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“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet,
and a light unto my path.”

PSALM 119:105

As Yet



JOHN WEAVER

WEAVER BIBLE COLLEGE



It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed.

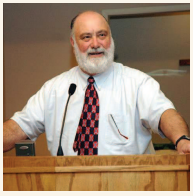
LAMENTATIONS 3:22, EXCERPT

The words 'as yet' can mark both an unfinished promise and a merciful delay. John Weaver considers God's faithfulness, the believer's inheritance, endurance in later life, and the opportunity for repentance. These messages invite readers to distinguish patient hope from careless presumption while responding faithfully to the time God gives.

“First, while we are alive, it is God's grace, God's mercy, and God's power that keep us alive and enable us to enjoy the life He gives us.”

JOHN WEAVER





John Weaver

John Weaver's sermons form the teaching collection presented by Weaver Bible College. This volume gathers his teaching from that collection.

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CHAPTER 1

As Yet

Part One of Three

Introduction: The Phrase 'As Yet'

In Exodus chapter 9, we read verse 17. We will come back and consider it in its context a little later. The title of the message today is “As Yet.” In fact, the next two messages will also be “As Yet.” God says to Pharaoh, “As yet exaltest thou thyself against my people that thou wilt not let them go.”

Have you ever noticed how frequently we use the term or phrase “as yet”? Oftentimes we answer questions with it. We say, “Nothing has happened as yet,” or, “Nothing has arrived as yet.”

I recently spoke to a young man whose wife was expecting. I asked, “What about the baby?” He responded, “Nothing as yet.” Every time we use the phrase, it is usually in the context of an expectation. We may say, “As yet nothing has been accomplished,” indicating that we expect something to be accomplished. We may say, “I’ve not made it rich as yet,” though we may expect to become rich, or, “I have not lost all the pounds I want to lose as yet.” Some

young men might say, “I have not found the girl of my dreams as yet.” They are expecting. As I was reading through the Bible, I saw this phrase, and a question entered my mind: How often do we use it, and how often is it used in the Bible?

A number of years ago, when Alice and I were very active in karate, the teacher was very flexible and powerful. He would demonstrate a kick, kata, maneuver, or exercise, and almost the entire class would say, “I can’t do that.” Then he would smile and say, “As yet.” After considerable exercise, stretching, training, and torture, we were able to do whatever he asked us to do. He always included that “as yet.”

The 'As Yet' of Presumption (Exodus 9:17)

Interestingly enough, it is used the same way in the Bible. It gives us an expectation every time it is used. So, when we look at verse 17, the first of two points is the “as yet” of presumption. God said to Pharaoh, “As yet exaltest thou thyself against My people that thou wilt not let them go.” The expectation on God’s part is that, after He is through with Pharaoh, Pharaoh will indeed let His people go.

The word “presumption” conveys the concept of that which is unwarrantable and unbecoming, or what we would call impertinent boldness. The Hebrew word for “exalt” means literally to exalt or lift up oneself and act like a superior. It also includes looking down upon someone, belittling them, and not holding them in high expectation. God was expecting that, when He got through with Pharaoh, all of that haughtiness would end.

Look back in your Bibles to Exodus chapter 5. Beginning with verse 1, we read: “And afterward Moses and Aaron went in and told Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness. And Pharaoh said, Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go.” Here is what he was saying: “I don't recognize God. I don't acknowledge Him. He is not my sovereign. He is not my superior. I am the sovereign. I am the superior.”

Pharaoh's Haughty Attitude and Bargaining with God

Pharaoh was exalting or lifting himself up above God. He would not admit that God was God and sovereign, nor confess and acknowledge that God was supreme over himself, his gods, and his people. In refusing to obey God, Pharaoh was indeed exalting himself and acting as a superior to God.

When God sent the plagues against Egypt, they were directed primarily against the false gods of Egypt. Exodus 12:12 says, “For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the Lord.”

Egypt was polytheistic, and each of these plagues was directed against a particular god of Egypt. The last plague was against Pharaoh, who claimed to be a god, because Pharaoh could not save his own child, much less the children of the other people in the land. God was not through with Pharaoh as yet. When God did get through with Pharaoh, he would be willing to let Israel go, and he would be willing to let them go on God's terms.

Most people want to bargain with God and make deals with Him. Even Pharaoh tried to set the terms and limits on several occasions. Man likes to dictate to God and wants things done on his terms. Of course, man's terms are always fruitless, useless, worthless, and pathetic, especially in light of God's divine sovereignty. The plagues irritated Pharaoh and affected his people as well.

In Exodus 8:28, Pharaoh tried to set the terms and limits: “And Pharaoh said, I will let you go, that ye may sacrifice to the Lord your God in the wilderness; only ye shall not go very far away: entreat for me.” In effect, he said, “You want to go three days' journey in the wilderness and sacrifice to the Lord? Fine. I'll let you go, only you cannot go very far away.” Pharaoh was saying, “I'm still in control. I set the terms. I set the limits. You may go and do this, but only on my terms and only on my grace.” He would have allowed them to go if they had left on his terms. God says no; that is not going to work.

In Exodus 10:8-11, Pharaoh continued trying to set the terms and limits: “And Moses and Aaron were brought again unto Pharaoh: and he said unto them, Go, serve the Lord your God: but who are

they that shall go? And Moses said, We will go with our young and with our old, with our sons and with our daughters, with our flocks and with our herds will we go; for we must hold a feast unto the Lord. And he said unto them, Let the Lord be so with you, as I will let you go, and your little ones: look to it; for evil is before you. Not so: go now ye that are men, and serve the Lord; for that ye did desire. And they were driven out from Pharaoh's presence." Pharaoh was willing to let them go, but only the men.

How many men are going to leave their wives and their children? Pharaoh is saying, "I can get you back. I am still in control as long as I can control your family. If you are not far away, I can bring you back. If I divide and conquer, I can bring you back as well. I am still in control."

Then, in verses 24 through 27, we see Pharaoh's third attempt to set the terms and limits: "And Pharaoh called unto Moses, and said, Go ye, serve the Lord; only let your flocks and your herds be stayed: let your little ones also go with you. And Moses said, Thou must give us also sacrifices and burnt offerings, that we may sacrifice unto the Lord our God. Our cattle also shall go with us; there shall not an hoof be left behind; for thereof must we take to serve the Lord our God; and we know not with what we must serve the Lord, until we come thither."

"But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let them go. And Pharaoh said unto him, Get thee from me, take heed to thyself, see my face no more; for in that day thou seest my face thou shalt die."

The third time Pharaoh was willing for the men, their wives, and their little ones to go, but their cattle and everything else had to remain behind. Here is something we need to learn: whoever controls your wealth controls your life. That is why you hear, "I don't care who makes the laws of a country, let me control the money." Whoever controls your wealth basically controls your life.

The Bible tells us in verse 27, "But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let them go." As you read through the book of Exodus, it is true that God hardened Pharaoh's heart. It is also

said that Pharaoh hardened his own heart. One's own hardening is the result of God's hardening that heart.

Look in Exodus chapter 9, verse 16. Here is what God told Pharaoh: "And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth." For this cause had He raised Pharaoh up. What cause? "For to shew in thee my power, and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth."

God's Sovereignty in Hardening Pharaoh's Heart

Now hold Exodus chapter 9 and turn to Romans chapter 9. I want you to see how the apostle Paul quotes from Exodus chapter 9. In Romans 9, verse 17, the apostle Paul says, "For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh..." Obviously, he is quoting from Exodus chapter 9: "For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth."

The apostle Paul is laying down a principle in Romans chapter 9, and that principle is simply this: God's grace does not necessarily depend upon anything but God's will. And that is true.

Albert Barnes, the commentator, said this, referring to Romans chapter 9: "This passage is designed to illustrate the doctrine that God shows mercy according to His sovereign pleasure by reference to one of the most extraordinary cases of hardness of heart which has ever occurred. The design is to show that God has a right to pass by those to whom He does not choose to show mercy and to place them in circumstances where they shall develop their true character and where in fact they shall become more hardened and be destroyed." That is exactly what God said to Pharaoh: "For this very cause have I raised thee up."

It is true that God hardened Pharaoh's heart, but it is also true that Pharaoh hardened his own heart. Pharaoh was showing his true colors and his true character because he was in rebellion against God and unwilling to submit to Him.

God specifically warns rulers, and in fact everyone, in Psalm 75:5: “Lift not up your horn on high: speak not with a stiff neck.” To lift up one’s horn is to lift up one’s power and oneself in arrogance and haughtiness. To speak with a stiff neck, in Scripture, demonstrates rebellion, hardness of head, refusal to listen, and absolute arrogance. You do not have to be a ruler to lift up your horn or speak with a stiff neck.

