

Book of Hebrews Part 57: 13:3; The Prisoners and Persecuted;

Guest Gene Studniski (4/30/2022)

The following text is a message from Corner Fringe Ministries that was presented by Daniel Joseph. The original presentation can be viewed at <https://www.cornerfringe.com/media/k753vgw/book-of-hebrews-part-57>

***Portions of this document have been edited from the video message to better present a comprehensive, written document. Special attention was given to preserving the original context, but this document is not verbatim. Scripture verses are in the red text with other quotes in blue. Therefore, it is recommended that this document is printed in color. The Hebrew words are generally accompanied by the transliterate, English word. In most cases, the Hebrew is to be read from right to left.**

We are continuing our series on the book of Hebrews and are in the final chapter. Two weeks ago, we covered verse one. Last week we covered verse two and this week we will be covering verse three.

To get things kicked off, let's look at what Hebrews 13:3 says — ³ Remember the prisoners as if chained with them--those who are mistreated since you yourselves are in the body also (emphasis added). The first thing I want to point out is that this statement is explicit. It is a direct statement that refers to believers. We know this because we are talking about the body as in the body of Messiah. The writer's concern is that you don't forget the body of Messiah. Don't forget those who have been imprisoned for the gospel, those who have been chained. You need in your spirit to be chained with them.

Think about the historical context surrounding this statement. In other words, when the writer said these words, what was happening in those days? Remember, this was written about 60 A.D. to 68 A.D. During this time period, Emperor Nero rose to power and there was great persecution against the church. So, when the writer makes this statement to the audience, this was something that they could implement immediately. It was tangible. It was not something afar off that maybe someday they'd be able to do. No, this was something they could act on that very moment.

So, I want to begin by taking you back to the Roman historian, Tacitus whose writings we looked at early on in this series. Tacitus lived in the first century and is a contemporary of the writer of Hebrews and those that followed. He's not a Jew, he's a secular historian. We are not accessing a biblical resource, and that's what makes this so fascinating. We are looking at what this secular historian recorded because he recognized what Nero did to Christians.

I want to share this with you because it's not just relevant for the writer in his day or to his audience, but is relevant for us today and is going to become more relevant with each passing day.

Before we read Tacitus' commentary, understand that the backdrop here is that Tacitus is dealing with the great fire in Rome that happened in A.D. 64. You can study this on your own, but I will simplify it for you. Think of Rome in all its glory in those days. It was thought that Nero himself set fire to Rome which ended up burning three quarters of the city to the ground. Over half the population became homeless virtually overnight. This fire was out of control for six days! The people were blaming Nero, but Nero does something to distract them.

So, let's read from Tacitus, the Annals — [But, all human efforts, all the lavish gifts of the emperor \(Nero\), and the propitiations of the gods](#) (he had been giving all these sacrifices to the gods to show himself honorable), [did not banish the sinister belief that the conflagration \(the fire\), was the result of an order.](#) In other words, it was getting out of hand. The people knew Nero gave the order to burn the city and they were livid.

Tacitus continues on and says — [Consequently to get rid of the report, Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations, called Christians by the populace](#) (emphasis added).

Isn't that interesting! Nero takes the heat off himself so that he doesn't get in hot water and puts it not just on anyone, but he specifically puts it on the Christians who were hated because they believed Yeshua was the King of the Jews, the King of Israel, the King of Glory, the One who can redeem us and forgive our sins. He is the one who resurrected and sits at the right hand of the Father. That beautiful testimony of the gospel was absolutely an abomination in the eyes of the world in the first century and nothing's changed, right? So, Nero puts it on the Christians, someone that's already hated. This is easy because when you tell people things that they want to believe, things go very badly.

I can't help but think about World War II and the Jews. Hitler blamed the Jews for their economic issues and their health issues. Basically, every issue that Germany was dealing with was the Jews' fault. You had German after German coming on board and believing, "Oh yeah, that sounds right! Yeah, these dirty Jews! They are our problem!" and you saw how that worked out. Not so good. Well, it doesn't work out so good for the Christians in the first century.

