

Prophetic Word: America Must Lay Down Its Pride

Many are praying about what the Lord is saying for this year and in this hour. There are several things the Lord has spoken to my heart.

This is a serious time in which we need to be sober, pray and take heed. But also, we must not fear. How do we not fear? When we do justice and righteousness.

Ezekiel 33:16 refers to justice after someone who has committed an injustice or sin turns from it, when God sees and says, "None of his sins that he has committed will be remembered against him. He has practiced justice and righteousness; he will surely live."

We are to do justice and righteousness. We are to live holy as He is holy. That means we need to clean our "house."

"I will judge each of you according to his ways" (Ezek. 33:20).

This is to each of us individually. Each of us will give an account individually to the Lord.

The word "judge" in that verse is the word: *shaphat*. It actually means more than just to judge. It means "to govern" and encompasses the areas of executive, legislative and judicial actions of government.

It has both positive and negative meaning: for those who practice justice it means to avenge and defend. For those who practice unrighteousness it means to pronounce sentence and punish.

This is both a time of restoration (justice given) and judgment (also justice given) depending on which side of the

pendulum you are on. This is a call for holiness and repentance.

I heard the Lord say this for this year. This is not a futuristic word. It is an imminent word. And it will begin with the shepherds (leaders) and the prophets.

"Woe to the shepherds who are destroying and scattering the sheep of My pasture!" declares the Lord" (Jer. 23:1).

We know that judgment begins first within the church, although I believe this is also a word for others in leadership. We have already seen over the last several years the church shaken with those who have fallen.

But for those who are *still* leading a double life, leading sheep astray, abusing, they will be broken ... and suddenly. I don't believe this is just a word for the shepherds of the church. It is for the shepherds (leaders) in our nation as well.

This is a call to holiness and repentance.

But let the sheep be fully aware that this call to holiness is to them as well. God deals with leadership first ... and then he deals with the sheep. Do not think He will deal with one and not the other.

But this is also word of hope and encouragement as He says to His people:

"I shall also raise up shepherds over them and they will tend them; and they will not be afraid any longer nor be terrified, nor will any be missing, declares the Lord" (Jer. 23:4).

"I will feed them in a good pasture. I will feed my flock and I will lead them to rest," declares the Lord God (Ezek. 34:14-15).

So, while we are not to walk in fear, it is urgent that we

each make sure we have our lives and our house in order. One of the areas we need to begin is in the area of pride. Pride comes in so subtly that often we don't even recognize it.

In the midst of the tense relations with Iran right now, I sensed the Lord say, "There is a pride in America that they are untouchable. They are not." Pride makes us touchable. We have to remove it.

We cannot put our hope in our military might, in our strength, or that we are a "Christian nation" and so we cannot be touched. To do so is pride that opens a window to our downfall. Our hope and trust must be in God.

This is also a call to humility. Let us remember, "If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land" (2 Chron. 7:14). {eo}

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