernacle: and they prophesied in the camp.

Num 11:27 And there ran a young man, and told Moses, and said, Eldad and Medad do prophesy in the camp.

Num 11:28 And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of Moses, one of his young men, answered and said, My lord Moses, forbid them.

Num 11:29 And Moses said unto him, Enviest thou for my sake? would God that all the LORD'S people were prophets, and that the LORD would put his spirit upon them!



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Numbers 11: “Quailing” the Rebellion

Num 11:30 And Moses gat him into the camp, he and the elders of Israel.

Num 11:31 And there went forth a wind from the LORD, and brought quails from the sea, and let them fall by the camp, as it were a day's journey on this side, and as it were a day's journey on the other side, round about the camp, and as it were two cubits high upon the face of the earth.

Num 11:32 And the people stood up all that day, and all that night, and all the next day, and they gathered the quails: he that gathered least gathered ten homers: and they spread them all abroad for themselves round about the camp.

Num 11:33 And while the flesh was yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed, the wrath of the LORD was kindled against the people, and the LORD smote the people with a very great plague.

10 Homers = 86 gallons (without refrigeration)



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Numbers 11: “Quailing” the Rebellion

Num 11:34 And he called the name of that place Kibrothhattaavah: because there they buried the people that lusted.

Num 11:35 And the people journeyed from Kibrothhattaavah unto Hazeroth; and abode at Hazeroth.

Kibroth Hattaavah (“graves of craving”): because there they buried the people who had craved other food. Paul later said of the enemies of Christ, “Their god is their stomach” (Philippians 3:9). No doubt terrified by their experience there, the people moved on to Hazeroth (possibly present-day Ain Khadra), just south of the Desert of Paran.



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Numbers 12: Miriam’s Murmuring

*Num 12:1 And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married:
for he had married an Ethiopian woman.*

Not Zipporah, the daughter of the priest of Midian – she would be a Midianite. The last we hear of Zipporah is when her father brought her to Moses at Mount Sinai (Exodus 18:2). The Ethiopian (Cushite his 2nd wife). Bible is silent. Some scholars think that when Moses and the Egyptian army besieged the capital city of the Ethiopians, Meroe (Saba), the daughter of the king of Ethiopia, Tharbis, fell in love with Moses. She asked Moses to marry her. Moses agreed on the condition that she delivered the Ethiopians into his hand. This would have been before Moses fled Egypt. Scholars think that when Moses went back to free the Israelites the Ethiopian women left with Moses out of Egypt. Other scholars think that Zipporah had died, and Moses then married the Ethiopian. This is unclear by scripture.



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Numbers 12: Miriam’s Murmuring

Num 12:2 And they said, Hath the LORD indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us? And the LORD heard it.

Num 12:3 (Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.)

Num 12:4 And the LORD spake suddenly unto Moses, and unto Aaron, and unto Miriam, Come out ye three unto the tabernacle of the congregation. And they three came out.

Num 12:5 And the LORD came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam: and they both came forth.

Moses actually heard the voice of the Lord and saw His glory (Exodus 19:16-19; 24:17-18; 34:5-11)



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Numbers 12: Miriam’s Murmuring

Num 12:6 And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream.

Num 12:7 My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house.

Num 12:8 With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?

God says that He deals differently with Moses than with any other prophet: He speaks with Moses directly. God appeared in dreams to Abraham. He appeared in dreams to Joseph. But God dealt with Moses face-to-face. Later: “I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him” – Deuteronomy 18:18. That Prophet who would be like unto Moses is the Lord Jesus Christ.



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Numbers 12: Miriam’s Murmuring

Num 12:9 And the anger of the LORD was kindled against them; and he departed.

*Num 12:10 And the cloud departed from off the tabernacle; and, behold, Miriam became leprous, white as snow:
and Aaron looked upon Miriam, and, behold, she was leprous.*

*Num 12:11 And Aaron said unto Moses, Alas, my lord, I beseech thee, lay not the sin upon us, wherein we have
done foolishly, and wherein we have sinned.*

*Num 12:12 Let her not be as one dead, of whom the flesh is half consumed when he cometh out of his mother's
womb.*

Num 12:13 And Moses cried unto the LORD, saying, Heal her now, O God, I beseech thee.