This is the spirit of the Antichrist. When the spirit of Antichrist moves in this manner that's when things get really ugly. It's just vile. It moves with a lying spirit, condemning the innocent, charging them with charges they didn't commit and heaping crimes upon them that they didn't commit.

This is going to become quite tangible to us very soon. I would argue that it already is at least in its infancy stage. Christians are going to be blamed today for going to church under this alleged pandemic, known as the Covid Crisis. They've commissioned by law you can't go to church, but you are welcome to go to Walmart, the hardware store or the grocery store, but you just can't go to church. If you do go to church, guess what? You are a horrible person and don't care about humanity. In fact, you hate humanity. You are a threat to the environment and society. You want to kill everybody because you want to go to church or sing praises to Yeshua. This is quite literally becoming tangible. It's going to increase the demonization of the church. Mark my words, it is going to increase. I can say this confidently because the spirit of Antichrist is moving and you can see it. There's evidence all over the place. What we are reading here in history might as well be front-page news.

Continuing on in Tacitus — [Christus \(Christ\) from whom the name had its origin](#) (In other words, Christians), [suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilatus \(Pontius Pilate\), and a most mischievous superstition](#) (Notice the adjective, mischievous. The teachings and the truth of who Yeshua is are called mischievous. It's not just a superstition. Typically, those are harmless. People can hold superstitions and nobody really cares, unless it's this mischievous Christianity superstition. Then it's a real problem in the eyes of the world). — [thus checked for the moment](#) (and so once Yeshua was killed, they're saying it froze the faith for a moment where nothing happened) — [again broke out not only in Judaea, the first source of the evil, but even in Rome](#) (the gospel spread to Rome and we know the Apostle Paul was there) — [where all things](#)

hideous and shameful from every part of the world find their center and become popular. Accordingly, **an arrest was first made of all who pleaded guilty**; then, upon their information, an immense multitude was convicted, not so much of the crime of firing the city, **as of hatred against mankind** (emphasis added).

Do you understand this? When Tacitus says they all pleaded guilty, it wasn't in regard to setting fire to Rome. It was because you hate mankind by clinging to your faith in Yeshua and by clinging to the gospel. By clinging to that truth, you are evil. I am telling you the precedent is being set for this very type of ideology to sweep the land. It is being mobilized as we speak. Christians are going to want to go back to church again and they will be deemed evil. This is coming. It's going to be seen as a mischievous superstition, as harmful.

Next you read in Tacitus, the Annals — **Mockery of every sort was added to their deaths. Covered with the skins of beasts, they were torn by dogs and perished, or were nailed to crosses, or were doomed to the flames and burnt to serve as a nightly illumination, when daylight had expired.**

Think about what Nero, the spirit of Antichrist, did here. Think how he vomited hell out in the first century upon precious believers who clung to the Lamb of God for hope. These precious little lambs that are precious in Yeshua's sight are absolutely despised by the Antichrist. He hates them with a vehement hatred. As we see the Antichrist spirit start to move out into the land, you need to get ready. You need to get locked and loaded in your faith. You need to be prepared.

2 Timothy 3:12 — **all who seek to live godly in Messiah Yeshua will suffer persecution.** I'm telling you as it says in Acts 14:22 — **we must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.** It is coming! Far too long, have we enjoyed this beautiful freedom to freely assemble and praise the precious name of our Lord, praise Him for what he has done and praise Him because He is worthy. Those days of being able to do that without fear of death or imprisonment are coming to an end. We need to get resolved in our hearts today.

As we look at this passage, Hebrews 13:3, in its historical context, I'm telling you this was a commission that was tangible. May I say, it was necessary because of what was happening to the church in those days. This is actually something that Yeshua himself warned. He warned it was happening in his own ministry.

In Luke 21:12, — (Yeshua says) **they will lay hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues (oh and into what?) and prisons. You will be brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake** (emphasis added).

For those of you who are going to pick up your cross and follow Yeshua, understand what's awaiting you. It is persecutions. It is tribulations. It is hatred. It is imprisonments. This is what awaits you when you take on that precious name of Yeshua.

