

# THE COMING OF THE LORD

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*Rev. 7 vs 3 "Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their fore heads ... "*

*Quotable quotes:*

*God's theology and position of doctrine is not  
fundamentalism of being saved and getting into heaven.  
God's desire is not you escape hell but that you destroy hell  
!!! Burt Asbill. (Mahomet, Illinois July 29, 2007)*

(Sunday 30th March, 2008)

## THE COMING OF THE LORD CONTD.

Today we take a look at scriptures that confirm God's pattern of bringing tribulation when there is an over spreading of abominations. Abomination is indeed a grievous thing in the sight of God, it provokes God to jealousy. For God to be jealous for His glory is fearful. Wherever you find abomination you can be sure that tribulation will most certainly follow.

**Our first example is taken from: 1 Sam. 2 vs 12 – The sons of Eli.**

Hophni and Phinehas the sons of Eli, by right, due to their Aaronic lineage were next in line for the priesthood. They handled the things of the Lord daily, they had a great opportunity to know God through God's dealing with the priesthood and the going on's in the house of the Lord. They ought to have been learning the ways of the Lord, serving the Lord faithfully; but this was not the case. Outwardly Hophni and Phinehas looked like they knew the Lord because they were discharging their priestly duties at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation but inwardly the Lord knew they were very far from him. God testified of them thus: *vs 12 "Now the sons of Eli were sons of Belial; they knew not the Lord"*. Their activities (work, offering) were detestable to the Lord.

Are you a Christian doing all that is expected of Christians (going for prayer meeting, going to church, doing other Christian works etc.), then it is expedient that you confirm that your offerings (activities) are acceptable to the Lord. What will God testify of you? Learn a good lesson from the story of Hophni and Phinehas. **They were serving God but thier service was detestable to God. Let each man examine himself to ensure that he is in the faith (2 Cor. 13 vs 5b), 2 Timothy 2 vs 19b "And let every one that nameth the name of the Lord depart from iniquity"**.

**Now let us look at the actions of Hophni and Phinehas more closely.**

First they blatantly disobeyed God's instructions, they had no respect for the Lord or their duties as priest. God's instruction to the people at the time was "the meat offering should be boiled and the fat burnt before a portion is given to the priest" but Hophni and Phinehas would have none of that. Of what the people provided they would take what they wanted by force; making themselves fat with the chiefest of all the offerings of the people (*1 Sam. 2 vs 29b*). **No man who fears the Lord will go against God's instruction so blatantly, treating the offering of God with such contempt.** The bible records that their actions caused the people of the Lord to transgress.

Secondly, they were seducing the young women at the entrance of the tabernacle of the congregation (*1 Sam. 2 vs 22*). These their evil deeds were an affront to God. God spoke in His Word: I honour those who honour me and seriously despise those who dishonor me. LET US FEAR BEFORE GOD ALMIGHTY. IT IS A FEARFUL THING TO FALL INTO THE HANDS OF A MIGHTY GOD.

Thirdly they despised their birthright. Instead of busying themselves to learn of the Lord with a view to taking over the service of priesthood from their father, they were wasting their substance partaking in abominable acts.

**What was the result?**

Certainly tribulation followed and not only for Eli and his sons but for all Israel *1 Sam. 20 vs 30b "... but now the Lord saith, Be it far from me, for them that honour me, I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.*

*Vs 31 "Behold, the days come that I will cut off thine arm, and the arm of thy father's house, there shall not be an old man in thine house and all the increase of thine house shall die in the flower of their age. Vs 34 "And this shall be the sign unto thee, there shall come upon thy two sons, on Hophni and Phinehas; in one day they shall die both of them.*

Consequently, when the Philistines attacked Israel, the Israelites carried the "Ark of the Covenant of the Lord (which carried God's presence) into the battle field to solicit God's help. Did it happen as they desired? It did not. God did not help them, because there was abomination in the holy place. God brought judgment. The glory had indeed departed (Icabod) from Israel *1 Sam. 3 vs 13, 14.*

