

Come to Understanding

**They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding,
and they that murmured shall learn doctrine. — Isaiah 29:24**

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Who Shall Be Able to Stand?

In the midst of the “great day of his wrath,” a question is asked which we pray we will be able to answer:

17 For the great day of his wrath has come; and who shall be able to stand? -Revelation 6

The day of the wrath of Yahweh is a very unpopular subject that most of us would prefer to not consider. Yet Zephaniah warned of it and described it in great detail, giving it many different names

14 The great day of Yahweh *is* near, *it is* near, and hastens greatly, *even* the voice of the day of Yahweh: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly.

15 That day *is* a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of devastation and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness,

16 A day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities, and against the high towers. -Zephaniah 1

The good news is that this day will not come without warning. Yahweh says that He will not do anything until He has told it to His servants the prophets:

6 Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid? shall there be evil in a city, and Yahweh has not done *it*?

7 Surely the Lord Yahweh will do nothing, but he reveals his secret to his servants the prophets. -Amos 3

Yahweh uses the words of His prophets to show short-term prophecies as examples that show, after they are seen to be fulfilled, the reality of future prophecies. For example, He used prophets, such as Amos, to warn of His coming judgment to an unrepentant kingdom of Israel:

8 And Yahweh said to me, Amos, what see you? And I said, A plumbline. Then said the Lord, Behold, I will set a plumbline in the midst of my people Israel: I will not again pass by them any more:

9 And the high places of Isaac shall be desolate, and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste; and I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword. -Amos 7

Israel refused to listen to the prophets. Yahweh kept His word and used the king of Assyria to judge them and remove them out of the land:

18 Therefore Yahweh was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of his sight: there was none left but the tribe of Judah only. -2 Kings 17

Even though the people of Judah had witnessed the fulfillment of prophecy in the destruction of Israel, they also continued on the same course toward their own destruction:

19 Also Judah kept not the commandments of Yahweh their God, but walked in the statutes of Israel which they made. -2 Kings 17

Consequently, Yahweh sent prophets, such as Jeremiah, to warn them to repent from disobeying Him and to save them from the fate that came upon Israel. However, Judah also rejected the truth of Yahweh’s word:

27 Therefore you shall speak all these words to them; but they will not listen to you: you shall also call to them; but they will not answer you.

28 But you shall say to them, This *is* a nation that obeys not the voice of Yahweh their God, nor receives correction: truth is perished, and is cut off from their mouth. -Jeremiah 7

Consequently, Yahweh finally also judged Judah. He sent the king of Babylon to destroy all but a remnant of them (see Jeremiah 39:1-18). This was a day of Yahweh’s wrath for the people of Judah.

The judgments of Yahweh upon Israel and Judah are historical events. He warned them through His prophets of the day of His wrath if they continued to reject Him. They ignored His warnings and He kept His word. These events, however, are not merely history lessons. The fulfillment of these and other short-term prophecies are also recorded for us to see as examples of long-term prophecies that serve as a warning of His righteous judgment:

11 Now all these things happened to them for examples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world have come. -1 Corinthians 10

However, at the same time, such historical prophecies were also written for our learning and to give us comfort in the hope that He offers to us:

4 For whatever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. -Romans 15

**So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense,
and caused them to understand the reading. — Nehemiah 8:8**

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During the destruction of Judah, Yahweh shows us the example of the hope that we have in Him. Jeremiah trusted Yahweh and His word. He continued to obey Him, even in the midst of public ridicule, scorn, and threats. Consequently, the king of Babylon said this of Jeremiah:

- 11 Now Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon gave charge concerning Jeremiah to Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard, saying,
12 Take him, and look well to him, and do him no harm; but do to him even as he shall say unto you. -Jeremiah 39

Furthermore, Yahweh spared others, such as the Ethiopian eunuch that came to Jeremiah's aid while he was imprisoned in a dungeon (see Jeremiah 38:7-13). Yahweh promised to deliver him, "...because you have put your trust in me:"

- 17 But I will deliver you in that day, says Yahweh: and you shall not be given into the hand of the men of whom you *are* afraid.
18 For I will surely deliver you, and you shall not fall by the sword, but your life shall be for a prey to you: because you have put your trust in me, says Yahweh. -Jeremiah 39

Yahweh spares those that trust in Him in ways that we cannot even imagine. He often puts us in a circumstance that seems as though He has turned His back toward us, only to use it as a means for our deliverance. Jeremiah's imprisonment for trusting and obeying Yahweh was the means by which he was saved from the destruction that came upon the rest of the untrusting kingdom of Judah.

Yahweh promises that, if we will trust Him completely, then He will direct our journey through this life. He will take us the way He chooses for us to travel:

- 5 Trust in Yahweh with all your heart; and lean not unto your own understanding.
6 In all your ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct your paths. -Proverbs 3

We cannot trust in Yahweh with all of our hearts while we are still leaning on our own understanding. Neither can we "acknowledge," or more literally "know," Him in all of our ways unless we totally trust Him to direct our feet by the lamp of His word that lights the path by which we travel:

- 105 Your word *is* a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. -Psalms 119

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Unless we trust in Yahweh and His word during the "day of the wrath of Yahweh," we are likely to find that those things in which we put our misplaced trust become stumbling blocks in our path. This was Ezekiel's caution for those of us that trust in silver and gold for deliverance. Not only will they fail to deliver us, but they may actually become "the stumbling block" of our iniquity!

- 19 They shall cast their silver in the streets, and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of Yahweh: they shall not satisfy their souls, neither fill their bowels: because it is the stumbling block of their iniquity. -Ezekiel 7

In order to truly trust in Yahweh in times of trouble, we must be able to set aside our prideful thinking that we are in control and then wholly lean upon Him for our deliverance. This requires training in the school of afflictions, which humbles our hearts and teaches us to trust in Yahweh. With each of the many afflictions from which he was delivered, David's trust in Yahweh grew stronger:

- 18 Yahweh *is* near to them that are of a broken heart; and saves such as are of a contrite spirit.
19 Many *are* the afflictions of the righteous: but Yahweh delivers him out of them all. -Psalms 34

He shows His love for us by correcting us:

- 12 For whom Yahweh loves he corrects; even as a father the son *in whom* he delights. -Proverbs 3

His correction is also called chastening:

- 6 For whom the Lord *Yahweh* loves he chastens, and scourges every son whom he receives. -Hebrews 12

Chastening is an exercise that often involves afflictions. The eighteenth century preacher named John Wesley wrote this of afflictions: "One of the greatest evidences of God's love to those that love him is to send them afflictions with grace to bear them." (see John Wesley, *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection; As Believed and Taught by John Wesley, A. M. from the year 1725, to the year 1777*, In *The Works of the Rev. John Wesley in Ten Volumes*, Vol. 3, First American Edition, New York: J. & J. Harper, 1827, p. 59.)

Yahweh's training helps to increase our faith to enable us to trust in Him more completely. The object is to yield in us the "peaceable fruit of righteousness:"

- 11 Now no chastening for the present seems to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. -Hebrews 12

Training through chastening increases our trust in Yahweh and His righteousness, which, as He did with Abraham, He bestows upon us:

- 6 And he believed in Yahweh; and he counted it to him for righteousness. -Genesis 15

Those that trust in Yahweh and take Him at His word are those that shall be able to stand in the day of His wrath:

- 13 Therefore take to you the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. -Ephesians 6