

## *Supporting Pastors by Ministering to Christians in Need of Guidance and Deliverance*



Newsletter—Vol. 4, No. 9  
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Dear APF Supporter:

### **Greetings!**

Thank you once again for taking the time to read the monthly newsletter. It is encouraging to me when people mention reading it. I hope the newsletters are encouraging and thought provoking for you all.

### **Praises:**

God has been at work, as He has ministered healing to people. The tears of joy and smiles I have seen in ministry sessions is a blessing and humbles me each time.

The men's Bible study has been going well. We have been comfortable to share with each other and discuss the Scripture that is being read. It has been an enjoyable time.

The reach of the ministry of *A Pastor's Friend* is growing beyond the national borders! Last week, I received a call from Alberta, Canada, from someone needing help. I was able to refer them to a person closer, and I'm glad that they had heard of this ministry and could contact me.

### **Something to Consider:**

**2 Chronicles 36:12-16**—<sup>12</sup> He [Zedekiah, King of Judah] did evil in the eyes of the LORD his God and did not humble himself before Jeremiah the prophet, who spoke the word of the LORD.

<sup>13</sup> He also rebelled against King Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him take an oath in God's name. He became stiff-necked and hardened his heart and would not turn to the LORD, the God of Israel. <sup>14</sup> Furthermore, all the leaders of the priests and the people became more and more unfaithful, following all the detestable practices of the nations and defiling the temple of the LORD, which he had consecrated in Jerusalem.

<sup>15</sup> The LORD, the God of their fathers, sent word to them through his messengers again and again, because he had pity on his people and on his dwelling place. <sup>16</sup> But they mocked God's messengers, despised his words and scoffed at his prophets until the wrath of the LORD was aroused against his people and there was no remedy

What a humbling passage, especially the end of the last sentence: "there was no remedy." As I've been reading through this portion of the Bible, I have been challenged and reminded of the need to obey God. For generations, God worked through prophets to warn people of the calamity that would come upon them for not listening to His commands. The time had finally come where the country was erased and taken over by Babylon. Not everyone was wiped out, but the sin of the leaders and the people brought terrible destruction.

At the end of the Book of Joshua, the Israelites had just taken over the Promised Land. Joshua is ready to die, and issues the challenge to the people to obey God and listen to Him. The people commit to obey God alone (Joshua 24:21). Sadly, the Old Testament records how the people fell into idolatry and occult practices, culminating in the destruction recorded in 2 Chronicles 36. Moses warned before entering Canaan of what would happen if they disobeyed (Deuteronomy 28:15-68), and they were reminded many times throughout their history. Nonetheless, they didn't listen.

With the finished work of Jesus Christ on the Cross, we no longer need the rituals to deal with

sins as was done in the Old Testament. Yet for us today, the New Testament gives us the same challenge to listen to God. James 1:22-24 says, “<sup>22</sup>*Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.*” <sup>23</sup>*Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror* <sup>24</sup>*and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like.*” Also, John 14:15 says, “*If you love me, you will obey what I command.*” Jesus also says in John 10:3 we should know His voice. Therefore, it should be important to us to be obedient as much as we can. Philippians 2:12-13 says to “*work out our salvation with fear and trembling.*” Since we are saved, our heart’s desire should be to obey. Obedience isn’t done to earn salvation, but being in Christ enables believers to follow God’s instructions.

Galatians 5:19-26 lays out what our obedience should look like:

<sup>19</sup>*The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery;*

<sup>20</sup>*idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions* <sup>21</sup>*and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.*

<sup>22</sup>*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,*

<sup>23</sup>*gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.* <sup>24</sup>*Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires.* <sup>25</sup>*Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.* <sup>26</sup>*Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.*

Compare the acts of the sinful nature and the reason for the fall of Jerusalem. Idolatry, witchcraft, and selfish ambition especially are in both. Instead we are to produce “good fruit”—the fruits of the Spirit. The Good News for us is that we have the Holy Spirit to empower us to do so. Jesus said in John 15:4 that without Him, we can’t do it anyway. Though we have the same challenge, we are not left alone. Praise God that He is here to help us! Nonetheless, I want to truly work at obedience, which is why 2 Chronicles 36 humbles me so. I know that daily I need to grow at being more obedient to the Lord, and am so thankful that I don’t have to do it alone. Is anyone perfectly obedient? I don’t believe so, but we all can commit to obey God each day and produce good fruit.

### **Prayer Concerns:**

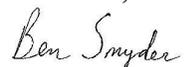
Upcoming Events: *Monday, September, 13 at 6:30pm* is the next monthly Bible study at the APF office.

Please pray for God to work out any scheduling conflicts.

### **Final Thoughts:**

In Daniel 9:4-19 and Nehemiah 1:5-11, both Daniel and Nehemiah prayed to God confessing and repenting of their sins and the sins of the ancestry that caused the destruction of their country that were noted in 2 Chronicles 36. God was faithful and forgave them. Although the political entity of Israel/Judah was destroyed, Jerusalem was restored as God’s dwelling for fellowship with His people. In the same way for us today, we can confess and repent of the sins in our lives, turning from wicked actions, and restore fellowship with God. The mighty work of Jesus Christ on the Cross accomplishes this for us. Even if we have failed to listen to the challenge to listen to God’s instructions, we can be restored. What a gracious and merciful God we serve! He will restore us when we turn to Him.

In Christ,



Ben Snyder