*Num 12:14 And the LORD said unto Moses, If her father had but spit in her face, should she not be ashamed seven
days? let her be shut out from the camp seven days, and after that let her be received in again.*



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Numbers 12: Miriam’s Murmuring

Num 12:15 And Miriam was shut out from the camp seven days: and the people journeyed not till Miriam was brought in again.

Num 12:16 And afterward the people removed from Hazeroth, and pitched in the wilderness of Paran.

Why wasn’t Aaron struck with the leprosy? Because Aaron was God’s high priest. If he were leper, he could not serve in that capacity. Israel would have had no intercessor to stand between them and God. Miriam was the leader: Her name is mentioned first (and the verb Spake in verse 1 is in the feminine: “she Spake.”) Aaron was not a leader; he was a follower. He was weak and pliable (Exodus 32: the making of the golden calf. And God had already judged Aaron with death but later.)

What do these men have in common? Shammua; Shaphat; Igal; Caleb; Oshea; Palti; Gaddiel; Gaddi; Ammiel; Sethur; Nahbi: and Geel ... These are the names of the men which Moses sent to spy out the land. “And Moses called Oshea the son of Nun Jehoshua.” Oshea or Hoshea is Joshua. We will hear more of these two remarkable men who brought in the minority report.



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Miriam “ The Complainer” – Let’s Look At Paul’s Letter to Phillipians 2:1-18

Php 2:1 If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies,

Php 2:2 Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

Php 2:3 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

Php 2:4 Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

Php 2:5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

Php 2:6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: me.



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Miriam “ The Complainer” – Let’s Look At Paul’s Letter to Phillipians 2:1-18

Php 2:7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

Php 2:8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Php 2:9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

Php 2:10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

Php 2:11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
Lights in the World



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Miriam “ The Complainer” – Let’s Look At Paul’s Letter to Phillipians 2:1-18

Php 2:12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

Php 2:13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

Php 2:14 Do all things without murmurings and disputings:

Php 2:15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;

Php 2:16 Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.

Php 2:17 Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all.

Php 2:18 For the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me.



God Is Government

Isaiah 33:22

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LORD is our lawgiver, the LORD
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Miriam “ The Complainer” – Let’s Look At Paul’s Letter to Phillipians 2:1-18

HOW TO LIVE IN A CROOKED AND PERVERTED GENERATION – WHERE WE ARE

A little bit of history about that seemingly obscure little fountain town was that 42 years before Christ, 42 BC, one of the greatest battles in Roman history was fought there; and when I say a great battle, I mean 200,000 men engaged in war: 110,000 on one side and 90,000 on the other side, and 40,000 casualties. It was called the Battle of Philippi. It really reflected the Roman Revolution. It was Antonian Caesar with 110,000 against Brutus and Cassius with 90,000.

When the battle was over it was the end of the Roman Republic and the beginning of the massive Roman Empire. As a result of that many soldiers settled in Philippi; it was a very tough town, pagan to the bone. And if you were a citizen of Philippi, you were given status as a Roman citizen. It reflected all the paganism of Rome, all the idolatry; it was a crooked and perverse place. And the Lord led the apostle Paul to establish the first church in Europe in Philippi on his second missionary journey. You remember the story, right? Acts 16, they put him in jail; and he was singing with Barnabas in the jail, and they were released from jail, and that first church was founded.



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You will notice in verse 15 that we live in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. That is not only an apt description of our time in history, but it also suits all of history. Every generation is to some degree or another a manifestation of the crookedness and the perversity of the human heart. We are seeing it in our time very boldly. What this text says to us is that we have the responsibility in this crooked and perverse generation to act as the children of God and to shine as luminaries, or lights, in the world. That’s why we’re here. God understands that it’s a crooked and perverse generation.

Now we also know that we’re experiencing divine judgment. God has turned us over to a sexual revolution, a homosexual revolution, and a reprobate mind, Romans 1. So, we know the nation is under judgment and under wrath, and part of that wrath is now going to be unleashed by the very people who rule us. So how do we respond? What’s to be our reaction to all of this? It does give us a sense of fear about the bleakness of what the future looks like for our children and our grandchildren as we see the sins of this generation being visited on the following generations into the future.