I have heard people say, “I don’t care what God says.” That is speaking with a stiff neck: “I’m not listening to Him. I’m going to do what I want to do anyhow.” Men always desire their wills above God’s will and their purpose above God’s purpose, and they will learn the hard way, like Pharaoh, that presumption is wicked.

God's Purposes in Allowing Wickedness

God had, and still has, two purposes in allowing the wicked temporarily to resist, disobey, and exalt themselves. We do not need to look far in this world for illustrations of wicked people who refuse to bow to God, listen to His Word, or heed it. Someone sent me word today that someone said, “Tell Brother Weaver I wish that he had the opportunity to preach to Congress.” I smiled. Certainly, I would take that opportunity—but how many of them would listen to me?

You follow what I'm saying? They could care less about the Scripture. They could care less about the Word of God. But God has two purposes in allowing the wicked to resist and to rebel against Him. God is going to demonstrate to them that they are absolutely nothing but mere men and they have no power in and of themselves. In fact if you look back whole Romans 9 we are going to come back there but look in your Bibles if you would please to Psalm 9 and verse 20. Psalm 9 and verse 20. Here is a very interesting verse. Psalm 9 verse 20. In fact let's read verse 19. Psalm 9 verse 19.

"Arise, O Lord; let not man prevail: let the heathen be judged in thy sight. Put them in fear, O Lord: that the nations may know themselves to be but men." So man is going to find out sooner or later he is not anything but a man. He is not God. He does not have supernatural power. He cannot do anything but die. Look in your Bibles to Psalm 82. Psalm 82 at verses 6 and 7. Now Psalm 82 is a wonderful psalm. It's actually a psalm to the judges, to the rulers. In

fact, let's read. It's very short. Let's begin with verse 1. Psalm 82, verse 1, "God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods." Now, he is not saying that there are other gods other than himself. The gods here are the rulers, those who are supposed to be ruling for Him. I can explain that a little bit later, but look at the context. "God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods."

"How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked?" So He is talking to the judges now.

Now God tells them what to do. "Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy. Deliver the poor and needy: rid them out of the hand of the wicked." And now look what God says concerning these judges and these rulers, "They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course." In other words, wicked rulers turn the world upside down basically. And then in verse 6 and 7, He says, "I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High. But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes. Arise, O God, judge the earth: for thou shalt inherit all nations." So God says you are going to die.

When you get to John chapter 10, our Lord Himself quotes this passage: “Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?” He is talking about those individuals whom God has placed in positions of power and authority to rule for Him. But what is going to happen? They will die like men.

Psalm 49 shows the absolute helplessness even of the richest men in the world. God says, “They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches; none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him.” Not only can they not redeem themselves, they cannot redeem anyone else as well. So God has said that man is going to understand sooner or later that he is just man. The only thing that he can do is die.

The sad fact is, men will not listen to this. Even Pharaoh. God said to Pharaoh in Exodus 9:30, “But as for thee and thy servants, I know that ye will not yet fear the Lord God.” God had done all of those miracles and sent all those plagues, yet He said, “I know you’re not

going to yet fear me." Likewise today, there are multitudes who refuse to fear the Lord.

However, listen carefully: in time, in due time, man will discover to his dismay and great perplexity that he is not God. He is just man. He is indeed going to be judged, and he is indeed going to die. He may continue to fight against God and rebel against God, but he will do so unsuccessfully. As yet, God has not brought them down as He did Pharaoh, but He shall.

God says in Deuteronomy 32:35, "To me belongeth vengeance, and recompence; their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste." Their foot shall slide in due time; the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste. Here is what God is saying: "I set the terms. I set the limits. You will learn just like Pharaoh learned in my time."

As yet, you will not submit, but hold on, you shall. So the very first reason God has in allowing wicked men to continue is to demonstrate that they are indeed but men. There is a second reason: men will ultimately understand that God is God alone. He is the sovereign God.

In Romans chapter 9, verses 16 and 17, the Apostle Paul is drawing an argument to a close: "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth."

John Gill wrote, "That I might shew my power in thee." That is His superior power to Pharaoh, His almighty power in destroying him and his host in the Red Sea when the Israelites were saved. The ultimate end which God had in view was this, "that my name might be declared throughout all the earth," that he himself might be glorified, and that the glory of his perfections, particularly of his wisdom, power, and justice, might be celebrated throughout the world. The sum of it is this: Pharaoh was raised up by God in every

sense for God to show his power in his destruction, that he might be glorified. From this the apostle deduces the conclusion in verse 18: "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth."

Psalm 83:18 spells it out plainly: "That men may know that thou, whose name alone is JEHOVAH, art the most high over all the earth." Sooner or later, men will discover who God really is. Psalm 86:10 says, "For thou art great, and doest wondrous things: thou art God alone."

The “As Yet” of Preparation

You remember that passage in Philippians chapter 2, verses 5 through 11? The Scripture says, “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

As yet, God has not struck down the wicked, but he shall. As yet, men may not recognize that they are men, and they may not recognize who the sovereign God is. But in due time, they shall. So here is the “as yet” of presumption.

The 'As Yet' of Preparation (Deuteronomy 12:9)

Secondly, here is the “as yet” of preparation. In Deuteronomy chapter 12 and verse 9, God says to His people, “For ye are not as yet come to the rest and to the inheritance, which the Lord your God giveth you.”

In order to grasp this verse, you need to see it in its context. Verses 1 through 12 give that context, though we will deal primarily with verse 9. In verse 1, God says, “These are the statutes and

judgments, which ye shall observe to do in the land, which the Lord God of thy fathers giveth thee to possess it, all the days that ye live upon the earth."

Israel had not yet come into the land of Canaan or into its inheritance. Therefore, God was preparing them and telling them how to live and how to act before they reached their inheritance: "These are the statutes and the judgments which ye shall observe to do in the land."

Then, in verse 2, He says, "Ye shall utterly destroy all the places, wherein the nations which ye shall possess served their gods, upon the high mountains, and upon the hills, and under every green tree: and ye shall overthrow their altars, and break their pillars, and burn their groves with fire; and ye shall hew down the graven images of their gods, and destroy the names of them out of that place."

"Ye shall not do so unto the Lord your God. But unto the place which the Lord your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put his name there, even unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come: and thither ye shall bring your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, your tithes, and heave offerings of your hand, and your vows, and your freewill offerings, and the firstlings of your herds and of your flocks: and there ye shall eat before the Lord your God, and ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto, ye and your households, wherein the Lord thy God hath blessed thee."

"Ye shall not do after all the things that we do here this day, every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes. For ye are not as yet come to the rest and to the inheritance, which the Lord your God giveth you. But when ye go over Jordan, and dwell in the land which the Lord your God giveth you to inherit, and when he giveth you rest from all your enemies round about, so that ye dwell in safety; then there shall be a place which the Lord your God shall choose to cause his name to dwell there; thither shall ye bring all that I command you; your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, your tithes, and the heave offering of your hand, and all your choice vows which ye vow unto the Lord: and ye shall rejoice before the Lord your God, ye, and your sons, and your daughters, and your menservants, and your maidservants, and the Levite that is within your gates; forasmuch as he hath no part nor inheritance with you."

So in this passage God is saying to Israel, “You have not as yet come into this inheritance.” He details exactly what they are to do in order to get into the land. When they get into the land, God tells them how to live, how to deal with the false gods, and how to deal with himself, the one true and the living God.

First of all, they were to observe his commandments. He says, “These are the statutes and the judgments which ye shall observe to do in the land.” God is saying, “I’m laying it out for you. I’m telling you how to live. I’m telling you how to act.”

Secondly, they were not to learn from the heathen, follow them, emulate them, or use them as an example. Furthermore, all of their idols were to be hewed down and broken up. They were not to worship on the mountains and hills where the heathen worshiped. They were to destroy all those false gods and not even mention their names.

And he said, “Ye shall not do so unto the Lord your God.” In other words, you must remember me and do exactly what I am telling you. You must understand that I will choose a place to put my name, and there you are to come to worship me. There you will bring your sacrifices, all your offerings, and all your vows—no other place. You are not to worship me on the hills and mountains; you are to worship me where I choose and in the way that I choose.

In Deuteronomy 12:8, God says, “Ye shall not do after all the things that we do here this day, every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes.” God says, “Don’t start that stuff with me. Don’t say, ‘Well, I think this and I think that.’ No, no, no. You don’t do what you declare right in your own eyes.” You do what I tell you to do. You’ve not yet come into your inheritance. Until you get that inheritance, I’m telling you how to live, and I’m telling you how to live once you get that inheritance.

