

"...WONDROUS THINGS OUT OF THY LAW"

Ps 119:18 Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law. KJV

This short verse from the Psalms can be set forth as a prayer each time before we open the Bible to read. It asks God to help us see the wondrous things that are in this book. It is His book. He is the author behind the human writers who set the words down on clay tablet or parchment or papyrus. And wondrous things they are which are written between the book of Genesis at the beginning and Revelation at the end.

We begin a new year soon and there is no better time to make a commitment to reading a portion of this wonderful book each day, or perhaps two portions which will take you through the whole Bible in a year. It makes no dif-

ference whether you use your own treasured Bible or read any one of the four versions of the Bible that are on line at www.dailybiblereader.com. Read them on your PC, read them on your tablet or your mobile. If we ask God to show us the wonderful things written in the pages of this marvelous book, he will open our eyes and the things which seemed to be hidden will come alive and real to us. This is a special book and the special message God has prepared for you will spring from its pages and embrace your heart.

From its beginning, the ministry of DailyBibleReader has been to encourage you to read and become more familiar with this wonderful book through reading it on a daily, regular basis. Morning, evening or in between, with others or by yourself, with break-

fast or lunch or just a cup of coffee let it become a source of strength and a message of hope and redemption. Let it revive your soul.

As we begin our eleventh year of publication we have always tried to gear the message in this newsletter to what you are reading during the quarter. In this issue however, we are going to look at God's wonderful plan and purpose for this earth which is revealed piece by piece throughout the whole Bible. We hope you will receive a blessing as you read through the Bible teaching we have included in this quarterly newsletter and that it will help you gain a Bible-based perspective about God's coming kingdom and his plan for this earth and your future.

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ACCORDING TO HIS PURPOSE

One of my all-time favorite verses is Romans 8:28: "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."

I'm sure this verse and the verses surrounding it have brought much comfort to many especially when life is full of difficulties and trials. This tells us that God is in control, that he is actively working, and that he has a purpose in

all things. The verses surrounding verse 28 tell us what God's purpose is. The creation waits for the time that it will be freed from bondage to decay and the sons of God will be revealed:

"For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope

that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God...Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies."
- Romans 8:19-23 NIV

And a little further on in verse 29
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Start the New Year right by reading the Bible every day

Read the Bible daily on line

www.dailybiblereader.com

Our website features a daily focus verse, two Bible readings and some Bible background on readings for the day.

Our newsletter is also available online - present and past issues

According to his Purpose

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we're told that from the beginning God foreknew and predestined those whom he called to be conformed to the image of his Son:

“For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.” - Romans 8:29 NIV

God has a purpose in everything that he does. That purpose includes his whole creation and the people he has called to be his children, the brothers and sisters of his Son Jesus. When we go back to the very first chapter of the Bible we see this purpose stated also, but in different words.

The creation story shows us each command that God gave on each successive day prepared the earth for his children. Light and darkness, the separated waters, and the dry earth appearing produced vegetation. The sun, moon, and stars gave balance and seasons to the earth. The water and the sky and the dry land then teemed with

life and finally man and woman were created in God's image. All the earth was prepared for the creation of God's children, children who would be like him and glorify him.

The rest of the Bible story, for example in the verses that we read in Romans, tells us the creation of his children is not yet complete. They have yet to be perfected so that they become like his firstborn son, Jesus. Just as Jesus had to be made perfect through suffering, so all his children need to be perfected.

In bringing many sons and daughters to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through what he suffered. Hebrews 2:10 NIV

We know that in everyway Jesus loved and obeyed his Father. In this he glorified his Father. In this Jesus manifested, that is, made known his Father. And this is what he wants for all his children.

There are many verses in the Bi-

ble that tell us that God's plan and purpose is that all the earth will be filled with his glory. That glory is shown in his children.

For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. - Habakkuk 2:14 NIV

"but truly, as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD-- - Numbers 14:21 NKJV

Nothing will hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain, for as the waters fill the sea, so the earth will be filled with people who know the LORD. In that day the heir to David's throne will be a banner of salvation to all the world. The nations will rally to him, and the land where he lives will be a glorious place. - Isaiah 11:9-10 NLT

Yes, God's purpose is to fill the earth with his children, children who are like him, who are created in his image. Jesus was the firstborn of his children. When God has completed his purpose, the earth will be filled with his children who glorify him.

