

A. The character of these chapters

1. An historical interlude
2. A word of prophecy
3. An immediate application

B. The Present challenge:

1. A problem of personal spirituality and priority 7:1-7
2. The record of history 7:8-14
3. From now until a coming age 8:1-8
4. A prescription for the present 8:9-17
5. The resolution of the problem 8:18-24

C. Seeing our Discouragements in the Light of the Present reality

D. Some points for observation:

1. Yieldedness to the Word is the key to continuity
2. All of life is to see God as its focal point
3. The reality of the blessing to come encourages us to face the trial that is presently here.
4. Digressions are to be avoided

E. Conclusion: The present reality is that God is to be honored in all of our lives and in every part of life. If that is set before one the direction and adventure of life is must more easily kept in proper orientation.

IV. The Hope of The Future

The present is where we face our challenges but the future is set before us as a means of understanding the program of God. In our chapter much relates to Israel but the general principles of God's working are in plain view. We are wrong to doubt that God can bring order (well, maybe we can doubt it if we confess and get right fast) and wrong to feel that our works are destined to doom!