

Mt. Traveler Missionary Baptist Church, Waverly, Alabama
Synopses of Sermons Preached by Rev. B. C. Datiri, Pastor

AFRICAN AMERICANS' IDENTITY AND DESTINY

FEBUARY 3, 2008

A People of Faith and Theology

Psalm 37:1-11

- **As we begin another new sermon series on AFRICAN AMERICANS' IDENTITY AND DESTINY with a focus on A People of Faith and Theology, let me say that every one needs a Faith and a Theology to have an identity and live a successful life to achieve the appropriate destiny. African Americans have survived all kinds of conditions, including the diabolical slave trade, because we are a people of faith and theology that stems from our roots in Africa.**
- **The African man, the root of the African Americans, is a man of faith and theology. Contrary to the picture that the European and American slave masters portray that the African man is a pagan, in actuality the African man is a man of faith and theology. The slave masters used the concept of Africans being pagans to justify and perpetuate enslaving them. Albeit, inherent in the African is faith in God, a faith that transcends all generations instructing them of the fear of God which is very apparent in all Africans and their descendants. The African man or his descendants may not articulate God in the Biblical understanding of Who He really is, but they inherently know that there is a Higher Being that deserves respect and worship. Africans and African Americans start to act otherwise when they allowed other cultures to adulterate their profound theology. However, when they allow their theology to be strengthen by the understanding of who God is as explained in the scriptures, they are wonderful being to be around because they are a people of faith and theology. Or having you heard an African American say I know the Lord will make a way out of no way; or sing ... "He brought feet out of a miry clay and place them on a solid ground to stay?" These are profound statements of faith and theology. Definitely, without a hope of a great destiny there would by no faith or theology.**
- **Chike Akua, a minister at Atlanta, Georgia in his booklet "The African Origin of Faith" said in the preface "many people are unaware of the Original Spiritual traditions of the African people". In fact he presented in this booklet a list of ancient African sacred writings with parallel Biblical Scriptures even though the former were written over 1000 years earlier. Sometimes the wordings in the scripture appear to be a direct replica of these ancient African writings, suggesting that Africans were a people of faith and theology before the focus on the Hebrew people as a chosen race as documented in the scriptures. We shall compare some of these sacred writings with scriptural verses to prove to you that the African people, the root of the African Americans, have long been a people of faith and theology.**

ANCIENT AFRICAN SACRED WRITINGS	BIBLICAL SCRIPTURES
1. "Thus said Ra (God), the Lord of all... I came from among the plants which I created all things which creep and crawl and all that exist among them" (The Book of Knowing the Creations).	1. "And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good" (Genesis 1:25).

2. “And after He had created all things ... Ptah (God) was pleased and rested” (The Book of Knowing the Creations).	2. “And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made” (Genesis 2:3).
3. “Follow the footsteps of your ancestors, for the mind is trained through knowledge. Behold, their words endure in books. Open and read them and follow their wise counsel” (The Book of Kheti).	3. “Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee” (Deuteronomy 32:7)
4. “Pour libation (honor) for your father and mother who rest in the valley of the dead. God will witness your action and accept it. Do not forget to do this even when you are away from home. For as you do for your parents, your children will do also for you” (The Book of Ani).	4. “Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee” (Exodus 20:12).
5. “... the self-mastered man or woman sets himself or herself apart. He or she is like a tree grown in fertile ground. It grows and doubles its yield of fruit. It has its place in the eyes of its owner. Its shade is pleasant and its end is reached in the garden” (The Book of Amenomope)	5. “And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper” (Psalm 1:3).
6. “Although the way of God is before all people, the fool cannot find it” (The Book of Ankhsheshonqi)	6. “The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good” (Psalm 14:1).
7. “His name (Ra)[God] is a useful word in time of trouble, a gentle breeze for one who calls him” (The Book of Prayer and Sacred Praises).	7. “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble” (Psalm 46:1).
8. “Follow your heart as long as you live” (The Book of Ptahhotep).	8. “Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life” (Proverbs 4:23)
9. “When a fool lights a fire, he goes too close to it and gets burnt” (The Book of Phebhor).	9. “Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned?” (Proverbs 6:27).
10. “Thousand of men have been ruined for the pleasure of a short moment, which passes like a dream and then brings death to those who have indulged in it” (The Book of Ptahhotep).	10. “Say unto wisdom, Thou art my sister; and call understanding thy kinswoman: That they may keep thee from the strange woman, from the stranger which flattereth with her words. For she hath cast down many wounded: yea, many strong men have been slain by her. Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death” (Proverbs 7:4-5; 26-27).
11. “Those who associate with a fool are drawn into wrongdoing. Those who live with a fool die in captivity” (The Book of Phebhor).	11. “He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed” (Proverbs 13:20).
12. “Better is bread when the mind is a peace than riches with troubled heart” (The Book of Amenomope)	12. “Better is little with the fear of the LORD than great treasure and trouble therewith” (Proverbs 15:16).

