

EXPOSITORY
SERMONS
AND
MEDITATIONS
in the Scriptures

October 2026

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MEDITATIONS IN 2 TIMOTHY

October 2026

MEDITATIONS on the 2nd Letter to TIMOTHY

2 Timothy 1: 3-7

For Sunday, 4th October 2026

IN these verses we are shown Paul earnestly praying for Timothy, and these verses contain the substance of his praying. Every example of praying in the Bible has much to teach us, and in this case of Paul praying for Timothy, we have an example of prayer for those who are called to the ministry in the church.

Paul opens his prayer for Timothy by thanking God for the gift and desire to pray. He speaks of the fact that he had been taught to pray as a Jew, by speaking of the spirit of prayer in his forefathers, and that he could pray with a clear conscience, that is he was able to pray as a justified sinner coming to God in the merits and righteousness of Jesus Christ, his beloved and divine Saviour. It is only in this consciousness that anyone is able to pray and come into the presence of God. He tells us that this spirit of prayer he exercised night and day. What an example for all of us who are true believers in Jesus. We should be people of prayer.

Paul then tells Timothy he constantly remembers him in his praying. God had laid Timothy on his heart to pray for him that he may be a blessed and faithful pastor. How we who have been called into the ministry of the Gospel need such prayers being offered for us.

Paul continues by speaking of how he remembered Timothy, which gives him his motive for prayer, and then he gives the reason for his

praying that Timothy may grow even more earnest in his devotion to his ministry for Christ.

Verse 4 deals with the love Paul and Timothy had for each other. Paul remembers Timothy's tears of affection. Like the church in Ephesus (Acts 20: 37) Timothy was moved to tears when he was separated from Paul who had been such a strength in his spiritual life and in his call to the ministry. So Paul assures Timothy of his love for him by telling him that he longed to see Timothy as much as Timothy longed to see Paul. Christian friendship and fellowship is a huge strength for every believer, and specially for pastors. In fellowship believers strengthen each others faith, and help each other to deeper faith and love for Jesus, and in this way the joy of Christ fills our hearts.

Verse 5 is where Paul speaks of his assurance of the true reality of Timothy's faith in Christ as his Lord and God and Saviour. Where was this sincere faith nurtured from. Timothy had the blessing of a Christian upbringing. His grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice, where believers, and had earnestly, by example and teaching, made known to Timothy the saving love of God in Christ. The result was that Paul could say with assurance that this faith dwelt in Timothy also. How precious it is to be brought up in a Christian family. From the moment we are born Christ is made known to us as a wonderful and perfect Saviour. If we have had such a commencement in life, it should be a subject of thanksgiving ever after. So many have never had this great blessing.

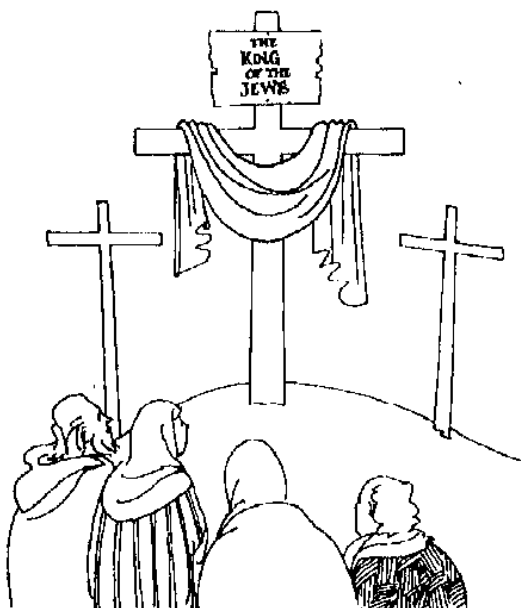
So in verse 6 Paul speaks of the heart of his praying. His praying for Timothy was motivated and filled with the deep desire that Timothy may become a more and more diligent and faithful Christian and pastor.

Here we are brought to the truth of the experience of a true calling to the ministry. Ordination to be a pastor and presbyter is a wonderful, blessed and serious experience. How this is expressed in different denominations in the Church may differ, but Paul reminds Timothy how it happened for him. His ordination was by Paul by the laying on of hands by the Apostle. Paul indicates that a gift is given by God at this

time. The gift is a special endowment of the Holy Spirit to enable to exercise ministry for Christ. Jesus received this anointing at his baptism in a very special way. Jesus called the Apostles where in the case of Peter he gave that apostle his mission to be fishers of men. All believers have the gift of the Holy Spirit to dwell within them. Everyone called to the ministry is given a special anointing, which without, it would be impossible to be a faithful and effective minister.

Paul exhorts Timothy to fan into flame this gift of God. This is so necessary as we follow the example of our Saviour who specially went apart to pray that this flame may be bright.