Frankly speaking, Christianity in this country has at best been soft. That's going to change. The days are coming to an end for those who want to flirt with the world and walk in the world and yet confess Yeshua as Lord. The weak ones that aren't strong enough and let fear overtake them will not continue in this fight. They will not do it. They will falter.

I want to give you a biblical example of Hebrews 13:3 being implemented and how powerful it is to not forget those who are in prison and to be as though chained with them. In Acts chapter 12 we read, — ¹ **Now about that time Herod the King stretched out his hand to harass some from the church. ² Then he killed James the brother of John with the sword.** Now when it talks about Herod the King, we are talking about Herod Agrippa. That's kind of important because then we know what time period we are talking about. We are literally talking about the timeframe of 41 A.D. to 44 A.D. So, during that time period, we know for an absolute fact that Agrippa killed James. And not just that, we continue in verse 3 — ³ **And because he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to seize Peter also** (emphasis added).

These were the Titans of the faith. James was one of the sons of thunder. He is a man that's going to sit on one of the 12 thrones judging the 12 tribes of Israel. He was closest to Yeshua. James, John and Peter were the innermost sanctum of the Apostles in regard to the proximity of Yeshua. These three saw things the other disciples didn't see such as the Transfiguration. So, Agrippa kills James and because he saw that it pleased the Jews, he's coming after Peter.

To truly appreciate this, you need to understand historically who Agrippa was. Most people just think Herod the King was a gentile and went out and did this. Herod Agrippa lived his life in a manner that was honorable to a Jew, identified as a Jew, went to the temple as a Jew and had an incredible relationship with the Jewish leaders. That's what makes this incredible and important.

I think this is important enough that I want you to read the writings of Josephus. Josephus is a Jew obviously. Josephus is a Roman Jewish historian, but he identified with the Pharisees, the primary rulers, the rabbis of the day. I want you to see what Josephus says of Agrippa which just adds to this bizarreness.

In Josephus, Antiquities — **He (Agrippa) also came to Yerushalayim, Jerusalem and offered all the sacrifices that belonged to him, and omitted nothing which the law (Torah) required;** He omitted nothing. He himself was Torah observant. He sought to fulfill the obligations in Torah.

Continuing— **on which account he ordained that many of the Nazarites should have their heads shorn.** So, with the Nazarites, this guy's heart is going forth, "Hey you guys need to keep the Torah. You guys all need to be shorn." He's not just seeking to keep Torah for himself. His concern is that everyone's involved in doing this. "Let's all do this together". This is Agrippa!

And then Josephus says, — **And for a golden chain which had been given to him by Caius of equal weight with that iron chain wherewith his royal hands had been bound, he hung it up within the limits of the temple, over the treasury.** There's a lot of backdrop to what was just said, so I'll simplify it for you. Herod Agrippa was bound in chains. He was brought very low, but he was released. Later, he received a prominent place which he recognized that though he was brought low, God had elevated him to a position of power and honor. To honor God for what He had done in his life, Agrippa took the chain and hung it up in the temple as a memorial to show everyone that this is what God can do. God can bring you low and He can lift you up and restore you. Start looking at who Agrippa really is in his very being.

Going on, — **he (Agrippa) returned the kindness which the inhabitants of Yerushalayim, Jerusalem had shown him; for he released them from the tax upon houses, every one of whom paid it before, thinking it a good thing to requite (repay) the tender affection of those that loved him.** The inhabitants of Jerusalem and first and foremost the leaders of the Jewish people of the day, the chief priests and the Pharisees loved him. And he loved them and showed them kindness in return. You need to understand

this relationship that Agrippa had with the Jews in that day. Honestly, it couldn't have been better. He couldn't have shown more favor to the people and vice-versa, they couldn't have been happier having anyone else lead them.

Jumping ahead Josephus says, — **But after a very little while the young men of Doris, preferring a rash attempt before piety and being naturally bold and insolent, (look at this) carried a statue of Caesar into a synagogue of the Jews, and erected it there. This procedure of theirs greatly provoked Agrippa** (emphasis added). Josephus recounts this story in detail (we're not going to do that) where men ended up defiling a synagogue by bringing a pagan image and setting it up. That's idolatry, there's no other way to say it. Agrippa is livid by this and he takes action. I wanted to include this to show you that at every corner you can see, through Josephus accounts and history, who this Agrippa is and what he has done. He has fought the fight of a Jew to preserve the synagogues and to preserve the temple. This is his concern.