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The believers there were desperately poor; all you have to do is look at 2 Corinthians chapter 8 and you will read there about the poor saints of Macedonia. That would be the Philippians. They were desperately poor. Paul says they were generous, but they gave out of their deep poverty. They were literally swimming in a sea of paganism, and a coarse and gross culture largely influenced by ex-soldiers. When the church was planted by the apostle Paul, it was assaulted and attacked.

Back in chapter 1, verse 28, Paul says, “Don’t be alarmed by your opponents. Don’t be alarmed by your opponents – which is a sign of destruction for them, but of salvation for you, and that too, from God. For to you it has been granted for Christ’s sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake, experiencing the same conflict which you saw in me, and now hear to be in me.” Don’t be alarmed by persecution. You’ve been granted for Christ’s sake to suffer.



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So, this is a church isolated in the Roman world, the only church in Europe, in a sea of paganism. To make matters worse, the church was attacked by false teachers. Look at chapter 3, verse 2: “Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the false circumcision.” Jewish legalists had come and attacked. Down in verse 18, “Many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you weeping, they are enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose god is their appetite, and whose glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things.” Their glory is in their shame. They boast about their wickedness.

This is a poor church. This is a persecuted church. This is a church that is being assaulted by false teachers. This is also a church struggling mightily with discord and disunity; and we’re certainly familiar with that.



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That phrase “crooked and perverse generation” was used by our Lord. It’s recorded in Matthew chapter 17, and then again in Luke 9, that our Lord said to the Jews of His day, “You are an unbelieving and perverted generation.” This is a general description, certainly for the world. “Crooked,” you notice in verse 15, is the Greek word skolios from which you get scoliosis of the spine, a twisting and curvature. It means to be bent. It means to be twisted. It means to be deviated from the standard. This is a generation of people who are twisted in terms of truth and virtue.

Listen to Proverbs 2:11, “Discretion will guard you, understanding will watch over you, to deliver you from the way of evil, from the man who speaks perverse things; from those who leave the paths of uprightness to walk in the ways of darkness; who delight in doing evil and rejoice in the perversity of evil; whose paths are crooked, and who are devious in their ways.” Way back in the book of Proverbs we find that that is the way the world was then, as it was in Paul’s day and our Lord’s day, and as it is now. Proverbs 21:8 says, “The way of the guilty is crooked, crooked.”



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“Perverse” is diastrephō. It means to distort. It’s two ways of saying the same thing. First word means to twist; the next one, to distort. So that’s where we are. So why would we expect anything other than what we’re seeing?

Our country, our nation, and our world has gotten back to sort of square one in its crookedness and perversity by systematically eliminating morality and religion. The apostle Paul is drawing that indictment. That phrase, “crooked and perverse generation,” comes right out of Deuteronomy chapter 32 – and we’ll see that in a bit; and it was essentially the reference that our Lord was speaking of in Matthew 17 and Luke 9. So, from the history of Israel and from the words of Jesus indicting the Israelites of His day, Paul takes a phrase and uses it to define the godless world of the early church: “They’re twisted and perverted.”



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The term “generation” has the idea not so much of a nation or a race as of those who are alive at a given time: all the people of a given kind and a given period, all the wicked God-haters. So that’s where we live, that’s where we are. And this is exactly where the Lord wants us to be.

You know, when our Lord was praying His great prayer in John 17, verse 15, this is what He says to the Father concerning us: “I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one.” Did you get that. “I do not ask You, Father, to take them out of the world, but keep them from the evil one. Yes, they’re not of the world, as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth. As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.” So, He’s saying, “I don’t want You to take them out of the world, I want You to protect them from the god of this world, Satan. I want You to protect them by the truth.”



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Who are we in this crooked and perverse generation? Well, that also is in verse 15. We are children of God above reproach, and we are lights in the world. That’s who we are, we have two identifications there.

We are children of God. That is to say we are not the children of the devil like the rest of the world. We understand that the devil’s kingdom and the devil’s children behave like their father, John 8, right? That passage in John 8 is so definitive, it’s amazing how many times in preaching we find ourselves having to go back to John chapter 8, verse 42.