13. "Offensive words that come from your mouth, if repeated, can make bitter enemies. A person can be ruined by his or her tongue" (The Book of Ani)	13. "Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof" (Proverbs 18:21).
14. "If your son strays and neglects your council and disobeys all that is said, with his mouth spouting evil speech, then punish him for all his talk" (The Book of Ptahhotep).	14. "Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying" (Proverbs 19:18).
15. "The God of Wisdom had placed the stick on earth in order to teach the fool by means of it" (The Book of Phebhor).	15. "Judgments are prepared for scorers, and stripes for the back of fools" (Proverbs 19:29)
16. "A mortal man dies along with his dependents, but will you be a man of eternity by your righteousness" (The Book of Khun-Anup).	16. "Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find? The just man walketh in his integrity: his children are blessed after him" (Proverbs 20:6-7)
17. "The seeing of the eyes, the hearing of the ears and the breathing of the nose are communicated to the heart and mind, and the heart and mind cause all perceptions to come forth ... So ere all divine powers completed" (The Book of knowing the Creation).	17. "The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the LORD hath made even both of them" (Proverbs 20:12).
18. "If you are parents of worth and wisdom, train your children so that they will be pleasing to God" (The Book of Ptahhotep).	18. "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6).
19. "A harsh answer provokes strife, but one who speaks with gentleness is loved" (The Book of Ani)	19. "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver" (Proverbs 25:11)
20. "... do a good deed and throw it in the water and when the water dries up, you will find it" (The Book of Ankhsheshonqi).	20. "Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days" (Ecclesiastes 11:1).
21. "...what the heart and mind think and wish is declared by the tongue" (The Book of Knowing the Creations).	21. "O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Matthew 12:34)
22. "Indeed every word of God came into being through that which the heart and mind thought and the tongue commanded. Thus by means of the Word, all faculties and qualities were fashioned and created which furnish all food and yield all nourishment" (The Book of knowing the Creations).	22. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made" (John1:1-3).
23. "...to be free from all that is evil, guard against the vice of greed for material things. It is a grievous sickness and there is no cure for it" (The Book of Ptahhotep)	23. "For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (1Timothy 6:10).
24. "May I rise like a living god and give forth light like the divine powers that are in heaven" (The Book of Coming Forth By Day)	24. "Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? [children of the most high God] (John 10:34) [Psalm 82:6].

25. “Stand back form my path, for I am one with Ra (God)” (The Book of Coming Forth By Day).

25. “I and my Father are one” (John 10:10).

Table adapted from “The African Origin of Our Faith” by Chike Akua.