So, this is Agrippa and when it says, — **he saw that it pleased the Jews**, now you understand, there is a lot of backdrops here in connection to “well they saw that I took out James and they were so happy with me.” At this time, Christianity was explicitly Jewish and had very little to do with the Gentiles. It being a Jewish thing, the apostles, Peter, James and John were absolutely heretical to the chief priests and the rulers of the day. Absolutely heretical! Agrippa would have seen it just as the rabbis saw it and just as the chief priests saw it. So, taking James out, made a lot of sense.

It rips your soul up to see this division within Israel. Their leaders were just like Yeshua said in Matthew 12:39, — **an evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given ...** In other words, testifying that this generation is wicked and evil. Yeshua says in the Gospel of Luke 19, if this generation had known of the things that were for her peace, and if Jerusalem and its inhabitants had understood, they wouldn't have done what they did which was kill the King of Glory. They didn't accept Yeshua. So, when reading Luke 19, you realize that Jerusalem fell because they rejected its King.

It tears you up inside to see all of this and how Yeshua tells us in the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 10 that he didn't —³⁴**come to bring peace but a sword.** ³⁵**...to set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother...**³⁶**Man's enemies will be those of his own household.** it tears you up.

Agrippa cares about the temple, the Torah and the Jewish leaders. He seems like a great guy and yet he's doing the work of the Antichrist. Again, it's hard to wrap your mind around it. When you get into the historical context, the chaos that was ensuing was debilitating. I'm going to tell you right now, that kind of chaos is returning this very day. We are now entering the days where that kind of craziness, that kind of chaos is going to hit. It's painful and it's going to rip you up inside.

Now continuing on in Acts 12:3 —³**And because he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to seize Peter also. Now it was during the Days of Unleavened Bread.** The Pesach, right? What is this about? Isn't this supposed to be a time when we get together in love and are brought together in unity. Yet, the Apostle James gets killed and Peter is being put in prison during this time. It seems like the devil loves for this to happen at this time and goes after them at these moments.

Most of you can appreciate this, but when you get around the festivals, it is all-out spiritual war. Just look at this last Passover! How did it look? It was unprecedented! Never before in history, had messianic synagogues and churches closed all over the entire world at the time of Passover. Everyone was locked in their houses. It was unbelievable and absolutely demonic, but not a coincidence at all.

Now moving on to verse 4 we read, — ⁴ **So when he had arrested him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four squads of soldiers to keep him, intending to bring him before the people after Passover** (emphasis added). What does it say? **He puts him in prison**. Let's put ourselves in Peter's shoes for a moment. If you're Peter, and James, your good faithful brother in the Lord, a man you've done ministries shoulder to shoulder with, a man you've seen incredible things with like the Mount of Transfiguration, just got wiped out, what are you thinking? "I'm going to the stocks and I'm going to be killed." There's no question about it. In Peter's frame of mind, he is probably prepping himself for death; not that he feared it. Peter was so strong in the faith. This is the guy that people were walking in his shadow to be healed. In his mind, he's preparing himself.

In verse 5 — ⁵ **Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church** (emphasis added). So, when you think about what the writer says in Hebrews 13:3, that we are to — ³ **remember prisoners as if chained with them**, we can actually see these people putting this into practice in the first century. As the church is being persecuted and as it's growing, they're implementing this. It doesn't say, "Hey guys, say a quick prayer for Peter because he's in prison." These people dropped to their knees and gave **constant prayer** as being **chained with him**. They put chains on with Peter through prayer. They didn't leave him.

We will need this kind of faithfulness and this kind of heart in the days that are ahead because there will be Christians put to death, persecuted and imprisoned. We, as the body, need to intercede. We need to be like these men and women that are dropping to their knees and praying, knowing the power of prayer. What happened when the church was in constant prayer for Peter? I'll tell you how it worked out. Peter was set free! It wasn't Peter's first time; it wasn't his first rodeo; but in this instance it was so surreal, Peter didn't know it was real. He thought it was a vision. He had visions before, like the sheet coming down three times in Acts 10.

