

VI- Disembarkment of the Pure Gospel Galatians 4:1-7

Galatians 4:1-7 Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; 2 But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. 3 Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: 4 But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, 5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. 6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. 7 Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

Exposition of the Text:

The key verse for this section is Galatians 3:4, "When the fullness of time was come..." The title, Disembarkment of the Gospel gives us the primary focus of this study, the coming of the Messiah in the "Fullness of time." The disembarkment from the shores of heaven to the manger of Bethlehem.

These verses are a continuation of the subject of justification by faith as well as the subject started in the last session of our relationship to God as a son and an heir. "Paul explains that the time of the law was a dispensation, a special dealing of God with Israel for a special purpose." 36

Allow me to offer the following outline for our study of this session.

Outline: Disembarkment of the Pure Gospel Galatians 4:1-7

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I- Reminder of Bondage: Galatians 4:1-3

The event that will take place that is mentioned in Galatians 4:4 was after 400 years of spiritual darkness. God had not given any utterance from a prophet for 400 years prior to the coming of John the Baptist. They were in bondage to the law and God was silent.

Paul gives us a reminder of the bondage in the first three verses of our text. He says that an heir differs not from a servant as long as he is under the tutors and governors. J.V. McGee says that, "When a little one was born into the home, the servants cared for him and dressed him in play clothes so that he didn't look any different from the children of the servants with whom he

was playing. And he had to obey the servants just like the other children did." 37 This adds a little understanding to the text. The child that was really the son was under the tutors and governors.

"Until the time appointed by the father." "Under Roman law the age of maturity for a child was set by his father." 38 The point here is that the son was not any better off than a slave until the father decided he was a man.

The "elements of the world" here is interpreted by some as the physical world and some as the spiritual world. However, "It is likely that the reference is to the rudiments of the legalistic Judaism." 39

II- Fullness of Time: Galatians 4:4

Just as the father of the son in the illustration of verses 1-3 decided when the time was full so did God the Father. "The meaning is that when that moment came which completed the period of time designated by God that should elapse before the coming of the Son of God in incarnation, then He would send forth His Son." 40 The time was not late, nor delayed in the mind of God. It was when God had foreordained for it to happen. When God had all the things ready. Notice:

A- Prophetic Fullness:

Daniel in his seventy weeks prophecy had given the time of the birth of Messiah to the Jews. His is a most remarkable prophecy. Dan_11:25 says, "Know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the commandment to restore Jerusalem, unto the Messiah the Prince, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks...." The interpretation of Daniel is this is a period of 483 years from the edict of the Medo-Persian government to rebuild Jerusalem. According to Encyclopedia Britannica this date was March 14, 445 B.C.

Allow me to give us a lengthy quote from H.L. Wilmington to help us understand the prophecy of Daniel concerning the fullness of time prophetically. There are two periods of time mentioned in Daniel seven weeks and sixty-two weeks.

a. First period.

Seven weeks (forty-nine years) from 445 B.C. to 396 B.C. The key events during this time were the building of the streets and walls of Jerusalem "even in troublous time" This literally took place! (See Neh. 2-6.)

b. Second period.

Sixty-two weeks (434 years), from 396 B.C. to A.D. 30. At the end of this second period the Messiah was crucified! (See Mt. 27; Mk. 15; Lk. 23; Jn. 19.)

The brilliant British scholar and Bible Student, Sir Robert Anderson, has reduced the first two periods into their exact number of days. This he had done by multiplying 483 (The combined years of the first two periods) by 360 (the days in a biblical year, as pointed out in Gen_7:11, Gen_7:24; Gen_8:3-4)

The total number of days in the first sixty-nine weeks (or 483 years) is 173,880. Anderson then points out that if one begins counting on March 14, 445 B.C., and goes forward in history, these days would run out on April 6, A.D. 32.

