

The Law of Jealousy

by Bob Phillips

The law of jealousy is a spiritual principle that God uses to deal with spiritual adultery and idolatry in His people.

Duration: 1:03:03

Scripture: Numbers 5:14-16, Matthew 12:39-40, Matthew 22:29-32, Matthew 23:23, Acts 3:23

Topics: "Jealousy"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the law of jealousy as described in Numbers 5. He explains that this law was applied to women who were suspected of adultery, causing physical symptoms as a result of drinking a special water. The preacher draws a parallel between this law and God's judgment on unfaithful Jerusalem, stating that God will judge them like women who commit adultery. The sermon also includes a personal testimony of a woman who experienced conviction after reading Galatians 5 and found freedom through the Word of God.

Transcript

The fifth chapter of Numbers. As we begin, I want to read something to you from the book of Acts. You can just simply write it down.

It's another one of those scriptures that speak about using the Old Testament. And I'm not trying to prove anything by reading this, except to say that there are more places than you would possibly imagine where a reference is made to using the Old Testament and using that as a type to point to Jesus. That's what we're going to do this afternoon.

I'm going to speak to you about the law of jealousy. The law of jealousy. Now, let me just read this scripture to you from Acts chapter 3, verse 23.

Verse 23. And when they had set a day for him, they came to him at his lodging in large numbers. Now, this is Paul that they're coming to.

And he was explaining to them by solemnly testifying about the kingdom of God and trying to persuade them concerning Jesus. Now, listen carefully because multitudes are coming to Paul and he is explaining to them concerning Jesus, testifying about the kingdom of God from both the law of Moses and from the prophets from morning until evening. And so, there's another place where Paul was taking pictures.

And Jesus throughout his ministry used quotations from the Old Testament to illustrate a point. He used Jonah to speak about himself. And so, there are types in the Old Testament, as we know, to point to spiritual realities in the New Testament.

That's what I want you to see here in Numbers, the fifth chapter. I'm going to start reading with verse 11. And at first, don't try to find a type everywhere with every word and every phrase.

But we're going to get the general picture of what he's speaking here in this particular passage of scripture. Numbers chapter 5, verse 11. Then the Lord spoke to Moses saying, Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, If any man's wife goes astray and is unfaithful to him, and a man has intercourse with her and it is hidden from the eyes of her husband, and she is undetected, although she has defiled herself and there's no witness against her, and she's not been caught in the act, and if a spirit of jealousy comes over him, that is the husband, and he is jealous of his wife when she has defiled herself, or if a spirit of jealousy comes over him and he is jealous of his wife when she's not defiled herself, then the man shall then bring his wife to the priest, and shall bring as an offering for her one-tenth of an ephah, a barley meal.

He shall not pour oil on it nor put frankincense on it, for it is a grain offering of jealousy, a grain offering of memorial, a reminder of iniquity. Then the priest shall bring her near and have her stand before the Lord, and the priest shall take holy water in an earthenware vessel, and he shall take some of the dust that is on the floor of the tabernacle and put it into the water. The priest shall then have the woman stand before the Lord, and let the hair of the woman's head go loose, and place the grain offering of memorial in her hands, which is the grain offering of jealousy.

And in the hand of the priest, it is to be the water of bitterness that brings a curse. Now, I want you to just make note of that. It's a water of bitterness.

Now, notice what happens. Now, you get the picture. Now, here's what he's saying.

If there seemingly is unfaithfulness involved in this, whether it be unfaithfulness or the husband thinks there's unfaithfulness, there was a law in the Old Testament to determine whether or not there was genuinely unfaithfulness. And the woman was to be brought before the priest, and this frankincense and some dust was to be put in this water, and she was to drink it. Now, notice what happens.

Verse 19, And the priest shall have her take an oath, and shall say to the woman, If no man is laying with you, and if you've not gone astray into uncleanness, being under the authority of your husband, be immune to this water of bitterness that brings a curse. Now, when she takes this water into herself, if she's not unfaithful, then she's immune from the curse that would be upon her. Verse 20, If, however, you have gone astray, being under the authority of your husband, and if you have defiled yourself, and a man other than your husband has had intercourse with you, then the priest shall have the woman swear with the oath of the curse, and the priest shall say to the woman, The Lord make you a curse and an oath among your people, by the Lord's making your thigh waste away, and your abdomen swell.