“Jesus says to the Jews, ‘You are doing the deeds of your father.’ They said to Him, ‘We were not born of fornication; we have one Father: God.’ Jesus said to them, ‘If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and have come from God, for I have not even come on My own initiative, but He sent Me. Why do you not understand what I’m saying? It is because you cannot hear My word. You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning and doesn’t stand in the truth because there’s no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he’s a liar and the father of lies. But because I speak the truth, you do not believe Me.’”



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Do you get that? If one thing is characteristic of the world is that they are killers and liars. They’re killers and liars because their father the devil is the arch-murderer and the arch-liar. Are you surprised when you hear lies from people? Don’t be. Their father is the force in them that justifies lying.

We’re children of God, on the other hand, very clear separation. And because we’re children of God, we hear God’s word, and we follow His word, and we obey His word. We have become children of God by birth, and we have become children of God by adoption. We’re covered both ways.

John 1:12, “As many as received Him,” – that is Christ – “to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name.” This is repeated often in the New Testament. We are children of God, and we are in the middle of the children of the devil.



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First John 3:10, “By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who doesn’t practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who doesn’t love his brother.” So, where you see a lack of love and you see sin, you have a child of the devil. Children of the devil have been in charge of things in this culture since the beginning. First John 3:1, “See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are. For this reason, the world does not know us, because it didn’t know Him.”

We’re the children of God, and they don’t know that, because the glorious manifestation of the children of God hasn’t happened yet. Romans 8:17, “If children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ.” Romans 8:16, “The Spirit testifies with our spirit that we are the children of God.” So here we are, who we are (the children of God), exactly where we are supposed to be (in a crooked and perverted generation).

And, secondly, we are lights in the world; *phōstēr* is the Greek word. It’s used of the sun and the moon and the stars. We are the luminaries. As the sun, moon and stars are the luminaries that light the darkness in creation, we shine as the luminaries in the darkness of Satan’s kingdom.



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I want to establish something, so I want you to go back to John 18 for a moment because I want to reinforce something to you, “How do we live?” because this is challenging for us since we live essentially in a parallel universe. We live in a parallel universe, literally a universe that the unbelieving world doesn’t understand, doesn’t connect with, doesn’t relate to, because they’re dead in trespasses and sin. And we’re alive to God; we live in a completely different realm.

Listen to the words of Jesus in chapter 18 of John, verse 37. The question came up back in verse 33 about whether Jesus was a king, and it was sarcastic on Pilate’s part. “So, Pilate said to Him, ‘So You are a king?’ Jesus answered, ‘You say correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.’ Pilate said to Him, ‘What is truth? What is truth?’” “You are a king.”



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But go back to verse 36. “Yes, My kingdom is not of this world.” At the end of that verse, “My kingdom is not of this realm. My kingdom,” His kingdom, kingdom that belongs to Him. They tried to make Him a King, John 6:15, He didn’t allow it. And here’s what He is saying, listen very carefully: “His kingdom has no connection to the kingdoms of this world.” Did you get that? It has no connection. The whole world lies in the lap of the evil one. We have been delivered from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God’s dear Son, Colossians 1. Let me see if I can spell it out.

The kingdom that belongs to Christ transcends the world. It does not derive its power from the world. It does not derive its success from the world. It does not derive its reality, its origin, its nature, its extent, its duration from any created thing. Christ’s royal title, royal authority, and sovereign power are not derived or dependent on any created person, institution, force, energy, work, effort, or right. His dominion is eternal and derived solely from His own glorious nature as the eternal Son. His rule is neither given nor taken away by anyone. His power and authority cannot, by any effort, by any assault, be diminished, limited, altered, removed, replaced. His rule is complete, comprehensive, everlasting, over time and eternity and every soul; and none of that power comes from any created source. One day He will rule over all creation with a rod of iron in truth and righteousness, Psalm 2 and Revelation 20.



