

Written For Our Learning

For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. (Rom 15:4)

When considering the first part of this verse last week we had seen the infinite value of “*that which was written aforetime*”, the Scriptures, the words of God.

We take for granted that there is nothing that the Bible does not speak to, either directly or indirectly;

- that it had an evident effect upon mankind; upon most particularly the **Western world** as it did on a people in the past, the people of Israel.

Just as the advantage of the Jew was to have the “*Ordinance of God*” so it is to the world who today have “*The whole counsel of God*”.

We saw that Light came into the world **in the first century**, but it was soon plunged into darkness; Satan working in the large portion of the world to keep the Bible locked away in an unknown tongue so that the *advantage of the Jew* could not be known for the learning of the **gentiles**.

The dark ages lasted a thousand years until a handful of brave men ventured to unlock the word of God from **it’s language prison**, and gave it the freedom of the tongues of the world.

It was John Foxe, the author of *Foxes book of Martyrs*, who spoke of the spread of the word of God like **the ashes of John Wycliffe**, who’s bones were burnt by the Pope because he translated the Bible away from the locked language of the Latin into English, and who commanded his ashes to be thrown into the river swift;

Foxe commented;

“And, like the River Swift which runs into the Avon and the Avon into the Severn and the Severn into the Bristol Channel which empties into the oceans of the world, so did the proliferation of God’s Word go to the ends of the earth.”

Now the common man in the street had the word of God in his own language and the light had a chance to shine.

We saw the effect this had upon mankind originally. It is not a coincidence that the **renaissance**, the Re-Birth of civilization, occurred a few short years after the Bible was given to the people, God promised that his words would have such an effect from the very beginning.

And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: 7 And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. 8 And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. 9 And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates. 10 And it shall be, when the LORD thy God shall have brought thee into the land which he swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give thee great and goodly cities, which thou buildedst not, 11 And houses full of all good things, which thou filledst not, and wells digged, which thou diggedst not, vineyards and olive trees, which thou plantedst not; when thou shalt have eaten and be full; (Deut 6:6-11)

Moses summarized the blessing of the people following the **words of God** and he laid it out for them as it also applies **to us today**. If they follow the word of God, as they did, they would be blessed, as they were, and as WE ARE.

But Moses also laid out that which would occur if they turned away. **He spoke of both the blessing and the curse**, both of life and of death and witnessed the truth of it as he still does to this very day;

“I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: 20 That thou mayest love the LORD thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days:” (Deut 30:19-20)

Now we are today the witnesses of the abandonment of the word of God in the world that began to manifest itself during the period of The Enlightenment, in the mid 18th Century. **Man elevating himself above God**, thinks he saved himself and took himself out of the darkness and into the light.

Now Today, with so few even in the Church who read their Bibles anymore, we should not be surprised to see darkness again **envelop the land**..... The Word of God is barely elevated by Christians, why should we expect the world to consider it?

Nevertheless, *“the children of Israel had light in their dwellings”*(Exo 10:15).

While the world around them were enveloped in a darkness, *“even a darkness which may be felt”*, a small people had light.

And so it has been throughout history to this very day.

You and I have light in our dwellings, we see the hope laid before us because *whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.*

Our Learning of That Which Was

God Through a People

Contrarily to what many people think, the Bible is not a book about **good ideas and ways to live**. Neither is it only about that which teaches the way to everlasting life, it is not only about salvation; (you can save a soul from hell with a handful of passages in the Scriptures). The entire council of God, all 779,000 words, are not ONLY about everlasting life, Jesus tells us what the scriptures are about.

[John 5:39](#)

*Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are **they which testify of me.***

And this is the truth, the Old Testament itself witnesses to it;

[Psalm 40:7](#)

Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me.

The disciples testified to the truth of it when they had met with Nathaniel at the beginning of his ministry;

[John 1:45](#)

*“... We have found him, of whom Moses **in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph**”*

And when Jesus desired to reveal the truth of Christ to those two disciples on that Emmaus Road, whose conversation was sad concerning him, but without revealing to them that he was the resurrected Christ, the passage tells us in [Luke 24:25](#) where he rebukes them saying;

*“...O fools, and slow of heart to believe **all that the prophets have spoken**”*

So what is the learning that we primarily learn about in the Bible?