Now, if she takes the water and she's not guilty, nothing happens. But if she takes the water and she is guilty, a curse comes upon her, the abdomen swells, and the thigh wastes away. Verse 22, And this water that brings a curse shall go into your stomach, and make your abdomen swell, and your thigh waste away, and the woman shall say, Amen, Amen.

Then the priest shall write these curses on a scroll, and he shall wash them off into the water of bitterness. And he shall make the woman drink of the water of bitterness that brings a curse, so that the water which brings a curse will go into her and cause bitterness. Now, come on down with me to verse 27.

When he has made her drink the water, then it shall come about, if she has defiled herself and has been unfaithful to her husband, that the water which brings a curse shall go into her and cause bitterness. Now, notice that. It's going to cause bitterness.

And her abdomen will swell, and her thigh will waste away, and the woman will become a curse among her people. But if the woman has not defiled herself and is clean, she will then be free and conceive children. Or that word literally means she'll have seed or bear fruit.

Now, look what he calls this. Verse 29. This is the law of jealousy.

The law of jealousy. Now, God was not simply trying to give a law to the Old Testament Israelites, but he was giving us also a spiritual picture. Has a message to us.

There's still a law of jealousy. And it operates much the same way, and you find it interspersed throughout the Old and New Testaments. We're going to look at that.

But first of all, I want you to see something. I want you to see that oftentimes, this same picture of a woman committing adultery is not only applied here, but it's applied to the church. Turn with me to Ezekiel.

Remember, this was called the law of jealousy. Turn with me to Ezekiel 16. You might mark Numbers 5. Probably too late now.

But you get a chance you might mark it because we'll be coming back to it. Ezekiel 16, verse 38. Ezekiel 16, verse 38.

I want you to see the analogy. Remember what we had in Numbers 5? This woman takes in this water. She's been unfaithful to her husband.

She's an adulteress. And the water comes into her, causes her thigh to waste away, her abdomen swells, and God calls it the law of jealousy. Now, notice verse 38.

God's speaking and He says, Thus I shall judge you. Now, He's talking here to unfaithful Jerusalem, to the unfaithful people of God. Thus I shall judge you.

Like women who do what? Who commit adultery. God says, I'm gonna judge you the same way that women who commit adultery are judged. That's what we read in Numbers 5. That's how they're judged.

Or shed blood are judged. And I shall bring on you the blood of wrath and what? Jealousy. See, so this becomes later on, it becomes a type of the way God says, I'm gonna deal with you the same way that I deal with the church.

Now, do you remember what happens? When God's people become unfaithfulness, now, that water, that water that they take into themselves, that the woman would take into themselves, became what kind of water? It became a bitter water. Now, the same word is wormwood. It became like wormwood.

Now, turn with me to Jeremiah 23. Jeremiah 23. Jeremiah 23.

And I'm just going to pick at some verses through this so that we might see it. Jeremiah 23. Now, literally, and we're gonna see this in a moment, what happens in applying this to the church is that literally God brings a bitterness of spiritual deception on His people.

It's a bitterness. Now, when I speak of the word bitterness, we'll see as we go along that I'm not necessarily talking about something that's sour tasting or bitter to the taste or even all the time is perceived as something harmful. But God says a bitterness begins to take place.

And we're gonna see the references to this as we go through the word. But here's what He says. Verse 1. Jeremiah 23.

Woe to the shepherds who are destroying and scattering the sheep of my pasture, declares the Lord. Thus says the Lord God of Israel concerning the shepherds who are attending my people. You've scattered my flock and driven them away and have not attended to them.

Behold, I'm about to attend to you for the evil of your deeds. Now, He says what He's going to do. He's gonna judge the shepherds.

Then He says, I'm going to give them a shepherd over them. Verse 5. Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord. And I'll raise up for David a righteous branch.

And he'll reign as king and act wisely and do justice and righteousness in the land. Now, who is that? That's Jesus. Now, notice what had happened to the people.

Verse 9. As for the prophets, Jeremiah speaking, my heart's broken within me. Jeremiah looked at the condition of the prophets and it broke his heart. God's making... He's raising up a remnant today that... The remnant of God cannot stand to look at the church in the state that it's in without a broken heart.

I'm convinced of that. You just can't do it. Now, Jeremiah sees this and he says, As for the prophets, my heart's broken within me.

