

Old Testament Judgment



Facing God's Judgment (Part 2)
by Derek Prince

"Then he [that's the Lord] called out in my hearing with a loud voice, saying, 'Let those who have charge over the city draw near, each with a deadly weapon in his hand.' And suddenly six men came from the direction of the upper gate which faces north, each with his battle axe or destroying weapon in his hand. One man among them was clothed with linen and had a writer's inkhorn at his side. They went in and stood beside the bronze altar. The glory of the God of Israel had gone up from the cherub where it had been to the threshold of the temple, and he called to the man clothed with linen who had the writer's inkhorn at his side. The Lord said to him, 'Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and cry over all the abominations that are done within it.'"

A few people still understood God's standards, were committed to His will and were deeply and intensely grieved over what was going on in God's city, Jerusalem. So, the Lord said, "You go first and with your inkhorn you put a mark on the forehead of everyone who grieves and cries for what's going on."

"To the others He said [the other six men] in my hearing, 'Go after him through the city and kill. Do not let your eyes spare, nor have any pity. Utterly slay old and young men, maidens and little children and women, but do not come near anyone on whom is the mark; and begin at my sanctuary.'"

Where did it begin? The sanctuary, the house of God.

So they began with the elders who were before the temple.

Not only did they begin with the sanctuary but it began with the leaders.

> "Then He said to them, 'Defile the temple and fill the courts with the slain. Go out.' And they went out and killed in the city. So it was that while they were killing them, I was left alone [that's Ezekiel the prophet] and I fell on my face and cried out and said, 'Ah, Lord God, will you destroy all the remnant of Israel in pouring out your fury on Jerusalem?' Then He said to me, 'The iniquity of the house of Israel and Judah is exceedingly great, and the land is full of bloodshed and the city full of perversity; for they say, 'The Lord has forsaken the land and the Lord does not see.' And as for me also, my eye will neither spare nor will I have pity, but I will recompense their deeds on their own heads.' Just then the man clothed with linen who had the inkhorn at his side reported back and said, 'I have done as you commanded me.'"

That is a very vivid picture of God's judgment. It begins at the house, begins with the spiritual leaders and it is a judgment to death. It's a judgment of total destruction. But before that judgment is released, God sends the man with the inkhorn to mark on the forehead everyone who seriously grieves and mourns over the condition of God's people. And they and they alone were spared from the judgment. Otherwise, the judgment fell on men and women, boys and girls, old and young — no one was exempted. That's the picture. The principles are eternal.

Then I want to turn to a passage in Ezekiel 22, beginning at verse 23:

> "And the word of the Lord came to me, saying, 'Son of man, say to her [that's the land of Israel], 'You are a land that is not cleansed or rained on in the day of indignation.'"

And there's only one kind of rain that can cleanse a land of sin, that is the rain of the Holy Spirit. If that does not fall, the land is not cleansed. And then he goes on — and now I want you to notice the order of the people that he singles out. It so happens in the English language that every one of them, four groups, begins with the letter "P." So, it's easy to remember. It's prophets, priests, princes and people. And observe again, it begins with the prophets. It goes on with the priests; moves on to the princes, the secular rulers; and only ultimately the people. To whom much is given, of him much also will be required.

So now we have these words:

> "The conspiracy of her prophets in her midst is like a roaring lion, tearing the prey. They have devoured the people. They have taken treasure and precious things, they've made many widows in her midst."

And notice the real motivation there is covetousness. I've been so impressed by the statement of Paul, "The love of money is a root of all evils." In fact, I've just written a teaching letter called "The Error of Balaam." I was really interested to see what was the motive that led Balaam in stubborn opposition to the revealed will of God of which he himself had been a prophet, so that ultimately he perished under God's judgment. The New Testament, which refers to Balaam three times, makes it absolutely clear it was the love of money that led him to his destruction. And Paul says it's like a dagger, the love of money, with which people have pierced themselves through and brought upon themselves many sorrows. And as I was writing that letter I had a mental picture of somebody taking a sharp dagger that was poisoned and plunging it into their own flesh. That's what the love of money does.

