

Snippets From KeyCom

April 2026

Kept From

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

There's an intriguing passage in Acts chapter 16 which says that the Apostle Paul was "kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia." (Acts 16:6 NIV) Since we're not told why, we can only speculate. Since Paul later had a very fruitful ministry in Ephesus, we know that his desire to preach in Asia was not inherently wrong. But, the timing wasn't right, or something else had a higher priority in God's scheme of things. However, I can sense Paul's frustration and bewilderment, especially since the Spirit prevented him from going to Bithynia as well.

I can sympathize with Paul's frustration. Sometimes good projects have to be put on hold for reasons we could not anticipate. For example, Saleem scheduled a speaking tour in the cities of Islamabad and Peshawar to introduce people to our broadcasts and the other resources we provide. Then, Iran and the US chose Islamabad as the venue for their negotiations. The government of Pakistan restricted travel in the area and virtually shut down the city of Islamabad for two days. As a result, Saleem could not keep his appointments and had to cancel the tour. Fortunately, he found out about the problem before leaving Lahore. The uncertainty over whether and when further talks between the two countries might be held makes rescheduling challenging.

Waiting does not come easily to me. While I like to plan things out and consider options (thus irritating those who want to take immediate action!) once a decision has been made, I want things to happen right now and according to plan. Unexpected obstacles or delays test my patience. I have to remind myself that this is the Lord's work, not mine. If He wants something done, it will happen in His timing. Obstacles and delays may be an indication from God that I'm either headed in the wrong direction or perhaps something else should take priority.

Case in point: I mentioned back in January that we need to reprint some of the books we distribute. B.S. Dean's *Outline of Bible History*, which my father first published 50 years ago, is one of them. Demand has been fairly good. Another ministry has even based one of their correspondence courses on it. But, we're completely out of stock. It's time for another printing of the second edition. It should be easy since I still have the electronic files, right? Actually, no. The layout of the book is complex, with maps, charts and lots of footnotes. The Urdu publishing software we use has gone through several upgrades since we first laid out the book. Importing the files into the new version changes all the formatting. One of many problems I found was that the Urdu symbol for a footnote was not properly programmed. Not acceptable! I dusted off an old laptop which happened to have the original version of the software on it. But, how to transfer the book to it and retrieve the PDF file back from it which is necessary for printing? The laptop will no longer communicate with our network. Nor will it recognize a USB drive. The book is too large to fit on a floppy. The CD drive no longer functions. The old software won't run on newer hardware.

After struggling with this for the better part of a day, I just about gave up. Maybe God doesn't want the book reprinted at this time?

Fortunately, I also had an old copy of a PDF file of the body of the book which was properly formatted. The problem was that it was in the wrong page order. (Urdu reads from right-to-left instead of left-to-right.) More research and fiddling around to find out how to reverse the page order. Then, redoing all the front matter including the Table of Contents before I could finally package the whole mess into one, print-ready file. Heaven help us if we ever have to make any edits or revisions! (The new edition also required me to design a new cover for reasons I won't go into!)

With the help of LATM (Literature and Teaching Ministries) we're also in the process of republishing our separate commentaries on the Apostle Peter's two letters in one volume. It's at the printers right now. We'll put *Outline* out for bid after we take delivery of the Peter book.

This saga has highlighted a conundrum: How do you know whether it is Satan who is throwing roadblocks in your way, or the Lord telling you to hold up or go a different direction? I don't have a definitive answer. It probably depends on each circumstance. One of the factors in deciding is whether you have the resources to pursue the project.

One of the things which helped me keep going in reprinting *Outline* in spite of all the problems was that we do have the wherewithal. In addition to the encouragement of LATM, I want to thank each of you for your prayer support as well as the very generous gifts which make not only our publishing ministry, but our broadcasting, possible.

Yours in the Name of Him who helps us overcome,



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