

WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE CLASS NOTES - March 25, 2020

Be the Barnabas: Encouraging One Another

“And Joses, who was also named Barnabas by the apostles (which is translated Son of Encouragement), a Levite of the country of Cyprus, having land, sold it, and brought the money and laid it at the apostles’ feet.”

[Acts 4:36, 37]

- Joses was called *Barnabas* by the apostles; they probably had a good reason for doing so! Think about the names given to people in the Bible that signified something of importance: Abram → Abraham (**Gen. 17:5**): from ‘exalted father’ to ‘father of a multitude’; Jacob → Israel (**Gen. 32:28**): from ‘supplanter’ to ‘God prevails’; and now the one called *Joses* [exalted one] is named *Barnabas* [son of encouragement].
- Barnabas literally encouraged the brethren wherever he went: by his generosity in the text noted above; in Antioch (**Acts 11:22, 23**); and we first note of his encouraging efforts when Paul [then, *Saul*] tried to join the disciples in Jerusalem (**Acts 9:26-28**). **Discuss: How might things have been different if Barnabas had not encouraged others, or acted as he did?**
- Consider other times disciples were said to have encouraged others - (**Acts 16:40**; this is done right after Paul and Silas were released from the jail in Philippi!); Paul also encouraged the brethren of Macedonia (**Acts 20:1-3**; this was part of Paul’s work -- not just in converting souls, but also in strengthening); Paul encouraged his shipmates as he traveled to Rome amidst rough seas (**Acts 27:33-36**); Paul sent Timothy to those in Thessalonica to encourage the brethren in their faith (**1st Thess. 3:1-5**). **Discuss: Note the various situations where one disciple encouraged another or others, and the difference that encouragement could mean.**

- Note the times when it is said that someone was **discouraged**, someone **tried** to discourage others, or there was a potential of discouragement - the Israelites (**Num. 21:4, 5**); the Israelites, again (**Num. 13:26-14:4/32:9/Deut. 1;22-28**); the tribes that settled on the east side of Jordan (**Num. 32:1-9**); and the non-Jews in Canaan after the Jews returned (**Ezra 4:1-5**) . **Discuss: What were the reasons for the discouragement or potential discouragement? Were they legitimate reasons? How could/did they overcome the discouragement?**

QUESTIONS FOR CLASS AND DISCUSSION PERIOD/AFTERWARDS

- How can our current situation be a cause for discouragement? Are there legitimate reasons why some might feel discouraged, and are there reasons why we should **not** be discouraged?
- What are some ways we can strengthen ourselves to not allow discouragement to take over? What are some ways we can help **others** to not become discouraged?
- What is a good rule of thumb for dealing with situations over which we have no control, especially when we know it can lead to discouragement?
- What did David do when he was told he could not build the temple for God?