

WEEKEND Edition 24/25 September 2022 "God's Perfect Time" (Gal. 4:4-7)

Hello, my "Walking with Jesus" friends and welcome to the weekend!!

*Perhaps you've heard the phrase 'perfect timing'? Normally it refers to some circumstances or events which occur at just the right time to accomplish something significant. I'm sure you've had several such 'perfect timing' experiences in your life, I know I sure have! **Did you know it happens often with God as He deals with us, the human race, in our very complex world?***

Come, let's rejoin a small group of people sitting in a little house in Syrian Antioch about the year 48ad as the man known as the apostle Paul is writing his first letter. *That letter has been preserved and copied and translated so that no matter where you live in the world today, it is probably available to you in your language and is known as the letter "Galatians" in the Bible.* Paul is beginning his fourth chapter of this special letter he's writing to Gentile Christians specifically in four towns where he and Barnabas had taken the Gospel of Jesus: Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe in the region today known as Turkey. Paul is sitting quietly at his writing table, praying, as he collects his thoughts and seeks to hear what the Holy Spirit of God is telling him to write.

Paul picks up his stylus and speaks the words as he writes them: **"When the time had fully come, God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those people under the law, that we might receive the full rights of sons. Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, 'Abba, Father'. So, you are no longer a slave but a son' and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir."** (Gal. 4:4-7) Paul sets down his stylus and leans back to ponder the power of the words which are still wet ink drying on the parchments. *Sometimes the words the Holy Spirit directs Paul to write simply overwhelm him as he writes them, and he needs time to reflect.* This is one of those times. Let's ponder each powerful phrase along with Paul.

"When the time had fully come..." *Does time really matter to an eternal God who is not limited by anything?* YES! When God in the timeless past, chose to create our universe and put what we know as TIME in motion with our sun and planets and orbits, days and nights, lunar months and years began. God created mankind in a world framed in time, but have you ever thought about this: *before the fall in Genesis 3 and the effects of evil into God's created universe, time existed but it was only perfect. Nothing was decaying.* Adam and Eve would potentially have lived forever as what we know as death did not yet exist. It was with their belief in the deceiver and their invitation for evil to come into God's perfect garden of Eden that our world began showing the painful evidences of that evil, and decay and death are two of many of those evidences.

The Old Testament of the Bible is filled with many events which reflect the truth of this powerful statement: **"When the time had fully come God..."** *It means as God watched the course of our human race through time, there were some monumental occasions when God intervened!*

Genesis 6 is one of those cataclysmic times. Evil had become so widespread, so destructive, God intervened and sent a global flood, destroying the entire human race with the exception of 8 people... Noah and his family. From that one family God started the human race all over again, but as you know it didn't take long and evil was again widespread.

In Genesis 11 God did it again in a place called **Babel** where sinful men were building a tower into the sky and God miraculously introduced a wide range of diverse new languages and *the people gathered in those language groups and dispersed from that place, leaving the tower unfinished.*

God did it again, as recorded in Genesis 12, when He chose one man **Abraham and his wife Sarah**, calling them to follow God in great faith and trust God for a miracle son to be born to them in their old age, and from that son starting a new nation of people, the Jews, God's chosen people. While this phrase **'when the time had fully come'**, is not specifically written in the Biblical record regarding those three major events, *the phrase certainly describes that God, watching carefully over the events on planet earth, INITIATED a specific, divine intervention that changed the course of human events.*

*Paul wanted his readers, both then and down through all time, to understand that Almighty God the Father, sending Jesus Christ, the Son of God, to earth from heaven, was another very specific **God initiated event**, at a very specific time in human history.*

For centuries scholars have attempted to closely evaluate the conditions in our world at that time, to try and discern exactly WHAT the specific motivators were that caused God to choose THAT particular time in history for the greatest God initiated event of all time. . . the incarnation of God here on planet earth! Paul, I believe, was led of the Spirit of God to very carefully choose these words: **'When THE time'...** To me that means very specific conditions all converged at a specific time and God selected THAT time, for the incarnation miracle. Then the words **"had fully come"** suggests to me that God had been watching all human events, all cultural and social and moral and political trends, down through the centuries, *waiting for just the right convergence of conditions, which God knew would serve His purposes for sending Jesus into that particular set of global circumstances, and attitudes at that particular time, and in that particular place!* Now ponder the significance of that statement my dear friends.

The phrase **"God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under the law..."** is incredibly profound. *Here is another very clear statement regarding the TRINITY of God... God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, all three fully engaged in the miracle of the Incarnation of God among humanity on earth!*

We understand the power of the word '**sent**' don't we? We also understand, within the context of the family, what is meant when a parent sends their child on an errand. Deeply ingrained in that is the assumption that the child, **if wise**, will fully understand the instructions given by the parent as they are sent and the child, **if honorable**, will fully obey those instructions. Also, the parent, we presume, sends the child with clarity on their assignment, and sufficient resources to accomplish their assignment, and showered by the deep love of the parent for their child. Isn't that true?

Can we see that, my friends, in God the Father, sending God the Son, to earth? *But do we understand what God the Son agreed to experience as He accomplished His God given assignment to become the Savior of the human race?*

May I suggest we take a moment or two... let's take our pen and paper and begin making a list of what you understand was required of Jesus if He was going to FULLY accomplish His God given mission? Here are a few to get you started...

1. God the Son needed to leave heaven and come to earth for an extended time.
2. God the Son had to become incarnate... **the miracle of becoming fully human while retaining divinity**, starting with the pregnancy process, then birth and infancy and childhood and the teen years, and adult hood etc. oh my!
3. God the Son had to live a perfect human life in order to be qualified to give His life as an atonement sacrifice for all humanity.
4. God the Son had to be willing to experience the full scope of every human emotion that we humans know... love, hate, hunger, thirst, exhaustion, physical and emotional excruciating pain, disappointment, rejection, abandonment etc.

Now, why don't you keep the list going. What was required of God the Son, Jesus, if He was going to FULLY accomplish the mission for which "**God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law...**"?

And we'll come right back here on Monday and continue our look into this very powerful portion of what Paul wrote. And here's a song, my friends, that will help us appreciate and further consider the magnitude of these words that Paul is writing:

Today's Scripture is Galatians 4:4-7.