Paul ends this opening up the heart of his prayers for Timothy by speaking of the power and blessing of the gift of God by his Spirit. This gift of the Spirit is not one of timidity, but a Spirit of power, of love and self-discipline. There is no power in ministry, or a heart of love for Christ and the lost, or the ability to stand against all the assaults and fiery darts



of the evil one, without this gift of God. Unless we fan into flame this gift, power and love and discipline will fade away.

MEDITATIONS on the 2nd Letter to TIMOTHY

2 Timothy 1: 8

For Sunday, 11th October 2026

Paul continues to exhort Timothy concerning the execution of his preaching and ministry. This constituted the substance of his praying. That which Paul prayed for Timothy, he exhorts him to do and be. No doubt he prayed with the assurance that God would answer his prayer. His faith and confidence should always be at the heart of our praying. without faith it is impossible to please God.

This verse contains two important ingredient of ministry. The first one is 'do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord', and the second was 'do not be ashamed of me his prisoner'. How important these two issues are.

In the first place Timothy had to face the attitude of the world and of many in the visible company of church members. Satan prompts the world to discourage the servants of Christ in witness and preaching by ridicule and persecution. We do not know exactly how this presented itself in the time of Paul and Timothy, but we do know how it is presented in our world today, and this is what we need to identify and face so that we may not be ashamed of witness, and in the pastor of testifying to the truth of the Gospel in preaching and teaching.

In the present time, much of the Bible is declared as unbelievable. The creation revelation is declared as impossible to believe. The miracles of Jesus are deemed to be simply unbelievable and not true. The moral

teaching of Jesus is deemed acceptable, but all the supernatural is rejected as impossible. Anyone who holds firmly to the Bible as the inspired and infallible revelation of God is laughed out of court as foolish and deluded. In the place of the Bible the theory of evolution has taken over the thinking of the world. Such has been the cleverness of Satan that he has caused the omnipotence and omniscience of God to be reduced to what human sinful reason deems as possible. Such thinking has the appearance of being sound and beyond question; but in fact it shows an incredible example of stupidity.

Over the last hundred years or so the church has been deceived by Satan to accept and receive this wisdom of the world, and large sections of the visible church has been so affected by the wisdom of the world and to accept it all lock stock and barrel, and so looks down on the faithful remnant in the church, and despises those who remain faithful to the whole Bible as God's word written.

In this situation the words of the apostle Paul in this 8th verse of 2 Timothy, chapter 1 are so applicable to today. We must not become ashamed to testify to the truth concerning our Lord Jesus Christ, which is expressed, not only in the Gospels, but also in the rest of the New Testament, which was written as the Holy Spirit inspired the apostles and other New Testament writers to explain the saving truth of salvation in Jesus Christ in his living and working to achieve salvation and forgiveness of our sins.

It is exceedingly hard to stand against the tide of public opinion and the opinion of the majority of the visible church and its scholars. The question remains as to how we may be able to unashamed of the Gospel of Christ and his saving work. The two main gifts of grace of prayer and study of the Bible is the clue.

When the Bible is faithfully and diligently read and studied, with much prayer that light may be given by the operation of the Holy Spirit, it will be seen and appreciated that wisdom is not on the side of the wisdom of the world.

Let us study the opening of the Bible honestly and without prejudice, and we will be brought to understand that the wisdom of the Bible trounces the wisdom of the world. In the opening verse of Genesis (In the beginning - God – created - the heavens and the earth) we see that it tells us the truth that GOD existed before time, that he was the creator of time, and the universe as we know it was his, brought into being by his omnipotent sovereign good pleasure. The world in its wisdom does not know God, and has never expressed how matter came into being. Its wisdom is flawed from the start, and makes all its wisdom that follows as unprovable.

Let us not be ashamed of the Gospel and God's infallible word, the Bible. Let us take heed of Paul's words to Timothy, and refuse to be cowed by the so called wisdom of the world which has been so cleverly introduced by the cleverness of Satan.

Let us not be ashamed of the apostle Paul, who was inspired to write so much of the New Testament, and make clear the wisdom of God and his great love in giving us Jesus Christ as the second Adam to save the world from the death the first Adam brought on all humanity and creation, bring immortality to light by the Gospel.

MEDITATIONS on the 2nd Letter to TIMOTHY

2 Timothy 1: 8b

For Sunday, 18th October 2026

HAVING considered the exhortation of Paul to Timothy in verse 8 in an overall way, we need to look at the second half of verse 8 to enlarge our understanding of Paul's exhortation to Timothy in this verse. In this last sentence of verse 8 Paul adds to his exhortation to Timothy

these words 'But join with in suffering for the Gospel, by the power of God'.