- Thus you can see the African man is a man of faith and theology because he believes he is God’s creature. And to a great extent there is prove that life started in Africa. Recent fossils date the oldest man to be from Africa. If so, the first created man, Adam might have been placed somewhere around Africa as it has been suggested that the Garden of Eden is located somewhere between Africa and the Middle East. If all this is true, there is every reason to belief that Africans are direct descendants of Adam and have a relationship with God. This explains the seemingly inherent faith of the African man in God and how he reveres and worships Him. Most Africans believe in a Supreme Being and refer to Him with various names.
- Thus the term pagan used by Europeans who did not understand the faith and theology of the Africans defined Africans as such because the Africans had not refined their theology to include accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and savior. Therefore it is imperative to have a faith and theology that builds a relationship with God through Jesus Christ. For when you accept God through faith in the Lord Jesus, you will be adopted into God’s family and become a joint heir with Him to inherit His Kingdom. Christ’s righteousness then becomes your righteousness. As you delight in the Lord, revere and love Him, He will grant you the desires of your heart and you will not fear any man to succumb and subscribe to his humanistic beliefs.
- Thus our text for the day reads, “Do not fret because of evil men or be envious of those who do wrong; for like the grass they will soon wither, like green plants they will soon die away. Trust in the LORD and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture. Delight yourself in the LORD and he will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him and he will do this: He will make your righteousness shine like the dawn, the justice of your cause like the noonday sun. Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him; do not fret when men succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes. Refrain from anger and turn from wrath; do not fret—it leads only to evil. For evil men will be cut off, but those who hope in the LORD will inherit the land. A little while, and the wicked will be no more; though you look for them, they will not be found. But the meek will inherit the land and enjoy great peace” (Psalm 37:1-11).
- This text emphasizes that it is good to have a faith and theology that ensures you are related to God because there is a clear distinction between the righteous and the wicked. Therefore it is imperative to have the right faith and theology. An adulterated faith and theology disrupts a good relationship with God and interferes with one’s identity and destiny. The right faith and theology is the one that includes faith in Christ to reconcile sinful man to God.
- So, as we conclude this worship experience and message, the challenge I offer to you is do you have the right faith and theology? Be assured it is impossible for you to have a sound identity and destiny as well as the right faith and theology unless you have been

adopted into the family of God and the Holy Spirit has been placed into your heart as you accept Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and savior.

- Therefore, if you are here and desire to accept Jesus Christ to be your personal Lord and savior we invite you to come now. And if you have already said yes to Jesus and are saved, but have adulterated your faith and theology because of the effects of your sinful behaviors, you too we invite you to be reconciled to God. Perhaps you are new in the area or have been searching for a Church home, where you can continue to experience God's love with a right faith and theology, we invite you to consider Mt. Traveler and unite with this local body of Christ. For at Mt Traveler, we are "a Caring Church with Ministries, Changing Lives, Connecting People, and Creating Friendship and Favor with God and Man". Remember it is a choice that you must make! The invitation has been made and may God bless you as you come either as a candidate for baptism, rededication or as one with Christian experience. Why don't you come as the Choir leads us in a song?
- And if you are reading this on the Internet why don't you pray asking Jesus Christ to be your Lord and savior, then write and tell us at pastordatiri@mttraveler.org?

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AFRICAN AMERICANS' IDENTITY AND DESTINY

FEBRUARY 10, 2008

A People Stereotyped With Limited Vision

Hosea 4:1-14

- As we continue our sermon series on AFRICAN AMERICANS' IDENTITY AND DESTINY we shall focus on the subtopic: "A People Stereotyped With Limited Vision" on today. Let me emphatically state that before you can be stereotyped, the process of eroding your faith and sound Theology has to take place first. Once that occurs you will be reduced to a person of limited vision that has lost site of his destiny. The slave masters stripped Africans, and their descendants African Americans, of their faith and sound theology during the diabolical slave trade in America. They were dehumanized, annihilated from acquiring any education and brainwashed to believe they were sub-human. This did not go without resistance and many of our forefathers sacrificed their lives in the process so that we may survive as a people. However so many of African Americans have succumbed to the stereotyping process that the African is pagan and illiterate. A lot of the stereotyping of the African American has, therefore, resulted from their development of what I refer to as slave mentality. And many of us are still thriving on that slave mentality.
- The scriptures say "Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he" (Proverbs 29:18, KJV) and "my people are destroyed from lack of knowledge..." (Hosea 4:6a, NIV). Illiteracy (especially the lack of knowledge of God) makes people accept and live to fulfill the way they have been stereotyped. Otherwise how can the African man, a man of faith and theology have limited vision? The process of stripping the African man of his faith and theology began during slavery and has continued since then by depriving him of education to acquire the appropriate