Our Present Preparation for Our Heavenly Inheritance

Now, I hope you can see the very simple application. We have not yet, literally, come into our inheritance. We haven’t. Hold Deuteronomy 12, but look in your Bibles to 1 Peter chapter 1,

beginning with verse 3: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”

Note that we have an inheritance reserved for us in heaven, incorruptible and undefiled. It does not fade away. We are not in heaven as yet. In Ephesians 1:11, he says, “In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.” Note, “in whom also we have obtained an inheritance.” It is already ours.

It has been purchased by the Lord Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit is “the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.” God tells us that we now have an inheritance. It is an eternal inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, and one that fadeth not away. We have been predestinated according to the purpose of Him. Consequently, because of Jesus Christ and His personal work, we have actually obtained this inheritance. So my question is, in light of our inheritance, how then shall we live? We have not as yet entered into our inheritance.

The Bible tells us in Colossians 1:12, “Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.” One thing you can do is learn to praise the Father and thank Him for bringing you out of darkness into light, and for making you suitable, making you fit, for this inheritance.

We are talking about an inheritance. Hebrews 12:22 says, “But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.”

“See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven.” Since we have not as yet come to the Judge of all the earth, to the spirits of just men made perfect, to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, to Mount Sion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, how do we prepare ourselves for our inheritance? Verse 25 tells us: “See that ye refuse not him that speaketh.” In context, “him that spake on earth” would be Moses; “much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven.”

So he tells us that, if we are going to prepare for this inheritance, we must not refuse him that speaketh from heaven. God has spoken. God has given his commandments. He has told us how we are to live and how we are to please him, that we might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.

So the question is, how do we walk pleasing unto him? In 1 Thessalonians chapter 4, the Word of God is very clear. Paul writes in verse 1, "Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more."

He is telling us how to prepare ourselves for our inheritance, how to walk and to please God. He says, "and that ye would abound more and more," that we would increase in our obedience.

Now notice verse 2: "For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication." That would cover the seventh commandment, Thou shalt not commit adultery. It would cover the tenth commandment, Thou shalt not covet: "that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour." That ought to cover the first three or four or five commandments. Then he says in verse 5, "Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God," in other words, do not act like them, "that no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter," Thou shalt not steal, "because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and

testified. For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit." In each of these passages, he is telling us how we are to walk and to please God, and that is in obedience to his law.

You know, I find it interesting that people want to live to please themselves and to satisfy their flesh. And when they die, somehow they think that everything is going to be different. God says, no. What you need to do now in preparation is to learn obedience and to honor Him and to worship.

How do we prepare for our inheritance? The answer is by obedience. Look in 1 John, chapter 2, verse 3: “And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.” Now that does not mean that we are perfect, but it does mean that our general lives are lives of obedience and that we have a real, genuine desire to obey.

He says, “And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.” Watch verse 4: “He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.” Did you see that? “Whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected. Hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.”

Now how did our Lord walk? In obedience to the Heavenly Father. How should we walk? In obedience to the Heavenly Father. And so the truth of the matter is, we do know that we know Him if we keep His commandments. If our hearts, if our lives, generally speaking, are in obedience to Him.

Look in 1 John chapter 5 at verses 2 and 3: “By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.” So if I want to love the Lord, I must keep His commandments. For whosoever keepeth His commandments, the Bible says love is the fulfilling of the law.

Conclusion: 'Yet a Little While'

I want to make two simple applications. We have considered the “as yet” of presumption and the “as yet” of preparation.

Turn to Psalm 37. Remember the “as yet” of presumption: the wicked have not been brought low, and the wicked have not been destroyed as yet. However, just wait a little while. Psalm 37:10 says, “For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be.” Notice the words, “in a little while.” Just wait. God has not brought them low as yet, but in a little while they shall not be.

Now turn to Hebrews chapter 10. The second “as yet” was the “as yet” of preparation. We have not as yet come into our inheritance. We have not, as yet, seen the splendors or the glories of heaven. We have not, as yet, come to the spirits of just men made perfect, to the heavenly Jerusalem, to Mount Sion, or to that innumerable company of angels. However, Hebrews 10:37 says, “For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.”

What is our Lord saying? Just wait a little bit. All the preparation will be worth it when He comes back, because He is coming back for you. In a little while, the wicked shall be destroyed. In a little while, our Lord will return and make everything right. He has not done so as yet, but it shall be done.

Let us pray. Father, help us, we ask in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. We are thankful for Your Word, and we are thankful, Lord, that You have given us hope. As yet, things may not be as we desire them, but in a little while, they shall be. In a little while Thou shalt deal with the wicked, and in a little while Thou shalt fully, completely, totally redeem Thy people, body, soul, and spirit. Thank You for Your Word. Thank You for Your truth. Help us to live for Thee. In Thy precious name we pray. Amen.

CHAPTER 2

As Yet

Part Two of Three

Introduction and Review of Previous 'As Yet' Messages

Joshua 14:11, Caleb is speaking: “As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out and to come in.”

Last week I began looking through the Bible at this little phrase, “as yet.” We use that phrase frequently, but when it is used in the Bible, it has great significance because it is usually used in a sense of expectation and anticipation. In that first message, I covered two points. The first was the “as yet” of presumption, based on Exodus 9:17, where it is said of Pharaoh: “As yet exaltest thou thyself against my people, that thou wilt not let them go.” The word “presumption” conveys that which is unwarrantable, unbecoming, and expressive of impertinent boldness.

The Hebrew word actually means to lift oneself up and to act as a superior. Pharaoh was refusing to acknowledge God, His Word, His

servants, or Israel. Thus, he was literally acting as God's superior. He elevated himself above God, and it ended up destroying him. Proverbs 16:18 says, "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." Pharaoh was not interested in obeying God, but in trying to bargain with God, set the limits, and set the bounds, which God refused to allow him to do. The "as yet" therefore refers to the fact that God expected and anticipated bringing Pharaoh low, and that is exactly what He did.

The second "as yet" we looked at was based upon Deuteronomy 12:9: the "as yet" of preparation. The people had not as yet entered into their inheritance, and God was telling them how to live and act then, as well as how they were to live and act once they entered the land.

The "As Yet" of Promise

Likewise, we personally have not come into our inheritance, because the Bible tells us in the book of 1 Peter that we have an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us. God also tells us how to live and how to act until we come into that heavenly Zion. The Scripture tells us, "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments, and His commandments are not grievous unto us."

There are two times "in a little while" that have occurred in the Bible. One, the Bible says, "in a little while the wicked shall be no more." And then, "in a little while He that shall come will come." We have not seen the wicked destroyed as yet, but our Lord said, "Wait a little while." We have not entered into our inheritance as yet, but our Lord said simply, "Wait a little while." And we certainly shall.

Introduction to the 'As Yet' of Promise in Joshua 14:11

We come now to what I am going to call the "as yet" of promise. If you look at verse 11 again, Caleb says, "As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me. As my strength was then, even so it is my strength now for war, both to go out and to come in." In order to grasp the absolute significance of what Caleb has said, we need to look at it in context. Let us read verses 6–13. In verse 6:

“Then the children of Judah came unto Joshua in Gilgal, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said unto him, Thou knowest the thing that the Lord said unto Moses the man of God concerning me and thee in Kadesh Barnea. Forty years old was I when Moses the servant of the Lord sent me from Kadesh Barnea to spy out the land, and I brought him word again as it was in mine heart.”

Context of Caleb's Testimony (Joshua 14:6-13)

Nevertheless, my brethren that went up with me made the heart of the people melt, but I wholly followed the Lord my God. And Moses sware on that day, saying, Surely the land whereon thy feet have trodden shall be thine inheritance, and thy children's forever, because thou hast wholly followed the Lord my God. And now, behold, the Lord hath kept me alive, as he said, these forty and five years, even since the Lord spake this word unto Moses, while the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness. And now, lo, I am this day fourscore and five years old, eighty-five years old, and as yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me, as my strength was then even so is my strength now for war, both to go out and to come in. Now therefore, give me this mountain, whereof the Lord spake in that day, for thou heardest in that day how the Anakims were there, and that the cities were great and fenced. If so be the Lord will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out, as the Lord said.

And Joshua blessed him, and gave unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh Hebron for an inheritance. Now, God basically had promised Caleb Hebron, the mountain in which he delighted. Caleb was faithful, and he served the Lord truly with all of his heart. He was a truly faithful and trustworthy servant. Interestingly, the name Caleb literally means "dog." How could the name Caleb, or "dog," be used of this man in a good sense?

Caleb's Name and Faithful Character

Look back to the book of Numbers, chapter 14, and look at verses 23 and 24. In this passage, God is speaking.

He is speaking first of those faithless servants who brought up an evil report on the land. In Numbers chapter 14 and verse 23, he says,

“Surely they shall not see the land which I sware unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoke me see it.” Then he says, “But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit within him, and followed me fully, him will I bring into the land wherein he went, and his seed shall possess it.”