All my bones tremble. I become like a drunken man, even like a man overcome with wine, because of the Lord and because of His holy words. For the land is full of what? Adulterers.

The land mourns because of the curse. Now, you see what the problem is. Now, we just read in Ezekiel that he's going to judge them on the basis of adultery.

He said, I'm going to deal with my people just like a woman caught in adultery is dealt with. And what happened to that woman? She drank the water of bitterness. And Jeremiah sees a people that are just like those adulterers.

And here's what he says is going to happen to them. Verse 15. Therefore, thus says the Lord of hosts concerning the prophets, Behold, I am going to feed them what? Wormwood or bitterness, the water of bitterness, and make them drink poisonous water.

Now, how many of you see that? Now, that's what God says He's going to do. When there's adultery in the land. Now, God is certainly against physical adultery.

But I'm taking this beyond this to a step of God dealing with spiritual adultery. Spiritual adultery. Turn with me to John chapter 7. Excuse me, Romans chapter 7. Romans 7. I'm laying a foundation for where we're

going.

Romans 7. I want you to see that this law of jealousy applies to the church. Romans 7. Verse 1. Or do you not know, brethren, for I'm speaking to those who know the law, that the law has jurisdiction over a person as long as he lives? Now, this appears at first as if he's talking about a scripture to deal with physical marriage. But he's not.

Notice this. For the married woman is bound by law to her husband while he is living. But if her husband dies, she is released from the law concerning the husband.

So then, if while her husband is living, she is joined to another man, then she'll be called what? An adulteress. Now, who was Israel supposed to be joined to? God, the Lord. But instead, she had joined herself to the world.

Now, when a woman's husband is still living and she joins herself to another man, she becomes an adulteress. It's not the world today who are adulteresses. It's those who've had an experience with the Lord Jesus Christ.

And they're supposed to be joined to Jesus. But they're committing spiritual adultery with the world. And they become an adulteress.

Now, follow on down with me. But if her husband dies, she's free from the law, so that she's not an adulteress, though she's joined to another man. Now, what he was telling them this is this.

Israel was, as long as the law was still alive, Israel was to be bound to the law. But now the law is dead. And who's come alive? Christ has come alive.

And so they're to be bound to Christ Jesus. But now notice this. Verse 4. He's giving an illustration.

Now he's bringing it home. Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the law through the body of Christ, that you might be joined to another. Now, who are we to be joined to? To Jesus.

To him who was raised from the dead, that we might bear what? Fruit for God. Now, when we read Numbers 5, this woman who was not guilty of committing adultery, did it say she went on to bear children or seed or fruit? Now, as long as we stay joined to the Lord Jesus Christ, we'll bear the fruit. We don't make the fruit, but we'll bear the fruit by the operation of the Lord Jesus Christ in our lives.

But the moment the heart begins to make friends with the world through the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, the boastful pride of life, when we begin to take on idolatry, when we begin to want Jesus plus something, and my friends, we've been saying it in this conference, I don't know why God's hitting it so hard, but the same thing can apply. Don't just think of somebody who's covetous for money. It can happen with healing.

Are you hearing me? It can happen with praise. When I mentioned this morning that we made an idol out of praise, I didn't at all mean that praise wasn't good, but all I'm saying is this. When you begin to make something else your God and your way to God, and it replaces a relationship with God.

Don't tell me everybody who's strong in praise has a relationship with God. Sometimes that relationship of deep intimate communion's been replaced by praise. And what I'm saying is simply this, that praise is to come out of a heart in love with Jesus.

Praise is not the way to victory. Jesus is the only way to victory. And because we have Jesus, we praise.

It's not the other way around. Are you following me? Now, I want you to see this. The same thing with Jesus the healer, but you can make healing your idol.

Make healing your God. The same thing with prosperity. You can make it your idol, you can make it your God.

Now, notice this. Turn to James. You're familiar with these scriptures.

We're to bear fruit for the Lord, but now turn to James chapter 4. I just want you to see it, so you see we have a reference to the New Testament. James 4. Here he applies it to the church, this adultery. James 4. James 4 verse 4. You, what? Adulteresses.

Do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore, whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. Now, I want you to see how this applies to the law of jealousy. Remember, God said in Ezekiel 16, I'm going to deal with you like I deal with an adulteress woman, and I'm going to bring upon you the wrath of my jealousy.