knowledge to make sound decisions. He was brainwashed and dehumanized to believe he was sub-human. He developed what I call slave mentality whereby he no longer thinks for himself but follows the orders of the slave masters. Indeed, depriving anyone of knowledge and taking away his faith in God, leads to the development of slave mentality. Thereafter all you see, hear, perceive, speak and do is out of slave mentality. You lose your reasoning to make sound decisions. This is why the scriptures will say where there is no vision, the people perish and that my people are destroyed from lack of knowledge.

- Lack of knowledge always leads to limited or no vision. The African man was denied access to acquiring knowledge during slavery so much that he developed limited or no vision thereby forcing him to develop certain behavioral patterns with which his descendants, the African Americans, are now stereotyped.
- For instance the African man in slavery was denied access to his family to have any intimate relationships. Probably that is why we still don't trust each other and kill each other on a daily basis. Men were denied intimate relationships with their wives and only used as breeding bulls to meet the slave masters' needs while the African woman was made to accept rape from slave masters as normal behavior. Such that at present these behavioral tendencies and patterns have persisted over the years and are prevalent among the African Americans of today. The deprivation of knowledge has caused us limited vision and great consequences. Some of our men still think they are breeding bulls; as such they feel it is great to be pimps and dogs. On the other hand, some of our sisters think they are just babies manufacturing industries, while others have resorted to harlotry. There is so much promiscuity among our people now that we have become insensitive to immorality and have accepted it as part and parcel of our lives. And some of us think it is okay to sleep with whomever we desire at any time we feel to fulfill our lust, then turn around to justify it that it is because we are sexually active. In fact, we have accepted this as a fact of life to the extent that babies are having babies without the maturity and guts to train them appropriately; and the circle just continues to repeat. This is because it is hard to ask someone to stop during the very thing you are engaged or have indulged in if your life has not been transformed by the renewing of your mind through the truth of the gospel.
- And because of some persistent behavioral patterns due to slave mentality among the African Americans, we have been stereotyped to be a people that is lazy and depends on the government for everything. And some of us do still have the slave mentality not to have an education forgetting the horror we go through for lack of knowledge and limited vision. Some of us have actually developed selective amnesia and live just for the now. We are the greatest spenders. We spend billions on liquor, drugs and clothes. And we squander all we earn; never saving anything for the rainy day. We prefer to spend on vehicles than investing on buying a house. Common sense and knowledge should tell us that a new car depreciates as soon as it leaves the dealer's parking lot whereas a house or property would always appreciate. Some of us, who cannot afford a new car, buy cars that are worth a thousand dollars, then put rims worth four thousand dollars on it, and loud speakers that fill up the trunk but then cannot afford the gas to drive the car sometimes. All these are behavioral patterns stemming out of slave mentality that speak loud and clear concerning the lack of knowledge and limited or no vision. Further, some of us spend almost all our resources on clothes, vehicles and the blink-blink culture, yet

cannot afford good food for the proper nourishment of our body; and then turn around and spend heavily on prescription drugs.