He thought it was a vision when an angel came and took him past the first gate, the second gate and then through the main gates. Only after he came to himself, did he realize that an angel of God was involved. That's the power of brothers and sisters coming together, being chained with their brothers in prison and offering up prayer so that their fellow brethren can be protected and God can intervene. And in this instance, God intervened on his behalf.

Jumping ahead to Acts 12:11 — ¹¹ **And when Peter had come to himself, he said, "Now I know for certain that the Lord has sent his angel, and has delivered me from the hand of Herod and from all the expectation of the Jewish people."** See Herod Agrippa was doing the work and the expectation of the Jewish people, and this sounds crazy! Peter was Jewish, all the apostles were Jewish, all the first believers were Jewish and yet all of Israel seemed to be against them. It's absolutely painful to read this.

Verse 12, — ¹² **So, when he had considered this, he came to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together praying** (emphasis added). Isn't that amazing! They are still praying for Peter. They had gathered together to offer up constant prayer and they didn't stop until Peter himself shows up. It shows the power. Talk about a testimony for those laboring in prayer! "We're praying for Peter; we're praying for his protection; Lord, have mercy on him; release him." And the next thing you know, there's a knock at the door and there's Peter. Glory! Hallelujah! Amen! How powerful is that!

So, as we look at Hebrews 13:3 in light of the days ahead, may I say the days are already here. I'm asking you personally, don't forget your brothers and sisters. We need to labor for them in prayer. My prayer truly is that the Lord burdens you to pray for this ministry, Pastor Craig, Bruce, all the leaders, our worship team that labors so hard in worship, and our congregants that go through struggles and tribulations. I pray that this community will constantly pray for those of you who are not here physically, but are spread out all over the world.

Through the same Spirit, there is one body, one Lord, one faith, one baptism. There is one Spirit. May that one Spirit connect all of us through faith in the Messiah Yeshua. I pray that prayer is central to this time. To be humble, to be on our knees, that's where the battle begins and that's where the battle will end. I can tell you that from experience. This is where we need to do battle. There's nothing more precious than believers getting together and praying. There's nothing more precious than you privately, when no one else is watching, going to your prayer closet, dropping to your knees and praying for others: for their well-being, for their safety, for their marriages, and their children to come back to the Lord.

There's some of you, I know, your children haven't come back to the Lord yet. I am burdened to pray for you because I know as a parent nothing can rip you up more. There's nothing more gratifying to a parent than to see their children walk with the Lord. Nothing matters more to me. I don't care if they have riches or whatever the world can throw at them, that's irrelevant. All that matters is that they become radical for the faith, know how to pray, know how to encourage and know how to read God's Word and allow it in. That's all that matters at the end of the day.

I want to give kudos to the audience of the book of Hebrews. The Jewish writer of Hebrews wrote to his Jewish brethren who need to be commended because the very thing that the writer wrote to them, they had already done. They had already put it into practice. Hebrews 10:32-34 — ³² **but recall the former days in which, after you were illuminated, you endured a great struggle with sufferings: ³³ partly while you were made a spectacle both by reproaches and tribulations, and partly while you became companions of those who were so treated;** They locked shields with those who were suffering. They wept with those who wept. Awesome!

Verse 34 and getting to the primary point — ³⁴ **for you had compassion on me and my chains, and joyfully accepted the plundering of your goods knowing that you have a better and enduring possession for yourselves in heaven.** So, understand that when the author wrote to his Jewish brethren, **remember those who are chained**, it came from his own personal experience. It's a very intimate statement. He made this statement to remind them to do this because he knew what it meant for him. He knew what they had done for him. That was huge! So, it's not about barking orders, that's not what the author is doing. He was a recipient of this love and compassion.

With that said, a special guest, Gene Studniski, who heads up our prison ministry is joining us and has a few words for us. In light of reading Hebrews 13:3, I think it is very beneficial to bring him on to talk to him about prison ministry and remembering those who are in prison and in going beyond that in regard to the body, understanding evangelism in the prison ministry. So, I'm going to invite Gene Studniski with us, a pastor of prison ministry.