In the words 'join with me ...' Paul is saying 'Don't be ashamed of me', but 'join with me', not as a prisoner, but by being ready to suffer for the Gospel, and being ready to uphold the Gospel. The fact that Paul was in prison indicated his willingness to suffer for the Gospel. Being faithful to the Gospel does mean suffering of various kinds, but it does not necessarily mean imprisonment, or even death, although this has been the experience, and still is, of many Christians in the past and present.

Paul also adds that what enables the believer and the pastor to suffer for the Gospel is 'by the power of God'. Immediately the question is raised in the mind as to why this should be so. In Matthew 11: 28-30 Jesus invites us saying 'Come to me .. and you will find rest for your souls', and this seems to contradict Paul who indicates that faith in Christ will bring suffering. This shows us that we must be careful to truly interpret the Word of God. Jesus promises 'rest for the soul' and not rest from suffering and conflict in this earthly life. Rest of soul is sure and abundant in Christ as he gives the assurance of forgiveness and the gift of eternal life, and so gives peace from conviction of sin and the fear of death and hell; but this eternal blessing brings us into conflict in our earthly life as we take Christ's yoke upon us and are obedient to him in all things. Why is this so? Why does faithfulness to Christ divide and bring suffering?

Here we need to learn more of the revelation of God in the Bible. The Bible reveals that there are two kingdoms which dominate this earthly condition. There is the kingdom of Satan, and the kingdom of God. Every human being who is born into this earthly life, is born under the dominion of the God of this world, which is Satan. John tells us in 1 John 5: 19 'We know that we are children of God, and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one'. Here is expressed the fact of the two kingdoms.

Our first parent Adam, chose to follow the advice of Satan, and so plunged the whole of his progeny into the dominion of Satan. Because of this action of Satan all human beings are born separated from God and under the kingship of Satan. While we remain in this condition of spiritual death, Satan keeps us happy in the world under his authority. But as soon as a soul finds rest in Jesus, which means being lifted out of Satan's kingship, and being translated into the kingdom of God, Satan becomes our enemy, and activates his subjects to oppose and afflict us.

Jesus makes this so abundantly clear in his teaching to his disciples in John 15: 18-19. Jesus tells his disciples here that they must not be surprised if they experience hatred from the world. He goes on to tell them that the world hated him first, and that now, because they do not belong to the world any more, the world, led by Satan, hates them also. Because of this the redeemed under the lordship of Christ must not be surprised if we also find that the service of Christ brings suffering, because we are not ashamed to testify about our Lord.

The church in the time of Jesus, led by the Jewish leaders, hated and persecuted Jesus, and in the end they conspired to bring about his death; but in their hate of Jesus what they thought was their victory was their defeat. So we see how the kingdom of Satan had overrun the church at that time, so it is not surprising that the same condition exists today, as Satan has infiltrated the world into the visible church.

In spite of this affliction from Satan and the world we must still not be ashamed of the Gospel, and be afraid to testify to the truth, even if such action brings upon us the hate of the world even when expressed in the visible church. How are we to be courageous and not be ashamed. Paul makes this clear in this second part of verse 8 of 2 Timothy chapter one. It is by the power of God.

How we experience the power of God in order to be courageous for Christ could take many sermons to expound, but in its simplest form, the power of God is found in the promise of Christ that he will be with us

always, and in the gift of the Holy Spirit to dwell within our new created soul. If we are to know this power at work in our lives, the only way is to sit at the feet of Jesus in the study and meditation in the Bible, and to be much in prayer, as the example of Jesus illustrates. Jesus constantly went aside on his own to pray. Satan will be viciously active to keep up from these two means of grace. We must resist him, steadfast in the faith; and put on the whole armour of God so that we may stand in the evil day, and after you have done everything, to stand (Ephesians 6: 13).

MEDITATIONS on the 2nd Letter to TIMOTHY

2 Timothy 1: 9

For Sunday, 25th October 2026

VERSE 8 ended with the the words 'by the power of God'. We live our Christian life by the power of God, by faith, and by the Holy Spirit dwelling with in us. In this next verse, verse 9, Paul speaks of the glorious power and grace of God that has brought us into this grace in which we stand and live, which is new life in Christ.

In this earthly life we are in a realm where Satan reigns, and holds fallen sinners captive in darkness and sin. Christ has been sent by the Father as the stronger than the strong man, Satan, by spoiling his goods, (see Luke 11: 21-22). This Jesus has achieved in the way described in this 9th verse of 2 Timothy chapter one. Let us mediate and glory in this great deliverance described by Paul in this 9th verse.