Notice that the Bible said Caleb followed the Lord fully. In Joshua chapter 14, he said twice that he wholly followed the Lord. Here is the word Caleb, which means dog: Caleb, the little puppy dog, so to speak, faithfully followed his master everywhere he went.

Some of you have been to the house and have seen one of our pups, whose name is Claiborne. Claiborne follows me everywhere. If I am in my office studying, he is under the desk with his head on my foot. If I go to the bedroom to change clothes, he goes with me. If I go to the bathroom, he goes with me. If I go to the barn, he goes with me. Everywhere I go, he goes as well.

This is the way the word Caleb is used. Caleb was trustworthy and obedient, and he wholly and faithfully followed the Lord.

In Deuteronomy chapter 1, verses 35 and 36, God says the same thing again. God had said specifically in verse 34 of Numbers 14 that He was going to bring Caleb into the land. Deuteronomy 1:35-36 says, “Surely there shall not one of these men of this evil generation see that good land which I sware to give unto your fathers, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, he shall see it. And to him will I give the land that he hath trodden upon, and to his children, because he hath wholly followed the Lord.” Notice that God says, “I’m going to give him the land.” Then He says, “He’s going to see it, because he hath wholly followed the Lord.” Back in Numbers chapter 14, verse 24, God said again concerning Caleb what He had said here.

God's Sovereign Preservation of Caleb

"Him will I bring into the land whereinto he went and his seed shall possess it." God is going to personally undertake and see that Caleb gets into the land, that he actually inherits Hebron, the mountain in which he delighted. He will see that Caleb's seed inherits this land.

Allow this to settle in your mind for a moment. The sovereign God of heaven and earth is promising to undertake personally and make

sure that Caleb gets into the land. God is sovereign, omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent, and there is nothing too hard for the Lord. God could have miraculously transported Caleb into the land, but He did not. He could have allowed Caleb simply to walk over into the land and be there, but He did not. Caleb would still have to wait 45 years to inherit the land.

God is never late; God is always on time. Caleb had to wait 45 years for God to fulfill this promise. He was 40 years old when Moses sent him to spy out the land. Forty-five years later, he was 85.

You would normally say that the children of Israel wandered in the desert for 40 years. Actually, it was 38, plus seven more years after they went into the land, while they waited and conquered. Add 38 plus seven, and you have 45 years. From the time Caleb searched out the land until he was ready to possess it was 45 years.

According to Psalm 90:10, the average age, then and today, is 70 years. The Bible says, "The days of our years are threescore and ten, and if by reason of strength they be fourscore," that is, 80, "yet is their strength labour and sorrow, for it is soon cut off and we fly away." The average is 70; if you make it to 80 or 85, it is usually labour and sorrow, with all kinds of problems.

But I want you to note that Caleb was absolutely different. Forty-five years usually makes a difference in a man. I cannot even do what I used to do at sixty, at fifty, or certainly at twenty and thirty. Age usually makes a big difference, but it did not make any difference in Caleb. In Joshua 14:11 he said, "And yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me. As my strength was then even so is my strength now for war."

"Both to go out and to come in." James, it would be kind of embarrassing to get beat up by an eighty-five-year-old man, would it not? Yet here is Caleb saying, "I can fight just as good at 85 as I could at 40." Wow.

Notice his testimony in verse 10: "And now, behold, the Lord hath kept me alive as he said, these 45 years. Even since the Lord spake this word unto Moses while the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness, and now, lo, I am this day fourscore and five years old." Notice the beginning of the verse: "And now, behold, the Lord hath

kept me alive." Thousands died in the wilderness. They died from the curse of God, from disease, from old age, and in battle.

In fact, the Bible tells us there were thirty-six who died as they tried to conquer Ai after Jericho had fallen. But God preserved Caleb through all of this so that he might inherit that land, and so that his seed might possess it as well. Caleb was giving the Lord the praise: "Behold, the Lord has kept me alive as he said." Wow.

Lessons from Caleb's Preservation

There are several things we should learn from this. First, while we are alive, it is God's grace, God's mercy, and God's power that keep us alive and enable us to enjoy the life He gives us. Have you ever stopped to think about this? One of my favorite verses, I suppose I quote it every day, usually a couple of times a day.

Lamentations 3:22–23 says, “It is of the Lord’s mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions, they fail not. They are new every morning. Great is thy faithfulness.” One of my favorite hymns is “Great Is Thy Faithfulness.” In Deuteronomy 7:9, God is called the faithful God: “Know therefore that the Lord thy God, He is God, the faithful God, who keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love Him, and keepeth His commandments to a thousand generations.”

The Bible says in Psalm 66:9 concerning God, “who holdeth our soul in life and suffereth not our feet to be moved.” God holds our lives in His hand. He is the one who preserves us, protects us, and suffers not our feet to be moved. David said in Psalm 31:15, “My times are in thy hand, deliver me from the hand of my enemies and from them that persecute me.” Jeremiah is saying it is the Lord’s mercy that we are not consumed; David is saying our soul is in His hand and our times are in His hand. He controls absolutely everything.

Most of us have not realized the truth David said to Jonathan in 1 Samuel 20:3. Saul was after David, and Jonathan had entered into a covenant with him and was doing everything he could to protect him. Saul wanted David dead. David said to Jonathan, “Thy father certainly knoweth that I have found grace in thine eyes. And he said,

Let not Jonathan know this, lest he be grieved. But truly, as the Lord liveth," and then he continued, "and as thy soul liveth, there is but a step between me and death."

That is not only true of David; it is true of each of us. It is just a step, and how easily and quickly that step could be taken. I can look back over my life and see how God sovereignly and miraculously protected me when there were times I should have died and could have died. Most people never understand that life passes so quickly and there is just a step. It is God and God alone who preserves us, protects us, and provides for each of us.

We have to learn exactly what Caleb is saying: it is the Lord who has kept us alive. David said it this way in Psalm 92:2: "To show forth thy lovingkindness every morning and thy faithfulness every night." When you wake up in the morning, you should think, It is the Lord's lovingkindness, His tender mercies, and His compassions that allowed me to live through the night. When you go to bed at night, you should say, It is the Lord's faithfulness that has preserved me and kept me alive. We should understand, as Caleb did, that it is truly the Lord who has preserved and protected us.

The second thing we should learn is that the longer we live, the more sensible we should be of God's goodness, grace, and mercy in keeping us alive, prolonging our life, and giving us health and strength.

Everyone in this room can identify with what I am about to say. I find it amusing at times that young people hardly ever think of death or dying. Have you ever noticed that? You can think back upon your life; when you were young, you just thought you were going to live forever. You had all kinds of strength and energy. I have a young man staying at my house for a little while, and he is nearly eighteen.

A couple of mornings, we woke up about 5:30. As soon as it became daylight, I was out feeding and taking care of the animals. The last couple of mornings, he ambled out of bed late and came out to join me. I looked at him and said, "It's hard to play all day and court half the night and get up early the next morning, isn't it?" He just smiled.

The truth of the matter is this: Since young people hardly ever think about death and dying, and usually think they have all kinds of strength and energy and are going to live forever, they never really appreciate God's grace in sparing them and allowing them to live. They never really appreciate the fact that God has given them strength and health. The longer we live, the more thankful we are for what we are able to do. I might not be able to do what I could do at forty, but I am thankful that I can still at least do some things.

Let me show you. Hold Joshua 14, because we will come back to it, and turn in your Bibles to Isaiah 40. Hold the book of Isaiah, because we will come back there. Then turn to Psalm 71. We will go to Isaiah 40 first and then to Psalm 71. I want you to see this. Look in Isaiah chapter 40, verse 29. Isaiah 40, verse 29. We are going to come right back here. Notice in verse 29: "He giveth power to the faint."

"And to them that have no might, he increaseth strength." Notice again, "He giveth power to the faint. And to them that have no might, he increaseth strength." Verse 30 says, "Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall. But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings as eagles. They shall run and not be weary. They shall walk and not faint."

So here it is: It is God who gives us strength. It is God who gives us might. It is God who basically keeps us going even in our old age.

One of my favorite passages is Psalm 71, and I want you to look at it. We are coming back to Isaiah, so hold it. Look in Psalm 71, verse 18. Look what David said: "Now also, when I am old and grayheaded, O God, forsake me not, until I have showed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to everyone that is to come."

I could change just one word there, but you will understand in just a moment. I could say, "Now also, when I am old and baldheaded, O God, forsake me not." So it does not matter. When we are old, it is God that gives us strength.

There are a lot of older people who have more strength and more character than younger people. So David says, "Lord, now that I'm

old and grayheaded, forsake me not until I have showed thy strength unto this generation and thy power to everyone that is to come."

