

God's Anger Provoked



Orphans, Widows, the Poor and Oppressed (Part 2)
by Derek Prince

And then in Deuteronomy 14 verses 28 and 29 speaking about a celebration that took place every third year, speaking to all the people of Israel, Deuteronomy 14 verses 28 and 29,

> "At the end of every third year you shall bring out the tithe of your produce of that year and store it up within your gates.
>
> And the Levite, because he has no portion nor inheritance with you,"

Now the Levite was the one who was serving God and he did not have any inheritance because this inheritance was the offering of God's people. So it would correspond to the missionary or the evangelist in our society today.

> "And the Levite, because he has no portion nor inheritance with you, and the stranger and the fatherless and the widow who are within your gates, may come and eat and be satisfied,"

You see whom God cares for? The stranger, the fatherless and the widow. And He's built it into the Law. An Israelite could not follow the Law of Moses without being concerned for the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow. And then He says, "I am the LORD your God. That's the way I think, that's the way I am, that's how I want you to represent Me."

Then we come to the Prophets and I'll only take just a few passages out of many. As I've studied the Prophets over the years I've come to certain conclusions, and I'll just share them with you and you can ask yourself do you agree. But I find if you read the Prophets from Isaiah onwards, basically there were three sins that provoked God's anger. The first was idolatry, the second was adultery and the third was indifference to the poor. Now I've observed in dealing with people over the years in deliverance, that if people get into idolatry very often it will be followed by adultery. In other words, spiritual adultery leads to physical adultery. I've seen that time and time and time again.

Now we are all supposed to be shocked by idolatry and adultery. But what about the third thing that God puts on the same level? Indifference to the poor. This is what He says in

Isaiah chapter 1, verse 16.

> "Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; Put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes. Cease to do evil, Learn to do good; Seek justice, Reprove the oppressor; Defend the fatherless, Plead for the widow."

Who's at the top of God's list? The fatherless and the widow. And the failure to do that God puts in the same category with idolatry and adultery. And then a little further on in verse 23 speaking about the leaders of the people at that time, God says to Israel,

> "Your princes are rebellious, And companions of thieves; Everyone loves bribes, And follows after rewards. They do not defend the fatherless. Nor does the cause of the widow come before them."

You see failure to defend the fatherless is in the same category with idolatry and adultery. We've got our own little list of sins. But they're a very incomplete list. I mean, I've probably been Pentecostal longer than anybody here and I've heard many, many wonderful sermons. I've never heard a sermon that clearly defines our responsibility to care for the orphans and the widows. Never once in fifty-eight years.

You see, when this really struck me I said to myself, "How come that I've been a preacher all those years and I've never seen this." I'll tell you about my own personal experience a little later.

Let's go on in Isaiah chapter 11 verse 4. Now this is a prophecy of Jesus as the Messiah.

> "There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, And a Branch shall grow out of his roots. The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, The Spirit of counsel and might, The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD. His delight is in the fear of the LORD, And He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes, Nor decide by the hearing of His ears; But with righteousness He shall judge the poor, And decide with equity for the meek of the earth;"

Whom is Jesus concerned about? The poor, the meek, the oppressed, the people that don't get a fair deal.

Now I've been privileged. I come from a privileged level of society in Britain. I'm not speaking about what I didn't get because I got a lot more than I should have gotten. But I've come to realize that most of the people in this country are not really getting what they should. That may shock you, but I find it's true and the basic reason is human selfishness. Everybody cares for themselves. And you know you can be Pentecostal and very selfish. Did you know that? You can speak in tongues and be very selfish. Very self-centered, very concerned about yourself, and still speak in tongues. I believe in speaking in tongues. I speak in tongues every day. But that's not a substitute for my character.

Let's go on in Isaiah to 58. This is a passage that David Wilkerson calls the key to continuing revival. And I think probably the record of his ministry justifies his claim. Isaiah 58 verses 6 through 9.