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The Lord gave Pilate a kingdom manifesto. His kingdom will triumph over the whole creation of kingdoms. It’s spelled out magnificently, I know you’ll remember, in the eleventh chapter of the book of Revelation – so glorious. Twenty-four elders on their thrones fall on their faces and say, “We give You thank, O Lord God the Almighty, who was” – or were – “because You have taken Your great power and had begun to reign. And the nations were enraged, and Your wrath came. And the time came for the dead to be judged, and the time to reward your bond-servants, the prophets and the saints and those who fear Your name, the small and the great, and destroy those who destroy the earth. And the temple of God which is in heaven was opened; and the ark of His covenant appeared in His temple. There were flashes of lightning and sounds of peals of thunder and an earthquake and a great hailstorm.”



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What’s that signaling? Go back to verse 15: “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever.” That’s coming. He will halt the existence of all other kings and all other kingdoms, will rule as King of kings and Lord of lords. After that, He will create the new heaven and the new earth, as we read in Isaiah 65 and 66 and Revelation 21, and rule sovereignly forever.

For now, the kingdom of God not yet in its millennial form, not yet in its eternal form – a new heaven and a new earth – is a spiritual kingdom. It’s a spiritual reality separate from above and beyond all earthly power and all earthly authority. I’m saying to you: nothing – any person, persons, powers on earth – do/has any effect on His kingdom. Doesn’t matter who’s in Congress, who’s in the Senate, who’s in the Presidency; it has no connection to His eternal glorious kingdom, which He rules alone as a triune God.



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For now, the kingdom of God, the kingdom of Christ is a spiritual reality separate from all other kingdoms. The realities of His kingdom cannot be propagated or protected or altered by any earthly governmental power. The realities of His kingdom cannot be harmed. They cannot be hindered. They cannot be limited by any power. No laws can be made that will make His kingdom more successful, more compulsory, more effective. Nothing any government or any ruler or any person or persons can do by their temporal forces does anything to advance His kingdom or diminish it.

For now, His kingdom is in the hearts of those who believe in Him, right? He’s our King. And the church is where His kingdom becomes visible, and it’s built, as He said, on truth.

So, we start with that foundation. So where we are (exactly where God wants us to be), who we are (exactly who He’s redeemed us to be). How do we live in this parallel universe? Well, There are several things you could look at. If you go back to pick up some imperatives, go back to verse 5. Here are imperatives, or commands. This would answer the question, “How do we live?” “Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who humbled Himself.”



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So how are we to live? We’re to live in humility. We’re to have the same attitude that our Lord had when He emptied Himself and took on the form of a slave. And then because He humbled Himself, God highly exalted Him. So, the first imperative in the section we read is, “Have this attitude,” this attitude of utter and total humility.

You say life is getting hard in this situation. It’s likely we’ll all be humbled. But that’s a good thing, because whoever is humbled the Lord exalts. We know all of that. Second Corinthians 8:9, “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, how that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might be made rich.” He humbled Himself, and by that humbling was highly exalted, and accomplished God’s glorious salvation purpose.

In verses 3 and 4 of Philippians 2, which we are very familiar with and mentioned a few moments ago, “We are called to sacrifice for one another.” First Peter chapter 2 we’re told that Christ died as a sacrifice not only to atone for us, but as an example, as an example of willing suffering for divine purposes. James 4:10, “Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.” Take the suffering. Peter says, “Cast your care on the Lord, commit yourself to Him.”



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So, the first imperative is having this attitude: humility. The second imperative is back in verse 12: work out your salvation with fear and trembling. Work out your salvation – present middle verb, reflexive: “Work out your own salvation. Bring to completion the saving work.” How do you do that? Well, this is talking about holiness and sanctification. Pursue sanctification. Borrow – if you will – those wonderful words from Paul in chapter 3 of Phillipians where he says, verse 12, “Not that I have already obtained it or already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. I press on to the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ.” This is Paul saying, “I pursue holiness. I pursue Christlikeness.”

But the verse tells you that, because verse 15 says that you are to prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent. So, as you work out your salvation, verse 12, he says this: “So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, work out your salvation.” And how do you work your salvation out? By obedience. By obedience. By pursuing a blameless, innocent, virtuous life.



