

Jeffrey Epstein and the Truth of the Bible

The apparent suicide of disgraced billionaire Jeffrey Epstein brought an end to one tragic chapter in his ugly and abusive life. But it is certainly not the end of the story. He will yet have his day in court. In fact, in the end, all of us will.

But before drawing some sobering moral lessons from the painful story of Epstein, my thoughts go out to the women and girls whom he victimized. May I address each of you directly?

I haven't the slightest idea what it feels like to be trafficked or abused. I can't relate to the emotions you are experiencing. But I can understand that it must be terribly frustrating not to be able to bring charges against him in a court of law. Not to be able to look him in the face—if that is what you had planned to do—and give him a piece of your mind.

And I imagine that his death is small consolation to you right now.

But this much I know: What he did not pay for in this world, he will pay for in the world to come. The judge he will stand before sees all and knows all and is perfectly just. And based on the words of Jesus, I would hate to be in the shoes of a child abuser on that fearful day (see Matt. 18:1-6).

I also know that no amount of prison time for Epstein could bring healing to your own soul, and so I pray that you'll be able to find a path to restoration and wholeness in the days ahead.

With that being said—from the heart—let me share with you some sobering words from the Bible.

These words may have seemed irrelevant to Epstein at the height of his powers. He was incredibly wealthy. He was the friend of presidents and leaders. He was surrounded by beautiful women.

Yet the words of Scripture always come to pass, sooner or later. As Moses said almost 3,500 years ago, “be sure your sin will find you out” (Numbers 32:23b).

Either in this world or the world to come, our sins will catch up with us, and we will give account –unless, of course, we have truly repented before God and received forgiveness through the blood of Jesus.

In that case, God forgives us completely and entirely, calling us to lead a brand-new life. At the same time, we may still have to do the time for our crimes here on earth.

With our true repentance, God will forgive us for getting drunk and committing vehicular homicide. But we may spend years in jail for our misdeeds.

With our true repentance, God will forgive us for racking up a massive gambling debt. But we will still have to pay off our creditors.

On the other hand, if there is no repentance, no seeking mercy through the cross, then one way or another, our sins will catch up to us. In the end, no one—and I mean no one—will escape.

As many have pointed out, there are no U-turns on the way to the judgment seat. There are no lawyers to hire and no juries to influence. There are no excuses to make and there is no one to blame. And this judge cannot be bought or bribed.

In the words of the Puritan leader Thomas Watson, “Those iniquities which men hide in their hearts shall be written one day on their foreheads as with the point of a diamond.”

Imagine that for a moment.

For years, Jeffrey Epstein was able to evade the law, which might have made him feel untouchable. Did he ever imagine that he would be hanging in a prison cell, his very name mocked and despised? Did he ever imagine that he could lose everything in a moment of time, and no amount of money could bail him out?

Paul wrote to Timothy, "Remember, the sins of some people are obvious, leading them to certain judgment. But there are others whose sins will not be revealed until later" (1 Tim. 5:24, NLT).

The first part of this verse can be applied to Epstein. The second part can be applied to others. Does it apply to you? To me?

The moral of the story is simple. If you are not right with God, get right with Him today. If you have skeletons in the closet, don't bury them deeper. Come clean and get things right.

Better to be ashamed in this world, before people, than to be ashamed in the world to come, before God.

Better to deal with your sins today, when the door of mercy is open, than to wait until it's too late, when it's too late to repent.

Proverbs says, "The one who conceals his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them will find mercy" (Prov. 28:13, NASB).

So, what will it be? Repentance today and mercy forever? Or rebellion today and judgment forever?

As for me, I've turned from my sins and sought out refuge under the cross of Jesus. I can testify firsthand that there is nothing in the world like a clean conscience and a heart at rest. And the best is yet to come.