

Mercy & The Principle of Fulfillment – the First and the Last

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Mercy & The Principle of Fulfillment – the First and the Last is a Holy Spirit-inspired diversion from my reasoning brain that likes to do things in sequence. Since I have written brief overviews of the **Prophet** and **Servant** portions, my intent was to overview **Teacher** next, third of the seven gifts.

Instead, Holy Spirit rearranged the order. How like Him to unveil more about the **Mercy** portion of our human spirit in real-time life circumstances. Because one thing Mercy is *not* is a shoo-in for receiving and processing information like the other six gifts. **Mercy feels** life and does not just *do* life.

The previous six: **Prophet, Servant, Teacher, Exhorter, Giver, and Ruler** have redemptive life activity woven into their design. So does **Mercy**, but in a manner designed to flow from their love of and worship to the Lord, in order that it might flow to others. Rules and regulations do not drive the redemptive **Mercy**. **Mercy's** need for intimacy with God so that they may triumph over judgment does.

The Principle of Fulfillment

The **principle of fulfillment** represents a *fulfilling* life - and ultimate *fulfillment* when Christ returns.

*“Behold, I (Jesus) am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, ^[a]to give to each one ^[b]according to the merit of his deeds (earthly works, faithfulness).
¹³ I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End [the Eternal One].”
Revelation 22:12-13 (AMP)*

For now, Christ is seated in [the mercy seat of intercession](#) at his Father's right hand, interceding with the Spirit. (Romans 8:26-34)

the First and the Last

While in study of the **Mercy** portion, the phrase “the First and the Last” set me thinking about the order of the [seven redemptive gifts](#) (*portions of our human spirit*). The two portions on either end are **Prophet** and **Mercy**.

As noted on the [behavioral overview of Mercy checklist](#), **Mercy** is drawn to the gift of **Prophet** and their imparted trait of decisiveness, a good balance to **Mercy's** indecisiveness. However, that does not place **Mercy** in a lesser, more needy place; **Prophet** equally needs what **Mercy** offers: its pre-established softening influence. How each one responds to and supports the other affects the outcome when transition arrives.

Jesus the Word embodied in the flesh of humanity the fullness of all seven redemptive gifts. He is our model. At the same time, His *logos* (written) *Word* is full of stories of those in whom we can recognize these gifts.

In the community of the human spirit, **Prophet** and **Mercy** are perfectly paired in scripture's **Caleb** and **Joshua**, respectively. [Redemptive living](#) is readily apparent when we peer in the mirror of the Word through their lives.

Each of us is born into a generational line of ancestors and descendents. Caleb and Joshua were no different. In fact, their lines were distinct in that Caleb came from **the tribe of Judah** and Joshua from **the tribe of Ephraim**. And both were in the lineage of Jacob, with his father Isaac and [his grandfather Abraham](#) before.

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Caleb

By the time **Caleb** was born to his father Jephunneh, a lot of history had evolved from the days of Jacob and Leah, with **Judah** the fourth of six sons of their union. Leah's and Rachel's maidservants birthed four more of the twelve sons. Finally, Jacob and Rachel, whom he loved, had two sons – **Joseph** and Benjamin.

Genesis 37 recounts the story of Joseph's brothers plotting to sell him to the Ishmaelite merchants headed to Egypt. **In verse 26 Judah speaks up** with a plan agreeable to the nine¹ brothers: not to kill him for there would be no profit in that, but rather to sell him. Joseph was pulled out of the pit and sold for twenty pieces of silver.

One chapter later in **Genesis 38**, the **dubious story of Judah** continues. Here is where the **Mercy** heart of God boggles the mind. Matthew Henry in his commentary, stated in the natural what stimulates supernatural hope:

This chapter gives an account of Judah and his family, and such an account it is, that it seems a wonder that of all Jacob's sons, our Lord should spring out of Judah². But God will show that his choice is of grace and not of merit, and that Christ came into the world to save sinners, even the chief. Also, that the worthiness of Christ is of himself, and not from his ancestors.

We could unpack much from that paragraph; for now, it is enough to digest Jesus as *Lion of the Tribe of Judah*³.

With a placeholder for Caleb, descendent of the tribe of Judah, let's look at his desert counterpart, Joshua.

Jacob (Israel⁴) and Joseph

In **Joshua's** lineage, **Joseph**, who spent all but the first seventeen years of his life in Egypt, had two sons: Manasseh and **Ephraim**. Told his aged father, Jacob, was dying, Joseph presented his two sons to their grandfather. Most of Jacob's life had been spent living in the land of Canaan; the last seventeen* were lived in Egypt due to a severe famine that struck the land and the family's continuing story (**Genesis 39-47**). Long enough to witness and enjoy his son Joseph's wealth and leadership position in the land.