Isaiah 46:3-4 says, "Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne by me from the belly, which are carried from the womb. And even to your old age I am he, and even to hoar hairs will I carry you. I have made, I will bear, even I will carry and will deliver you." God said, "I'm the one that carries you from conception, from birth through youth. I'm the one that will carry you in old age." So it's Caleb then who said, "The Lord has kept me alive these years as he said."

We need to recognize this. God speaks to young people as well, not just old people. Ecclesiastes 12:1 says, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them." Before you get old and sickly and frail, you better remember your Creator in the days of your youth.

Verse 2 says, "While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain: in the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out the windows be darkened, and the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of music shall be brought low, and when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail." Why?

Because man goeth to his long home, that is death, and the mourners go about the streets: or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern. In fact, verse 6 is a picture of death at different stages of life. Then he says in verse 7, "Then shall the dust return into the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."

So he tells young people, listen, you better indeed remember your Creator in your youth. It is a wise child that will remember the Lord

and remember the Creator while he is young and serve Him with his whole heart. If one is sensible of death and dying and the mercies and the grace of God while he is young, undoubtedly that awareness should improve with age as well.

Here's the third thing we're to learn from Caleb. He said, "The Lord has kept me alive as he said." Do you realize that the deaths of all of those around us should make us more thankful to God who has spared our lives? Alice and I have lost six friends in just the last couple months, and certainly not all of them were as old as we are. You can go to any cemetery and see small graves as well as large graves.

Look back to the book of Numbers, chapter 14. The emphasis, I believe, is clearly on Caleb's mind when he said, "The Lord hath kept me alive as he said." Notice what God says, beginning with verse 28. Now God is speaking: "Say unto them, As truly as I live, saith the Lord, as ye have spoken in mine ears, so will I do to you."

The people, when they heard about all the giants in the land and the evil report by the ten spies, said, "Would to God we had died in this wilderness." So God says in verse 28, "As truly as I live, saith the Lord, as ye have spoken in mine ears, so will I do to you. Your carcases shall fall in this wilderness, and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me, doubtless ye shall not come into this land concerning which I sware to make you dwell therein, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun."

"But your little ones which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have despised. But as for you, your carcases shall fall in this wilderness, and your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years, and bear your whoredoms until your carcases be wasted in the wilderness. After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities even forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise. I, the Lord, have said, I will surely do it unto all this evil congregation that are gathered together against me in this wilderness, they shall be consumed, and there they shall die."

God had said that everyone numbered from twenty years old and upward would die in the wilderness. In Numbers chapter 2, verse 32, we find the number of men of war: "These are those which were numbered by the children of Israel by the house of their fathers: all those that were numbered of the camps throughout their host were six hundred thousand three thousand five hundred and fifty."

God had said that every one of them would go down in the wilderness: six hundred and three thousand five hundred and fifty. Since they wandered thirty-eight years in the wilderness before they actually crossed into the land, they did not conquer the land at that time; they were still under God's judgment.

But if you take 38 and divide 38 into 603,550, you get 15,883 men who died per year. If you divide 15,883 by 12, you get 1,324 dying each month. If you divide 1,324 by 30, you get 44 men dying each day. These figures would not include the women who died, the children who died, or the men who died in war later on.

Can you imagine finding 44 men dead every day? Every day that you woke up, your neighbors, your friends, your relatives—44 a day. Don't you imagine that when Caleb said, "The Lord has kept me alive as he said," he was thinking about all these people whom he saw die? He was saying, "The Lord has kept His promise."

Let me tell you, every time I drive down the road and see a cross, or crosses, evidently where there has been a wreck and people have been killed, the first thing I do is thank the Lord for life and health. Every time I look into a coffin, a casket, I thank the Lord for life and health. Even when I pass a cemetery, I thank the Lord for life and health. We have to profit from the lives of those whom God allows us to see as they live, but we also have to profit from the deaths of those who die. This is exactly what Caleb is saying: "The Lord hath kept me alive as he said."

Caleb's Strength at 85 and Reliance on God

In Joshua chapter 14, verse 10, he said, "Behold, the Lord has kept me alive as he said these forty and five years." In spite of all the death and dying, God kept him alive. Now he is 85 years old. He said, "And yet I'm as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses

sent me. As my strength was then, even so is my strength now for war, both to go out and to come in." We have to understand that it is God who gives us strength, and it is God who enables us to continue.

One of the biggest complaints of men, especially as they age, is that they lose their strength. They lose their strength in many ways. What I am trying to tell you is this: God not only preserved Caleb and kept him alive, He preserved his strength and vitality as well.

Everyone in this room has heard of what some people call a midlife crisis or a midlife fling, where some stupid man or woman decides all of a sudden to leave a mate of fifty years and run off with a younger woman or man. You tend to think, “Well, that’s normal.” That’s not normal.

People will look to two sources of power, but really and truly there is only one source of power. Psalm 62 says, “Power belongeth unto God.” Yet some people will try to go to the occult and into sin to reinvigorate themselves, which is absolutely stupid.

But I am going to show you someone who did it: Solomon. I suppose that no one ever experienced power like Solomon. Yet, instead of looking to the Lord when he was old, Solomon looked to the occult, false religions, and idolatry. First Kings 11:4 says, “For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods, and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father. For Solomon went after Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom, the abomination of the Ammonites. And Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord, and went not fully after the Lord, as did David his father. Then did Solomon build an high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon.”

“And likewise did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods. And the Lord was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned away from the Lord God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice, and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods. But he kept not that which the Lord commanded. Wherefore the Lord said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou

hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and give it to thy servant." So here is Solomon.

Solomon had all kinds of money, power, and might, but when he grew old and lost his power, his virility, and everything else, he turned to the occult, false gods, and idolatry. Caleb, on the other hand, stayed true to God. At eighty-five, he was fit for business. He was as strong and lively at eighty-five as he had been at forty.

This was the fruit of the promise. God even went further than His promise, because He had promised to keep Caleb alive to get him into the land and that his seed should inherit the land. But God not only kept him alive; He kept him in perfect health. He kept him in strength. He kept him powerful. God always gives more than His promise. His promise not only included life, but included comfort and strength as well.

Old men, by God's grace and by God's power, can be fit for fighting and war. You may say, "How in the world can you do that? I cannot run and jump and climb over fences and stones and buildings like I could when I was twenty." That is true. You may be weak, helpless, and impotent in yourself, but with the power of God, that is a totally different subject. We have to lay aside the thought of our weakness, our loss of strength, and our helplessness. No, no, no. We have to say, "We can do what we must do by the grace of God, and we will do it." Wherever you are in life, whatever God demands of you, and whatever His providence calls upon you for, He will give you grace and strength to do it. It may be fighting, war, serving, or any number of things. God's grace, strength, and power can help you. If you look at Caleb, you are going to have to give up the idea of weakness and impotence.

Look at verse 11, and now we are going to verse 12. Caleb said, "I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me. As my strength was then, even so is my strength now for war, both to go out, and to come in. Now therefore, give me this mountain, whereof the LORD spake in that day; for thou heardest in that day how the Anakims were there," that is, the giants, "and that their cities were great and fenced. If so be the LORD will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out, as the LORD said."

He was eighty-five, but it did not matter. If the Lord was with him, he could do it. He knew the Anakims and the giants were there. He knew the cities were fenced and walled up to heaven, but it did not bother him. His great faith cast out all his fear: “If the Lord’s with me, I can do it.”

We have to realize that we can do whatever God calls us to do, whatever our age. I still love Psalm 71: “And now, Lord, when I am old and grayheaded, forsake me not; till I have shewed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come.”

Applications: Faithfulness, Honor, and Divine Strength

The applications are these. First, we must remain true and faithful, even in the most difficult and trying circumstances, as did both Joshua and Caleb. Consequently, they prevailed when the others failed. Joshua and Caleb were men. God uses men. He does not use committees or a majority. Usually He uses a minority, and He uses men.

Second, exceptional obedience and exceptional faithfulness are always crowned with exceptional blessings and favor. God said it in 1 Samuel 2:30: “Them that honour me I will honour, saith the LORD, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.” Caleb and Joshua honoured the Lord, and the Lord honoured them. Caleb had a tremendous testimony: “Now behold, the LORD hath kept me alive, as he said. The LORD hath enabled me to have the same strength and power at eighty-five as I did at forty.”

“And I'm ready to fight. Give me this mountain.” Wherever we are in our life, God is able to give us strength and power. What we must do is look solely, totally, and completely at Him. We cannot look anywhere else. God alone is omnipotent. He has all power. Power belongeth unto the Lord, and it belongeth unto Him alone.

Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, we ask for your grace, mercy, goodness, and kindness. We thank you for the testimony of Caleb and for the faithfulness of your promise: you not only kept him alive, but have kept us alive; you not only crowned him with blessings, but have crowned us with blessings. Help us, Lord, to be your little

puppy dog, to be faithful to Thee, and to follow Thee wholly, totally, and completely. Give us grace, Father, that we may serve Thee acceptably, with reverence and godly fear. In Thy name we pray, Amen.