The words of Paul commence 'who has saved us'. God has saved us in Christ, who in his victorious life and all-sufficient death, has provided the means whereby God is able to be just, when he justifies, us sinners, by imputing to us the perfect righteousness of Jesus. Satan's hold on

sinners is the fact that we are born sinful and under his dominion under the condemnation of God and the sentence of eternal death which God pronounced on Adam and all his progeny, when Satan deceived Adam to trust him, and not God. Christ's complete saving work in his life and death frees the believer from Satan's hold on us, by providing a perfect righteousness which is imputed to the believer and restores to us the gift of eternal life in the kingdom of God.

Paul continues to open up this incredible saving work with the words 'who has saved us'. God has saved through Christ. This is an irresistible call of God by grace. He calls us out of the dominion of Satan and translates us into the kingdom of his dear Son, Jesus Christ. This expressed in Romans 8: 29-30. Paul makes this more clear in Ephesians 2: 4-5 'But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus ...'.

Paul goes on to express the nature of this call in the words 'to a holy life'. We are justified (clothed in the righteousness of Christ, that is justified), and also glorified (which is to be given citizenship in heaven, so that we are made fit and certain of eternal life in heaven). We are made to sit in heavenly places with Christ, given a new nature by spiritual birth, in order that we may live a holy life, now and forever.

How is this glorious salvation granted? Paul goes on to tell us in the words 'and not because of anything we have done, but because of his own purpose and grace'. Salvation is a gift of the grace of God alone. We contribute nothing towards it, and are given grace to live in it in a life of holiness.

Then Paul tells us where this gift was given by God. The words are 'This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time'. If we are believers saved, called, justified and glorified, it is because of the sovereign purpose of God, determined before the beginning of time; and before creation and the fall of man in Adam. We can claim no part

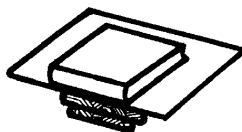
in it. No good works of ours achieved it. We perform acts of holiness because of this sovereign choice of God.

How this great revelation of truth humbles us, and crushes human pride to the dust, and takes from us any spec of pride we may think we have. In time we were granted the grace to believe in Christ for our salvation, not from any merit in ourselves, but we believed because God according to this election before the foundation of the world determined to grant it to us.

No doubt Satan, when he so subtly deceived Adam and Eve, thought he had already defeated God and ruined all his perfection in creation. In this revelation of God through Paul to Timothy we are able to understand that God had everything in hand, and had before time was created, determined all things in his sovereign and eternal wisdom. Grace reigned in victory in the mind of God before God commenced creation. History is eternally in the hands of God, and all the mayhem Satan has so cruelly caused in the history of the world has been in the permissive hands of God, for the glory of his grace.

So Paul in his inspired wisdom and revelation rounds off this incredible doctrine with the words 'This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time.'

As we look out on our world, and as we face the whole of history, and as we face all the assaults on our faith by Satan, the flesh and the world, here we have the glorious truth, which ruins all the temptations and assault of the world and Satan. We have been saved by sovereign grace, and are in the hands of almighty God who has determined all things in Christ, so that we may be glorified with Christ, in the heavenly glory.



GOD'S WORD FROM HOSEA

Number 36

THE INESCAPABLE JUDGEMENT OF GOD

"What will you do on the day of your appointed feasts, on the festival days of the Lord? Even if they escape from destruction, Egypt will gather them, and Memphis will bury them. Their treasures of silver will be taken over by briars, and thorns will overrun their tents. The days of punishment are coming, the days of reckoning are at hand. Let Israel know this. Because your sins are so many and your hostility so great, the prophet is considered a fool, the inspired man a maniac. The prophet, along with my God, is the watchman over Ephraim, yet snares await him on all the paths, and hostility in the house of God. They have sunk deep into corruption, as in the days of Gibeah. God will remember their wickedness and punish them for their sins"

Hosea 9: 5-9

WHEN these words are read and their message fully appreciated, they are terrifying. Hosea is speaking the words God has given him to declare to Ephraim, that is Israel. They reveal a total impotence on the part of Israel to escape God's judgement and punishment, which is promised in these verses. Their terror is increased as we take in each verse. When we go forward in time in the history of Israel, the terror is increased, for history, found in 2 Kings 17, shows us the awful reality of this prophecy of Hosea. As we read the history of Israel recorded in 2 Kings, we cannot escape the terror. Although in amazing grace God continually warned Israel, there is a consistent record of the kings of Israel doing evil in the eyes of the Lord, and totally ignoring the word of God told

by the prophets God sent in grace to speak to Israel in warning; and we may assume from this history that the people loved to have it so.

Let us now think through these verses and face the truth of the speaking of God to Ephraim by the faithful prophet, Hosea.

