

# *Capital Connections*

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## **YOU KNOW WHAT?**

Remember last month's statement? "The reader/hearer is encouraged to continue in faithful service to the once and future King of Kings and Lord of Lords. This is, without exception, the purpose of all such prophecies." This month's chapter from the Book of Daniel presents another of the great purposes of prophetic writings. "... and I was astonished at the vision, but none understood it." (Da 8:27 AV) By its very nature prophecy is prone to baffle its speakers, hearers and readers. Daniel said so in Chapter 8. In Chapter 9 we'll discover a bit more of the meaning of his vision, but that's next month's article.

I sometimes have vivid dreams. One Sunday morning, my alarm didn't awaken me because I'd set the time wrong. At 7:51, I awoke from my stupor twenty minutes later than I'd hoped, and stumbled to the shower; my hazy dream still clouding my mind's eye. I'd not been sleeping well for the previous couple of nights, so I'd taken two Tylenol PM. It was extra hard to get my bearings that morning. The lingering thoughts of my subconscious mind fought with the reality of the message I was about to preach. Hopefully, by the time you were here with me, I was thinking and speaking clearly.

That's why Pastor Steve and I stand to speak to you each week. We want to clearly communicate the truths of the Bible. But sometimes prophecy is meant to confuse. Daniel received this vision, The Ram and the Goat on the banks of the Ulai River in the city of Shushan, as he slept. Being awakened, or addressed as he slept, by Gabriel clouded the matter all the more.

At the time it was revealed, the vision had no comprehensible meaning to those who received it. It would be rendered understandable many years later. An important principle to get a grip on is that the Lord fulfills His word in His time.

By now however, the mature Daniel understands that he is a channel through which flows God's message. His job is not to understand. He is simply the recipient and transmitter of the visions that God gives.

In your own experience there should be a growing awareness of God's purpose for your life. "Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." (Eph 4:8 AV) We believe that the gifts given are purposeful as we find our place of Kingdom Service through the local church.

Daniel's gift was that of prophet. His appointed place was Babylon during the exile. For you, that place of service is right here through the ministries of Capital Baptist Church. Do you know God's gift to you?

With each passing year, you can become more intimately acquainted with God's gifts in your life and more actively engaged in using those gifts in service through the ministries of your church. What an awesome experience!

A part of the vision given to Daniel and recorded in Chapter 8 was elucidated more than 500 years later when the Lord Jesus referred to it in the Olivet discourse. You can find that passage in Matthew 24.

"And as he sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" (Mt 24:3 AV) "When ye therefore shall

see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)" (Mt 24: 15 AV)

To have to wait more than 500 years for a better understanding, let alone who knows how much longer for the complete fulfillment of the prophecy is hard for us modern Americans to abide. We want everything revealed right now, at this very moment.

But we are the ones who must accommodate the truth. The truth will not accommodate us. It will only prove itself true. We must make the adjustment if we are to experience God working His will in our circumstances. Another truth of Biblical prophecy is this, "forewarned is forearmed." Get ready. That day will come as a thief in the night.

One way you can get ready is through service, as we've mentioned above. Another way is not to be caught off guard. We should not be engaged in activities that we'd be ashamed to acknowledge at the moment of the Lord's return. Living simple lives of service and love will most honor and please the Lord Jesus upon His return, and will garner for us the words of praise we long to hear.

I mention this to you because there are ample ministry opportunities through the life of your church. Small Group activities will begin again in September. The Sunday School year will also kick off in September.

There are important places of service at the church and to the community. Let's get ready so that these words may be true for us. "Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing." (Mt 24: 46 AV)  
Be Right Back, Pastor John



A few weeks ago, the Peters' household made a 3-week commitment to host a Japanese student coming with the Cultural Homestay International program. The program's function to provide an educational experience away from a student's normal environment, introducing them to family life in a new culture, while providing immersion in the English language.

For us, it is an opportunity to put our best foot forward offering a home to live in, a family to interact with, and a Christian life to model. Each of these requires preparation, from making a guest room comfortable, to planning our schedules to include another teenage girl. Preparation of the guest room is not too difficult, and getting the rest of the house presentable is somewhat routine. Even the process of incorporating another person's schedule is not all that challenging. But I'd like to focus for a few minutes on what it means to prepare yourself and those around you to be good models of the Christian life and faith.

There are simple things we can do to prepare to model the Christian life, but each requires a commitment of focus and undivided attention. The greater challenge is stated for us in Joshua 1: 7-8, when the Lord says, "*Only be strong and very courageous; be careful to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may have success wherever you go.*"<sup>8</sup> "*This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success.*"

How can we make ourselves ready for such singleness of purpose? Deuteronomy 6: 4-9 gives us a visual image that helps. "*Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!*"<sup>5</sup> "*You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.*"<sup>6</sup> "*These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart.*"<sup>7</sup> "*You shall teach them diligently to*

*your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. <sup>8</sup>“You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. <sup>9</sup>“You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”*

The first part of the picture is a fairly easy to visualize, even if it is less and less common in our day. Because we are a people of ideals, we can see in our mind's eye the father spending time with his son, teaching him the important things of life. Even so, it takes a deep and abiding commitment to live it out and to be diligent teaching our children the priorities of a meaningful relationship with God.

The next part of the picture illustrates the importance of having the Word of God in front of you at all times. There is not much you will ever do without having your hands out in front of you. For the laborer, his hands are in use constantly, guided by his eyes. The one who works in administration, communications, teaching, or any other process is continually involved with his or her hands, either using a computer keyboard or a pencil, or descriptive gestures to accomplish each task. When we engage in sports or games, our hands are directed by our eyes to use skills developed through practice.