CHAPTER 3

As Yet

Part Three of Three

Review of Previous Messages

The Bible says, “Howbeit the high places were not taken away: for as yet the people had not prepared their hearts unto the God of their fathers.” We have covered two messages concerning this phrase “as yet.” It is very interesting to see how this phrase is used in the Bible. The first message dealt basically with two points. The first was the “as yet” of presumption, based upon Exodus chapter 9 and verse 17, where it was said of Pharaoh, “As yet exaltest thou thyself against my people, that thou wilt not let them go.” The word “presumption” was used to convey the concept of that which is unwarrantable, unbecoming, and impertinent.

The Hebrew word actually means to lift oneself up and to act as a superior, and basically to look down upon someone. Pharaoh was refusing to acknowledge God, God’s law, God’s word, and God’s people. He was refusing to be humbled, and he exalted himself against God. The Bible says in Proverbs 16 and verse 18, “Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.”

The second point was the “as yet” of preparation, based on Deuteronomy chapter 12 and verse 9, where God said to Israel, “For ye are not as yet come to the rest and to the inheritance which the Lord your God giveth you.” In that chapter, God was preparing the people to receive their inheritance. He was telling them how they were to live, how they were to act, and how they were to worship Him, not only while they were waiting, but also when they entered the land.

The implications are very simple. We have not as yet entered into our inheritance, literally and physically. The Bible tells us in 1 John chapter 5 and verse 2, “By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments.” Verse 3 says, “And His commandments are not grievous,” or, “This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous.” Until we get to our inheritance, we basically keep His commandments. In a little while, according to the Scripture, the wicked will be no more, and in a little while our Lord certainly will come.

The “As Yet” of Purpose

Review of Caleb's 'As Yet' of Promise

The second message dealt with Caleb. In Joshua chapter 14, verse 11, Caleb said, “For as yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength was then, even so is my strength now for war, both to go out, and to come in.” This was the “as yet” of promise. Joshua and Caleb brought back the correct word about Canaan, honoring God in their testimony and in what they had seen. God said Caleb would enter the land, and He promised that Caleb would have Hebron, where his feet had trod.

The amazing thing is that when Caleb said, “As yet I am as strong this day as when Moses sent me,” it was forty-five years later, and he was eighty-five years of age. God kept His promise. He not only kept Caleb alive, but kept him strong, because at eighty-five he was just as strong as he had been at forty. As I mentioned to James and some of the others, it would be mighty embarrassing to get whipped by an

eighty-five-year-old man, and yet that is what Caleb could do. God had kept him.

In Deuteronomy 1 and verse 36, God purposefully and specifically said that He, the sovereign God of heaven and earth, would undertake to make sure Caleb got into the land and that his children inherited it. It is an amazing thing when you consider that God Himself undertook and gave Caleb that assurance. God is faithful even forty-five years later.

Most of us want everything right now. Caleb had to wait forty-five years. Today we come to this fourth point, the “as yet” of purpose. In verse 33, we read, “Howbeit the high places were not taken away: for as yet the people had not prepared their hearts unto the God of their fathers.” As we read through the Old Testament, several kings undertook to eradicate idolatry from the land and restore the pure worship of God as revealed in His law. Yet Scripture tells us that some of these kings were not successful, not because they did not want to do what was right, but because the people had not prepared their hearts unto the God of their fathers.

The 'As Yet' of Purpose: Unprepared Hearts

Amaziah was one of those individuals who wanted to honor God. Joash was his father. Joash was a good man, and an honest man, and one who worshiped the Lord, and so was Amaziah.

The Scripture shows that the high places were places of idolatry. The Bible says, “For they also built them high places, and images, and groves, on every high hill, and under every green tree.” So here were these high places. The high places were basically places of idolatry. The interesting thing is that the Bible says they built them on every high hill and under every green tree. These high places were usually on a mountain or on a hill because of the shadow or because of the shade.

For instance, in Hosea chapter 4 and verse 13, God says, “They sacrifice upon the tops of the mountains, and burn incense upon the hills, under oaks and poplars and elms, because the shadow thereof is good.” In other words, they wanted to be cool and comfortable as they worshiped their idols. That is what it amounted to. They wanted

the convenience and comfort of the shade even in their idolatrous worship.

So here were these high places; they should not have been, and yet they were. Several kings undertook to abolish these high places. In 2 Kings chapter 14, beginning with verse 1, we find the account of Amaziah. The Bible says, “In the second year of Joash the son of Jehoahaz king of Israel reigned Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah.”

He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem, and his mother's name was Jehoaddan of Jerusalem. He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, yet not like David his father; he did according to all things as Joash his father did. Howbeit the high places were not taken away: “as yet the people did sacrifice and burnt incense on the high places.”

The interesting thing is that, as good as Amaziah was, he still left the high places. In fact, if you look down to verse 5, you will see how he wanted to be biblical: “And it came to pass, as soon as the kingdom was confirmed in his hand, that he slew his servants which had slain the king his father. But the children of the murderers he slew not: according unto that which is written in the book of the law of Moses, wherein the Lord commanded, saying, The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, nor the children be put to death for the fathers; but every man shall be put to death for his own sin.”

Here was a man trying to do that which was right and biblical, and yet the Bible says, at the same time, that the high places were not taken away. Now turn over to 2 Chronicles chapter 15. Asa was another king who endeavored to remove idolatry from the land. Asa was so dedicated that he even removed his mother from being queen because she had built an idol.

Beginning with verse 12, the Bible says: “And they entered into a covenant to seek the Lord God of their fathers with all their heart and with all their soul; that whosoever would not seek the Lord God of Israel should be put to death, whether small or great, whether man or woman. And they sware unto the Lord with a loud voice, and with shouting, and with trumpets, and with cornets. And all Judah

rejoiced at the oath: for they had sworn with all their heart, and sought him with their whole desire; and he was found of them: and the Lord gave them rest round about."

"And also concerning Maacah, the mother of Asa the king, he removed her from being queen, because she had made an idol in a grove: and Asa cut down her idol, and stamped it, and burnt it at the brook Kidron." Evidently Asa was a man of conviction as well. I have told you this in times past, but I want to reinforce it in your mind.

Every time you see the word "grove" in the Bible, with the one exception in Genesis where it says that Abraham planted a grove, it refers to something other than what we ordinarily mean by a grove of trees. Abraham did plant a grove of trees, but all the other times when the Bible says they built a grove, the word is actually Asherah, or Asherim, meaning a sex goddess. In other words, it was an image of a sex goddess that they worshiped. Therefore, every time you see the word "grove," other than the one Abraham planted, it is used in an idolatrous place.

This is why Maacah, the mother of Asa, was removed. In verse 16, the Bible says, "And also concerning Maacah the mother of Asa the king, he removed her from being queen, because she had made an idol in a grove." Here was a grove of these other idols. She made herself one, and Asa cut down her idol, stamped it, and burned it at the brook Kidron. Usually they were made of wood, and therefore the Scripture says this as well.

Here was a man who truly wanted to undertake a revival. But notice verse 17: "But the high places were not taken away out of Israel: nevertheless the heart of Asa was perfect all his days." Thus, in spite of all Asa did and the reform God gave during his reign, the high places were not removed.

Turn to 2 Chronicles 17, and you will find that Jehoshaphat seems to have succeeded where others failed. The Bible says that he strengthened himself against Israel, placed forces in Judah's fenced cities, and set garrisons in Judah and in the cities of Ephraim that Asa had taken. The Lord was with Jehoshaphat because he walked in the first ways of his father David, sought not unto Baalim, sought the Lord God of his father, walked in His commandments, and did not

follow the doings of Israel. Therefore, the Lord established the kingdom in his hand; Judah brought him presents, and he had riches and honor in abundance. “And his heart was lifted up in the ways of the Lord: moreover he took away the high places and groves out of Judah.” Jehoshaphat seemingly did what none of the others had been able to do.

He took away the high places and the groves out of Judah. If Jehoshaphat took away the high places and the groves out of Judah, how is it that we read this? “Howbeit the high places were not taken away: for as yet the people had not prepared their hearts unto the God of their fathers.” So the Bible tells us that on the one hand Jehoshaphat had taken away the high places, and now the Bible tells us in verse 33, the high places had not been taken away.

Explaining the Apparent Contradiction

So is there a conflict? And the answer is no. There are two possible explanations as to why it says Jehoshaphat took them away and then says the high places were not taken away. First of all, it could refer to the fact that idolatry had been suppressed very generally speaking. Most of the idolatry had been done away with. Most of the high places had either been destroyed or removed. However, that would not mean that not every single individual could not slip around and build a high place.