It was on this very day that Jesus made his triumphal entry into the city of Jerusalem!" 41

My friend I submit to you that God waited to the fullness of time, prophetic fullness, for the birth of Christ so that this prophecy would be fulfilled and Messiah would arrive in Jerusalem on God's time schedule..

B- Political Fullness:

The political situation into which the Messiah was born was not any accident. I submit that God in His sovereignty and providence arranged even the political climate for His birth.

1- Greek Language Significance:

God had arranged for the Greek language to become the universal language of the day. English is today's universal language spoken around the world but in the day of Messiah, in the fullness of time it was Greek. The Greek language was a carry over from the Alexander the Great's rule before the Romans. (See my notes on Daniel.) The Greek language is a language that allowed the gospel and God's word in the New Testament to be written in a very precise way. It also allowed the propagation of the gospel by its wide spread use.

2- Roman Rule Significance:

We might wonder why God would choose or allow the birth of Messiah to be during the Roman rule. After all they were vicious, mean and vile men. Israel was also under Roman Rule and oppression.

a- Crucifixion instituted:

It is said that the Romans may not have invented crucifixion but they perfected it. The method of punishment was the way the Romans carried out a death sentence. Someone said that the year of Messiah's birth was the year it was adopted by the Romans.

b- Taxation Decree:

The famous taxation decree was the result of the Romans rule over the world. The prophet Micah had said that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. The problem was Joseph and Mary was in Nazareth their hometown. No problem, God had this all figured out, the Roman government would simply issue a decree that all Jews would return to the city of their ancestry for a census. (See Luke 2.)

c- Roman Roads:

Another thing that made the political fullness of time complete was the Romans roads that made travel for the missionaries easy. The Romans were famous for their road building and evidence is still to be found today. Remember all roads lead to Rome.

C- Religious Fullness:

The religious proclamation of the Jews was a "monotheistic and messianic hope in the synagogues of the Mediterranean world."⁴² The Jews proclaimed that there was only one God and looked to Messiah's coming. This is against a backdrop of world religions that preached multiple gods. The religious world was ready though they would reject Him. The discipline and preparatory work of the law was complete. The "Fullness of time" had come religiously.

"Made of a woman" refers to the virgin birth of the Messiah. (See Mat_11:11 .) This shows the fully human nature of Christ.

"Made under the Law" is not without significance also. "It was necessary that he keep the Law perfectly in order to redeem his people from the bondage and curse of the Law and to secure for them the adoption of sons." 43

III- Purpose of the Disembarkment: Galatians 4:5-7

Why did He come into the world? What was the purpose that Christ Disembarked from the shores of heaven to earth? There are two reasons given here, redemption and adoption.

A- Redemption Galatians 4:5

The first reason for his Disembarkment was to bring redemption to mankind. The word for redemption here means to "buy back out of a slave market." This is wonderfully illustrated for us by the example of Hosea as he buys back Gomer. (See Hosea 3.) He came to buy us back unto Himself.

B- Adoption as Sons: Galatians 4:6-7

The second reason is so that we, "might receive the adoption as sons."

1- Abba Father": Galatians 4:6

This is a very personal aspect of our salvation. "Abba" is a Arabic word that means father or could be more closely rendered "daddy." In Mar_14:36 as Christ used it, "This familiar form indicated intimacy and trust as opposed to the formalism of legalism." 44

God is a very personal God to His children. He is not a transcendent God who does not care but a close personal and loving Father. The Trinity is also seen at work here. The Father sent, the Son came and the Spirit work within us.

2- Heirs of God: Galatians 4:7

In the family of God to be a son is to be an heir. Our inheritance is assured because we are His sons. We are heir to eternal life and assured of an inheritance in heaven. In Ephesians Paul pray for the Ephesians was that, "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints..." James says that we are heirs of the kingdom. (See Jam_2:5 .)

1Co_2:8-9 says, "...Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit..."

My friend we are heirs to God's riches and Joint heirs with Christ and that is good enough for me.