

John Burton: A Sobering Prophecy

Note: This is the second of a three-part series. For part one, [click here](#).

In Ezekiel 25 we see a key strategy emerge.

Up until this point, concerning Jerusalem and the land of Israel, people had been holding on to faint hope due to the encouragement of false prophets. Then, contrary to the words of the false prophets, Jerusalem was destroyed.

We are hearing the same thing today from so many Christian prophets and preachers—that everything is OK, and even getting better and better, all while great evil is increasing exponentially, persecution is increasing and darkness is expanding. People are being lured into nationally sanctioned sodomy and perversion and Christians who oppose it are being ridiculed and fined. Soon, if things don't change, we will see Christians in prison in America just as they are in North Korea simply for preaching the Bible.

After Jerusalem was defeated, Ezekiel switched his prophetic focus to the surrounding nations. It would not be pretty. His message wasn't one of happy affirmation.

In fact, Jesus himself didn't always have the disposition of a gentle shepherd. Watch how he set his face against cities:

"Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. But it will be more bearable in the judgment for Tyre and Sidon than for you. And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven? You shall be brought down to Hades. 'The one who hears you hears me, and the one who rejects you

rejects me, and the one who rejects me rejects him who sent me' " (Luke 10:13-16, MEV).

J. Vernon McGee said:

"We get a warped view of Him when all we hear is, 'God is love, God is love.' It is true that God is love, but don't lose sight of the fact that God is also holy. He is righteous and He will judge. You are not rushing into heaven on the little love boat today. If you reject His salvation, there will be nothing left but judgment.

"The word of the LORD came again to me, saying ..." (Ezek. 25:1, MEV).

I often have to stop after seemingly unimportant verses like this one to consider the ramifications: "The word of the Lord came to me."

Is the word of the Lord coming to anybody out there today? Of course several true messengers of God are receiving the alarming, Rhema words of God in this hour, but they are few and far between. I appreciate people like John Kilpatrick who has the courage and discernment to declare that, "America is now an apostate nation." Others like Steve Hill, Leonard Ravenhill, Isaiah Saldivar, Nathan Morris, Mike Bickle, Mario Murillo and Lou Engle are voicing or have voiced culture-shaking truth.

When supposed messengers of God are expressing only happy, positive, affirming words they instantly lose credibility with me.

"Thus says the Lord of hosts: Do not listen to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you. They lead you into vanity; they speak a vision of their own heart and not out of the mouth of the Lord. They still say to those who despise Me, 'The Lord has said, 'You will have peace' "; and they say to everyone who walks after the imagination of his own heart, "No

evil will come upon you” (Jer. 23:16-17, MEV).

Contrast the previous verses with what follows:

“For who has stood in the counsel of the Lord and has perceived and heard His word? Who has given heed to His word and listened to it? Look, a whirlwind of the Lord has gone forth in fury, a tempestuous whirlwind. It will fall tempestuously upon the head of the wicked. The anger of the Lord will not turn back until He has executed and performed the thoughts of His heart. In the latter days you will understand it perfectly” (Jer. 23:18-20, MEV).

Just as in Jeremiah’s time, today people are prophesying words that did not originate with God:

“I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran. I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied. But if they had stood in My counsel and had caused My people to hear My words, then they would have turned them from their evil way and from the evil of their deeds” (Jer. 23:21-22, MEV).

Thankfully, Ezekiel did receive the Word of the Lord. Now, what happens next is a spiritual mandate that is almost entirely forsaken in today’s church.

“Son of man, set your face toward the Ammonites and prophesy against them” (Ezek. 25:2, MEV).

One of the most quoted scriptures in the Bible is John 3:16. It’s a revelation of God’s love. I believe we stop short of the greater message to the detriment of the mission.

Here are the famous verses:

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved” (John 3:16-17, MEV).

And here's what's so often neglected though it is a part of the preceding passage:

"He who believes in Him is not condemned. But he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (John 3:18, MEV).

We need to understand that the wrath of God remains on those who don't have eternal life in Christ. Reading further in chapter three of John reveals this:

"Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him" (John 3:36, MEV).

So, clearly there are enemies of God who are choosing to remain condemned, and we can't sit back hoping that they someday turn.

As we prophesy against the enemies of God we are simply bringing revelation regarding their condition and their future should they not repent. This is an act of godly love that will be rejected as hatred in our humanistic culture!

In fact, even within the church we are called to some extreme measures for the sake of the rebellious person's soul—in the name of love!

"It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and such immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles, that a man has his father's wife. But you are arrogant. Instead you should have mourned, so that he who has done this deed might be removed from among you. For indeed, though absent in body but present in spirit, I have already, as if I were present, judged him who has done this deed, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. When you are assembled, along with my spirit, in the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, deliver him to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that the spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord Jesus"

(1 Cor. 5:1-5, MEV).

We are to deliver unrepentant people in the church to Satan! This is a very powerful example of what Ezekiel was doing by prophesying against people. Again, this is an expression of love as we trust God's wisdom. Note that delivering someone to Satan would introduce them to a terrible season of life as their flesh is destroyed—so that their spirit might be saved.

As we prophesy against the spirit of the age, we are also agreeing in battle with God as he moves to protect his own. God is zealous for his bride.

The Ammonites Celebrated and Ezekiel Responded

Why was God against the Ammonites? They celebrated when Israel was defeated.

There are many today who are applauding the defeat of godly marriage in our nation, defeats regarding abortion, prayer in school and many other losses. This is the rebellion in the land that must be confronted, in love, with boldness by today's preachers and prophets.

"Say to the Ammonites, Hear the word of the Lord GOD: Thus says the Lord GOD, Because you said, 'Aha!' over my sanctuary when it was profaned, and over the land of Israel when it was made desolate, and over the house of Judah when they went into exile, therefore behold, I am handing you over to the people of the East for a possession, and they shall set their encampments among you and make their dwellings in your midst. They shall eat your fruit, and they shall drink your milk" (Ezek. 25:3-4, MEV).

This is serious.

Is America at risk of being handed over to other nations who will ultimately defeat us? Yes. It's becoming easier to see a day when America will be no more. I know such a thought will

cause the positive thinkers to react and accuse me of not standing in faith or professing doom and gloom. Those accusations don't move me. If I had no faith for America's spiritual revival I would never waste time sounding an alarm like I am in this article. A revelation of a possible, or even probable, troubling future is not an exercise in faithlessness; it's an act of love. Tornado alarms go off to help people prepare for trouble and react accordingly so they might be saved. Can you imagine getting angry at the alarm?

Just as I wrote that I heard very loud thunder exploding outside, and then I heard loud, distinctive tones booming out of my mobile phone. A message is currently displaying that says:

Emergency Alert: Flash Flood Warning in this area until 9:00pm CDT. Avoid flood areas. Check local media. National Weather Service. Imminent severe alert.

Interesting timing don't you think?

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