But Jacob's heart never forgot the promised land of Canaan, his true home. He made Joseph promise, then instructed his twelve sons on his deathbed, that when they returned to the land God had promised their ancestor Abraham, they would not leave him buried in Egypt. They were to transport his bones to their final rest in the burial cave of Abraham with Sarah, Isaac with Rebekah, and his wife Leah, mother of six sons, with **Judah** the 4th.

Genesis 48 relates the adoption and blessing old Jacob conferred on Joseph's two sons born in the land of Egypt while Jacob was still living in Canaan – before the transition to life in Egypt. Jacob himself believed the God of his fathers that the promised land would one day belong to his twelve sons, who became the twelve tribes of Israel. In the act of blessing, Jacob placed his right hand on the younger, **Ephraim**, instead of on the elder Manasseh as was the custom. Jacob was not mistaken; rather, it was a prophetic act of future fulfillment.

Joshua

Born in Egypt, **Joshua** was a prince of the **tribe of Ephraim** (*double fruit*). His father was Nun (*perpetuity*). As Moses led the children of Israel in the Exodus from Egypt, Joshua was there. So were the bones of Jacob & Joseph.

Joshua, the Old Testament type of Jesus, attended Moses. Trained under command, Joshua became skilled at conducting business, but his defining feature was that he learned to obey the one in command over him. Moses trusted him and made Joshua captain of the host to choose men and go out to fight the Amalekites.

Exodus 17:8-15 tells the battle story. When Moses arms were raised, the fighting prevailed in favor of the Israelites; when his arms grew heavy and tired, the battle turned. Aaron and Hur, with Moses on the hilltop, resorted to holding up Moses' arms as Joshua and his chosen men fought below. Amalek was overwhelmed.

Sometime later, in the multitude in the wilderness, **Caleb** and **Joshua** were paired with ten others:

*"Send out for yourself men so that they may spy out the land of Canaan, **which I am going to give to the sons of Israel**; you shall send a man from each of their fathers' tribes, **every one a leader among them.**"*
(God instructing Moses in Numbers 13:1-2)

For forty days the twelve spies traversed areas of the land, taking stock of the land, the people in it, their cities, the trees, the fruit – of which they bore back a cluster of grapes so large, it required a pole carried by two men.

We know the rest of the story, that Caleb and Joshua were the only two who possessed strong faith that aided their courage to declare *they could all possess the land*. The other ten spies gave a fearful report, which ended in a most melancholy history to this day. In Jewish history, it was [the 9th of Av](#), a real date in time that God had ordained the Israelites should go in and possess the land of Canaan, as promised to Abraham centuries before.

Instead, they turned back at the border, resulting in four decades of wandering and death in the wilderness. As for the ten, they were struck with a plague and died. *"But Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh remained alive out of those men who went to spy out the land."* **Numbers 13-14** is worth the read.

Why re-tell such history?

I am daily more convinced that we are living in God's season of Mercy. Just as Caleb and Joshua had generational lineage and life experiences that, in the natural, would seem to dis-appoint them, God had a purpose for each of their lives. Planned long before, we read their stories now and wonder at God's mercy.

You and I are no less in the flow of God's marvelous mercy than they were. **Like them, we are in a time of Whom we will choose to believe.** Unlike them, we are living our life stories on this side of the Cross, with the grace-privilege of life in Christ – the true "promised land". What Caleb and Joshua possessed in the natural pointed to what we may possess in Christ Jesus if we too do not turn back from following and trusting Him. In *these* days.

This is long, I know. The pieces I write here are for those who desire to stay His course in their spiritual journey with the Lord. Another post will follow to wrap up some thoughts regarding Caleb and Joshua and their respective life examples of the **Prophet** and **Mercy** portions of the human spirit. *You are always welcome.*

~ Nancy

[Revelation 22:12](#) i.e. the final judgment for the believer will occur when he stands before Christ to have his fidelity and service judged, and the appropriate reward determined. [Revelation 22:12](#) Literal *as his work is*. [Amplified Bible](#) (AMP)

¹ Judah and his nine brothers were ten of the twelve; Joseph, 17, was eleventh with little brother Benjamin at home

² Hebrews 7:14

³ Revelation 5:5

⁴ Genesis 35:10 – God renames *Jacob* (*supplanter*; deceiver, trip up,

circumvent) to be *Israel* (prevail, strength, have power (as a prince)

*it's striking that *Jacob/Israel* spent 17 corresponding years living in Egypt, the age Joseph was when sold by his brothers -3-