We learn who God is!

We learn of his character.

His nature

His love

His faithfulness

His mercy and grace

We learn of his power

Of his promises

Of his wisdom

Of his judgment

We learn that he is the King of kings and the Lord of lords

We learn that he is both the judge of all the earth and the Saviour of the world.

*For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written **for our learning**, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. (Rom 15:4)*

The end of this is **HOPE**, not the hope that the world thinks is hope, this is not a 'hope so, hope' like, "I hope I win the lottery", this is the **certain expectation of that which is not yet seen.**

That is the HOPE we have.

So first, OUR LEARNING IS OF THAT WHICH WAS

This is God Through a People.

The Bible teaches firstly through creation that God is a God of purpose. All that *is* has a purpose for being. We do NOT live in some arbitrary, accidental universe, we live in the PURPOSE built creation of God.

And you are not a *part* of this creation beloved, you are the *purpose for it!*

This is just one of those things we learn **of that which was.**
Is that not important to know?

Origins are vital, without it we can have no true understanding of why we are here and this is the fundamental question of life.

Learning of **that which WAS** is critical for our understanding of **that which IS.**
The history of the creation of the Universe gives to us a part of our understanding of the nature of God, of Jesus Christ.

Genesis 1:1 says "*In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth*"

It tells us of his timelessness, "*in the beginning God...*" God was there before time began. It tells us of his power "*in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth*"

John 1:1-4 identifies who this same God is;

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. 4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

But the history of creation, though it tells us so much and though we can glean from the truth of it so many things, the character of Christ is not revealed as clearly but **through a people.**

That is, the people of Israel.

In Genesis 12 God chose to himself the beginning of a people through Abraham, the father of many nations. And from him came Isaac and from him Jacob and the twelve tribes.

It was through these twelve tribes that we begin to see the character of the Lord manifest to us. Not only his power and knowledge, but most importantly his **love and faithfulness**.

When we **LEARN OF THAT WHICH WAS** in the OLD Testament, we learn of the nature of God as he works his work **through a people, a chosen people**, a people who did nothing to deserve Gods care and benevolence

Consider what he says of this people, turn to [Deut 7:6-8](#)

*“For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God **hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth.** 7 **The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: 8 But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt”** ([Deut 7:6-8](#))*

Through this people God would reveal his Character, his nature, his wisdom, his love, his sacrifice, his mercy and grace.

We would learn that God keeps his promises, that he is a **“Covenant keeping Creator”**.

We would see also that God **protects his people**, hedges them against evil when they are faithful and resting in him.

We LEARN OF THAT WHICH WAS **through a people**, we learn about God through the actions and promises he made to Israel YESTURDAY so that TODAY we, *through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.*

Our Learning Of That Which Is

God For A Person

For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. ([Rom 15:4](#))

Seeing how God cared for his **people in the past**, gives us confidence that he will care for his **children individually today**.

We LEARN that God worked corporately in that WHICH WAS
And discover that from the time of Christ to this very day, God works FOR A PERSON in THAT WHICH IS.

In writing to Timothy Paul said;

This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; to which he refers to himself as the Chief in [1 Tim 1:15](#)

Jesus Christ came into the world to save the individual, the person and not the people. We learn today of THAT WHICH IS. God worked through a people in THAT WHICH WAS, but now for the benefit of a PERSON IN THAT WHICH IS.

There is nothing like this anywhere among the pagan nations and beliefs where God shows himself PERSONALLY.

This level of intimacy reveals to us his **individual love for you and I, it is personal**.

When Christ died On the cross he died for **you and me personally**, and we choose to believe what he has done personally.

My friends at the end of this sermon I am going to invite you to give your life to Jesus Christ personally, that he might save you from your sin. I ask you now to be ready for that moment.

It is going to be your opportunity to learn personally who God is, why he came and the wonderful hope that ONLY THOSE WHO HAVE BELIEVED HIM PERSONALLY have.

The Scriptures are written for our learning that we may LEARN OF THAT WHICH IS.

We today are living during a time of grace, a time that God has ordained for the salvation of the gentile world, *this is the time that IS*. The time of his Grace.

