

Destroyed Without Knowledge

Hosea 4:6 (ESV):

**⁶ My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge;
because you have rejected knowledge,
I reject you from being a priest to me.
And since you have forgotten the law of your God,
I also will forget your children.**

Knowledge is a powerful force. We live out what we know from deep within. The nation of Israel forgot God because they lost knowledge of Him. As a result the nation perished.

This is Perry Greene, your host for GodNAmerica. I am always grateful that you are listening in to our podcasts and following us on Facebook.

Today, let's consider the levels of knowledge that the Hebrews lacked and apply them to us.

1. They Lacked Knowledge of the Word of God, i.e., the Scriptures

God's word has always been a centerpiece for His people. It is, not just a set of rules and regulations for us, but an "abundant life manual" if we put it to practice.

In Jesus' high priestly prayer He mentioned "truth." In **John 17:17** (ESV) He said:

¹⁷ Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.

Here Jesus equates the word of God with truth. The reality of the word of God is that it is applicable in all areas of life. Through it, as Paul stated, we are made complete for every one of our tasks.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 (ESV)

¹⁶ All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

Jesus also reminds us of the connection between truth and freedom. In **John 8:31-32** (ESV) He said:

³¹ Jesus said to the people who believed in him, "You are truly my disciples if you remain faithful to my teachings. ³² And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

What is the key to being a disciple of Jesus? It is continuing in His word, being faithful to His teachings. When we do that we know truth and truth leads to freedom. But, don't forget the price we pay – constant exposure to the word of God! It's not to the "Tell-A-Vision." It's not to their *programming* or *channeling* (sounds a bit like the occult, doesn't it?). It's not to movies. It's not to athletics. It is to the life-giving, freedom-giving word of God. We must develop a biblical worldview to apply its precepts to every corner of our lives.

2. They Lacked Knowledge of God Himself

Knowing scripture is good and important. Scripture leads us to the One from whom it originated. I have a box of letters between an uncle and his wife during WWII. Reading the letters means little except I knew the two who wrote them. Bible knowledge leads us to know God and reflect on who He is. Paul said it like this in **Philippians 3:10** (ESV):

¹⁰ that I may know him and the power of his resurrection,

3. They Lacked Knowledge of the Love of God

We see this from our perspective in **Ephesians 3:19** (ESV):

“. . . to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.”

Isn't it interesting that Paul speaks of knowing the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge? He's talking more than head knowledge. He is talking about an experiential level of love. Knowing or experiencing the love of God.

It is one thing to understand the love of Christ. It is another to experience it. It is true that we can comprehend in our minds as in **Romans 5:8** (ESV):

⁸ but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

But, what do you *feel* when you read this verse and others like it? Does it move you to *feel* appreciation? Does it move you to *feel* repentance from the heart?

It appears that when we truly are enveloped by the love of God in our lives, it moves us towards Him. It moves us to do His will. You see, **“the love of Christ controls us,”** (**2 Corinthians 5:14**, ESV). That is His love to us as well as our love towards Him. Either way, this moves us to embrace Him and His will.

Do you remember **Psalms 37:4** (ESV)?

Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.

How do you get the desires of your heart? The text says by delighting yourself in the Lord. Delight here is a special, “exquisite” delight. It is a unique happiness that seems to me starts with a deep personal relationship of God.

Have you ever loved someone so that the things they were interested in became things you were interested in? Spouses do that. Parents will do that with their children. “Because the person I love likes this particular subject I will like it too.” I think that is kind of the way it works with God. Because we know He loves us, we love Him. As a result of loving Him our lives change. We start loving the things God loves. We delight in Him and His desires become our desires. By delighting in Him we receive the desires of our hearts that are reflecting His heart.

God loved the nation of Israel in a unique and special way. In **Exodus 19:4-6a** God actually proposes to the nation – because He loved them for the sake of Abraham. Notice His proposal and their response.