God commences with a question to Israel. The question is by way of a challenge to Israel to face their impotence when they face God's omnipotence. God calls Israel to look hard at the worship they were carrying out. It is plain that they were coming before God with the appointed feasts and festivals that had been laid down in the time of Moses. God asks them to look hard and carefully at how they were carrying out these festivals and feasts. The question 'What will you do ...' is a command by God to consider carefully what they were doing, to see whether the conduct of such festivals and feasting were pleasing to God, and whether they were faithful to word of God concerning them given in the time of Moses. It is plain that in the eyes of God there were much to be desired in the way such feasting was being conducted.

In the next verse Hosea speaks of destruction, so it is plain that the way Israel were conducting their feast and festivals had become offensive to God, and God had indicated that they deserved destruction for their offense before God. The question 'What will you do ...' is calling Israel to face their impotence in opposing God's action of punishment and judgement.

Verse 6 is making clear to Israel that all their efforts to escape the destruction of God would utterly fail. Even if Israel's efforts to escape God had some measure of success, Israel could not escape the judgement of God. God points out that their power could not escape the might of Egypt, and when Egypt attacked them they would be totally defenseless, for Memphis will bury

them, that is the power of Egypt would totally overcome them. Verse 6 goes on to describe the helplessness of Israel when Egypt attacked. They would be stripped of all their riches, and the land left in devastation, described by Hosea as 'and thorns will overrun their tents'.

God speaking through Hosea plainly warns them that punishment was coming, when God's patience with Israel will be at an end. The idea of reckoning makes clear that God was taking account of the life of Israel, and noting all their disobedience and departure from the pure worship of Jehovah God. When Hosea says 'Let Israel know this' God is making his displeasure plain and making clear to Israel that they can not live as they were living without God's punishment being inflicted on Israel if they did not heed God's warning through Hosea.

The rest of this seventh verse declares the reason for God warning punishment on Israel. In the first place God tells Israel the greatness of their sins, and their hostility against God. In other words Hosea made clear that the living in Israel was rebellion against God. This rebellion is shown to be very great because the prophets which God sent to Israel to make clear God's displeasure were treated as fools, and ignored, laugh at and derided, and their warnings were treated as the words of a maniac.

Verse 8 shows how this attitude of Israel to the prophets sent by God was so remiss and disgraceful. Hosea's words speak of Israel's actions towards his prophets as totally reprehensible. God sent his watchman to bring conviction upon Israel, but Israel put snares in their way, and all that God's prophet experienced was hostility. This accusation makes clear that Israel's treatment of God's prophet was an offense directly against God.

Verse 9 describes the assessment and reaction of God to the way Israel treated his prophets.

In the first place God speaks of Israel's behaviour as deep corruption, which has resurfaced again and again in the history of Israel. Then in the second place God declares his response to such behaviour in Israel. God tells Israel he will remember their wickedness and punish them for their sins.

APPLICATION.

1. It is impossible to sin against God with impunity.

This 9th verse before us plainly makes clear that nothing we human beings can do is hidden from God. All is plain before God. It tells us also that God never forgets, and will bring such sinning to punishment. This sinning in Israel was of a greater offense to God, because it was being committed by God's people, whom he had chosen as his people, with the promise that he would be their God. God had given them his law. He had poured out blessings upon Israel. God had rescued them from slavery in Egypt. He had brought them to the land he had promised them. He had given them victory over their enemies. He had continually sent his prophets to call them back to faithfulness to him, and they had ignored all this graciousness from God. Further God had been so patient with them, warning them, calling them to return to him.

Israel's response was done in spite of the truth we are considering here, that God remembers all wickedness, and it is impossible for God to overlook wickedness, and so when his gracious patience is ignored, punishment must follow.

2. The punishment of God against sin cannot be ignored.

Hosea made clear to Israel that punishment for sin is true. However much Israel sought to ignore this inevitable action of

God against sin, God makes clear through Hosea that promised punishment could not be avoided if Israel refused to heed God's warnings through Hosea, and indeed through all the prophets sent by God.

Jesus told a parable which speaks of the truth of the words of Hosea in verse 9 before us. It is the *parable of the tenants*. This parable is found in Luke 20: 9-19; Matthew 21: 33-46; and Mark 12: 1-12. The fact that this parable is recorded by all three of synoptic gospels indicates how important the teaching of this parable is.

This parable is about an owner of a vineyard who rented it to some farmers. The owner sent servants, at the time of harvesting the grapes, to claim some profit from the vineyard. The tenants of the vineyard treat these servants cruelly refusing to give the owner of the vineyard any profit from the vineyard. In desperation the owner of the vineyard sent his son, believing that the tenants would honour his son. Instead the tenants said to themselves that the son, being the inheritor of the vineyard, would be the future owner of the vineyard, and said to themselves that if they killed the son, the vineyard would be theirs. So they killed the son of the owner.

