

THE INTERPRETATION OF PROVIDENCE IN HISTORY – (PART A)

WEEK 5

October 4 – October 10

SCRIPTURE MEDITATION

“When Ahab saw Elijah, Ahab said to him, “Is this you, you troubler of Israel?” He said, “I have not troubled Israel, but you and your father’s house have, because you have forsaken the commandments of the LORD and you have followed the Baals.”

1 Kings 18:17-18

BOOK READING

Roberts, pp. 30-39 (middle of)

Quotation for Meditation

“Carelessness in our walk, worship and witness not only forfeits God’s blessing but robs him of his declarative glory on earth” (p. 37).

M’CHEYNE BIBLE READING SCHEDULE

Oct 4	1 Ki 7	Eph 4	Eze 37	Ps 87, 88
Oct 5	1 Ki 8	Eph 5	Eze 38	Ps 89
Oct 6	1 Ki 9	Eph 6	Eze 39	Ps 90
Oct 7	1 Ki 10	Phil 1	Eze 40	Ps 91
Oct 8	1 Ki 11	Phil 2	Eze 41	Ps 92, 93
Oct 9	1 Ki 12	Phil 3	Eze 42	Ps 94
Oct 10	1 Ki 13	Phil 4	Eze 43	Ps 95, 96

PERSONAL REFLECTION

TRUSTING GOD IN MY WAITING PLACES

STEVE LAROCCO

“Wait for the LORD; Be strong and let your heart take courage; Yes, wait for the LORD” (Psalm 27:14).

As I look back at the last 23 years of my life since I graduated from high school, the “tight place” in which the Lord has often put me is the “waiting place.” God put me in that waiting place for the first time before I turned twenty. I vividly recall how disappointed I was to learn that I would likely have to wait for two years between high school graduation and coming here to Greenville to begin my education at BJU. Now, from a distance of more than twenty years, I understand how much I really needed to learn about hard work and waiting on the Lord during that time. I tremble to think where my immaturity and naiveté at the age of seventeen might have led if I had “gotten my way” and left for school the fall after my high school graduation. The second “waiting place” came at the end of my junior year at BJU. I was out of money to pay for school and there was no available scholarship back then to pick up the tab. I had to sit out a semester and work. This was hard since I was missing what would have been the fall of my senior year. The Lord used this time to help me to appreciate even more what I had both at BJU and at Mount Calvary. I came back a far more grateful student. This delay meant that I would be finishing my undergraduate education in December and therefore could not start my graduate assistant position until the following August. After sitting out that earlier semester, however, I more readily accepted the prospect of another few months away from Greenville as the Lord’s appointment for reasons only He knew best. Sure enough, I was able to come alongside my parents during a *very* trying time as I watched my father for the only time in his life resign a senior pastorate and then lead our family during a period of great uncertainty and transition.

The third waiting time stretched over three and a half years of graduate school. During this time, I became increasingly convinced that the Lord wanted me to be married. I became increasingly frustrated at my lack of progress toward that goal. I remember finally coming to a crucial point in my spirit one night in January of 2008. It was my first night back from Christmas break. I remember telling the Lord that I would be faithful to

the stewardship he had given me as a student and teaching graduate assistant and would be content to wait on His will and timing to be revealed. Within two weeks, I had met Laura, my wife, at an MCBC college and career fellowship. She was still a senior. I was in my fourth year of graduate school. It turns out that one of the benefits of being out of school for the equivalent of three years was that I was still around to meet Laura in Greenville! “How unsearchable are [God’s] judgments and unfathomable His ways! For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who became His counselor? ... for from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever, Amen” (Romans 8:33-36).

I could go on to talk even more about the waiting times the Lord has had for me since we got married. I finished graduate classwork in Spring of 2010, but I did not graduate with my doctorate until Spring of 2016. Then, my father passed away suddenly in December of 2017. During the past decade, the Lord has given Laura and me four beautiful children. There have been plenty of opportunities to learn to wait on the Lord during the past decade!

Here are some basic truths that I have found to be *foundational* as I learned to “compose and quiet my soul like a weaned child” (Psalm 131:2) in the face of these “waiting times.”

- What God ordains is *always* good (James 1:17). He *cannot* do evil, even when He sends trouble.
- As a believer, I know that I, by God’s amazing grace and mercy, have come to love God and to be “called according to His purpose.” God, therefore, causes *all things* to work together for good for *His* great purpose: that I be conformed to the image of His Son (Romans 8:28-29). I must discard any goal, ambition, or timetable that is not in keeping with my Father’s loving ambition for me.
- If God is for me, then I need not fear who is against me (Romans 8:31). He is my loving Shepherd and I will never lack anything! I have been born again, and my permanent abode is “the house of the Lord forever” (Psalm 23). Nothing here is meant to satisfy. I can wait for the better things to come!
- Paul’s exhortation to the Corinthians, therefore, frequently rings in my ears whenever I am tempted to sigh in exasperation, or impatience, or even despair. “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the

Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 15:58).