Daniel: Mr. Gene Studniski, thank you for joining us today on this beautiful Shabbat. I want you to share your experience in prison ministry and encourage other people who may not be involved in any ministry to actually be motivated to do something they never thought of doing, by getting involved in

the jails and bringing the gospel to people that are behind bars, that need hope, that need salvation, that need forgiveness. Gene, start off by telling us how long have you been in prison ministry?

Gene: About eight or nine years.

Daniel: Awesome. And what would you say is probably the most rewarding thing that you have acquired over these years?

Gene: Well, one of the most rewarding things that I've acquired is knowledge of Scripture because I have to go study it before I can teach it.

Daniel: I love it. You're being pushed.

Gene: Right. I started out doing word searches on a particular subject and that's what I'd go in and teach. One example is: I was teaching on being slow to anger. After my time was up, I had a guy come in and he read some scripture and his quotation was way off. He started talking about capping people and this kind of stuff. So, I told him it was time for him to leave. I got up and went and held the door open for him and I told him, "Look I'll even hold the door open for you." He went out cursing me, of course, but the guys that were in there had a good laugh because they said, "Look you had to practice what you were teaching."

Daniel: That is fantastic. What a light you were in that very moment. They saw you not just preaching the word, but living it right on the spot. I bet that spoke to them in profound ways.

Gene: Yes, I've had people ask, "What are you like outside of here?" I told them to come and follow me. What a better witness than to come and see how I live outside of the church or the jail.

Daniel: I think it's hard what these prisoners are up against. Being inside the jails is a very oppressive and dark environment. Would you say that's a fair assessment, Gene? And you are kind of going at this really having to fight the powers of darkness.

Gene: It is. The one thing though, the people are coming in on a volunteer basis to learn scripture. The majority of them want to learn.

Daniel: So, they're looking for hope.

Gene: I had one gentleman tell me that he checked out everything I taught and he found out it was true. That's what we're there to teach, the truth of God's Word, not a denomination. Denominations, they divide people.

Daniel: I can tell you personally, because Gene and I have sat down and had some discussions with chaplains that are presiding over certain jails, that not everybody is excited to see Corner Fringe Ministries, Gene Studnisk, come into their jails. One thing I can share with the audience, Gene, is that with my exposure to this by going with you, I really saw that there's a stranglehold. The devil does not want the truth of God's Word being brought into the jails. They want to keep everything very non-controversial. They don't want you to say anything that rocks the boat. Of course, some chaplains are not Torah observant, so they don't appreciate people talking about Shabbat. They don't appreciate people talking about food laws or about the Torah. For us, coming into the prisons, it's not just the

challenge of dealing with the demonic spirits and the issues that people are struggling with in life, but also having to deal with the people that allow you to come into the prisons. It's only by the grace of God that we can get into these places. These challenges are incredible, but how do you navigate that, Gene?

Gene: Well, you just tell the truth. What else can you do? When they were going to pull me out of one jail, they sent in one of their top guns, so to speak. He went in when I was teaching and told the men at that time that all you have to do is ask Jesus into your heart. You don't have to do anything, God will do it all, which is a complete lie. That's a lie from the pit of hell. When I told the people in charge at that organization about that, they said that's just our theological difference. But Yeshua never told anybody go and sit on your hands. When He healed somebody, He said, **"Go and sin no more."**

Daniel: That's exactly what he said, **"Go and sin no more."** It's to tremble and fear before God and to cherish what is holy and I appreciate you doing that Gene. And I ask this rhetorically, have we ever been kicked out of a jail?

Gene: Of course, actually twice.

Daniel: Why have we been kicked out of the jail, Gene?

Gene: Well, I was accused of telling a homosexual that he was not going to make it into God's Kingdom. Which if we read first Corinthians 6, we'll know that that's true, unless they repent. You know, that isn't exactly what I said. I brought him back to Leviticus and I told them it says that a man should not sleep with a man like he does with the woman and it was wrong back then and it's still wrong today. That's what got me taken out of a jail.