At the close of the parable we are told that the Pharisees and Jewish leaders realized that Jesus was speaking concerning them, and their rejection of him, and realized that Jesus was telling the parable as a record of the history of the Jews. In fact the Jews did crucify the Son of God, and the parable proved to be true prophecy.

What does history record. History records that judgement fell on the Jews in 70 AD when Jerusalem was destroyed by Titus.

3. Importance of taking note seriously of the word of God through his faithful prophets.

In verse 7 of these verses before us we read of how Israel treated the faithful prophets, like Hosea, that God sent to speak to Israel. The words at the end of this verse are 'the prophet is considered a fool, the inspired man a maniac'.

These words indicate that as the prophet, presumably in this case Hosea, the word he gave from God was ignored, and his message considered as foolish; also the prophet was treated as if his message from God were the words of someone who was deranged.

Though the prophets that God sent in love and grace to sinful Israel to warn them of God's displeasure at their living, and warn them of the reality of God's reaction to punish such behaviour if the message of the prophet was ignored, Israel treated the prophet with contempt. When we read the history of Israel in 1 and 2 Kings, it is recorded how this action against God's faithful prophets took place. For the one faithful prophet there were numerous false prophets which laughed at the message of the faithful prophet, and said that he was prophesying lies, and giving a different message which was more in line with what the kings and the people wanted. In the case of Jeremiah the treatment he received for being faithful to God was cruel and life threatening.

The history also records how false and how foolish the false prophecy was. The warning of punishment and judgement eventually occurred, with total loss to Israel, and the end of the ten tribes of Israel.

How cogent is this record concerning Israel for the church today. There are faithful preachers of the Bible message, who faithfully record the fact of the wrath of God against sin, and speak faithfully concerning the Bible revelation concerning the judgement and punishment of sin and unrepentant sinners. So many clergy ridicule the conception of God's wrath, and

eternal punishment in sin, and declare that such teaching is incompatible with a God of love. There is such success in this teaching of false teachers and preachers in the church today, that both congregations and clergy treat faithful clergy in the same way as Israel treated Hosea and other prophets who bravely and faithfully declared the message of God in their day.

This attitude against the clear teaching in the Bible concerning the reality of God's wrath against sin, and the certainty of retribution and judgement, like in the case of Israel when they laughed at and ignored the message of Hosea, will have the same tragic result eventually as occurred in the history of Israel. Jesus taught clearly the reality of eternal punishment in hell for all who reject the Gospel of grace in God sending Jesus as Saviour and to be the propitiation for sin. Just as the false prophets in the Old Testament were proved to be dreadfully wrong when final judgement fell on Israel; so this attitude of clergy to the teaching of Jesus and the apostles, will prove to be hopelessly and tragically wrong, not only for themselves, but the congregations they have led. They will finally at the end of their lives find themselves in everlasting punishment in hell.

4. The importance of taking the Old Testament seriously.

Hopefully we have seen that the word of God through Hosea was fulfilled with tragic consequences for the ten tribes of Israel making up what is known as the northern kingdom, which came into being when these ten tribes split from Judah and Benjamin in the days of Rehoboam the son of Solomon. 2 Kings 17 tells of the awful and complete judgement executed by God on Israel in the days of Hoshea, who was the last king of the northern kingdom.

This example of God's dealing with Israel surely confirms the inspiration by God of the Old Testament, and that it faithfully

teaches the truth of God. This surely confirms that the Old Testament is truly God's word written, and must be taken seriously. It tells us also that taking the Old Testament seriously means we not only should read it carefully, but when taken seriously it opens up to the faithful reader the valuable truth of God.

We have seen how the words of Hosea from God became fulfilled later in the history of Israel, and this makes clear that to dismiss the Old Testament revelation is the greatest of folly, and also assures us that faithful and believing study of the Old Testament will be eternally rewarding.

This clearly seen in the fact that the Old Testament has much teaching and revelation concerning Christ which confirms all that happened in the life of Jesus, and makes clear the teaching of Jesus and the apostles.

CONCLUSION.

What should we take away from what we have been considering in this prophecy of Hosea? Surely the faithfulness and grace of God in that he has given us a sure word of prophecy in the whole Bible, which is true and real and saving food for our soul.

OCTOBER 2026



GOD'S MESSAGE IN THE LETTER OF JAMES

Expository Sermons in the 2nd Epistle of Peter

INTRODUCTION

*"James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,
to the tribes scattered among the nations; Greetings."*

James 1: 1

COMING to the Epistle of James we find ourselves in a different sort of letter than the ones of Paul, Peter and John. James deals with all sorts of different issues which occurred in the early church, and although his letter is full of doctrine, James does not teach doctrine as truth to be believed, but is concerned to correct what he sees as wrong understanding of truth, which has appeared in the church, and deals with issues troubling the church in his time.

