

God's News In The News

Week One Hundred Sixty-One

Prophetic Encouragement: God Always Finds A Way

Really Dark Times

Christianity was born in very dark times. And it prospered in very dark times. Roman rule was domineering, the political landscape was controlled by those who respected Rome more than God just to "keep the peace." At any given moment the appointed ruler of the area, Herod could go on a lunatic rage and kill your children if he felt threatened by one of them being the Jewish messiah. This paranoid despot would kill even his own family if he thought they wanted his position. Add to this that the conditions of the temple were not pristine either. Jesus Himself condemned the money for the extortion and shenanigans going on there. You're taxed everywhere and for everything it seemed. Taxes were obscene and heretical. While Rome made traveling easier, the risks of doing so are seen in the parable of the Samaritan who was beaten and left for dead along the road. And yet it was into this world that Jesus came.

It Was The Perfect Time

But when the right time came, God sent his Son, born of a woman, subject to the law. (Gal 4:4, NLT)

It would seem that We and God have a different definition of what the right time means. If spreading the Gospel to the most people was needed, we live in that time now. Communication is easy and in most cases, instant. If quick and fast travel was of paramount importance, again, we live in a day and age when you can go to the ends of the earth in less than a day. So just how was Jesus born in the perfect time? Hindsight is truly 20/20 and we see that Rome had done all the heavy lifting for Christianity to grow and prosper. There were roads everywhere and shipping lines that were protected by the empire. There was a common language as well. Jesus taught at a time of a religious dry time. People were questioning their gods as they were of no help against the mighty Roman Empire. Oh, did I also mention that Bible prophecy pinpointed to this exact time for Him to be born and live? **Daniel 9:24-27** is where you can find that incredible portion of Scripture. Overall, what we think of as ideal circumstances is based on our perception of things. And right now, we think things are pretty grim as well.

But What About Paul?

I mention the great apostle because he went from the penthouse to the outhouse in terms of conditions of living. One moment he was rich, well-educated, and holding the power of life and death in his hands and the next he was on the ground, blind and running for his life. He spent the better part of his remaining years going from town to town, preaching to people who hated his guts or thought he was a lunatic, or worse a fool for putting his life in danger for his message. Here is how he described his life living for Jesus:

...I have worked much harder, been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again. 24 Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. 25 Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was pelted with stones, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, 26 I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my fellow Jews, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false believers. 27 I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked. (2 Cor 11:23-27, TLB)

I'd say he'd been through some tough times, wouldn't you agree?

And Yet, He Served

We often forget that so many of our favorite Bible verses, ones we put in picture frames and hang on our walls came from the Apostle Paul, written when he was in prison. He willingly went there since he could have easily asserted his rights as a Roman citizen at any given point and avoided it. We like to recite these verses, often forgetting where they were written:

Phil 4:4 – *Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!*

Phil 4:6-7 – *Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

Phil 4:12 – *I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want.*

Phil 4:13 – *I can do everything through him who gives me strength.*

Phil 4:19 – *And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.*

How was he treated by these Philippians? He was arrested and beaten severely. And he then wrote to them from a dark prison where he had limited light and it was wet and cold. Context is king when we talk about these verses.

Encouraging To The Very End

Paul wrote to his protégé Timothy from Rome, still in a prison, but this time with a death sentence hanging over him. He encouraged him to do as he had done and keep the faith in trying times:

Herald and preach the Word! Keep your sense of urgency [stand by, be at hand and ready], whether the opportunity seems to be favorable or unfavorable. [Whether it is convenient or inconvenient, whether it is welcome or unwelcome, you as preacher of the Word are to show people in what way their lives are wrong.] And convince them, rebuking and correcting, warning and urging and encouraging them, being unflagging and inexhaustible in patience and teaching ... For I am already about to be sacrificed [my life is about to be poured out as a drink offering]; the time of my [spirit's] release [from the body] is at hand and I will soon go free.

7 I have fought the good (worthy, honorable, and noble) fight, I have finished the race, I have kept (firmly held) the faith. (2 Tim 4:2, 6-7, AMPC)

You see, Paul had eternal glasses on when he wrote this. He knew as much as anyone, that God ordered his life, orchestrated his steps, and led him from a man who killed His children to an apostle who cared for them until his dying breath.

