

And we being exceedingly tossed with a tempest, the next day they lightened the ship; And the third day we cast out with our own hands the tackling of the ship. And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away.” (See Acts 27:18-20.)

Daniel Series, Sixteen: Be Ye Steadfast



The ship of God endures gale force winds, and sometimes takes on much water, but the Lord hath His men at the oar, and His Son at the helm.

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.” -I Corinthians 15:58

“For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.” -Hebrews 6:10

In the United States Department of Defense stands the top brass. Accomplished generals with stripes, medals, and awards. Medals signifying past events of valor. Each one, on display upon his chest, and held in detail in his memory.

Be advised, for those who serve, and have served, in the armies of heaven, every act of service has its reward.

A relic, a portion of antiquity, a piece of paper with the royal insignia, stamped and sealed with signet ring.

“In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a thing was revealed unto Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar; and the thing was true, but the time appointed was long: and he understood the thing, and had understanding of the vision.” -Daniel 10:1

In recognition of his majesty and the royal court of Cyrus the Great, a thing was revealed unto one of his majesty's appointed officers. His formal name was known within

the empire as Belteshazzar, but unto his companions, Daniel. This portion of the chronicles is written in the ancient Hebrew tongue.

“In those days I Daniel was mourning three full weeks. I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.”

A time of great depression, of emotional distress. The location and date are confirmed:

“And in the four and twentieth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, which is Hiddekel;” -Daniel 10:4

At such a time when this elderly saint of God finds himself discouraged and depressed, to the breaking point, the curtain is pulled back.

*“Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz: His body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude. And I Daniel alone saw the vision: for the men that were with me saw not the vision; but a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves.”
-Daniel 10:5-7*

A preincarnate appearance of Jesus Christ in His glorified



state. A state of fierce majestic.

“Therefore I was left alone, and saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in me: for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength. Yet heard I the voice of his words: and when I heard the voice of his words, then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground.” -Daniel 10:8-9

One may think this to be a strange way to encourage a desperate old man, but the glory of God is a signature of His being. His person and attributes are to be adored. God is omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent. These traits lead one to look up and out to the horizon and to other coordinates in the world. The date is 534/535 BC and the Lord is moving the chess pieces around upon the globe. We sail to the homeland to view the movements in Ezra chapter 3. The decree has been issued for the allowance for the Jews to return to the homeland. Daniel is not only aware of this but is genuinely concerned. Concerned for the land, concerned for the men, for the women and children. The prophet is discouraged and depressed, and if he were not in his nineties he would be there. But the trek by mule would be his demise. Those that have returned are about to undergo a unique experience.

“They kept also the feast of tabernacles, as it is written, and offered the daily burnt offerings by number, according to the custom, as the duty of every day required;” -Ezra 3:4

They are making the first attempt at the ritual since the siege. Nehemiah recorded the current condition of the city, “Jerusalem lieth waste, and the gates thereof are burned with fire.” In fact the rubble made the streets impassable.

“From the first day of the seventh month began they to offer burnt offerings unto the LORD. But the foundation of the temple of the LORD was not yet laid.” -Ezra 3:6

The city was so thoroughly destroyed by the Babylonians that the foundations were destroyed. But now a great milestone has been achieved...the foundation.

“And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the LORD, they set the priests in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites the sons of Asaph with cymbals, to praise the LORD, after the

ordinance of David king of Israel. And they sang together by course in praising and giving thanks unto the LORD; because he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever toward Israel. And all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid.” -Ezra 3:10-11

But immediately following, or even during the shouting, was an overwhelming emotion of a different sort.

“But many of the priests and Levites and chief of the fathers, who were ancient men, that had seen the first house, when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice; and many shouted aloud for joy: So that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people: for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the noise was heard afar off.” -Ezra 3:12-13

Notice another detail to the portrait.

“Now these are the children of the province that went up out of the captivity, of those which had been carried away, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away unto Babylon, and came again unto Jerusalem and Judah, every one unto his city; Which came with Zerubbabel: Jeshua, Nehemiah, Seraiah, Reelaiah, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mizpar, Bigvai, Rehum, Baanah. The number of the men of the people of Israel:

The children of Parosh, two thousand an hundred seventy and two.

The children of Shephatiah, three hundred seventy and two.

The children of Arah, seven hundred seventy and five.

The children of Pahathmoab, of the children of Jeshua and Joab, two thousand eight hundred and twelve.

The children of Elam, a thousand two hundred fifty and four.

The children of Zattu, nine hundred forty and five.

The children of Zaccai, seven hundred and threescore.

The children of Bani, six hundred forty and two.

The children of Bebai, six hundred twenty and three.

The children of Azgad, a thousand two hundred twenty and two.



The children of Adonikam, six hundred sixty and six.

The children of Bigvai, two thousand fifty and six.

The children of Adin, four hundred fifty and four.

The children of Ater of Hezekiah, ninety and eight.

The children of Bezai, three hundred twenty and three.

The children of Jorah, an hundred and twelve.

The children of Hashum, two hundred twenty and three.

The children of Gibbar, ninety and five.

The children of Bethlehem, an hundred twenty and three.

The men of Netophah, fifty and six.

The men of Anathoth, an hundred twenty and eight.

The children of Azmaveth, forty and two.

The children of Kirjatharim, Chephirah, and Beeroth, seven hundred and forty and three.

The children of Ramah and Gaba, six hundred twenty and one.

The men of Michmas, an hundred twenty and two.

The men of Bethel and Ai, two hundred twenty and three.

The children of Nebo, fifty and two.

The children of Magbish, an hundred fifty and six.

The children of the other Elam, a thousand two hundred fifty and four.

The children of Harim, three hundred and twenty.

The children of Lod, Hadid, and Ono, seven hundred twenty and five.

The children of Jericho, three hundred forty and five.

The children of Senaah, three thousand and six hundred and thirty." -Ezra 2:1-35

The whole congregation was 42,360.

The population of Israel before the invasions was near 1,000,000. And if one would number the casualties near 500,000 that means they are now about 460,000 short. Where are they? Where is everybody else? Why did they not return? But there are over 40,000 that are present and working, plus servants and their maids, and 200 singing men and singing women. (See *Ezra 2:65*.) Would this be encouragement?

Notice the accurate records.

Notice the generosity.

"And some of the chief of the fathers, when they came to the house of the LORD which is at Jerusalem, offered freely for the house of God to set it up in his place: They gave after their ability unto the treasure of the work threescore and one thousand drams of gold, and five thousand pound of silver, and one hundred priests' garments." -Ezra 2:68-69

A few of the wealthy men gave over \$100,000 for a special offering above and beyond the tithe. They, like God, kept accurate records. Every person, every family, every dollar, every animal, everything they brought.

Daniel is smitten, overwhelmed in discouragement because of the condition of the homeland. The activity and occurrences happening there would have caused the same emotional swings as the ancient men, he being one of them. Whether the victories are tremendous or small, momentous or unnoticed the records are kept.

"And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." -Revelation 20:11-12

If there be no wind for the sails, grab an oar.

