

OCTOBER 17

One thing you notice reading The One Year Bible is that it is hard to find a day when God is not projecting your vision forward to the time when Christ returns and the plan of redemption will be complete. God is always interested in strengthening our hearts and giving us a lasting hope as we work each day in the harvest.

Jeremiah 30-31:26

Some people call chapters 30-33 the "Book of Consolation." Almost right in the middle here, God gives the nation a view of their distant hope and His everlasting love.

Jeremiah 30

Vs. 1-7 After the promise to restore the entire nation, Israel and Judah together, v. 7 projects ahead to "Jacob's" ultimate distress at the end of the Tribulation.

Vs. 8-9 In this final deliverance, Israel will no longer be threatened, and they will be led by a resurrected king, David. Ezekiel 34 also mentions the return of David.

Vs. 10-17 This is hope mixed with an explanation of why God needs to punish them to heal them. Notice the mention in v. 17 of Zion. That will be important. Notice also that the way these promises are stated, the restoration of vs. 10 and 11 have to be for the Millennial Kingdom.

V. 12 Notice the revisiting of the theme of an incurable wound. This is also in v. 17. Redemption in Jesus and the resurrection encompass that cure.

Vs. 18-22 This will be the ultimate restoration of the people, and of course, before that, there will be events that foreshadow this; but Israel will never be in true peace until the Messiah rules on earth.

Vs. 23-24 *In the latter days*, probably of the Tribulation and the kingdom.

Jeremiah 31:1-26

V. 1 This should probably belong to the last verses of chapter 30. In order for God to be the GOD of all the clans, they all have to be believers. This is still in the future and referring to the Millennial Kingdom.

After this statement come the declarations of the Lord.

Vs. 2-6 The rebuilding of Israel. Jesus said that there would be a time when those in Judea would need to flee to the mountains in the wilderness (Matt. 24:16, Rev. 12:14). Notice the *everlasting love*. It is still everlasting for Israel's future. Notice that the Lord is in Zion.

Vs. 7-9 This is the regathering of Israel. They have probably felt this in every age when they have been scattered.

Vs. 10-14 This is the future redemption of Israel. Notice that this declaration went out to the nations. The result is great joy in Israel.

V. 15 This is a famous verse, but what is it doing here?

Here is my thought on this. In the plan of redemption the moment God put His hand on Abraham, he and his family and the nation of Israel became servants of the world, examples to the world of sin and God's character and forgiveness. God has put them to hard work for us. They will weep, but there will be joy and reward.

Rachel's destiny was a part of this story. She died near Ramah giving birth to the only one of Jacob's children born in the land of promise. As Rachel was dying she tried to name the child "son of my sorrow," but Jacob named the child, "son of my right hand," Benjamin. Rachel wept in death, losing her children, her sad life and death being a part of God's plan of redemption.

During Jeremiah's days in that same area around Jerusalem, many would die. Jeremiah 40:1 indicates that Ramah became the area where Nebuchadnezzar gathered the people to take them into exile. There would be people parting, going into exile who would never be seen again.

When Herod destroyed the children around Bethlehem trying to kill Jesus, once more Israel suffered tragedy and violence because of its work in the plan of redemption. It is also interesting that it was from this area that Joseph took Mary and Jesus, fleeing into Egypt to escape Herod's deadly brutality.

Vs. 16-17 The nation has wept, but there will be a reward for their work. That is quite a profound statement.

Vs. 18-20 Israel (designated by the name Ephraim) repents and God welcomes him. Doesn't this sound like the prodigal son?

Vs. 21-25 God brings them back and restores the holy hill of Zion in millennial blessing.

V. 22 Usually it is the man who seeks the woman. Here, Israel, as a bride, seeks the man, the Lord.

V. 26 Poor Jeremiah. What a stressed out guy, always bringing bad news and being pushed by the Lord and punished by the people. But this was a good vision of hope from the Lord, and it brought him peace and comfort, knowing that the end of Israel's work would be joyously rewarded.

1 Timothy 2

So then, since Paul had been chosen by grace to be an apostle, and in view of the distress of the times and in view of the call of God on Timothy's life, Timothy was to reestablish the foundation of the church.

Vs. 1-7 This is a general pronouncement for the conduct and focus of the entire church, and there are some famous verses here.