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There’s an element of worship here: “with fear and trembling,” verse 12. So that’s an imperative, it fits us all. Pursue the completion, *katergazomai*. It means basically to bring it to completion. Pursue your holiness. Pursue your holiness. Is that realistic? How do we do that? It is realistic, because at the subsequent verse 13 it says, “It’s God who is at work in you both to will and to work for His good pleasure.” His good pleasure means His enjoyment.

You can pursue holiness because God is at work in you. He’s at work producing that holiness. It’s possible, and it’s commanded. So how do we live in the world? We live humbly and we live holy.

There are couple of others that are mentioned at the end of the text. Go down to verse 16. The NAS says, “Holding fast the word of life.” I would prefer, “Holding out the word of life, holding up the word of life, holding forth the word of life,” because it’s talking about basically proclaiming the gospel. The word of life could be Christ. The word of life could be the Holy Spirit who’s the Spirit of life. The word of life could be the Scripture. The word of life is actually the sum of all the Trinity. God, Christ, the Holy Spirit give life; that life comes through the gospel.



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“I’m rejoicing in my sacrifice.” Back to verse 17: “I’m rejoicing in my sacrifice.” He uses all sacrificial language there. He’s like a drink offering poured out. It would be an animal burning on an altar, and they would bring wine and they would dump it on top of the burning animal, and it would send up smoke. Paul says literally, “I’m offering my life as a sacrifice and a sweet aroma to God.”

“In my sacrifice I find joy. I rejoice,” he says. “I rejoice in the sacrifice I’m making for you. And I urge you, rejoice in the same way.” You’re going to make sacrifices; they’re going to be required. Rejoice. Rejoice.

So how do we live in this crooked and perverse generation? We live humbly, holy, proclaiming the gospel, and joyful. All those are essential, but those are really not the point. I’m going to give you the point now.

Go back to verse 14. Here is the imperative that’s connected to verse 15: “Do all things without grumbling or disputing.” Now there’s something very practical. Stop complaining. This is how you prove yourselves to be blameless, innocent children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world. Stop complaining. Yes, be humble. Yes, be holy. Yes, be faithful to testify to the gospel. Yes, be joyful. But the priority here is, “Stop complaining.” Both are in the plural: grumbings and complaining's, or disputing's.



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In fact, grumblings is an onomatopoeic in the Greek. It’s, “Rah-rah-rah-rah-rah-rah.” It’s one of those expressions of discontent and dissatisfaction with low guttural sounds. “What are you talking about, complaining against the government?” No. Stop complaining to God about the situation. You are who you are, you are where you are, and you are not to complain, because this is where God has you. Don’t argue with God over His will. Don’t argue with God over His purposes.

Paul borrowed this phrase; and now you can do what I mentioned we would do earlier. Go to Deuteronomy 32, Deuteronomy 32. Moses at the end of his life, he’s going to die, and he’s giving a message of warning. We’ll just look at the first few verses: “Give ear, O heavens, and let me speak; and let the earth hear the words of my mouth. Let my teaching drop as the rain, my speech distill as the dew, as the droplets on the fresh grass and as the showers on the herb. For I proclaim the name of the Lord; ascribe greatness to our God! The Rock! His work is perfect, all His ways are just; a God of faithfulness and without injustice, righteous and upright is He.” Wow. That’s our God. Did you get that?



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The greatness of our God: the Rock, the immovable one. His work is perfect, His ways are just. He’s a God of faithfulness, without injustice, righteous and upright is He.” On the other hand, “The people have acted corruptly toward Him, they are not His children, because of their defect; but are a perverse and crooked generation.” That’s where that comes from. And Moses is indicting Israel: “You have become a crooked and perverted nation.”

What was the evidence of that? Well, there were a lot of things; certainly, plenty of idolatry. But in that same chapter, verse 51, “You broke faith with Me. You broke faith with Me.” What does He mean? “You stopped trusting Me. You stopped trusting Me.” That’s familiar stuff. This is at the end of the forty years.

Go to the beginning. Go back to Exodus 5. Who’s the first complainer? Exodus 5:22 and 23: Moses, Moses who gives this speech started out as a complainer. Exodus 14 and subsequently – I don’t have time to go through them all – the Israelites complained about everything: “Why did you lead us out here? Why are we in the wilderness? We don’t like the food. We don’t have any water.” Endless complaining at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end. Even the people closest to Moses, Miriam and Aaron, Numbers chapter 12, were complaining so that God struck Miriam with leprosy.