⁴ ‘You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. ⁵ Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; ⁶ and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’

How would you have responded to God if you had been at Mt. Sinai and had experienced the deliverance of the LORD from Egypt? Would you have stopped in wonder and awe of the God who had taken the time and energy to redeem you? Would you have been filled with gratitude for His kindness and the gift of freedom He had provided? Or would you have wanted to go back into slavery? Here is their response in **verse 8**:

⁸ All the people answered together and said, “All that the LORD has spoken we will do.” And Moses reported the words of the people to the LORD.

They accepted His invitation. Literally they said, “We will do and we will hear.” That is, they were going to so trust this loving God that they would do what He said – even when they did not understand the ‘why’ of what He had said. Some prefer “I need to see it to believe it.” God says, “Believe it and you will see it.” It’s a matter of faith.

Shall we make an application to America? The generations that came to America and established the nation did so (for the most part) motivated by a love for God and for freedom. The Pilgrims came to “advance Christian faith.” As the Declaration of Independence was being signed Samuel Adams said:

"We have this day restored the Sovereign to Whom all men ought to be obedient. He reigns in heaven and from the rising to the setting of the sun, let His kingdom come."

This was not just a coup. It was not a demonstration. It was a determination to put God at the heart of the nation.

4. They Lacked Knowledge of Their Culture

One way they and we can be destroyed is by thinking life is just “business as usual.” Things change in life and we must be aware of the changes and make necessary adjustments. If we don’t, we will perish because we didn’t pay attention.

When David was at Hebron, among the groups of soldiers came to him were the men of Issachar. They had a wisdom that would help David. Notice **1 Chronicles 12:32** (ESV):

³²Of Issachar, men who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do,

If these men had had a main stream media they would not have accepted everything they said. They would have thought for themselves.

We need to pay attention to what is going on around us. We need to question the answers that we are being given. Sometimes the things we see aren’t really what is going on. There is something deeper and often more sinister than the surface. Dig deeper. See for yourself. Pay attention to the times in which we live. Right now everything is turned upside down. It feels like we have fallen through the looking glass with Alice.

5. They Lacked Knowledge of Their History

Roots and fruits go together. When a nation knows where it came from and who it was intended to be, it can carry out that purpose. Take away the roots, the foundation of nation and it can be led wherever a tyrant will take it.

Too often Israel forgot who they were. They forgot whose they were. They forgot the covenant God made with Abraham and the responsibilities He placed on them as His chosen people. Instead, they wanted to be like the other nations. They wanted a king because they couldn’t be satisfied with having God lead them. They wanted the gods of the land because they couldn’t be satisfied with the worship and direction of the living God.

Several times in scripture God reminds them of where they came from and where they were to go. The book of Deuteronomy is a recap of the history of Israel for the young generation that was about to enter the Promised Land and had not seen the Egypt events. They needed the memory of their history.

America has the same need. Repeatedly our Founding Fathers gave credit to God for the establishment of the nation. Yet, today many have forgotten our roots. Tyrants are leading us further and further away from our destiny under God. We must know where we have been in order to know where we are to go.

In a letter to Pastor John Rodger on June 11, 1783, George Washington wrote of the providence of God.

“Glorious indeed has been our Contest: glorious, if we consider the Prize for which we have contended, and glorious in its Issue; but in the midst of our Joys, I hope we shall not forget that, to divine Providence is to be ascribed the Glory and the Praise.”

Have we forgotten the providential aid of God in our roots as a nation? If we have forgotten the calling of God we can be led away from the direction He intended for us. Do you ever feel like America is drifting aimlessly? Actually it is not. It is being led away from the original intent of our Forefathers.

Samuel Adams once said:

It is in the interest of tyrants to reduce the people to ignorance and vice. For they cannot live in any country where virtue and knowledge prevail.

The “Cancel Culture” wants to remove our history. They want to make us ignorant from whence we have come. So they tear down our statues because they do not like the people they represent. Too many Americans have stood by and said, “It’s just a statue.” No, it’s more than a statue. It is a statement in time of people and events that have shaped our country. Some right, some wrong; some evil; some good. The more ignorant we are of our God and our history the better the tyrants like it. They can maneuver us anywhere they want us to go.