* * *

MY PURPOSE WILL STAND

Throughout the Bible, God and his purpose are revealed through examples in history, prophecies and warnings, wisdom and poetry. It is important that we read and meditate on all God's word. The readings for the first quarter of the year include histories of God working with his faithful, called out ones both in the Old Testament in the books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, and in the New Testament in the books of Matthew, Acts, and Romans. As you read through these books, see God working towards his ultimate

purpose in each interaction with his people and in all human history. He is God and what he has purposed he will do:

Remember the former things, those of long ago;
I am God, and there is no other;
I am God, and there is none like me.

I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come.

I say, 'My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.'
From the east I summon a

bird of prey; from a far-off land, a man to fulfill my purpose.

What I have said, that I will bring about; what I have planned, that I will do.

Listen to me, you stubborn-hearted, you who are now far from my righteousness. I am bringing my righteousness near, it is not far away; and my salvation will not be delayed.

I will grant salvation to Zion, my splendor to Israel. - Isaiah 46:9-13 NIV

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My Purpose Will Stand

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His purpose in his creation, as we have seen, is to fill the earth with his glory. That glory will be seen in his children whom he is creating and perfecting to be like his firstborn son, Jesus.

So, let's start following how God has been working to bring about his purpose in his creation from the beginning. Here are some highlights from this quarter's readings:

Genesis – God gave form and function to the earth and his creation. He made man and women in his image. (Genesis 1) With a free will they were given a choice to love and trust him or to disobey him. (Genesis 2) They failed the test. They did not deserve to live. (Genesis 3) But God, in his mercy and love, set in motion a plan to save and redeem them from themselves. Adam and Eve were promised that one of their children would destroy what had tried to destroy them. (Genesis 3:15)

God chose and called a man named Abram (Abraham) to be the faithful father of his special people. He gave him many special promises because of his faith and obedience. Look for these promises in Genesis, 12, 13, 15, 17, 18, and 22.

Abraham had no children when he was promised by God to be the father of a great nation but after many years his son Isaac was born. From this one son, the nation of Israel was descended. But also, through this one son, the lineage of the Messiah the Savior is traced. Step by step God was bringing about his purpose.

Exodus – The children of Abraham over several centuries had multiplied to be a great nation as promised by God. But they were not in the land that had been

promised to Abraham. In fact, they were slaves in the land of Egypt. (Exodus 1) Exodus tells the history of God's redeeming work through his servant Moses. Through Moses, God destroyed the power and idols of Egypt and led the nation of Israel out of Egyptian bondage. This is history but it's also a promise and prototype of God's saving work to come through the promised Savior.

Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy – After Israel left Egyptian, they still had to travel through a vast wilderness before entering and possessing the land promised to their forefathers. During this time they were prepared by God through Moses to become a nation belonging to God. They were to be God's holy people, and an example and model nation for the rest of the world to see. They were given laws and shown God's power and glory. God's presence was with them.

See, I have taught you decrees and laws as the LORD my God commanded me, so that you may follow them in the land you are entering to take possession of it. Observe them carefully, for this will show your wisdom and understanding to the nations, who will hear about all these decrees and say, "Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people." What other nation is so great as to have their gods near them the way the LORD our God is near us whenever we pray to him? And what other nation is so great as to have such righteous decrees and laws as this body of laws I am setting before you today? - Deuteronomy 4:5-8 NIV

The children of Abraham, the nation of Israel, were to become a holy nation, the people of God.

Through these people the rest of the world were to know about the one true God.

Matthew: Fifteen hundred years after Moses led Israel out of Egypt, the promised descendent of Adam and Eve, and of Abraham and Sarah was born:

This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah the son of David, the son of Abraham: Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac the father of Jacob, Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, - Matthew 1:1-2 NIV

Matthew, as a disciple of Jesus of Nazareth, was an eyewitness to the life, death, and resurrection of the Messiah, the promised Savior, Son of God and Son of Man. This was the one to save Israel and all who believed in him, not from slavery in Egypt, but from slavery to sin. Matthew recorded the life and work of this sinless man, the Son of God.

Acts: The book of Acts records the work of those sent by Jesus, those witnesses of his life, death, and resurrection into the world to proclaim the good news. Sin and the grave have been conquered. The Savior has completed his work of overcoming and defeating sin. The grave could not hold him. God raised him from the dead. The firstborn Son of God was perfected.