Paul wrote; *“behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation”* ([2 Cor 6:2](#))

IN part of that WHICH WAS, the messiah of Israel was long promised to come for them as a PEOPLE, but they turned their hearts away from him.

Turn to [John 1:10-14](#)

“He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. 11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not. 12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. 14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”

Turn to [Romans 11:11](#)

Paul giving a response as to the Jews and the hope they have lost for a time;

*11 I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: **but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy.***

The Church was a mystery in the Old Testament, it is not evident that it is what WAS, but now we have our learning in that which IS.

It was this that turned the heart of God **to the gentile world**, that is you and I individually. We are referred to as "*the sinners of the gentiles*", but when those to whom he came received him not, then was the way made for **you and I**.

We learn then that Paul had taken the testimony of salvation to the gentiles, and we see this evident in the book of Acts, **turn there also with me**, to [Acts 17:29](#)

He went to the gentiles in every place, and here he is in Athens Greece, and his spirit was stirred within him as he had seen "*the city wholly given to idolatry*". He came to the alter of the "*unknown God*", he charges them with superstition and then goes on to teach them of the God they worship in ignorance, yes he speaks to the of Christ, God who came to save them personally from their sin.

*29 Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. 30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; **but now commandeth all men every where to repent:** (This is that WHICH IS)*

This is referring to this very day, from the time of Christ to TODAY.

[Hebrews 3:7-8](#) it is written; "*Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness:*"

Jesus said "*All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.* ([Jn 6:37](#))

This is WHAT WE LEARN OF THAT WHICH IS.

This is now God working for the benefit of the person!

Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: ([Isaiah 55:6](#))

But that passage of Acts where we concluded with Paul words in verse 30, continues on to verse 31

*31 **Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.***

(Paul here introduces that WHICH IS TO COME)

Our Learning of That Which Is To Come

God To A World

There is a judgement coming for the world and for every man and woman who dies in their sin.

31 Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained;

God IS today angry at sin!

God will not let sin go unpunished, he will deal with the godless, he will bring their account to balance **in accord with his righteousness and judgement**, he will NOT let the guilty go unpunished but will bring to the world **the account of that which is due**.

In a few short words at the beginning of Romans 6:23 Paul refers both to THAT WHICH IS and THAT WHICH IS TO COME

"The wages of sin is death" (Rom 6:23),

The sin of the world is present, but its wages are yet to come.

The sin of the individual is in the present, but his wages are yet to come.

This time of GRACE will one day come to an end, BOTH CORPORATELY AND INDIVIDUALLY.

- CORPORATELY in that the world is drawing to a close and the signs we see in the world bear testimony that the end of it is very near. Never in the history of the world have the nations suffered such corporate despotism and delusion collectively. The world is being thrust into a state of chaos never before seen, until there comes forth that "man with the plan" the scriptures refer to as AntiChrist.
- But why is this occurring? Because of sin INDIVIDUALLY, and the time of their GRACE individually comes at their death.

There are today the world over, wicked men and wicked women who lead lives completely ignorant of the sin that offends God so much as to see them cast into hell the moment of their death.

Today, wicked men and wicked women even join together to work their evil in the world, BUT according to THAT WHICH IS TO COME, there will be a recompence before a holy God. HOW CAN WE KNOW IT?

Because THE SCRIPTURES ARE WRITTEN FOR OUR LEARNING and our learning of THAT WHICH IS and that WHICH IS TO COME.

21 Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished: but the seed of the righteous shall be delivered. (Prov 11:21)

In this we see that they can take NO COMFORT IN NUMBERS, “*though hand join in hand*” it will be the individual who “*shall not be unpunished*”.

There are NO PARTY VOTES in the Bible, EVERY VOTE IS A CONCIENCE VOTE and every individual will give their account.

Isaiah wrote;

“Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him: for the reward of his hands shall be given him” (Isa 3:11)

Have you seen your sin for what it is?

Can you see your own sin and its effect encouraging others to sin?

Do you personally encourage others to sin in your sin to make you feel better about your sin?

O the vanity of people who think that “ONLY IF I CAN GET OTHERS TO SIN THE WAY I DO I MIGHT JUSTIFY MYSELF”.

Expressing itself in such a way individually around the world, every sinner toward every other sinner, casts the world into its collective sin and sets itself up for judgement.

