



A new creation focus through Colossians ...

Knowledge of God's Will

The remnant that had been left on the land by the Babylonians near the ravaged city of Jerusalem came to Jeremiah the prophet with a question: "What shall we do; shall we go down to Egypt?" Jeremiah inquired of the Lord and ten days later received the answer: "Stay in the land of promise, and do not go down to Egypt." But the Lord went on to say through Jeremiah, "So, I have told you today, but you have not obeyed the Lord your God, even in whatever He has sent me to tell you" (Jeremiah 42:21). They had said, "We will listen to the voice of the Lord our God," but

they were only willing to listen if He told them what they already wanted to hear. The result was the sword, the famine, and the pestilence destroyed them when they went to Egypt.

Time and time again, the people of the Old Testament would not listen. So, under the terms of the new covenant, God has produced a special people — born of water and Spirit — who will listen.

- ◆ **Value of a soul** — The apostle Paul knew that just because a person was immersed into Christ, that did not guarantee that he would make it to heaven. Immersion is primarily a beginning, not an end; hence, if someone were to fall away from the faith, it would be better for them not to have known the truth. The apostle, therefore, understanding the eternal value of a soul, wrote: "For this reason, since the day we have heard [of the Colossians love in the Spirit], have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding" (Colossians 1:9). That prayer arose from a desire on his part that the brethren would remain faithful and fruitful to the end.

- ◆ **Knowledge of His will** — The remnant left in the land in Jeremiah's day found out what God's will was, but refused to do it. The brethren in Colossae, hopefully, would "be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding." The implication of "spiritual wisdom and understanding" is that they would be able to spiritually assess their surroundings and situations, and make sound spiritually-focused decisions based upon the principles that the Lord had laid out for them in the terms of the new covenant or *new will*. After a person obeys the gospel, God does not tell him specifically what to do. He expects that those who are truly "born again" will have the maturity to gather information from the scripture and facts from their surroundings to then, as sons rather than slaves, make decisions. That is why they would need "spiritual wisdom and understanding." He continues, "so that you may walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects" (Colossians 1:10).

- ◆ **Walking worthy** — As Paul prays for the Colossian brethren to be filled with the knowledge of God's will, he petitions that they be "bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God." Doing good works for the sake of doing good works is a waste; this earth is going to pass away. But the good works Christ is concerned about are those which result in more people being rescued from the domain of darkness and transferred into the kingdom of Christ.

The apostle, as he writes, cycles back around to "increasing in the knowledge of God." In the days when the New Testament was being written, that knowledge had to come through the apostles and those who were so gifted by the Holy Spirit through the laying on of the apostles' hands. Today that knowledge comes through earnest study of what is written in God's word, and by having a person's thinking challenged or expanded by others who have studied and expounded upon God's word. And that is the only knowledge that endures forever. "Heaven and earth will pass away," averred Jesus, "but My words shall not pass away" (Matthew 24:35).

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