After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. ... He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the

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My Purpose will Stand

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Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. - Acts 1:3, 7-9 NIV

In bringing many sons and daughters to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom

and through whom everything exists, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through what he suffered. Both the one who makes people holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters. He says, "I will declare your name to my brothers and sisters; in the assembly I will sing your praises." - Hebrews 2:10-12 NIV

Jesus was the pioneer of our salvation. Through him, to all who come to him, there is freedom from sin and death. There is hope for all who believe to be raised from the dead and become God's perfected children. This is God's purpose: to dwell with his true and perfected children on the earth that he has created. Then all the earth will be filled with his glory.

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"...DECLARING THE END FROM THE BEGINNING"

"...I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose...I have spoken, and I will bring it to pass; I have purposed, and I will do it.'" Isaiah 46:9-11 NIV

In the Bible God has not only told us what his purpose is, he also tells us what is going to happen to bring about that purpose. In fact, much of the Bible contains prophecy, the foretelling of things yet to happen. This prophecy tells us that God is in control of the future, that he has a purpose that he is bringing to fruition, and that we need to heed the warnings given in prophecy. We need to be prepared. Why do we need to be prepared? For what? Prophecy tells us that the world will not continue as it has. A day of judgment is coming. Paul the Apostle, when speaking to the Greek philosophers in Athens warned them:

"In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he

commands all people everywhere to repent. For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead." Acts 17:30-31 NIV

Notice the prophecy of what is going to happen (judgment of the world) and notice the warning (repent).

Matthew 24 from our readings this quarter is a prophecy that Jesus gave to his disciples concerning what will happen on the earth prior to his second coming. As with all prophecy, Jesus' words assure us that even in times of trouble God is in control and working out his purpose. Prophecy also warns us to be prepared for the judgment ahead.

One day, just weeks before his death, Jesus told his disciples that the Temple in Jerusalem would be destroyed. Not one stone would be left on another. A little later when Jesus and his disciples were sitting on the Mount of Olives to the east of Jerusalem, with the Temple in full view, they

questioned him about this pronouncement. The disciples asked two questions: When will this happen (referring to the Temple being torn down) and what will be the sign of your coming and the end of the age? The rest of the chapter is known as the Olivet Prophecy and includes these prophecies of things to expect:

Matthew 24: 4-14 General signs that would take place from the time of Jesus' ascension until the end: there would be false christs and false prophets, wars, famines, earthquakes, persecution of God's people, people losing their faith, increase in wickedness, and the Gospel being preached in the whole world.

Matthew 24:15-31 Specific signs of the end times are given: the abomination that causes desolation (from Daniel) would take place, great distress unequalled from the beginning of the world, false christs and false prophets will perform wonders, armies will surround Jerusalem (Luke 21:20), no one will survive unless those days be shortened, the sun will be darkened and the moon not give its light, the sign of the Son of

“...Declaring the End From the Beginning”

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Man will appear in the heavens.

Jesus has warned his disciples that there will be ongoing troubles in the world from the time of his ascension until the time he returns. These things are no different from what has always happened. However, as the time for his return draws closer, even greater distresses will be evident. Unless the days of distress are shortened, no one will survive. It is only the coming of our Lord

that will bring salvation to those who belong to him.

"Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. And then all the peoples of the earth will mourn when they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. Matthew 24:30 NIV

At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. When these things begin to take place, stand up

and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near." Luke 21:27-28 NIV

After Jesus gave this prophecy, he warned his disciples over and over again in Matthew 24: 32-51 to be prepared for his coming. He is coming to judge the world as Paul stated but he is also coming to bring salvation to his own.

"Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come." Matthew 24:42 NIV

FOR THE PRAISE OF HIS GLORY

God has a purpose in all that he has created. Each part of his creation has its purpose and function. From the very beginning, Adam and Eve were told what their work and purpose was:

So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. Then God blessed them and said, "Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. Reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground." - Genesis 1:27-28 NLT

The LORD God placed the man in the Garden of Eden to tend and watch over it. - Genesis 2:15 NLT

Men and women are created in God's image to be his children. They were given the work of filling the earth, governing the creatures that God has made, and to care for the land.

