

A Prophetic Call to the Valley of Shechem

✖ If you are reading these words, then you've probably already chosen this day whom you will serve. But could it be possible that there are yet things you need to put away in order to truly worship the Lord in spirit and in truth and love Him with *all* your heart, with *all* your soul, with *all* your strength and with *all* your mind? I submit to you that it is possible, and for many of us even probable.

Today, the Lord is calling you to the Valley of Shechem.

Until recently, I hadn't spent much time studying the rich biblical history of the Valley of Shechem, the place where Abraham first built an altar to the Lord on his migration out of an idolatrous land. I had never done an intense analysis of this valley between mounts Ebal and Gerizim, where Jacob built his well and Jesus would later tell a woman there everything she ever did (John 4).

No, I didn't know too much about this significant valley. But it only took three words from the Lord to pique my curiosity. He said to me, "Valley of Shechem." Those three words set me off on a prophetic investigation for what the Lord is saying to the church in this hour. I studied the geographical and historical significance of Shechem, but it is the spiritual significance on which the Lord shined a bright light.

The Valley of Shechem is where Joshua called together all the tribes of Israel. Once all the elders, chiefs, judges and officers arrived and presented themselves before God, Joshua delivered a powerful prophetic word to the nation. Joshua prophesied about Abraham, a prophet who once worshipped other gods. He prophesied about the plagues on Egypt. He prophesied about the parting of the Red Sea. He essentially offered a

history of Israel right up to its modern day. God was reminding them of the kind intentions of His will.

God was going somewhere with this prophetic history lesson. Indeed, He was methodically working to drive a point home. See, God had given Israel a land for which she did not labor and cities she did not build. Israel was dwelling safely in the Promised Land, eating of the vineyards and the olive groves. In other words, God followed His miraculous deliverance with His abundant grace. Much the same, God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ, predestined us to adoption as sons of Jesus Christ to Himself—according to the good pleasure of His will (Eph. 1:3-6).

With this spiritual truth in mind, come with me to the Valley of Shechem and listen closely to the heart of the prophetic message Joshua delivered to Israel on that day of decision—then apply it to yourself.

“Now therefore, fear the Lord, serve Him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt. Serve the Lord! And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord” (Joshua 24:14-15).

The question is simple: Will you serve Jehovah whole-heartedly or will you serve an idol? The simplest definition of “idol” is a false god. Merriam-Webster defines idol as a “representation or symbol of an object of worship; a false god. Another definition is “pretender, impostor.” Yet another definition is “an object of extreme devotion” or “a false conception.”

In ancient times, people created idols to worship. They gave

these wooden, silver and golden idols names that represented gods. Today, we are a little more sophisticated and the enemy is a little subtler. We would never dream of worshipping a golden calf. But we may be tempted to worship our favorite sport, our career, our children or even our ministry.

In other words, we may set up people, places and things as idols in our lives that draw our attention away from God. Anything that draws our attention away from Jesus is a pretender and an imposter. Any object of extreme devotion apart from God is a false god.

The Bible clearly says "You shall have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20:3). In case you didn't hear it loud and clear in Exodus, the Holy Spirit repeats Himself in Deuteronomy 5:7: "You shall have no other gods before me." And once more, "For thou shalt worship no other god: for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God" (Exodus 34:14).

Maybe you have "idols" in your life, like your kids or your car. But this is what the Lord is saying in this hour: More often than not the idols in our lives is self.

The Bible says that stubbornness is as idolatry (1 Samuel 15:23). Stubbornness is putting our self-will before God's will. The Lord is saying that now is the time for our self-will to decrease so that His will can increase in the earth. Now is the time for us to lay aside childish ways and adopt His ways for His glory. Now is the time for us to surrender with *all* our heart, with *all* our soul, with *all* our strength, and with *all* our mind to the will of God—even at the expense of our personal ambitions, hopes and plans. It's time to lay everything on the altar and let the Lord give back only that which agrees with His plans and purposes.

Just like Jesus told the woman at the well in the Valley of Shechem, God is Spirit, and His worshippers must worship in spirit and in truth. So choose this day whom you will serve:

self or Spirit. I urge you by the Spirit of God not to be conformed to this world, but to be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God to a lost and dying world. And I pray that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding—and that you may be strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power to do obey the will of God in all things. Amen.

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