

Day 80 – May 19

And then it was done. Babylon completely destroyed Jerusalem, imprisoned or killed its people, and caused all that were left to flee to Egypt, the Land of Slavery. It is the final destruction of all God had built for His people since the time of Moses.

They came from Egypt as newly freed slaves and God protected them. Yet they wandered 40 years due to their faithlessness, and upon taking the land God promised them, they refused to drive out the people as God had commanded. Then it was Judge and King, waffling back and forth between honoring God and more often turning away. Worship was given to Asherah, Baal, Chemoth, and a host of other gods. And in the end, God turned back His gifts, for the people had rejected them by rejecting Him. Those not killed or enslaved by invaders fled back to Egypt from whence they had come.

Yet even here, in the end, there is a glimpse of hope. After all the bloodshed, idolatry, war and captivity, the very last paragraph gives a glimpse of hope. The new king of Babylon turns a kind eye upon the leader of Israel, befriends him, and gives him food once again. Even here, we get a moment of grace from God. But again, this grace is given through a gentile, even a conqueror. For God's grace and blessing usually comes from a place we don't expect.

We've talked long and often about the bloodshed, the idolatry, and the war in this study. But have you seen the glimpses of grace along the way? See if you can name just 5. Five times when God showed His character, His grace, His forgiveness, His mercy to His people. And when we watch the news, look at social media, or hear the next presidential debate, think about this. Look for the small glimpses of grace that God is showing us, even here, even now. They are abundant, yet hidden by our warring culture just as they were in the time of Kingdoms.

Lord, show us Your glimpses of grace, that we might point them out to each other and to the world around us, and thereby bring You glory. Amen.