- Still some of us because of lack of knowledge and limited vision have developed cravings to fulfill the lusts of the flesh to make us feel good. Thus drugs have become prevalent and have infested our communities. Some of our people have adopted and adapted to the prison mentality. In fact, some prefer to live in prison than out of it. Some of our young men have adopted the dressing pattern of prisoners showing their under-pants and telling others they are available. Sometimes some wear their pants backwards and think they are cool fulfilling the stereotyping that we are a bunch of fools and clowns. Some are into earnings not knowing that its origin was for gay men to identify themselves. Worse still we are not ashamed to publicly portray that we are gay; a thing that was taboo among the Africans. Some of our girls and women on the other hand have ceased to dress decently. They dress half-naked and provocatively showing all their contours and exposing their cleavages and sometimes unaware that they are making themselves sex symbols and targets of sexual assaults, all in the name of being fashionable. All these are behavioral patterns of lack of true knowledge and limited vision that make us as a people fulfill how we have been stereotyped. And all these are results of slave mentalities.
- Whereas our fore-fathers who never lost their faith and theology during slavery, out of slavery craved for education and knowledge to broaden their vision and enlarge their territories and horizons. With pennies, nickel and dimes, they build churches and schoolhouses. Yet in our generation, where education is free up to the high school level some of our people and children think it is cool to drop out of school, roam the streets and make quick money from selling drugs or have babies to depend on the government and child support from the fathers of those children, most of which a dead-beat fathers that end up in jails or prisons. And the circle repeats itself again and again for lack of knowledge and limited or no vision so fulfilling the stereotyping labeled on us. And because they refuse to acquire an education they end up with empty brains yet full of arrogance and pride. Desiring to live like the rich and famous yet have not acquired the proper knowledge to acquire wealth, they resort to stealing and drug dealing and ultimately destroy their lives by being killed or imprisoned. Indeed the lack of knowledge and limited or no vision is destroying our people. At times it looks like the men among our people have become an endangered species as we are either in jail, on the streets on drugs and as pimps or dead from senseless killings.
- Thus our text for the day began, “Hear the word of the LORD, you Israelites (allow me for today to substitute African Americans for Israelites), because the LORD has a charge to bring against you who live in the land: There is no faithfulness, no love, no acknowledgment of God in the land. There is only cursing, lying and murder, stealing and adultery; they break all bounds, and bloodshed follows bloodshed. Because of this the land mourns, and all who live in it waste away; the beasts of the field and the birds of the air and the fish of the sea are dying. But let no man bring a charge; let no man accuse another, for your people are like those who bring charges against a priest. You stumble day and night, and the prophets stumble with you. So I will destroy your mother- my people are destroyed from lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also reject you as my priests; because you have ignored the law of your God, I also will ignore your children” (Hosea 4:1-6). Just like the Israelites who ignored

knowledge and rejected God so are African Americans and are destroyed as a consequence. The African American of today has generally neglected the faith and theology of his fore-parents. In fact it appears the more preachers we have they more we are rejecting God, our faith in Him and any theology. This is perhaps because the preachers that we have in our generation are not sincere in preaching thus says the Lord and leading by example. In fact many preachers preach to delight what the itching ears desire to hear. They are engaged and indulged in the same things the people are doing – adultery, blood shed, divorce, and unfaithfulness to God to name a few. Therefore, many preachers do not have the guts to rebuke, reproof, correct and teach godly doctrine. As such sin has continued to multiply among our people. As a result it appears a curse has been passed on our people.

- Thus our text for the day continued and concluded, “The more the priests increased, the more they sinned against me; they exchanged their Glory for something disgraceful. They feed on the sins of my people and relish their wickedness. And it will be: Like people, like priests. I will punish both of them for their ways and repay them for their deeds. They will eat but not have enough; they will engage in prostitution but not increase, because they have deserted the LORD to give themselves to prostitution, to old wine and new, which take away the understanding of my people. They consult a wooden idol and are answered by a stick of wood. A spirit of prostitution leads them astray; they are unfaithful to their God. They sacrifice on the mountaintops and burn offerings on the hills, under oak, poplar and terebinth, where the shade is pleasant. Therefore your daughters turn to prostitution and your daughters-in-law to adultery. I will not punish your daughters when they turn to prostitution, nor your daughters-in-law when they commit adultery, because the men themselves consort with harlots and sacrifice with shrine prostitutes— a people without understanding will come to ruin!” (Hosea 4:7-14).
- Therefore, as we conclude this worship experience and message, the challenge I offer to you is do you have the right knowledge of God that promotes your faith and theology? Or do you lack knowledge to limit you vision that you live to fulfill how people have stereotyped you? Be assured it is impossible for you to have a sound identity and destiny as well as the right knowledge, faith and theology, and vision unless you have been adopted into the family of God and the Holy Spirit has been placed into your heart as you accept Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and savior.
- Therefore, if you are here and desire to accept Jesus Christ for the first time to become your personal Lord and savior we invite you to come now. And if you have already said yes to Jesus and are saved, but lack true knowledge and have limited vision because of the effects of your sinful behaviors, you too we invite you to be reconciled to God. Perhaps you are new in the area or have been searching for a Church home, where you can continue to experience God’s love with a right faith and theology, we invite you to consider Mt. Traveler and unite with this local body of Christ. For at Mt Traveler, we are “a Caring Church with Ministries, Changing Lives, Connecting People, and Creating Friendship and Favor with God and Man”. Remember it is a choice that you must make! The invitation has been made and may God bless you as you come either as a candidate for baptism, rededication or as one with Christian experience. Why don’t you come as the Praise Team (or Choir) leads us in a song?