Daniel: Wow. So, there you have a perfect example of what some of the challenges are or what they can be in these prisons. It's not just simply dealing with the inmates. It's the fact that the people that are in control, that facilitate ministries coming in are very concerned about not seeing anything controversial. That's concerning when all we want to do is come and bring the truth. That just shows you that the devil is very involved in the prisons and they need light. **Thy word is a lamp unto thy feet** and this is exactly what Gene has been doing for years. He has been bringing light into the prisons and the enemy hates it. Even to the point where unfortunately, we've been kicked out of places for doing nothing but preaching the truth in love. That is so sad. If you can, remember Gene in your prayers, please pray for him. Pray for doors to be opened for our jail ministry to get back into these jails because I'm telling you this is a place that needs the truth. Gene, what else would you like to share with us in regard to your experience in the jails that you think is good for the audience to know?

Gene: When Yeshua Jesus was asked, **"What's the greatest commandment?"**. He said to **"love God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind** and to **love your neighbor as yourself."** So many times, I've heard this taught and people stop there. So, it leaves us with the question, how do you do that? Well, read the next line, **on these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.** (Matthew 22:36-40). If you go to the 10 commandments in Exodus 20, the first four show us how to love the Father. Love God and Him only. Don't have any other gods before Him. We don't make any idols before Him. We don't take His name in vain. We keep the Sabbath. Keeping the Sabbath is a sign that we love Him. It's a sign on who we serve. Unfortunately, that's a stumbling block for most Christians. Then we're told to love our father and our mother. It doesn't say only if they're perfect. It tells us to do it. It tells us not to murder, not to steal, not to commit adultery, not to covet. If I'm not doing those things to you, it's showing love to you.

Daniel: It's just ironic to me that you have inmates that have broken the law and when you come in saying that you are bound to keep God's law, that it's the right way, then you get thrown out of prisons for this. It's just the work of the enemy that is moving about. Anything else Gene, that you'd like to share?

Gene: There was one of the guys that I visited in prison and there were times that I went in there and he'd be so down on himself. By the time I was there spending that hour with him, it was like he was a completely different person. That encouragement with the Word of God, it lifts us up, it builds us up, that's what we need to be doing. A lot of these people, not just in jail but outside the jail, don't have that self-confidence who their Father is and how much they're loved. How much they're valued by God. One of the things we need to teach them is that they're so precious. Precious enough that He would send His Son to die for them.

Daniel: Amen. I don't want to get too deep into the psychology or anything like that, but many of these men or even women in the prisons have an absent father. That has dramatically impacted their life, the decisions that they make and how they feel in their heart. I merely bring this up because this nation is hell-bent on absolutely destroying families. Divorce rates are out of control. Marriage is not even thought of as a commitment in any way. It is just a thing that you feel and if you don't feel it anymore, then it doesn't matter, you get rid of your spouse or you just leave. These things have dramatic implications on society. Do you want to speak to that, Gene? Are you noticing a lot of these guys that you're dealing with have the absent father situation?

Gene: Absent father situation. There are all kinds of statistics on that. It's pretty well known. How can a young man know how to be a man if there's no father there and if he's not disciplined.

Daniel: It's heartbreaking.

Gene: Yeah, it is. Well, Yeshua says that if you spare the rod, you hate your child. It's in Psalms. We all need discipline. We all need a way to go. And our Heavenly Father disciplines those who He loves. We still need it and we're not scared to pray for it.

Daniel: For those of you who are not involved in ministry or in prison ministry, let it be something that you consider. If you have questions about getting involved in prison ministry, Gene wants you to call him. So, we invite you to contact us. You can contact us through our website or on Facebook. We will put you in contact with Gene. He would love to talk to you about prison ministry if this is something that the Spirit of God is moving in your heart. But one thing I know is that we need this in prisons. The gospel needs to go out. Yeshua's name needs to be preached. They need Him so desperately.

Gene: There's one other thing we should think about, and that's how in Genesis, one man, Joseph changed the prison he was in simply by following God's commandments. He loved God so much that the prison guards put him in charge of the other detainees. There was peace at least in his area and we have that same vision for all the prisons today. We need a godly man inside there.

Daniel: Praise God, Gene! Way to bring it brother. Way to bring the Good News and bring the Word.