> "Is not this the fast that I have chosen: To undo the bonds of wickedness,"

And believe me I believe in fasting. Basically I fast every week so I'm not suggesting that fasting is unimportant, but God says there's a lot more to fasting than just abstaining from food.

> "To loose the bonds of wickedness, To undo the heavy burdens, To let the oppressed go free, And that you break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, And that you bring the poor into your house who are naked; When you see the naked, that you cover him, And do not hide yourself from your own flesh?"

Are we guilty of that? Just not seeing the people who need us. You know what suburbia is? It's really refusal to identify yourself with your people. In the United States, and I live in America most of the time and in Israel. What's happened in all the major cities is that the poor and mainly the blacks have moved into the center, standards of living have gone down, and the wealthy have moved out to the suburbs. What is that? It's hiding yourself from your own people. It's refusing to confront the need of your people. Then comes this wonderful promise.

> "When you see the naked and you cover him, And do not hide yourself from your own flesh? Then your light shall break forth like the morning, Your healing shall bring forth speedily, And your righteousness shall go before you; The glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard. Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer; You shall cry, and He will say, 'Here I am.'"

Here's a guarantee of answered prayer. But it's on a condition. It's on a condition that you care for the people who need you. That you do not hide yourself from your own flesh.

I don't know whether I should say this or not. I was educated at Eton and then at Cambridge and I was put in a segment of society that just didn't really recognize there were people that needed help. It wasn't exactly that we were against them. We were just indifferent. Then I was called up into the British Army in 1940 and I was suddenly pitched forth into a lot of people I had never known existed. Especially the Jordies (?) How many Jordies do we have here? Anybody? God bless you, I love them. They are warmhearted people. But when I went into the British Army I couldn't understand them and they couldn't understand me. Literally we did not have a language in which to communicate. And I began to discover there's different people in Britain that I'd never known. I never knew anything about them. I was confronted with a lot of areas in my own character that needed dealing with. I'd been hiding myself from my own flesh. I could have had an easy way through life probably the rest of my life. I'll tell you how it changed. Not now but in a little while.

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Transcript: TS-R185-102-ENG
Last Updated: 12 Apr 2023
Website: derekprince.com

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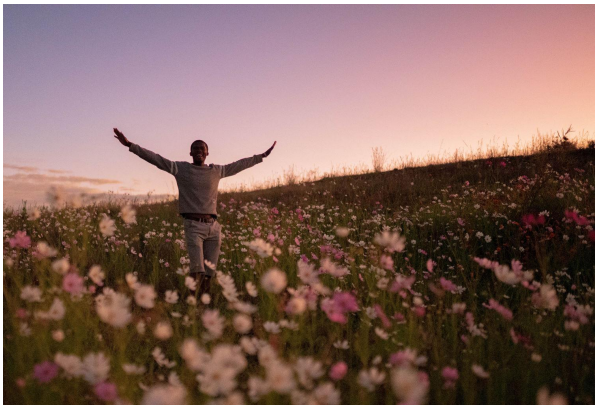

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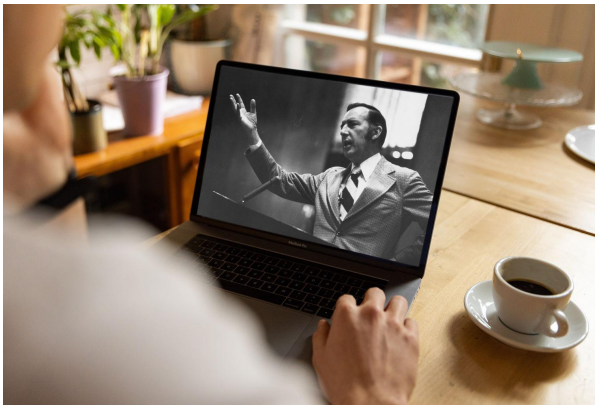

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