God Is Government

Isaiah 33:22

*“For the LORD is our judge, the
LORD is our lawgiver, the LORD
is our king; he will save us.”*

Miriam “ The Complainer” – Let’s Look At Paul’s Letter to Phillipians 2:1-18

HOW TO LIVE IN A CROOKED AND PERVERTED GENERATION – “REJOICE IN THE SAME WAY.”

First Corinthians 10 Paul says, “This happened as examples unto us.” Don’t complain against God. Don’t complain against God.

You read the book of Exodus and you’ll see it, a lot of it. You read the book of Numbers and you’ll see more of it. But let me read you some summations just in kind of wrapping up from the Psalms.

In Psalm 106, maybe verse 19: “They made a calf in Horeb, they worshiped a molten image. Thus, they exchanged their glory for the image of an ox that eats grass. They forgot God their Savior, who had done great things in Egypt, wonders in the land of Ham, awesome things by the Red Sea. Therefore, He said that He would destroy them, had not Moses His chosen seed stood in the breach before Him, to turn away His wrath from destroying them. They despised the pleasant land,” – the land of promise – “they didn’t believe in His word, they grumbled in their tents, they grumbled in their tents.” That’s familiar stuff. Some of you I’m afraid have been grumbling in your tent because you don’t like the way things have gone.



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Psalm 78, verse 17, “Yet they still continued to sin against Him, to rebel against the Most High in the desert. In their heart they put God to the test by asking food according to their desire. Then they spoke against God; they said, ‘Can God prepare a table in the wilderness? Behold, He struck the rock so that waters gushed out, the streams were overflowing; can He give bread also? Will He provide meat for His people?’ Therefore, the Lord heard and was full of wrath; and a fire was kindled against Jacob and anger mounted against Israel because they didn’t believe in God, they didn’t trust in His salvation.”

Down in verse 33: “He brought their days to an end in futility and their years in sudden terror.” Verse 40: “How often they rebelled against Him in the wilderness and grieved Him in the desert! Again and again they tempted God, and pained the Holy One of Israel. They did not remember His power, the day when He redeemed them from the adversary.”

Do you actually think that anybody in this world could do anything to harm the church of Jesus Christ? God is our protector. Stop grumbling. Stop complaining. Stop questioning the will of God. Stop questioning the work of God. His work is for us, it is in us, and it is from us. And what the world needs to see is humble, holy testimony and joy from the children of God who shine as lights in the world. And then we will be the blameless, innocent children of God above reproach, shining as lights in the world.



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I want to close our Philippians review with two, two sources of divine revelation that’s going to encourage us. The first one is from David, Psalm 37: “Do not fret because of evildoers, be not envious toward wrongdoers. For they will wither quickly like the grass and fade like the green herb. Trust in the Lord and do good; dwell in the land and cultivate faithfulness. Delight yourself in the Lord; and He will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord, trust also in Him, and He will do it. He will bring forth your righteousness as the light and your judgment as the noonday.

“Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him; do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, because of the man who carries out wicked schemes. Cease from anger and forsake wrath; do not fret; it leads only to evildoing. For evildoers will be cut off,” – I love this – “but those who wait for the Lord, they will” – what? “inherit the land. Yet a little while and the wicked man will be no more; and you will look carefully for his place, and he will not be there. But the humble will inherit the land and delight themselves in abundant prosperity.”



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And then that from David; this from Peter, 2 Peter 3: “Don’t let this one fact escape your notice,” – verse 8 – “beloved: with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day. The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but all to come to repentance.” The Lord can’t come and make things right until He’s gathered everybody in who’s been chosen.

“The day of the Lord will come. It’ll come like a thief in the night, and the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, the earth and its works will be burned up. Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be?” This whole thing is headed for destruction. “What kind of person should you be? “Holy in conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! But according to His promise we’re looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells. Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless.” Don’t complain against God; everything is on schedule. Humility, holiness, proclamation, joy, and trust.



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NEST SESSION

- **Read Chapters 13-14**
- **Read Hebrews Chapters 3 & 4**