The Family & The City of God!”

1. **Intro:**
   1.1. Last week: The wonderful Suffering Savior!

2. **THE FAMILY & CITY OF GOD! (1-17)**
   2.1. **THE FAMILY OF GOD! (1-10)**
   2.2. Here we have the future *regathering & restoring* of Israel.
      2.2.1. Oh the blessing when the trials & sufferings are over!
   2.3. **Vance Havner** said, “Life is like a bowl of spinach in front of you & clear down at the other end of the table is a chocolate cake.”
      2.3.1. It’s hard to eat the spinach when your eyes are on the cake.
      2.3.2. If the Lord explained ALL about the choc cake, we’d have a rough time eating our spinach!
   2.4. Three stigmas on OT women: Being **Barren**, a **Widow**, being **Deserted** by your husband.
      2.4.1. Barren – Like Sarah & Hannah experienced.
      2.4.2. Widow – Left w/o financial resources.
      2.4.3. Deserted – Again, left w/o resources.
   2.5. **The Barren Woman Sings! (1-3)**
   2.6. (1a) Sing? - Doesn’t seem like too much to be singing about when you’re barren?
      2.6.1. Singing often speaks to God at work, thus the Children of Israel couldn’t sing while in exile – Ps.137.
      2.6.2. But when God says sing, Sing!
         2.6.2.1. Sing in anticipation of the glories to come! (Can you?)
   2.7. (1b) The previously childless woman has received the gift of children.
   2.8. (2) She gives birth to so many children she must enlarge her tents.
   2.9. (3) He loves to expand our borders & watch us grow!
   2.10. **The Widow Remarries! (4-6)**
   2.11. The widow loses her shame & is wed once again, this time to Jehovah
   2.12. The women deserted is like Israel temporarily abandoned by God. (i.e. in Babylon)
2.13. Look at all the reasons why we should not fear in 4-10.
2.13.1. Forget the shame, not remember the reproach (4); God as your Husband, His Name is Lord of Hosts, your Redeemer, God of all the earth (5); called you (6); great mercies, will gather (7); everlasting kindness, mercy (8); he has sworn, not angry w/U, nor rebuke you (9); kindness not depart, cov of peace not removed (10).

2.14. The Rainbow of Peace Shines Again! (7-10)
2.15. The storm is over, & God gives peace.
2.15.1. Q: Is there a storm starting to brew in your life? Brewing? Or just past?
2.15.2. The covenant sign of the rainbow is in the sky!
2.15.3. Vs.10 is Israel “in the end!” - No more trials…it’s over!

2.16. Chastening or suffering may seem spiritually barren to you, but God uses the, to give birth to blessings.

2.17. THE CITY OF GOD! (11-17)
2.18. From the Tent in vs.2 to the City of Cities!
2.19. See Rev.21:9-12, 18-21.
2.19.1. We’ve all seen pictures of the moon - Don’t you think it’s a bit different for those who have got to walk on it?
    2.19.1.1. Aren’t you glad you can’t reduce heaven to earthly terms???
2.19.2. Don’t see a city & say “but I like the country”!
    Don’t see the paved streets & say I like bare foot on the grass!
    Don’t see enormous claustrophobic walls & long for open space!
2.19.3. Heaven is: Colors beyond your wild imagination; every precious stone, multifaceted, reflecting prisms of light in every direction (like a kaleidoscope); fragrances you’ve never smelled before; music so overwhelming it’s next to impossible not to join in; walking w/Jesus; talking w/God; Understanding the Trinity; Knowing Him as He is; walking w/the giants of the faith,……!

2.19.4. Paul calls this city our Mother!
2.19.5. Gal.4:26 “but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all”
    2.19.5.1. Not “Mother earth”! But Mother Heaven!

2.20. The Beauty After the Storm (11-15)
2.21. Storms can be frightening (the other night), but like stones that toss & tumbled in the surf, they polish & bring Him glory!
2.22. (13) What do you have to say about this Scripture parents?
2.22.1. Q: Do we just wait for that day? Or, do we make this a prayer, for the Lord to “teach our children” through us today?
2.22.2. Q: What is the result? (peace, Great Peace!)
2.22.3. Q: Pray this peace over your children!

2.23. **Bullet Proof Believers!** (16-17)
2.24. There is no promise of immunity from attack, but the final triumph of the truth is assured!

2.25. It’s painful to go through the **furnace**, but God uses the experience to make you a **stronger & better tool**!
2.25.1. Q: Are you being forged in God’s furnaces?
   2.25.1.1. Reminder, not only is the **fire** & its **temperature** in God’s hand, but even the **Blacksmith** is under His control!
   2.25.1.2. That means the **amount** of blows, how **frequent** they come, & the muscle of their **impact**…are all tempered by Him.
   2.25.1.3. He does have the **last word**!
2.25.2. Q: Do you realize what type of **Weapon** you’d amount to with very little forging?
   2.25.2.1. Ever try to eat hard ice cream w/a soft spoon? (bends)
   2.25.2.2. A sword that isn’t tempered steel? (won’t last)
   2.25.2.3. **Hardening steel** by **heat treatment** consists of heating the metal to a temp about 1,400° to 1,600° F & then **cooling it rapidly** in water or oil.
   2.25.2.4. Now they have “**Deep cryogenic treatment**” which is a dry process and requires temperatures -300° F degrees or lower. (Slow - 1 degree a minute)
2.25.3. **You without trials…will never** last in life’s battles!
   2.25.3.1. Yes, **you tempered**, by the hand of God, will help in the fact that “No weapon that comes flailing your way will prosper!”
   2.25.3.2. “**Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”**

2.26. Read 2 Cor.10:3-6.

2.27. **Vance Havner** said, **“Life is like a bowl of spinach in front of you & clear down at the other end of the table is a chocolate cake.”**
2.27.1. If the Lord explained **ALL** about the choc cake, we’d have a rough time eating our **spinach**!

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1 Warren Wiersbe; pg.485
Many years ago when D. L. Moody was still busy in this country, there was an industrial exposition in Chicago. There was in the exposition ground a fountain which became the rendezvous for folk who arranged to meet each other. One would say to another, “Will you meet me at the fountain?” The answer was, “All right, I will meet you at the fountain.”

P. P. Bliss, the gospel song writer, was allured with this meeting place. He wrote the gospel song based on it, lifting the thought from the meeting place in the exposition ground to that higher meeting place, and he wrote this:

Will you meet me at the fountain,
When I reach the glory-land?
When you meet me at the fountain,
Shall I clasp your friendly hand?
Other friends will give you welcome;
Other loving voices cheer;
There’ll be music at the fountain—
Will you, will you meet me there?