- And if you are reading this on the Internet why don't you pray asking Jesus Christ to be your Lord and savior, then write and tell us at pastordatiri@mttraveler.org?

FEBRUARY 17, 2008

Had a guest preacher and no notes were provided!

**Mt. Traveler Missionary Baptist Church, Waverly, Alabama
Synopses of Sermons Preached by Rev. B. C. Datiri, Pastor**

AFRICAN AMERICANS' IDENTITY AND DESTINY

FEBRUARY 24, 2008

A People Of Opportunity and Destiny

Psalm 37:18-29

- As we conclude this sermon series on AFRICAN AMERICANS' IDENTITY AND DESTINY please allow me today to focus on the subtopic: "A People of Opportunity and Destiny". Let me emphatically state that each time you survive a catastrophe it implies you have been granted another opportunity to experience the true meaning of life. After surviving the American dehumanizing and diabolic slavery African Americans now have the opportunity to experience the true meaning of life provided they know their identity and stay focus on their destiny.
- In our first message in this mini-sermon series, we did establish that Africans and their descendants the African Americans are people of faith and theology. This implies that African Americans know that God exists and they revere Him. They also know that life is brief and someday you will return to God your Creator and Maker to give an account of your life. In addition, they know that there is place call glory where God dwells and where man will return if he does what is right. Thus the Africans and their descendants, the African Americans know that there is a great difference between the righteous and the wicked. They know that the righteous love God and their neighbors, and live to please God. In fact, the Africans and their descendants as a people of faith and theology trust their neighbors such that every adult treats a child within a community as his/her own. And I am pretty sure you have heard this old adage of the Africans that "It takes a village to raise a child!" Africans and African Americans are a community-oriented people.
- Let me also say that the destiny of people is determined by its identity. What the diabolical American slavery attempted to do to the Africans and their descendants was to dehumanize them so that they would loose their identity. This was a direct eroding of their faith and theology and therefore the identity and destiny of the Africans and their descendants. Albeit, this wickedness did not last forever, because out of slavery, the descendants of Africans thirsted and yearned for knowledge. As such the limited vision they had due to the deprivation of education soon was replaced by a quest for knowledge. Surviving African Americans out of slavery therefore invested their pennies, nickels and dimes to build churches and schoolhouses so as to rebuild their eroded faith and theology and educate its people. As a result, today many African Americans have acquired a wealth of knowledge and are in the limelight of various professions with their

visions and horizons broaden and their faith and theology rekindled. Yet some have failed to seize the opportunity for a better destiny and are still lingering in limbo of slave mentality.