So, the correlation is easy to see. If we are to model the habits and live out the principles of the Christian life, we must keep them in front of us. We must keep God's Word in front of us if we want the result to be the image of Christ clearly reflected from our lives.

I'll be honest. Many distractions compete for my attentions and affections. A purposeful plan is necessary if we are going to keep the right things in focus. God said, *“You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. <sup>9</sup>“You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”*

Think about what that should look like in your life. It's kind of an “in your face” expectation, isn't it? In every way you can, keep God's Word where your eyes will be constantly reminded of Jesus, *“...the Way, the Truth, and the Life.”*

## **MEDIA LIBRARY**

--by Bonnie Brough

The PNAAC (Pacific Northwest Association of Church Librarians) met in Yakima, Washington the last weekend of June. There were authors, vendors, “The Inklings” bookstore sharing many new books for the Christian market, and workshops (too many to attend all). I attended one with an author on writing; one on a software program and one on book clubs. For this one, ahead of time each participant read the book Same Kind of Different as Me. *I recommend it to every one of you.* It is the true story of a homeless man—Denver, now a multi-millionaire and his wife, Debbie. I just finished reading the sequel What difference do it make?. You will find both titles in the Media Library.

Next year, July 15-16, Capital City, the Salem Chapter will be hosting the 2011 Conference at Tokyo University. *Jane Kirkpatrick* will be the Keynote Speaker. Her time will be open to the public. The CBC Media Library has a number of her books. By the way, she is an Oregon author. One of her books, A Land of Sheltered Promise is a book about the Big Muddy Ranch in eastern Oregon (which gained much publicity when the Rajneeshpuram and his followers were there.)

Keep reading this summer and enjoy a less pressured time of the year!

## **Saddle Ridge Ranch Review**

--by Melissa Hiltz

Sara and I would like to start by saying "thank you"! *Thank you* to every worker who got up early, roused sleepy children from their beds, rounded up materials for the day, packed everything in your car and got here in time to warmly greet the children as they arrived each morning. Thank you for giving up a week of your summer. Thank you for all your work planning, setting up, and cleaning up!

And on the subject of clean-up... the straw and hay was a great way to establish the theme, but if we'd thought about clean-up in advance, we might have been less liberal in its use. 'Thank you' to everyone who moved, swept, blew and vacuumed straw. Jo, your leaf-blower was a life saver! We would also like to thank all the teachers who carefully removed decorations so they could be reused. Skyline Baptist Church appreciated your generosity very much, both for the great ideas and for the time it will save them setting up their VBS.

We would also like to thank all who donated items by taking a card or multiple cards from the "boot" in the Worship Center foyer. Your contributions *greatly* decreased the amount the church spent on snacks and helped offset the most expensive part of VBS, crafts.

The final enrollment was 86: 23 staff and 63 children. Daily average attendance was 75.

Using facts Miriam supplied about their work in Malawi, particularly in regards to how their children adapted to and helped in their ministry, the Pumpelly family was the main focus during Campfire Creek Missions. During worship the kids were challenged by grade groups to see who could bring in the most money to help the Pumpellys share the Gospel in Africa. Inspired by a combination of empathy and competition, the kids gave \$101.10 to missions during VBS. The 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> graders gave \$38, winning the opportunity to throw mini "pies" at two VBS workers. The vote was close; they chose Sara and Michelle to "receive" the pies. Both were very good sports about the whole thing!

Finally, "thank you" to each worker that took the time to fill out the evaluation form. In response to your input we'll do a few things differently and fine tune the rotation plan next year.

Here's hoping the theme won't require bales of straw!

## **NEW THINGS**

--by Tina Brown

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!*  
--2 Cor. 5:17 NIV

Tony picked up a book on frugal living recently, and it had an interesting tip: if your living room looks tired, try cleaning up what you already have. A good vacuum and polish job will refresh colors and restore structure, giving your furniture a perky facelift. A few weeks ago, I guess I pulled a similar trick. I "repainted" my house by spraying it down with a garden hose. The north side, in particular, had a layer of algae along the bottom, and it came off easily with a scrub brush. So yes, I scoured the building.

When your face is only three inches away from a project, you see all the places you missed and you see how much is still ahead. You see the knots, the cobwebs, the chips in the paint. Dead bugs blast off the wall and stick to your clothes. You're soaking wet from the ricochet. Your shoulder burns so you switch to your weaker arm. (*Ugh, are we there yet!?*)

Coincidentally, I like to paint with a two-inch chip brush. Sure, a roller *would* be a faster, more appropriate choice for projects larger than a picture frame, but there is so much to experience when your face is right up in the business. You see every

pocket, every crease, and you lovingly cover each groove up and down, up and down. Primer starts the transformation and then... the paint. I can't help it; armed with my two-inch brush and the color I hope will change everything, I feel like Michelangelo, no, Rembrandt on a mission.

See, the great thing about redemption is that when you stand back, the whole room is remade; the building looks new. It's pretty. It's clean. It's fresh. The close-up version isn't comfortable, easy or perfect, but at a distance, it is satisfying. It is a good investment.

Anyone in Jesus Christ gets more than just a surface makeover. They are new creations. Up close, it may seem difficult, tiring, or discouraging, as the transformation takes place, but God's work will satisfy. Stick it out to the end.