This is where we get the well-known command to pray for rulers, but notice that the point of this prayer is so that we can work in the harvest under the radar.

This is the second time Paul uses the phrase *God our Savior*. He used it in the first line of the book and now here. Paul is making sure that the church is established in reaching out to a lost world.

So, if this is to be the general focus of the church, praying and working in the harvest, Paul gives some specific instruction to men and women.

V. 8 Men are to pray, *lifting holy hands*; that is, with a godly perspective of life and God's work in this dying world. They shouldn't be given to *anger or quarreling*. Anger and quarreling over what? Anything. Not over the price of gas or the political party. Their perspective is to be in going to God and having a spiritual perspective on life in the harvest.

Vs. 9-10 Women are also to be focused on the harvest. Good works as in Ephesians 2:10 are what God has prepared for us to do for our neighbors in opening doors of opportunity. Like men, women are not to be consumed by the issues of life, in their case, focusing on looking fine.

Now, I want to suggest something here. When Paul talks about men and women, sometimes he uses a kind of alternating reference, sort of like men-women, women-men, men-women. You see this in 1 Corinthians 7:2-4 and 7:12-14. I think that Paul uses alternating references to men and women as he changes his topic in the rest of this chapter and in chapter 3. I would say it looks like this:

Topic: Focus in the harvest, Men-prayer / Women-good works

Topic: Leadership of the church, Women-submission / Men-serve as elders

Topic: Serving the church Men-as deacons / Women-as deaconesses

In the Greek there is no chapter break between chapters 2 and 3. I believe Paul is talking about the guiding leadership of the church beginning in 2:11.

Vs. 11-15 A woman's role in the authority and teaching of the church is to learn quietly in submission. I think the words *teach or to exercise authority* are key to understanding what Paul says here and why he introduces the elders in 3:1. Elders are the people who are responsible for the teaching in the church (they determine, protect and oversee the entrusting of that truth) and they exercise authority in the church. I don't think a woman is to be in the position of an elder, having responsibility for teaching like an elder; nor should she be in a position to exercise authority in the church as an elder exercises authority. I think the limits on a woman's ability to teach and have authority are in the context of what an elder does. Elders determine the "teaching" of a church and make sure it is protected and entrusted accurately. Elders have the authority in a church to oversee this teaching and to call people to account if they have deviated in teaching or in behavior. Teaching and authority, I think, is meant in this context.

Vs. 13-14 Paul's/the Spirit's reasoning here is biblical and not cultural, based on God's decision in the creation order and in the events of the fall.

V. 15 "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread." (Alexander Pope) But making an attempt, here goes. In creation, God created Adam and Eve differently. A man is *saved* (from damage) by doing what God has given him to do, and a woman is *saved* by doing what she was meant to do. Each has received roles of leadership and service. To deny these roles is to put ourselves where we were not meant to be and, therefore, not to discover the fullness that God has for us. For most women, not all, God's plan involves bearing children. In the job of being a mom there is not only fulfillment, but plenty of leadership and service. Women for whom God hasn't designed motherhood can find fulfillment, a role of leadership, and service in other ways. The point is that God has designated a role for men and women, and only in staying true to those roles, do we develop "safely" the way God wants us to develop.

I remember wrestling with v. 15 and feeling the Lord had given me some insight into it. So I went to my mother-in-law, Barbara Youderian, and asked her what she thought v. 15 meant and she not only said the same thing, but she said it much better and gave me a great example. I sat there feeling like a kindergartner.

This chapter began by focusing the church and the behavior of everyone on the harvest.

Psalm 87

This is a very short and amazing psalm. We have just read something like this in Jeremiah.

Vs. 1-3 Someday this city will be the center of the earth because of the king who will be reigning there.

Vs. 4- 6 Jerusalem has been judged again and again. It was the scene of a famous murder and everlasting redemption. God's everlasting love is directed toward these people whom He has used as an example to the world of lost humanity. Someday it will be a high honor to hear that someone was born in Zion.

V. 7 The Septuagint gives the idea to this verse that everything that brings joy, refreshment and life is in Zion. That sounds like Revelation 22:2, *through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.*

Proverbs 25:18-19

Amen and "ouch!"