As we look through this opening address of his epistle, we are faced immediately by its sparseness. The introduction of the other letters we read in the New Testament are much longer and more complete in identifying the writer and to those to whom the letter is being written. Let us now look closely at this introduction to learn what we can from it.

James simple introduces himself by the name James. We are left with no clue as to which of the James in the New Testament it is. There has been much discussion as to which James is the writer, but as he does not directly identify himself we are left with no direct clue. It is assumed by some that he is what was known as James the just, the step brother of our Lord. Also there is seen to be two apostle called by this name. When we

turn to the list of the twelve disciples making up the apostles, (see Matthew 12: 2-4) we see two of the apostles named James. There is James, the son of Zebedee and James, the son of Alphaeus. The puritan, Thomas Manton, in his commentary of this epistle, chooses James, the son of Alphaeus as being the one chosen in his day.

As we understand that the New Testament is the infallible inspired word of God, and men spoke as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit, it is right to assume that the author of this letter was one of the Apostles, who we understand from John's Gospel, were special endowed with understanding of the truth of God, and were special taught by the Holy Spirit after the resurrection of Jesus, and who were specially filled with the Holy Spirit at Pentecost for this task. So, like all of the New Testament, we receive the Epistle of James as the truth of God to be believed and received, as it is properly and truly understood by the illumination of the Holy Spirit, who dwells within every believer, and specially in the apostles who were set apart to establish the church in the truth of God.

This is important to hold fast, as this epistle has often been challenged down the history of the church. Martyn Luther, the greater reformer at the Reformation in 16th century, called the letter an 'epistle of straw', because it appeared to him not to teach truly the doctrine of Justification by Faith, which was made clear at the reformation as the Holy Spirit opened the understanding of the reformers in the darkness of mediaeval times.

James, in speaking of his authority to write his letter, simply speaks of himself as 'the servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ'. To us this designation may not seem to have much force. When we look at the opening of Paul to his great epistle to the Romans, Paul gives, in much great detail, is authority. He tells us 'Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an

apostle and set apart for the Gospel of God ...'. He makes sure that his readers are convinced of his authority, and that it came from God. James just tell us he is a 'servant of God and our Lord Jesus Christ'.

However when we stop and think, James makes very clear his authority as one who speaks the very word of God in his description of himself. He speaks of himself as the servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul spoke of himself as the servant of Jesus Christ. James adds servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ.

To us the idea of a servant does not appear to have much strength. We understand a servant as one who serves, but in our culture a servant is employed and is paid for his or her service. It has been in the past that servants were looked down upon by those who employed them, and in many cases this attitude can be found still, but on the whole every employment is treated as equal worth. And although there probably were paid servants in New Testament times, this was not the case in the society of the times of the New Testament.

It is a pity that the translation of the word in the Greek in the Bible is 'servant'. However the Greek word is 'doulos' which means slave. Slaves were bought in the slave market and became the ownership of the one who bought them. The owner had complete rights over his slave, and could put to death his slave if he wanted to. If a slave ran away and escaped from his master, and was eventually caught, the penalty was death.

Slavery persisted in England for along time. Slavery was accept without question in England up to the 18th century. The Rev. John Newton, before his conversion, was a slave trader. Slaves were treated cruelly and abominably. In England it was Wilberforce, at the time of the Evangelical revival, who pressed the abolition of the slave trade through Parliament.

With this background to slavery, we can perhaps appreciate what James was saying concerning himself as he calls himself a slave of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a position and relationship to God and to the Lord Jesus that every believer should accept. We are owned by God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

James knew that he had been bought with a price. The price was the most expensive price that has ever been. He knew that he had been bought by the price of the blood of Christ, shed upon the cross. He knew Christ had given his life to save him from his sins, and everlasting death, and because of such love James knew nothing less was his response than to surrender in total obedience and faith to God and Jesus Christ.

As a slave of God and the Lord Jesus Christ, James was saying that he could write nothing but what he received from Christ through the Holy Spirit. He was bound in obedience to God and Jesus Christ to write nothing but what he received by the Holy Spirit as God's word and truth.

These days within the visible church the situation is very much different. A great number of clergy and ministers, in every denomination, do not show this obedience to God and the Lord Jesus Christ. No doubt they would say they seek to be obedient to Christ, but this obedience is qualified by the right to use their human wisdom and understanding to question the Bible, and deny, change, or reject, any part of Scripture that they feel is not compatible with human reason. By saying he was a slave of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, James was committed to receiving the whole of the Old Testament as the inspired and infallible word of God, and also the teaching of the apostles known and received at that time in the same way.