Could we honestly say that the Charismatic movement is free from the love of money? Could we not really say that most of the conspicuous people that have been toppled, their motivation was the love of money? I mean, I'll let you decide. But it seems to me it's clear. Brothers and sisters, we need to be on our guard, every one of us, including the preacher, against the love of money because it's a root of all evils. Every kind of evil can come out of the love of money.

And here we see these prophets were corrupted by the love of money. Let me say what I think I've said before, if anybody claims to be a prophet in this present world situation and doesn't demand repentance, I challenge his claim. I don't have any confidence in a prophet that simply tickles people's ears and tells them exciting things about themselves, and promises them all sorts of blessings in the future.

There was a group of, quote, prophets that went to Europe some time ago. They went to Germany, Norway, Sweden and in every one of them they said exactly the same thing — at least they were consistent. They said, "There's going to be a wonderful revival and it will begin here [whichever country it was, Germany, Norway or Sweden] and it will go out from here to all the other countries [whichever it was not]." And they said precisely the same thing in each one of those countries. The tragedy is God's people were gullible enough to believe them.

It's a solemn thing to call yourself a prophet. You are especially the representative of God, first and foremost, the one who speaks out the counsel of God. I'm impressed by the

fact that in the time of Jeremiah, as Judah tottered to its disaster, I can only find one true prophet, his name was Jeremiah. There were many false prophets who were predicting all sorts of wonderful things — the treasures of the temple that Nebuchadnezzar had taken will come back, in two years you'll see it. And the tragedy is this, as I see it, the false predictions of the false prophets kept God's people from listening to the one true prophet.

I see something of the same in the Charismatic movement today. A lot of people promising peace to those who are not living for God, to those who are breaking God's principles and laws. The Bible says there is no peace for the wicked. And anyone who promises peace to the wicked is wicked himself. He's a false prophet. This is not something from the remote past, we have the problem today inside the professing church just as much as it was in the city of Jerusalem in the time of Jeremiah.

We'll go on reading the next verse, verse 26:

> "Her priests have violated my law and profaned my holy things. They have not distinguished between the holy and unholy, nor have they made known the difference between the unclean and the clean, and they have hidden their eyes from my sabbath so that I am profaned amongst them."

What's the great challenge? There's been no recognition of true holiness and how it differs from that which is not holy. When professing church leaders will admit into the congregation of God and even ordain as ministers those who are homosexuals, they're doing precisely what Ezekiel describes there. I just want you to understand all this is not out of date, it's intensely topical, it applies exactly to the situation in the church and in the world today.

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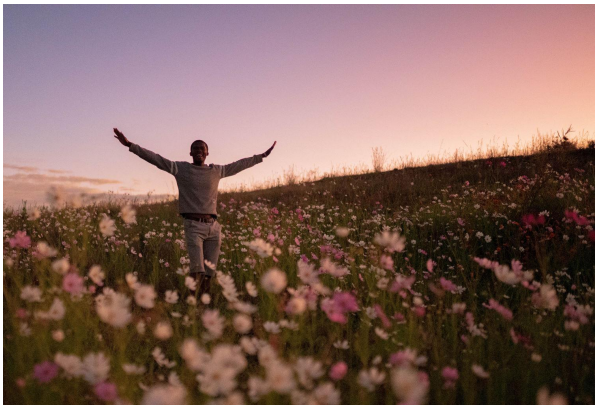

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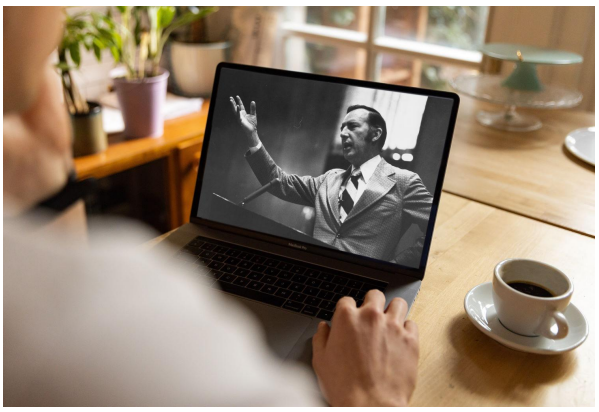

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