There may have been some there who did that which was wicked and wrong, but they would have been a minority and certainly not a majority. Thus, it is possible that they existed in some small degree. A second explanation is that, out of habit, custom, and tradition, the people were accustomed to worshiping in the high places. Notwithstanding that the temple had already been built, some would assume that they could worship the one true and living God in those high places as well.

Can God be worshiped anywhere? The answer is yes. That is true. But there is public worship as well as private worship.

These people would have been wrong, but the fact is that they could have gone there. I have heard people say, "Well, Brother Weaver, I can worship the Lord on the lake as easily as I can worship

Him in church, so I'm going fishing Sunday." Can you not worship the Lord on the lake? Of course you could. Most people do not, and most people will not. What you do privately in your worship is one thing, but there is also the public worship that God demands. God does not demand public worship on the lake; He demands it in His temple or in His house.

The Problem of Tradition and Unwilling Hearts

That is why He says, "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is." In other words, there is a time for public worship. It could be that these people were simply trying to worship God. It would not have been Jehoshaphat's fault; it would have been the fault of the people. Verse 33 says, "For as yet the people had not prepared their hearts unto the God of their fathers."

They complied with Jehoshaphat's reformation because, for shame, they could not do otherwise, but their hearts were not in it. They did not have a zeal for God, and they did not act out of a good principle or with any zeal or resolution. Everyone says, "If we could just get a good godly man elected to public office." I am for having good godly men in public office, but the best leaders, the best rulers, and the best magistrates cannot bring a reformation to pass if the people are not willing to do what is right.

There was no greater teacher than the Lord Jesus Christ. Yet when He finished teaching in John chapter 6, the Bible said that those who heard Him said, "This is a hard saying; who can hear it?" From that time forth many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him. Isn't that amazing? You cannot get any more perfect than Jesus Christ. You cannot be a better teacher than Jesus Christ, and yet they would not listen to Him.

We have the exact same problem today that they had in 2 Chronicles chapter 20. More people today are concerned with their traditions, habits, and customs than they are with the Word of God. I have always said I could split the average church with one sermon: all I would have to do is preach against tradition. You start messing with Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny, and you have problems in most churches. Most churches would rather have that than the truth of the Word of God.

You always hear something like this: "But we've always done it like this." Or, "This is the way my great-grandfather did it, and my grandfather did it, and my grandmother—we've always done it like this." Traditions can be biblical, but usually they are not. Traditions are usually made by man. Traditions were the downfall of the Pharisees.

What did they ask our Lord? "Why do you not keep the traditions of the fathers?" They cared little about what our Lord was teaching or what the Law of God said. They were more concerned about their traditions. The fact of the matter is, we want it our way regardless of what God says. We want to do what we want to do.

We have to understand that it is not sufficient to have a ruler who wants to do that which is right, holy, and godly. Certainly, we should have that, but it is insufficient in and of itself. A ruler cannot bring about reformation or change by himself. When you talk about reformation and revival, usually it is not top down; it always begins bottom up. That is, it begins with the people. When the people prepare their hearts and do what is right, then inevitably it flows up to the top, because the people are going to make sure that they have good, godly rulers. If we could just get a good man in Washington, Atlanta, or Tallahassee, it would not do a bit of good if the people's hearts are not there to do that which is right.

This is exactly what the Bible is telling us: "Howbeit the high places are not taken away." Why? "For as yet the people had not prepared their hearts unto the God of their fathers." When a true reformation occurs, all of the habits, customs, and traditions that are unbiblical will quickly and easily fall by the wayside. We simply will not want to do it like that anymore, because our hearts will be set on doing it right.

Here, then, is this "as yet" clearly revealed to us in 2 Chronicles chapter 20 and verse 33. Jeremiah chapter 31 is indeed the chapter dealing with the New Covenant. Verses 22 and 23 indicate that we may safely trust in our Lord to give us a true biblical reformation. The text says, "And ye shall be my people, and I will be your God." That is Jeremiah—that is 30; 31 is what I want. He says, "How long wilt thou go about, O thou backsliding daughter?"

"For the Lord hath created a new thing in the earth, A woman shall compass a man," which of course refers to the virgin birth. Then he says in verse 23, "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; As yet they shall use this speech in the land of Judah and in the cities thereof, when I shall bring again their captivity; The Lord bless thee, O habitation of justice, and mountain of holiness." Notice he said, "As yet they shall use this speech in the land of Judah, in the cities thereof, when I shall bring again their captivity." So when God does something, it does indeed work. God says here they shall as yet do this.

The 'As Yet' of Punishment: God's Delayed Judgment

Now look in your Bibles to 2 Kings chapter 13, because here is the fifth: the "as yet" of punishment. Verse 23 says, "And the Lord was gracious unto them, and had compassion on them, and had respect unto them, because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and would not destroy them, neither cast he them from his presence as yet." Here is the "as yet" of punishment. The Lord was gracious unto them, had compassion on them, and had respect unto them; because of His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, He "would not destroy them, neither cast he them from his presence as yet."

Let me tell you something: it is indeed a truth that God is gracious and that God is merciful. When you look at Israel particularly, God could have and should have destroyed them a multitude of times. You remember He said in one place, "Yet these ten times ye have provoked me." Each time would have been a suitable time for God to slay them, but He did not.

Hold this passage, but look also at Psalm 78 and verse 38. If you read Psalm 78, you will find out how often Israel provoked God. Notice verse 21: "Therefore the Lord heard this, and was wroth: so a fire was kindled against Jacob, and anger also came up against Israel; because they believed not in God, and trusted not in his salvation." Verse 31 says, "The wrath of God came upon them, and slew the fattest of them, and smote down the chosen men of Israel."

"For all this they sinned still, and believed not for his wondrous works." Verse 34 continues, "When he slew them, then they sought him: and they returned and inquired early after God. And they

remembered that God was their rock, and the high God their redeemer." Yet verse 36 says, "Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues. For their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his covenant." But then, "he, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not. Yea, many a time turned he his anger away, and did not stir up all his wrath."

Isn't that amazing? "Many a time turned he his anger away, and did not stir up all his wrath." In other words, if God had not had compassion, if God had not turned His anger away, if God had stirred up all of His wrath, all of them would have been killed.

May I point out that this is one of the reasons America is still in existence. It is one of the reasons you and I are still alive today: God is compassionate and merciful. That is what the Scripture said—"many a time."

Then look back in 2 Kings chapter 13, verse 23, the latter part. He gives a second reason why God did not destroy them. It was because of His mercy and compassion, but the Bible says, "because he had respect unto them because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." God was merciful unto them because of His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Here is the amazing thing: God is faithful even when we are unfaithful. You can read Psalm 78 all you want and see the unfaithfulness of God's people. We have read only a few of those verses, but God still remained faithful. God still fed them. God still honored His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He did not give them over as yet because of that covenant.

Now turn in your Bibles to Romans chapter 2. Let me put this together so that you can see the tender mercies, compassions, and faithfulness of God. Romans 2, verses 4 and 5: "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?"

But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his deeds. Many a time he turned away his wrath. Many a time he did

not stir up all of his anger. The Scripture says that He had compassion upon them and mercy upon them; moreover, He remembered that covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

So here is my question: if you and I recognize that we should have been destroyed—even our country should have been destroyed—what should that lead us to do? Look back in verse 4: "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" In other words, everything that God does for us should remind us that we need to repent, turn from our sins, and turn to Him. His goodness and mercy should lead us to repentance.

When those graces are abused, misused, and despised, the only thing left is God's judgment. That is why he said, "But after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath."

Turn back in your Bibles to 2 Chronicles chapter 36. Here is a perfect illustration of what I am talking about: the "as yet" of punishment. The Bible said He had not as yet destroyed them. Notice verse 15: "And the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place." How do you know when God has compassion upon a people? He sends them His preachers, prophets, and messengers to declare His Word. But what did these people do? "They mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy."

Therefore he brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age: he gave them all into his hand.

Go back and look at verse 15: "And the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place." Notice that "messengers" is plural; He sent more than one. Verse 16 says, "But they mocked the messengers" of God, and despised "his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the

Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy." Whose words were they actually despising? They were despising God's Word. They were misusing the prophets.

He had not destroyed them as yet. But when it reached this stage, He did destroy them. Therefore He brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age: he gave them all into his hand.

In 2 Kings chapter 17, verse 18, the same truth is stated another way: "Therefore the Lord was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of his sight: there was none left but the tribe of Judah only." Verse 20 says, "And the Lord rejected all the seed of Israel, and afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of spoilers, until he had cast them out of his sight." What did God do?

