

**Remnant Life Church**  
May 21, 2023  
**As the Storm Clears**  
Acts 7:23-36

What are the early things I have learned – Overall: God is in control

1. God is in the details
2. God was preparing this time before it even happened
3. God's peace was the evidence of His presence

This was not just about me

- Nor was it only about my family and those closest to me
- It was about this church
  - This family
  - Those who has gathered together for this time, this hour, and this purpose
  - And so what is that purpose?

First, we must consider what it is that God has been doing leading up to this time

- Remember the second of those things that God was teaching me
- The second was that He was preparing and is continuing to prepare each of us for what is to come
- That means that He is preparing this church, His church for the task that lie ahead

What is that task?

- We don't know for sure
- Have you ever wondered why God does not show us what is to come?
  - It is because we would live our lives toward that end alone
  - In every instance of God taking us to a new place, the journey is just as important as arriving at that place
  - IOW – what you learn along the way is necessary for when you get there

Turn to **Acts 7:23-36**

- While you are turning to the passage, these are a portion of the words spoken by Stephen to the Sanhedrin
  - He had been performing miraculous signs and wonders by the power of God's presence and grace in him (**Acts 7:8**)
    - The members of the local Jewish leaders attempted to debate him and convince the people that he was not of God (**Acts 7:9**)
    - But their arguments were always overpowered by the wisdom of the Spirit that had been given to him (**Acts 7:10**)
    - Instead, they paid some men to bring false charges against him (**Acts 7:13**)
    - Steven was being accused (falsely) of blasphemy
  - This was a crime punishable by death
    - Stephen is then given a chance to respond to the charges

- Instead of defending himself, he begins a lesson on the history of the Jewish people leading up to the time of Jesus
- Of course, they stoned him, and Stephen became the first martyr because of his faith (*Acts 7:54-60*)

### READ – *Acts 7:23-36*

What we read in Stephen's account are the three phases of God's preparation of Moses for what God was calling him to do

- Lead the nation of Israel through the desert to the Promised Land – Canaan
- *Acts 7:23* – *When Moses was forty years old, he decided to visit his fellow Israelites.*
  - This is the first segment of the triad
  - The first 40 years of Moses' life was spent receiving the best education available to a human living in that time
    - Egypt was at the pinnacle of current scientific, horticultural, and societal knowledge
    - He was learning about animals, plants, military strategy, and government
    - All while sitting at the feet of the most learned men of the day
  - God was physically preparing Moses for what was to come
- *Acts 7:29-30* – *When Moses heard this, he fled to Midian, where he settled as a foreigner and had two sons. After forty years had passed, an angel appeared to Moses in the flames of a burning bush in the desert near Mt. Sinai.*
  - In those 40 years Moses became a shepherd
    - He was learning what it meant to lead something where it may not want to go
    - Sheep have their own mind about movement and Moses learned how to guide them and protect them
  - God was preparing Moses mentally and emotionally for what was to come
- *Acts 7:36* – *He led them out of Egypt and did wonders and miraculous signs in Egypt, at the Red Sea and for forty years in the desert.*
  - How long did God prepare Moses before his assignment even began? (80 years!)
  - How long from the time it began before it was completed? (40 years!)
  - How can we possibly attempt to hold God to a timeline when it comes to the things of our lives?

Things cannot take as long today as they in the Bible for the simple reason we do not live as long now as they did then.

- But we are in a time of preparation right now!
  - It does not matter for how long
  - I am being prepared
  - You are being prepared
  - WE are being prepared for what is the next step at RLC

The awareness of the preparation began to be brought to light in February 2022

- In February and March of 2022, several people within the church family began to have dreams, some were visions and still others were words of knowledge
- It then happened a second time in the same two months of this year

- As these were being shared and brought to Katerina to interpret, two messages were realized
- They were two things that needed to be lifted in prayer
- I brought them to you and we did pray as a church
- The first was to pray specifically that the vaccine the government was pushing on so many would not be required of children
  - If you recall there was talk that it might be made so that children had to get the covid vaccine in order to attend public school
  - We prayed against that coming into law
  - Praise God it did not
- The second was to pray for protection over the men of the church
  - Specifically, those who God had as the heads of their house
  - Attacks were coming
    - Relational
    - Emotional
    - Physical
- The most recent was against the head of my house and the head of this church family
  - I am the under-shepherd
  - Jesus is the Good Shepherd ([John 10:11](#))
- But there is something very important that we must understand during times of trial, attack, or testing
  - The enemy can do NOTHING without God's permission
  - While God permits these things to occur, He also orchestrates them in order to accomplish His perfect will
  - Satan is nothing more but a tool in God's hands for His purposes

As we have been examining these things, I again considered what God had been doing over the last 2 years even to the focus of my preaching over that time

- The first sermon of 2022 was about the importance of not only looking ahead to the coming year but anticipating what God had in store for us
  - We then spent January, February and March in Paul's letter to the church in Philippi – the book of Philippians
    - Paul talks a great deal here about servanthood
    - About being set apart from the world
      - For that church it was from the influences of the Greek culture
      - For RLC it is from the influences of a society and culture that is hurtling into an abyss of godlessness
    - It was also about embracing all those who desired the truth of God's Word
  - We then spent 6 weeks examining this church as we approached our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary
    - Who we are; why we came together; what is our purpose; and what that means as we go about our lives demonstrating Jesus Christ
- Then at the outset of this year
  - We again spent the first three months on one topic
    - Last year it was Paul's letter to the Philippians
    - This year it was the prophetic

- What is it?
- How do you know the difference between a true and false prophetic word?
- What does it mean to receive a prophetic word?
- And then the prophetic and the physical return of Jesus Christ
  - Of course, that entire series culminated with our in-depth look at the Galilean wedding
  - And how that very familiar activity was and is the perfect physical picture of how and why Jesus will be returning for us, His church, His bride

That preparation has been happening and it will continue

- Both for me personally as I shared last week
- And for us as a church family
  - And a significant part of that preparation begins in your heart
  - Specifically a willingness to be honest about your own life
- Are you willing to open your heart, down to the deepest, darkest rooms that you keep shut and locked from everyone?
  - Are you willing to give up whatever the world still has hold of in your life?
  - One foot in both worlds
    - **Rev 3:15-16** - *I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth.*
    - IOW – God cannot tolerate those who worship Him with their mouths on Sunday and then go and live for and like the world the other 6 days of the week

God is preparing this church for what He has determined we will be doing for the Kingdom

- Will you be a part of that?
- Can you be a part of that?
  - More are coming
  - Some have left but more are coming

In the early 1500's, the Spanish explorer Herman Cortes came to the land of the Aztecs in Mexico

- As they advanced and fought against the Aztec people his men began to despair and talked of mutiny
- Cortes scuttled (likely did not burn) the ships in the harbor where they were anchored so that there was only direction to go – forward

Katerina and I have scuttled our ships of retreat

- Many of you have already made that commitment as well
- This morning I want to ask you a hard question
  - Are you prepared to scuttle your ship of retreat and give yourself wholly to what God desires for your life
  - Like me, it is about your personally and about you as a part of this church family