**Point to note:**

One may wonder, what exactly did Eli do wrong? The bible records in *1 Sam. 2 vs 23* that Eli spoke to his sons *"And he said unto them, why do ye such things? For I hear of your evil dealings by all this people vs 24 "Nay my sons; for it is no good report that I hear, ye make the Lord's people to transgress"* Eli failed to correct his sons with strong discipline when he had the opportunity to do so. *1 Sam. 3 vs 13 "For I have told him that I will judge his house for every for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile; and he restrained them not"*.

Eli's sons were amongst those who were given the responsibilities of taking the ark to the battle front. You can imagine, Eli allowing such a thing knowing very well the true nature of his sons. He ought to have driven them away from the tabernacle seeing that their sin was so grievous. As far as God was concerned the iniquity of his sons had driven God's presence from the ark. The ark was useless without God's presence. **Where there is iniquity, sin and overspreading of abominations what is required is repentance.** The elders of Israel in the war with the Philistines failed to realize this.

At the first defeat (4,000 Israelites died) instead of trying to find out the reason for their problem and repenting of their sins, they presumptuously went ahead to regroup and attack. They reasoned *1 Sam 4 vs 36 "... Let us fetch the ark of the covenant of the Lord out of Shiloh unto us, that when it cometh among us, it may save us out of the hand of our enemies.* The result was certainly defeat. *For Israel was smitten and they fled everyone unto his tent ... for there fell of Israel 30,000 footmen. (1 Sam. 4 vs 10a).*

With out God's presence there was no covering, so defeat was inevitable. It was so bad that even the Ark of the covenant was captured by the Philistines. (God eventually judged the Philistines and because of the plaques God brought upon them, they with their own hands returned the ark to Israel. Can anyone stand before this Mighty God? How presumptuous of the Philistines). Let everything that had breath fear the Lord!!.

### **Our second example is taken from Ezekiel 6, 7, 8.**

This is another account of the glory departing because of iniquity. Chapter 6 gives details of the abominations that caused the desolations. The elders of Israel had established in the land high places (high places are where sacrifices were made to idols) ALSO they made altars to other images which they worshipped. NOTE God in his mercy did not fail to warn them of the desolation he will bring upon them because of their unrighteous deeds. **Let us also take heed as the Lord is sounding a warning of such great tribulation in our own time.**

The encouragement for children of God who are crying out to the Lord out of a sincere heart is this; for each generation no matter the amount of tribulation unleashed, God always promised *"there will be a remnant. Ezekiel 6 vs 8 "yet I will leave a remnant, that ye may have some that shall escape the sword among the nations, when ye shall be scattered through the countries"*

### **The remnant: who does God refer to as the remnant?**

The remnant are those who are willing to live up to God's commandments no matter what. What is the criteria for becoming a remnant? You must make yourself available to Him, obeying His commandments, walking in His ways, receiving the mark/seal/nature/character of Christ Jesus and eventually becoming an overcomer.

### **Another account is found in Ezekiel Chapter 8 vs 3–18**

- ⇒ Men weeping for Tammuz; the equivalent of this in the modern day is the celebrations some partake in during the Easter period. The rituals (easter eggs, the 40 day fast, etc) being done at that time as history books state are exactly the same rituals that are performed during the easter period. These things will certainly provoke the Lord to jealousy.
- ⇒ Elders who were supposed to be worshipping God in the temple where seriously take up with idolatry *vs 12 "He said to me, son of man have you seen what the elders of the house of Israel are doing in the darkness, each at the shrine of his own idol? They say, the Lord does not see us"* This is not very far from what happens today. You find Pastors, Bishops, Reverends and other Christians alike in the open supposedly serving the Lord but in the secret they serve other things. God is calling our attention to these abominations in the holy place. As we see them we know it is time to "flee to the mountains".