God said, Here is the "as yet" of punishment. You deserve to be punished. You have been wicked; you have rebelled and disobeyed. But because of My compassions, My covenant, and My faithfulness, I have not destroyed you as yet. The truth is, we must turn or burn. We must repent or perish. It is just that simple. The immutable, unchangeable God who judged Israel and Judah will also judge us if we misuse and abuse His grace and mercy. He cleaned house in Israel. He cleaned house in Judah. He is equally able to clean house in America.

And if you and I think that we can rebel against Him, and despise His Son, and trample His law under our feet, and escape His judgment, we are not only deceived, we are absolutely stupid to the nth degree. It is impossible. I want you to see this. As long as we are in the "as yet" stage, there is hope. He has not destroyed us as yet. As yet. As long as we are in that "as yet" stage, there is hope.

Hebrews 11:7 says, "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." Did you hear that? What was the "as yet" in this context? It was the judgment. It was the flood. For 120 years he was building the ark. There was hope while he was

building the ark. But once that “as yet” stage passed, there was no hope. So the Scripture tells us we have been warned, we must prepare, we must repent, and we must obey. That is the “as yet” of punishment. As long as we are in the “as yet” stage, there is hope.

The 'As Yet' of Perception: Understanding Scripture

Now consider the New Testament, the book of John, chapter 20 and verse 9. Here is the “as yet” of perception, and this may surprise you. We should pay attention to how phrases are used in the Bible.

Now we are talking about our Lord’s disciples: “For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead.” Peter and John had gone to the sepulchre. Verse 6 says, “Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie, and the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself. Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre,” that is, John, “and he saw, and believed. For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead.”

How could they know not the Scripture? It was plainly revealed in the Scripture. How could they not know that He would rise the third day? He told them. And yet the Bible says, “For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead.” In other words, they did not understand those Old Testament types, figures, and emblems that prefigured Christ, His death, burial, and resurrection. Moreover, the truth was plainly stated not only in the Old Testament, but our Lord told them personally.

Psalm 16:9–10 says, “Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.” Our Lord was not going to see corruption. Yes, He was going to die. Yes, He was going to be buried. But yes, He was also going to rise again from the dead. In Matthew 12:40, our Lord makes this known plainly to His disciples: “For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.”

What did our Lord just get out of His mouth? He was going to die, be buried, and be in the earth three days and three nights, and then rise again. Isn't that simple?

You and I can look back upon these Scriptures and say, "We see it." Why couldn't they see it? How foolish could they have been? Those were smart men, and they walked with Christ. Why could they not see it? You have to remember that you and I understand this after the fact, after the reality. Hindsight is always better, I can assure you. But those apostles were nothing more than mere men. They did not have perfect understanding.

They did not comprehend everything that our Lord said, and there were occasions when they were even afraid to ask Him. In Matthew 15:16, our Lord looked at His disciples and said, "Are ye also yet without understanding?" Again, in Mark 7:18, He said unto them, "Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, it cannot defile him?" What did He say? "Are ye also yet without understanding?" It may shock you to realize that the early apostles and disciples were not perfect; they did not have perfect understanding.

In fact, look in your Bibles to 1 Peter chapter 1. It is not only that the apostles did not have perfect understanding; a lot of the Old Testament prophets did not have understanding. They did not even know everything they were prophesying. First Peter 1:10 says, "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently," who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you. They were searching "what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." It was revealed to them "that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you" by those who preached the gospel with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; "which things the angels desire to look into." So even these Old Testament prophets, when prophesying about Jesus Christ and everything that involved Jesus Christ, did not understand it all.

They had to inquire and search diligently. Mainly, they were ministering to us, not to themselves. We have to remember that not

everybody understands everything. So here is my question: Why is it that we, in this day and age, who have all the Bibles we want and all the study materials we need, do not as yet understand a lot of things in Scripture? Stop and think about that. Why is it that we do not? Let me give you an answer. The Apostle Paul told Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:7, "Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things."

There are two truths here. First, Paul told Timothy, “Consider what I say.” Think about it, meditate upon it, ruminate on it, and contemplate it. Secondly, “the Lord give thee understanding in all things.” Understanding is the gift of God. However, we are responsible to meditate and contemplate, to study and to think. That is our responsibility. We could study until the day we died, but if God does not open our eyes and give us understanding, we will never see anything.

The point is this: you do not go to bed dumb and wake up smart. You do not go to bed wishing that you understood something and wake up the next morning with everything perfectly laid out in your mind. It does not work like that in real life, and it certainly does not work like that when it comes to Scripture.

The truth is that we must consider, study, meditate, and ruminate upon God’s Word, while at the same time seeking God to give us understanding. We may not as yet understand certain things, but by His grace, using the means that He has ordained and the illumination of the Holy Spirit, we still may perceive and understand them. We do not give up merely because we say, “Well, I don’t see that right now.” Fine. Seek the Lord for understanding, study, and ask Him to open your eyes.

The 'As Yet' of Perfection: Our Future Glorified Bodies

One last passage: 1 John chapter 3, verse 2. Here is the last point, the “as yet” of perfection. “Beloved, now are we the sons of God.” Thank God for that. “And it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.” I understand that verse 2 does not have the phrase “as yet” in it, but consider it this way: “Beloved, now are we the sons

of God, and it doth not as yet appear," which is the same truth, "what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."

I recently had a discussion with a friend concerning our resurrection bodies. It is very interesting to read commentaries on what some men say concerning a resurrection body or a glorified body. Paul makes it clear in the Scripture that our bodies will be new, that they will be glorified. If you asked me to describe our glorified bodies, I could do so generally, but I could not describe them particularly in every detail, because the Scripture does not reveal everything.

One thing I can assure you: our glorified bodies will not be flesh and blood—I can assure you of that. First Corinthians 15:50 says, "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." So flesh and blood is not going to be in our bodies. However, our bodies will be flesh and bone.

Look in your Bibles to the book of Luke, chapter 24. He is going to tell you this. Look very closely. Luke 24 records this beginning with verse 36. This is our Lord's glorified body: "And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you."

The disciples rose up the same hour, returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together with the others. They were in a room in a building. As they spoke, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them. In other words, He just appeared, and He said unto them, "Peace be unto you."

Did He walk through a wall? I do not know. Did He come through the door? I do not know. The Bible simply says that He appeared in a room. They were terrified and affrighted, supposing that they had seen a spirit. Jesus asked, "Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?" Then He said, "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." His resurrected, glorified body was flesh and bones. He had the same hands and the same feet. When He had spoken, He showed them His hands and His feet.

While they still believed not for joy and wondered, He asked, “Have ye here any meat?” They gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and a honeycomb, and He took it and ate before them. Based upon this Scripture, I can tell you two things: first, our bodies will be flesh and bone; second, we will be able to eat. I am thankful we can eat fish. I love fish. That is what our Lord ate. We can eat fish.

People have asked, “Brother Weaver, do you think we will know each other in Heaven?” My response is always the same: I do not think we are going to be any more stupid there than we are here. If we know each other here, obviously we are going to know each other in Heaven. If we have the same hands and feet and the same features, surely we are going to know everybody. We must remember that we will have perfect knowledge at that particular time. Do not pin me down and say, “Well, what are our bodies going to look like?”

I have no earthly idea. I suppose we'll look like ourselves. Maybe, David, we'll have more hair. I don't know. But I'm simply saying there will be a new glorified body. It does not as yet appear what we shall be. But we know that when He appears, we shall be like Him.

The Apostle Paul writes, "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." So he says, "We look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."

The point I'm trying to make is that it is sufficient for me to know that He will change my vile body like unto His glorious body. Whatever our bodies are like in heaven, we'll be totally satisfied with them. We'll be happy with them. We'll be thankful for them. There will not be someone walking around saying, "Well, I wish I wasn't so fat," or "I wish I wasn't so thin," or "I wish I had more hair." Whatever our bodies are, we will be absolutely, totally satisfied.

Application: Hope in the 'As Yet'

If we have not as yet experienced the wrath and judgment of God, there is hope. If we have not as yet perceived the truth of God, as long as we study and seek the Lord for understanding, there is hope. If we have not as yet received a reformation, as long as we turn from our sins and turn back to the Lord and worship Him according to His Word, there is hope.

Jesus Christ is our hope in every area of life. He is our hope financially, spiritually, politically, emotionally, mentally, and economically. He is our hope in every imaginable way. And as long as He has not taken us home, as yet, there is hope that we can accomplish everything that He's ordained for us.

In fact, one of the old fathers said it like this: Man is immortal until God is through with him. You are not going to die before your time. When God is through, then He will take us home. Then we will have glorified bodies, and we can say that we know exactly what they are going to be like because we will have them.

Let us pray. Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, we thank You for Your Word. We thank You for Your truth and for the hope that we have in Jesus Christ. He is our hope. Give us grace, Father, that we may serve Thee acceptably, with reverence and godly fear. Help us, Lord, to bow to Thee and give Thee honor and worship through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

Source Notes

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