The Old Testament teaches us that it was the sin of the people that set them up with godless, evil kings. So too it is today.

Paul speaks to the present that which was a principle in the past but referring to the future, referring to THAT WHICH IS TO COME;

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; 4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. (1 TIM 4:3-4)

NOTICE, that it was in accord with their own hearts LUSTS that they “heap to themselves teachers”, yes even rulers and governors, princes and kings.

We see this in *whatsoever was written aforesaid*.

The turning away of the people from God found them with godless rulers set over them. YES, IT WAS PEOPLES CHOICE!!!!

Beloved, truly, if this be so with Kings who are directly appointed by Gods providence, what more can we say of DEMONCRACIES who's people directly cast their vote?

In Victoria we cast our votes and the majority voted for that which is not understanding ANYTHING ABOUT THAT WHICH WAS TO COME.

But EVIL is always ready to take the opportunity to act, when it is presented to it.

As a State;

We were first to employ a version of Same Sex Marriage in 2007 under Labor Leader Steve Bracks, permitting the formal register of the relationship in Births Deaths and Marriages¹

We were first in Australia to permit, through our Supreme Court same sex couples adoption rights where "*one person in a same-sex couple could adopt*"²

We were the first state in Australia to enact abortion to birth for ANY reason under Labor's John Brumby government in 2008. A massive 39% increase of late term abortions including the first full term murder of a healthy baby to a healthy mother in 2011 for "*psycho-social reasons*"³ Infanticide is now entrenched in the laws of our state.

Victoria was the First State in Australia to introduce the Safe Schools program of social engineering in October 2010⁴. Designed to both accept and promotes all forms of sexual perversion to children as young as grade 5. The federally defunded program ended up being paid in full by the current administration, and went from voluntary Opt In, to compulsory for ALL PUBLIC SCHOOLS by 2018.

We were the first state in Australia to enact assisted suicide in November 2017, under the reign Labor leader Daniel Andrews.⁵ The so called "Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill" opens the door for involuntary euthanasia and the future potential of justifiable homicide.

Just as NIGHT FOLLOWS DAY, so too will THAT WHICH IS TO COME, follow that WHICH IS. And we already have a hint of it affecting the daily lives of the 1.5 million people who voted for the current regime.

Let me summarize this point of learning of that which is to come, "God to the WORLD" reading a passage expressly speaking to it.

Turn in your Bibles to [2 Thessalonians 2:3-12](#)

3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; 4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. 5 Remember ye not, that, when

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LGBT_rights_in_Victoria#Same-sex_marriage

² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LGBT_rights_in_Victoria#Adoption

³ <http://laborlast.org.au>

⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Safe_Schools_Coalition_Australia

⁵ <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-11-29/euthanasia-passes-parliament-in-victoria/9205472>

I was yet with you, I told you these things? 6 And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. 7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. 8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: 9 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, 10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: 12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

We learn in our Bibles of that which is to come, and in this portion we speak to the judgement of sin, both individual and in the world. Today's events are God speaking to the WORLD.

But most importantly, there is also that which is TO COME, which has with it HOPE!

Our Learning The Way of Our Salvation

God In Christ

Paul wrote to the Corinthians that which pertains to THAT WHICH IS, that is, this time of grace.

I Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; 2 By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. 3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; 4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures; (1 Cor 15:1-4)

Isaiah wrote aforetime in THAT WHICH WAS, about a time that for him would be THAT WHICH IS TO COME, teaching to them who lived about HE WHO IS.

700 years before Jesus Christ walked the shores of the Galilee or climbed the mountains of Judea, 700 years before he cured the lame, healed the sick, made the deaf hear and the blind see, Isaiah wrote aforetime that which would forever be for our learning, *that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.*

Isaiah 53

If you now see your sin for what it is, the greatest hope is laid out before you. This is in the LEARNING OF THE WAY OF SALVATION, this is GOD IN CHRIST.

That same Isaiah wrote in chapter nine of his book of God in Christ;

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end,

upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

This same is Christ, this is God manifest in the flesh and if you see your sin for what it is, then believe that through his stripes you are healed.

That you have learned from THAT WHICH WAS, trusting now in THAT WHICH IS, for the culminating hope of THAT WHICH IS TO COME.

Maranatha.