- You see, each time that God gives you another chance to educate yourself and broaden your vision and horizons, it is another opportunity that God is giving you to get it right that African Americans are people of identity and destiny. Africans and their descendants are people of faith and theology and if we seize the opportunity to live and prove this identity, we reach or attain our destiny. The destiny of a people of faith and theology is righteousness. And you all know that “righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people (Proverbs 14:34). The African American must therefore sustain his identity as a person of faith and theology to attain his destiny. Some of our forefathers maintain their faith and theology during slavery and were able to sing, “I have a robe; you have a robe. All God’s children have their robes. When we get to heaven, we shall put on our robes and shout about heaven!” The robe in this context and instant is righteousness. And it is righteousness that will actually let you into heaven. For without righteousness, no man shall see God.
- Thus the opportunity is now ours to pass the baton of our legacy to the next generation that we are a people of faith and theology with knowledge that broadens our vision and horizons for our destiny. It is knowledge of the truth that actually broadens your vision and horizons for your destiny. The wicked lack such knowledge and are blindfolded by their wicked actions that limit the vision of their destiny. The knowledge of the truth informs us that God has a plan for us, a plan for good and not for evil, to give us a future and a hope. Yes, there is hope for African Americans but we must seize the opportunity to attain our destiny. And because we are a people of hope, we can always sing, “what is for me is for me”. Therefore, I challenge you to quit trying to be somebody that you are not otherwise you will become someone else and be wicked. And let me remind you that the destiny of the wicked is horrible. Instead, realize your identity as a people of faith and theology because we know that everything works together for good to them who love the Lord and are the called according to His purpose. Not so for the wicked and diabolically minded people because their destiny is misery.
- Thus our text for the day began, “The days of the blameless are known to the LORD, and their inheritance will endure forever. In times of disaster they will not wither; in days of famine they will enjoy plenty. But the wicked will perish: The LORD’s enemies will be like the beauty of the fields; they will vanish—vanish like smoke. The wicked borrow and do not repay, but the righteous give generously; those the LORD blesses will inherit the land, but those he curses will be cut off” (Psalm 37:18-22). When it comes to spiritual choices, it is easy to make because you are faced with two choices only. The choices are righteousness and wickedness. You have to choose one or the other. The choice you make determines you identity and destiny. And your ways will either be distasteful or delightful to the Lord.
- Therefore our text for the day then continued and concluded “If the LORD delights in a man’s way, he makes his steps firm; though he stumble, he will not fall, for the LORD upholds him with his hand. I was young and now I am old, yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken or their children begging bread. They are always generous and lend freely; their children will be blessed. Turn from evil and do good; then you will dwell in

the land forever. For the LORD loves the just and will not forsake his faithful ones. They will be protected forever, but the offspring of the wicked will be cut off; the righteous will inherit the land and dwell in it forever” (Psalm 37:23-29).

- A people of opportunity and destiny understand that opportunity always calls for choices that always determine your destiny. No wonder, Joshua challenged the people of Israel to declare publicly their choice of whom they will serve, but as for him and his household, they will serve the Lord (Joshua 24:15). Further along in the scriptures, Elijah challenged the children of Israel to choose between life and death even as they choose serve God or Baal. John was very explicit with the matter of choice as it determines destiny when he wrote “Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God” (John 1:12-13). Today you have the opportunity to make the choice that would determine your destiny – as you either to receive or reject Jesus Christ. Keep in mind that you cannot be a person of true identity and great destiny without accepting Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and savior and the Holy Spirit placed within you to lead a righteous life.
- Therefore, as we conclude this worship experience and message, the challenge I offer to you is do you have the right knowledge of God that promotes your faith and theology? Have you made your choice to accept Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and savior? Be assured it is impossible for you to have a sound identity and destiny as well as the right knowledge, faith and theology, vision and identity unless you have been adopted into the family of God and the Holy Spirit has been placed into your heart as you accept Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and savior.
- Therefore, if you are here and desire to accept Jesus Christ for the first time to become your personal Lord and savior we invite you to come now. And if you have already said yes to Jesus and are saved, but lack true knowledge and have limited vision because of the effects of your sinful behaviors, you too we invite you to be reconciled to God. Perhaps you are new in the area or have been searching for a Church home, where you can continue to experience God's love with a right faith and theology, we invite you to consider Mt. Traveler and unite with this local body of Christ. For at Mt Traveler, we are “a Caring Church with Ministries, Changing Lives, Connecting People, and Creating Friendship and Favor with God and Man”. Remember it is a choice that you must make! The invitation has been made and may God bless you as you come either as a candidate for baptism, rededication or as one with Christian experience. Why don't you come as the Praise Team (or Choir) leads us in a song?
- And if you are reading this on the Internet why don't you pray asking Jesus Christ to be your Lord and savior, then write and tell us at pastordatiri@mttraveler.org?