

Chapter 2

~ Do we tend to treat certain passages of God's Word as if they have nothing useful to say? ~

(v. 1-70) At first it may seem this passage is only a list of names and of little edifying value BUT we know that 2 Timothy 3:16-17 says, "**All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.**" Since we profess this is the Word of God and it is profitable for our souls, SO in what ways are these passages beneficial to us?

It is written that from the seed of Babylon, a Savior is sent to comfort the soldiers of Jehovah and be a companion to the Lord and that God will use those who were once servants of evil and eloquent speakers to bring mercy and comfort to the sons of affliction and bring them into the body of believers.

1. When **God restored His people** to their land to rebuild the temple; He **stirred** the hearts of many walks of life - He is no respecter of persons (no favorites, all are equal)
 - He stirred the hearts of **leaders** (v. 2:2) - see meanings. →
 - He stirred the hearts of **ordinary Israelites** (v. 3-35) - laymen
 - He stirred the hearts of **priests** (v. 36-39)
 - He stirred the hearts of **Levites** (v. 40-42) - those not caught up in idolatry of Babylon
 - He stirred the hearts of **temple servants** (v. 43-53) - Gibeonites (from bk. of Joshua employed to draw water for the Levites)
 - He stirred the **sons of Solomon's servants** (v. 55-58) - strangers employed by Solomon

God stirred the hearts of everyone **necessary** for the work. He didn't choose favorites/the best of the best to do His work. None of us play a small roll in ministry if we **obey** the **calling** of God. He calls each of us by name!

~ What does this detailed and complete list reveal about the nature of God? (Isaiah 40:26) ~

- There were some that sought priesthood but could not prove their lineage (v. 59-61)
 - They were disqualified from the priesthood for their protection, because if they worked as priests in the temple but weren't from a "qualified" line, they could be struck dead by His holiness breaking out against them.
 - In v. 63, the "sons of Hakkoz" were verified by Urim and Thummim. In 1 Samuel 14:41-42 they were used as lots to determine the will for the Lord.\

Let's consider the status of the family of Hakkoz. These were men who wanted to serve the Lord as priests but couldn't because their lineage wasn't of Aaron. They needed someone to stand up and do something for them that they could not. **They needed vindication that had to come outside of themselves.**

- Just like us who were lost, **our sin disqualified us before God.** Jesus lived the perfect life we couldn't live and died on the cross to absorb the wrath of God. He did this so if **we would swear allegiance to Him as our Lord and King**, His penalty would count for us. We were like the sons of Hakkoz, and **can now serve God as a priest!**

2. God preserves a remnant and each name is a trophy of grace.

- It demonstrates that **His redemptive purposes are still in place** and the Messiah will come!
 - There was an exodus from Egypt and one from Babylon. Jesus also accomplished an exodus in Jerusalem in Luke 9:31.
 - **Everyone who trusts in Jesus in Jesus participates in the exodus from being** in bondage to corruption.
- Romans 11:2-6 no matter what time period we look at or are in, God is preserving a remnant by grace.
 - He quickened our hearts to be conscious of our sin and free us **so we would fall at His feet with an unbearable conviction of sin.** (John 6:44)
 - It was and is there that **we find unmerited favor in His eyes.** (Luke 7:47)
 - Defiled and undeserving, He issues a decree that **we should be released from bondage and preserved by His indelible** (a mark that can't be removed) **blood!**
 - We are preserved that **we may be presented before Him on that day.** (Jude 1:24)

~ **Is there any sense in which we need to turn our backs on Babylon and be numbered along with those who are focused on building for eternity?** ~

~ **Are you hearing the faithfulness of God and believing that God can be trusted to keep His promises?**

3. A Vision for the future

- These people had a vision for the future. **They desired to cast off their shackles of captivity and entered the blessing** God had prepared.
- They wanted to be governed by God instead of a foreign power and **when the opportunity was presented to them they seized it with eagerness.**

~ **How strong is our desire to worship, work and witness for God? Do we take the opportunities we are given to turn our back on the powers that hold/held us captive?** ~

- These people **desired** to rediscover their spiritual identity and **forsook** that which prevented them from worshipping God.
 - **They were prepared to work** toward its fruition
 - We need to give more than lip service to the vision we have glimpsed and to the work we say we are commissioned.

Are we not so much at ease in Zion as we are content in Babylon?

~ **Have we lost that sense that we are engaged in a pioneering project for God? ~
How do we maintain or regain that understanding?**

- These people were discontent with Babylon! Read Psalms 137:1-6
 - We have to get to a place where we are discontent with our old self and content in the person of Jesus!
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~ The questions is not whether you *will* glorify God but *how*? ~

- Are our hearts ...

... **heavy with sorrow** that turn us to weeping ?

... **longing to be repatriated** (brought back home)?

... **aching to be restored** to a place where we can worship God?

~ Does any one of us truly long to worship God with this kind of intensity? ~

These people did and God recorded their names for eternity!

May Psalms 42 be the cry of our hearts!