We Don't Need More Platitudes

What of us today? It seems like Satan has the upper hand and is using his dominance in the social and political arena, much like the Romans in the days of early Christianity. More and more we see people who are supposed to know better, people who know their Bibles, giving their blessings on entertainment and activities that portray sinful behavior and call it “cute.” Or worse, there are those who openly call evil good and encourage those who live in those sins to continue with their blessings. Ministers that should know better are kowtowing to the satanic agendas because they want to be seen as loving and accepting, twisting and perverting the very Bible they say they also love. And then, at least here in the land of the free where are supposed to be guaranteed life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness and where we have rights to freedom to freely worship the way we please, we are experiencing less and less of them. Freedom of speech is blocked for those of us who hold views that are contrary to the politburo and it's followers. It

is getting darker by the second and more oppressive as well. We don't need more platitudes or trite phrases to buck us up. We need something more solid, sturdy, and secure.

God Found A Way For Those Who Went Before Us

I could go down this list of those heroes of the faith listed in **Hebrews 11** and still not be done with examples of men and women who were not worthy of this world that He provided for and cleared the path for their destinies to be fulfilled. From Abel, to Enoch, to Noah, to Abraham, to Sarah, to Jacob, to Joseph, to Moses, to Rahab, to Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel and all the prophets, and the list goes on and on. Rather than paraphrase the rest, here is the summation from that famous chapter:

These people all trusted God and as a result won battles, overthrew kingdoms, ruled their people well, and received what God had promised them; they were kept from harm in a den of lions 34 and in a fiery furnace. Some, through their faith, escaped death by the sword. Some were made strong again after they had been weak or sick. Others were given great power in battle; they made whole armies turn and run away. 35 And some women, through faith, received their loved ones back again from death. But others trusted God and were beaten to death, preferring to die rather than turn from God and be free—trusting that they would rise to a better life afterwards. 36 Some were laughed at and their backs cut open with whips, and others were chained in dungeons. 37-38 Some died by stoning and some by being sawed in two; others were promised freedom if they would renounce their faith, then were killed with the sword. Some went about in skins of sheep and goats, wandering over deserts and mountains, hiding in dens and caves. They were hungry and sick and ill-treated—too good for this world. 39 And these men of faith, though they trusted God and won his approval, none of them received all that God had promised them; 40 for God wanted them to wait and share the even better rewards that were prepared for us.

Heb 11:33-40, TLB)

We live the time that they hoped for and we can surely muster up the faith to overcome just like they did. In fact they are rooting for us as seen in **Hebrews 12:1**.

We Are Facing The Same

They may go by different names or be seen in different circumstances, but those heroes of the faith faced similar struggles. Daniel faced lions, we face the wolfs of wall street. The three Hebrew boys faced an idolatrous government that was resetting its ways, we face the World Economic Forum and their Great Reset. They also faced a fiery judgment, we face heated threats if we don't comply. They faced being thrown into prisons for crimes they didn't commit, some of us spent time in prison for trumped up charges as well, with many still there. They had the full weight of their rulers thrown at them, we see that as well with government overreach that continues to this day. They faced many things, but we also read that they were able to do this, as seen in the verses above, but I will quote again:

...Some were made strong again after they had been weak or sick. Others were given great power in battle; they made whole armies turn and run away. 35 And some women, through faith, received their loved ones back again from death.

That may not have happened yet, but we see evidence of it all over the globe.

God Always Finds A Way

Did you know that right now, there plans in place to continue to minister via the Internet even if current social media platforms censure us? Did you also know that ways to fund ministries are planned that won't be affected by the current digital currencies on the horizon? Did you know that real change is occurring even though we can't see it? Does this come as surprise for you? Does God having a plan that is bigger than any that the Devil and his minions come up with?

Well, it shouldn't if you know your Bible. God isn't taken off His game by technological advances, nor is he unable to supersede them. Viruses can't stop His will, nor can world leaders concoct schemes that He not only doesn't know about, nor can He topple and thwart. They only move when He allows them to and at no time is He losing to those moves. In fact, He is skillfully choreographing the game to His liking and His will and no mere human or even artificial intelligence using a quantum computer can outthink, outmaneuver, or overcome His will. It may look dark, but joy comes in the morning. Right now, there are slivers of light on the horizon, but we are too distracted by all the demonic skullduggery to notice it. Don't be dismayed, God is working to do His will. He ALWAYS finds a way. You can take that to the bank!