

## Paraklēsis: Pieces

Whenever we are faced with an obstacle – whether it is a trial, a project, a fear, a mystery, a conflict... etc. – there are pieces that need to fit together to create a complete solution. Many months ago I talked about project managers in my letter on Creep – how their job is to make sure that the project stays on track. Their job is also to locate, secure, organize, and fit together all the pieces needed to overcome the obstacle. So, in a sense, we are all project managers. If your obstacle is a painful and expensive trip to the dentist, then a regular, periodic project you need to manage well is brushing your teeth. The pieces required to put together that project successfully should be quite obvious to all of us reading this.

Very often in this life we are living we are faced with obstacles; many of which require pieces that are not so obvious, nor do they seem to be easily accessible. But, today I want to explore the idea that, while they may not be obvious to us, and they may not seem easily accessible, **they are certainly available**. We only need to know “where to look.” Well, that’s not the whole story. Yes, we need to know where to look; I have been known to look in the wrong place (arrogance, pride, leaning on my own understanding...)

*Many plans are in a man's heart, But the counsel of the LORD will stand. (Proverbs 19:21)*

But **we also need to look**. I have also been known to simply not look (head-in-the-sand syndrome, laziness, fear of failure, etc...)

*"But seek His kingdom, and these things will be added to you. "Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has chosen gladly to give you the kingdom. (Luke 12:31-32)*

One aspect to successfully managing a project is so obvious that we hardly ever think about it. That is, **we need to do our part**. But, sometimes we are deceived, or we aren’t remembering what our part is, or we try too hard. Some of the pieces need to come from us and our effort. We have a desire to overcome, so we expend effort. Is the effort well executed? We need to put our effort into trust and obedience...

With what shall I come to the LORD And bow myself before the God on high? Shall I come to Him with burnt offerings, with yearling calves? Does the LORD take delight in thousands of rams, In ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I present my firstborn for my rebellious acts, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? (Micah 6:6-8)

*"Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD and whose trust is the LORD. "For he will be like a tree planted by the water, that extends its roots by a stream and will not fear when the heat comes; but its leaves will be green, and it will not be anxious in a year of drought nor cease to yield fruit. (Jeremiah 17:7-8)*

*"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go." (Joshua 1:9)*

Other pieces come from God through His mercy and grace (blessings and miracles.)

King David loved God and desired to overcome an obstacle he saw – God’s physical house was not nearly as nice as his own. David made a plan to build a house for God, but he wisely obeyed when his plan was scaled back by God. (2Sam 7) David was able to provide many of the pieces needed for the

solution. He procured all, or maybe a surplus, of the materials for the building. (1Chronicles 22) But he did not build the house. Where did those resources come from? They were the spoils of all the battles that David won. Wait... **who won** those battles? Yes, God was the front line and the rear guard. Left and right flank, too! Throughout his life, David trusted and obeyed and was blessed. Out of the abundance of those blessings, David wanted to give it back to God. It belonged to Him, anyway... And so do we and all that we are blessed with. Don't forget, our very existence, our life that we live, is a blessing from God. **We are stewards, not owners**, of what He gives us. God, Himself, provides all of the pieces, except that of our will. David could have spent the resources on himself, like his son did after him, or like Prince Alwaleed bin Talal is doing today... (check out his custom private 747.) Instead, David pleased God with his devotion.

### **Our devotion to God is the piece we can provide.**

One more thing... Remember that inherently, we as humans tend to look at our watch when we expect something to happen. But, God in His eternity typically looks at the calendar. One of the pieces that we always need for assembling the solution to an obstacle is patience... Patience with others, ourselves and God. Our time is not His time and **He certainly knows best when we need something**. There are approximately 28 gazillion scriptures (give or take) that encourage us (or command us) to wait. Patience is one of the fruits of the spirit.

*Therefore, return to your God, observe kindness and justice, and wait for your God continually.  
(Hosea 12:6)*

To overcome an obstacle, we need to provide trust, obedience, devotion and patience; all of these are to be directed toward God. His promise to us is that **He will supply the rest of the pieces**. I have seen this work in my life and in the lives of others. It really is true and it really does work.

Remember last month's letter, collaboration? In there I talked, in a sense, about overcoming a much larger obstacle than any one person could handle – that was “making a pencil.” Sometimes the project we are managing is so large, we cannot even see the “forest” – we only get to see the “trees.” The Father will send His Son again when the Bride has made herself ready. (Rev 19:7) **Now there is a daunting task for even the best project managers!** Getting the Bride ready for the Marriage Supper... sounds like herding cats! But, we are not tasked with managing that project. We only need to worry about our little part in the matter. We all need to bring our piece to the table and place it on the puzzle. Let's get our pieces ready!

Peace to you and Glory to God!

-Nate

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