When we compare our education status to fifty years ago we, as a nation, have slid down the scale. We were once the greatest nation for education, no longer. We are being destroyed for lack of knowledge. We especially lack in knowing our God and His will.

Matthew 11:28-30 (ESV)

²⁸ Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

6. They Lacked Knowledge of God’s Creation

[For more information on the following story see Susie Federer, *Miracles in American History: 32 Amazing Stories of Answered Prayer*, (Virginia Beach, VA: Amerisearch, Inc, 2016), pp. 151-158.

One of my favorite stories has to do with George Washington Carver and his discoveries of the peanut. Without going into much detail of the background of his life, Carver joined the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama as a teacher and researcher. He nicknamed his lab, “God’s Little Workshop.” There he prayed to the Creator about what he should work on.

He relates that he first asked God (whom he called, "Mr. Creator") what the universe was for. He said God told him "You want to know too much for that little mind of yours. Ask something more your size, little man."

He then asked, "Please, Mr. Creator, what was man made for?" To which God replied, "You are still asking too much. Cut down on the extent and improve the intent."

That's when Carver asked about the peanut. He asked, "Please, Mr. Creator, will you tell me why the peanut was made?" God replied to him, "That's better, but even then it is infinite. What do you want to know about the peanut?" He asked if milk could be made from the peanut. Eventually he discovered many products that could come from the simple peanut.

Carver started with God and His word in order to learn about nature. On one occasion he spoke to a group and quoted from **Genesis 1** about the plants and herbs as food. He was asked how he had learned these things. He told them about the "old book" he used. That "old book," of course, was the Bible. He was then asked if the Bible told about peanuts. Hear his response:

"No sir. But it does tell about the God who made the peanut. I asked Him to show me what to do with the peanut, and He did."

God's creation is special. It would be nice if He showed us how to live within it. There are many passages of scripture that remind us of how to function in creation, plus we have the opportunity to address the King of the Universe for direction as Carver did. Consider:

There are secrets of His wisdom:

Job 11:5-6 (ESV)

**⁵But oh, that God would speak
and open his lips to you,
⁶and that he would tell you the secrets of wisdom!
For he is manifold in understanding.**

Even in the creation of human life, God is at work.

Psalms 139:15 (ESV)

My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth.

Matthew Fontaine Maury (1806-1873) was nicknamed "Pathfinder of the Seas" and "Father of Modern Oceanography and Naval Meteorology" and later, "Scientist of the Seas." He read the Bible and discovered the ocean currents. He said that if the Bible said they were there, they were there. His text?

Psalms 8:8b (ESV)

"... whatever passes along the paths of the seas."

It is possible for us to miss out on God's creation and not know what He wants us to know. We can be distracted and miss what He has made either by our own arrogance or being content with our ignorance.

The Hebrews sometimes got caught up worshipping the gods of the pagans. They needed rain so they worshiped Ba'al AND God just to cover all of their bases. They missed the focus of God and had their blessings withheld at times for worshipping the false gods.

Think about modern America. What are our gods? I remember thinking that when the Challenger space shuttle was destroyed in 1986 that we were watching the destruction of some of our gods. That craft represented among other things, science, technology, engineering, the military, and education. These are the things we have put our trust in at one time or another. That all went up in smoke that January day when we as a nation lacked knowledge of God.

What else may be coming? No one knows with 100% certainty but we can handle whatever comes; we can learn whatever we need to learn; we can do whatever needs to be done IF we know God.

If people are destroyed for lack of knowledge, what can be if we have with proper knowledge? Instead of destruction, we have construction. We are built up in our knowledge of Him.

I encourage you as an individual and we as a nation, "Know Him and the power of His resurrection!"

Keep telling HIS story in Our History. Until next time, Keep The Light Burning!