Thank God that there is still today a faithful remnant who receive the whole of the Old and New Testament as God's

written word and hold fast to this attitude of James when he says he was the slave of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ.

When Paul wrote his letters it was usually to a definite body of believers in a particular town or area, but James writes to Jews particularly those who had embrace the Gospel, and put their trust in Jesus as their Saviour and Lord. Because of persecution, and other perhaps more social reasons, Christians had been scattered into different part of world of the New Testament period.

The Jews as a nation had lost their chosen place as the people of God as nation. This occurred in AD 70 when the judgement of God at last was poured out on the nation of the Jews, and they were scattered around the known world at that time. As far as I understand it Jews became from this time before God as all the Gentiles. The Gospel was preached to them as to Gentiles, and whosoever believed received the gift of the Holy Spirit and became the members of the spiritual Israel, which Paul identifies in chapter 9 of his letter to the Romans.

Who are the new Israel, they are the children of God truly and saved for eternity. Peter makes this clear in the opening of his first letter, and this also applicable to both converted Jews and Gentiles. His introduction to his first general letter goes like this 'To God's elect, strangers in the world, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia.

Jews and Gentiles in the New Testament are equal before God in becoming believers. We are elect of God. Chosen by God according to the foreknowledge of God before the foundation of the world. Paul also makes this truth clear in his letters, as we see in Ephesians 1: 4. The nation of the Jews, Judah and Israel, were chosen as the people of God throughout the Old Testament as a means whereby God would provide a Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ, as promised in Genesis 3, where God

promised that the seed of the woman would crush the serpent's head. In Galatians Paul clearly teaches that the seed of the woman was one person, even our Lord Jesus Christ, who would overcome Satan, as revealed in Genesis 3 as the serpent.

It is interesting to notice that James is writing to the twelve tribes of Israel. This is suggestive, He could have said he was writing the Jews as a nation, or to believing Jews scattered among the nations, but he particularly says he is writing to the twelve tribes of Israel. In the history of Israel in the two books of Kings, we are told that all the twelve tribes remained together together up to the time of Solomon, the son of David. When Solomon's son Rehoboam followed his father as the king of Israel, there was a split between the tribes, where ten of the tribes split away from Judah and Benjamin, forming the northern kingdom of Israel, and Judah and Benjamin remaining under the kingship of Rehoboam. Rehoboam led the ten tribes in the division between the twelve tribes. The two kingdoms existed together, though the ten tribes forming the northern kingdom departed seriously from the Lord God, and in the reign of their last king Hoshea, God's final judgement fell on these ten tribes and the people were carried into exile in Assyria. After this time the ten tribes seemed to be forgotten and left out of the history. The history of the southern kingdom of Judah and Benjamin suggests that numbers of the 10 tribes found their way back to the southern kingdom, and Levites were brought back to teach the the alien inhabitants of the northern kingdom to teach the way of Jehovah, but history is largely silent concerning these ten tribes after their exile.

With this history in mind, James writing to the twelve tribes of Israel is suggestive. Plainly as the Gospel was preached, and Jews came to believe in their Messiah, for the forgiveness of sins, and the gift of eternal life, and they were scattered over the known world at that time, there were many people of the

tribes from the northern kingdom included in the saved ones with Judah and Benjamin. In the election of God concerning the new Israel, the church of Jesus Christ, members of the twelve tribes were included with the believing Gentiles.

James, in this introduction to his epistle, is rather bland. He simply ends his introduction to one word – Greetings. No doubt this is technically sufficient in introducing himself and his letter to his readers, but so bare as we compare it with the way the apostle Paul ends his opening address in his letters. Paul's ending is rather of the nature of a blessing. Paul's closing words of his introduction to his letter to the Romans with the words 'Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. All the rest of his letters have something similar.

However, though James uses just one word to express his greeting, it does have depth of meaning as we think and consider -

- 1.** This one words 'greeting' expresses the love and goodwill of James for these believing Jews scattered around the known world at that time, and his desire for the strengthening of their spiritual lives.
- 2.** The word greeting suggests a calling of James for the attention of those to whom he is writing. He desires wholeheartedly to do them good by what he writes.
- 3.** The words makes clear and assures those who receive the letter that any criticism or correction comes with love, so that the believers who read the letter may be helped and prevented from being led astray by Satan's devises to lead them away from saving truth of the Gospel. Surely this is the purpose of all true preaching, to so expound the truth that believers may be kept safe in the grace of God.

4. In this James is showing deep concern for the spiritual and eternal welfare of believers, who perhaps were not in a position of hearing good apostolic teaching which preserves the soul as it is believed and obeyed.

5. James also shows his love to keep believers from being led astray by Satan's devices.

So all though the greeting of James may seem sparse it does hold much deeper concern of James for the spiritual welfare of those who received his letter.

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