This tells us the general purpose that God has for us but he also

works with each person individually. He has a purpose for each of us. Jeremiah was told that God set him apart as a prophet even before he was conceived:

The word of the LORD came to me, saying, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations." - Jeremiah 1:4-5 NIV

Not many people have been told directly, as Jeremiah was, what their individual purpose is but we do know that God foreknows and calls those whom he wants to be his own people.

For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified. - Romans 8:29-30 NIV

For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will-- to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. ... In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. - Ephesians 1:4-6, 11-12 NIV

In the country and culture that we live in, we tend to think that our lives are our own. We can choose what we want to do and what we want to be. However, as followers of Jesus, the Son of God, our lives are not our own. We need to ask our God, what is your purpose for my life? What work do you want me to do? How are you working out your purpose in my life?

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Daily Bible Readings for January, February and March

Read the Entire Bible in One Year

Day	JANUARY		FEBRUARY		MARCH	
	Old Test	New Test/Psa	Old Test	New Test/Psa	Old Test	New Test/Psa
1	Gen 1,2	Matt 1	Exo 11,12	Matt 28	Lev 23, 24	Acts 24
2	Gen 3,4	Matt 2	Exo 13,14	Psalm 9, 10	Lev 25, 26	Acts 25
3	Gen 5,6	Matt 3	Exo 15,16	Psalm 11,12	Lev 27, Provb 7	Acts 26
4	Gen 7,8	Matt 4	Exo 17,18	Acts 1	Provb 8-10	Acts 27
5	Gen 9,10	Matt 5	Exo 19,20	Acts 2	Num 1,2	Acts 28
6	Gen 11,12	Matt 6	Exo 21,22	Acts 3	Num 3,4	Psalm 19,20
7	Gen 13,14	Matt 7	Exo 23,24	Acts 4	Num 5,6	Romans 1
8	Gen 15, 16	Psalm 1,2	Exo 25,26	Acts 5	Num 7,8	Romans 2
9	Gen 17,18	Matt 8	Exo 27,28	Acts 6	Num 9,10	Romans 3
10	Gen 19,20	Matt 9	Exo 29,30	Acts 7	Num 11,12	Romans 4
11	Gen 21, 22	Matt 10	Exo 31,32	Psalm 13, 14	Num 13,14	Romans 5
12	Gen 23,24	Matt 11	Exo 33,34	Acts 8	Num 15,16	Romans 6
13	Gen 25,26	Matt 12	Exo 35,36	Acts 9	Num 17,18	Romans 7
14	Gen 27,28	Matt 13	Exo 37,38	Acts 10	Num 19,20	Romans 8
15	Gen 29,30	Psalm 3,4	Exo 39,40	Acts 11,12	Num 21,22	Romans 9
16	Gen 31,32	Matt 14	Provb 3,4	Acts 13	Num 23,24	Romans 10
17	Gen 33,34	Matt 15	Provb 5,6	Psalm 15,16	Num 25,26	Romans 11
18	Gen 35,36	Matt 16	Lev 1,2	Acts 14	Num 27,28	Romans 12
19	Gen 37,38	Matt 17	Lev 3,4	Acts 15	Num 29,30	Romans 13
20	Gen 39,40	Matt 18	Lev 5,6	Acts 16	Num 31,32	Romans 14
21	Gen 41, 42	Matt 19	Lev 7,8	Acts 17	Num 33,34	Romans 15,16
22	Gen 43, 44	Psalm 5,6	Lev 9,10	Acts 18	Num 35,36	Psalm 21,22
23	Gen 45, 46	Matt 20	Lev 11,12	Psalm 17,18	Provb 11,12	Psalm 23-25
24	Gen 47, 48	Matt 21	Lev 13,14	Acts 19	Provb 13,14	Psalm 26-28
25	Gen 49, 50	Matt 22	Lev 15,16	Acts 20	Provb 15,16	Psalm 29,30
26	Provb 1,2	Matt 23	Lev 17,18	Acts 21	Deut 1,2	Mark 1
27	Exo 1,2	Matt 24	Lev 19,20	Acts 22	Deut 3,4	Mark 2
28	Exo 3,4	Matt 25	Lev 21,22	Acts 23	Deut 5,6	Mark 3
29	Exo 5,6	Psalm 7, 8			Deut 7,8	Mark 4
30	Exo 7, 8	Matt 26			Deut 9,10	Psalm 31,32
31	Exo 9,10	Matt 27			Deut 11,12	Mark 5

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