### **Ezekiel 10**

Ezekiel 10 gives account of what happens when the glory of God departs; what follows is destruction, tribulation etc. When men cause the glory of God to depart, they bring upon themselves destruction (Matthew 24) and in the converse when men make themselves available to God by walking in obedience the same glory returns.

Watch your heart brethren, be careful to walk circumspectly before the Lord, keeping yourself in the way and in the faith, that you may be numbered among the overcomers, who will survive the abominations that make some desolate, and consequently the great tribulation will have no effect upon you.

Most people erroneously believe that the only way overcomer saints will survive the great tribulation is that they will be "taken away in the twinkling of an eye" (rapture). It is not so. **Those who make themselves ready, will be kept through and brought out of the great tribulation and they will flourish like the palm tree in the court of their heavenly father. Amen.**

## **QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION**

**Question:** How can one in the present day in practical terms make the offering of the Lord contemptible?

**Answer:** If you understand what constitutes the offering of the Lord in our times and where the place of the 'offering' is, it will help make things clearer. The offering of the Lord is not "meat" and "grains" as it was in the Old Testament, nor do physical altars apply in our time. Today the altar is our hearts (will, emotions, desires, mind). And the offering can be equated to obedience. The decision we take in our hearts (based on God's word) and the actions we take as a result of those decisions we have taken, we

regard as our offering. When we hear the word of the Lord, what do we do with it? Do we take it seriously enough to act upon it, or do we treat it contemptibly by disobeying it and walking in our own way instead. God is calling us to a place where we can fully obey him in **all** things. This is the bottom line. Be ye perfect even as my heavenly Father is perfect. May the fear of God rule our actions continually. Let us purge our hearts from whatever is not pleasing to God

**Question 2:** How about in the case where when fellowshipping together (this is bringing an offering to God), somebody comes in who is unwilling to offer i.e. the person is not just ready to get out of their bad mood. Is it not possible that the person will constitute a block (or be a stumbling block) e.g. the person is not willing to get out of that particular mood and just sits down. When others see the person, would they also not be brought down i.e. would the person's sadness or moodiness not make others feel low as well, since the persons mood may rob off on others?

**Answer:** Well that is certainly possible. But in this dispensation, it is more of an individual issue. You must concern yourself with your own heart (soul) not another person's. Also note, one can only inhibit the move of God for a while, but not forever. You may constitute a clog in the wheel of progress only for a limited time. E.g. in the case of Eli and his sons; God raised up Samuel a man sent to the house of the Lord to serve only as a servant but God found his heart perfect towards him. So God elevated him to priesthood. So we see priesthood come to a man whose lineage did not qualify him to be a priest. God is well able to remove one and well able to establish another.

# IT PAYS TO REMEMBER ...

## THE OLD PATHS

Every Christian should read the Bible because it is "God-breathed and profitable for teaching, for conviction, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Tim. 3:16). It shows us many things that God has done for us and the way He has led men in the past. If we want to know the riches and vastness of God's provision for us, we must read the Bible. If we want to see God's step-by-step guidance for men, we must read the Bible as well.

God's speaking to man today is based upon what He has already spoken in the past. God rarely speaks things which He has not already spoken in the Bible. Even though a person may be quite advanced in his spiritual walk, God's revelation to him will still be confined to the words that He has spoken in the Bible. Hence, God's speaking today is merely a repetition of His own word. If a person does not know what God has spoken in the past, it is difficult for him to receive His revelation in the present because he lacks the basis for God's speaking.

The Bible is a great book. It is a monumental work. Even if we spent our whole life on the Bible, we could only touch a part of its riches. It is impossible for a person to understand the Bible without spending time to study it. Every young Christian should do his best to labour on God's word so that when he grows old, he can nourish himself and supply others with the riches of the word. ... Watchman Nee. (Reading the Bible, Nov. 1997)