

## It's Fishing Season

**Jeremiah 16:16 (KJV)** Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks.

For those of you who aren't familiar with fishing, the gist of it is pretty simple: you find the fish, set some bait out to attract the fish, and then you wait for one to bite. The point is that you're separated from the fish; you don't become a fish to catch a fish.

A lot of people enjoy fishing, because it separates them from the world. Fishing gives them time to be by themselves, out in the elements, and just enjoy themselves. Due to these reasons, a lot of people also dislike fishing. Personally, I dislike fishing, so I thought I might like hunting.

Unfortunately, when Bro. Drost was here in December, he was telling us stories about the times he has gone hunting, and when I said I'd always wanted to try hunting, he asked, "Do you like fishing?" I said, "No," He replied, "Then you won't like hunting."

This struck me as odd, because I'm an avid hiker. I like going out into the woods, walking around, and exploring nature. Then I realized that hunters today aren't really hunters, they are fishermen for deer. You see, today's hunters approach deer the same way they approach fish. They figure out where the deer are, get in a tree stand or blind, and wait for the deer to come to them.

If you look at a graph of the fastest animals and humans on earth, you see that we aren't the fastest things around. Now we are pretty quick, the world record holder for the 50 yard dash got up to 27 miles per hour. This puts us faster than pigs, mice, and turtles, but slower than giraffes, lions, and cheetahs. In fact, Cheetahs have been clocked at up to 70 miles an hour for a few yards.

Where humans shine, however, is in our endurance. If you rank the same runners as before, except measure their endurance instead of speed, you see that humans and camels are the only things able to run 100 miles or more. The cheetah is actually second from the bottom, narrowly beating out the turtle.

God made us for running long distances. We're almost hairless, which gives us the ability to stay cool in the summer. We can breathe through our mouths, which gives us extra oxygen and also helps to get rid of heat. In fact, if you measure the amount of energy used by the muscles, a human uses only slightly more energy when running than we do trotting. A horse, on the other hand, has a huge spike in its energy needs when switching from trotting to hiking.

This ability makes us good hunters. An animal may be able to run faster than we can, but all we have to do is keep chasing it. Eventually, the animal will collapse from either heat exhaustion or heart failure. Unfortunately, we live in a world much more closely packed than it was a few hundred years ago. People living in suburbs get a little upset when they see a man with a shotgun running through their back yard chasing a deer. The long distance runners that God made us to be have to give in to the realities of urban life.

But when the Bible talks about hunters, it means long distance runners that will stop at nothing until they get their prey.

### **Jeremiah 16:16-18 (KJV)**

**16** Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks. **17** For mine eyes are upon all their ways: they are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes. **18** And first I will recompense their iniquity and their sin double; because they have defiled my land, they have filled mine inheritance with the carcasses of their detestable and abominable things.

This scripture tells us that God will grow tired of the sins of man and send out His hunters over all the earth to hunt down those who have refused to listen to His Word. We know the judgment of God is for the sinners because He talks about their "iniquities."

### **Revelation 9:3-4 (KJV)**

**3** And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. **4** And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.

Here are the hunters described by John as locusts. They have the power to hunt down anyone that doesn't have the seal of God on their foreheads. From where did this seal come?

### **Ezekiel 9:4-6 (KJV)**

**4** And the Lord said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof. **5** And to the others he said in mine hearing, Go ye after him through the city, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity: **6** Slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women: but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at my sanctuary. Then they began at the ancient men which were before the house.

The word "mark" translated is actually the Hebrew letter 'tav.' The mark was placed on a person to represent ownership. So when the Lord sends the angel to mark the tav on everyone's forehead, he's marking those that are His. Tav, in particular, represents the Messiah. Therefore everyone with the mark of tav on their forehead belongs to the Messiah.

In Modern Hebrew, the letter tav is written as ט. The shape is reminiscent of the form that was written on the doorposts of the Hebrews in Exodus.

**Exodus 12:7 (KJV)** And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it.

It's this shape that God commanded the angel to place on the foreheads of his own. It's the shape that God commanded the Israelites to place on the door of their houses. And it's the shape that the hunter angel uses to spare those that belong to the Lord in Exodus, and Revelation.

It's reasonable to assume that this same mark, the mark of God's possession, is what the hunters will use in Jeremiah 16.

But thank the Lord that the time of the Hunter is not at hand. We still live in the time of the Fisher. When Jesus went to Simon Peter, Andrew, James, and John, he said:

**Mark 1:17 (KJV) And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.**

We were all once a fish, but we were brought to the Lord by the fishermen that came before us. Like a fisherman that brings in the fish without becoming a fish, they found a way to reach us where we were without abandoning the truth upon which they stood. A good fisherman knows where the fish are.

Many fly fishermen wait until they're on the river to see which bugs are in season and then they make a fly right there on the spot to match what the fish are expecting. They don't try to become a fish, nor do they try to become a fly. Rather, they provide what the fish really wants in a way that doesn't compromise their own status as the fisherman.

Too many people try to become like the world in a mistaken attempt to "bring people to church." People in the bar aren't there for the alcohol; they're there for the companionship, the sense of belonging to a group.

Our goal isn't to turn fishermen into fish; our goal is to turn fish into fishermen. The first commandment that God gave to creation was, "Be fruitful and multiply." We're expected to take that commandment seriously.