Now, look at this. The next verse, what does it say? Or do you think that the scripture speaks to no purpose? He jealously desires the spirit which he's made to dwell in us. Now, I mean, you see, so often through the word, and there are other scriptures we don't have time to turn to, but so often through the word, he equates this adultery, this spiritual adultery with his jealousy.

And so we have a type in Numbers 5 of how God's going to deal with spiritual adultery. See, whenever a pastor is more concerned about numbers in his church and building a big church and looking good in his ministry than he is his personal relationship with the Lord Jesus, he's in spiritual adultery. Now, I want you to turn with me to Nahum in the Old Testament.

Nahum. Well, I tell you what, before we do, let's look at Hebrews. Let's look at Hebrews, the 12th chapter.

No, I'm going to have you go to Nahum. I don't want to go there yet. Nahum.

I want you to look at the first chapter. If you find Micah, Habakkuk, Zephaniah. It's Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk.

As I've said many times, David said it just turned. Find the whitest pages you can find. Just hold your Bible up.

Find the whitest pages you can find. Those are the ones you haven't turned to very much. And you'll find Nahum right around there.

They haven't been yellowed from use. The gold's probably still on the edges. Nahum.

Nahum. Right after Micah. Jonah, Micah, Nahum.

Chapter 1. The Oracle of Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum, the Elkoshite. Now, look what he says.

A jealous and avenging God is the Lord. Now, what kind of God is he? He's a jealous God. The Lord is avenging and wrathful.

The Lord takes vengeance on his adversaries. And he reserves wrath for his enemies. But now, I want you to notice what he puts right in the middle of that.

The Lord is slow to anger and great in power. And then he follows it with something. And the Lord will by no means leave the guilty unpunished.

What kind of God is he? He's a jealous God. Turn with me to Exodus 34. Exodus 34.

Exodus 34. Verse 10. Then God said, Behold, I'm going to make a covenant before all your people.

I'll perform miracles which have not been produced in all the earth. Now, you realize who he said that to? He said that to the people that had just seen the miracle of God's deliverance from Egypt. And that pillar of fire between them and Pharaoh's army.

And the water closing up over. And closing with the Red Sea. He said, You think you've seen something? Just wait.

I've got more miracles greater than that. And God says to this people, I'll perform miracles which have not been produced in all the earth. Nor among any of the nations.

And all the people among whom you live will see the working of the Lord. For it's a fearful thing that I'm going to perform with you. Verse 11.

Be sure to observe what I'm commanding you this day. Behold, I'm going to drive out the Amorite before you. And the Canaanite.

The Hittite. The Perizzite. The Hevite.

And the Jebusite. Watch yourselves that you make no covenant with the inhabitants of the land in which you're going. Lest it become a snare in your midst.

Now did he say really in effect what he's saying? Make sure you don't become an adulteress with those nations. I'll drive them out before you. But make sure you don't become an adulteress with the world or the ways of the world.

Verse 13. But rather you are to tear down their altars. Smash their sacred pillars.

And cut down their asherim. Why? For you shall not worship any other god. For the Lord whose name is Jealous is a jealous God.

Now God is a jealous God. And he has a law of jealousy. And his people operate by this law of jealousy.

They take on the jealousy of God towards sin. When Jesus Christ, when you're joined to him, part of the fruit that's produced in this is that your life takes on the jealousy of God towards sin. I can tell if a man is not shut up alone with God.

Because he wants to go easy on sin. Pastors, if you're not shut up with God, you're going to be easy on sin. When you allow spiritual adultery to come into your lives.

Pastor or not a pastor. When you allow spiritual adultery to come into your lives. You'll start being easy on sin.

Or you'll either do that. Or you'll have such an outward form of holiness without ever touching the heart. And you'll pound away at things people do.

And never touch to the heart of the issue. But when you're joined to Jesus. As you begin to grow in the Lord.

And he begins to do a work inside you. Something begins to happen. What takes place.

Is that the closer you draw to Jesus. The more of his jealousy you take on. The more of his name you become.

The more jealous you become. About his honor. Now I'm not talking about you become so jealous about his honor.

That you start pointing a finger at everybody. You start pointing a finger at yourself. You start preaching to yourself.

You start looking at your own sin. Are you following me? Alright, now notice this. I want you to see somebody who was soft on sin.

And the result. 1 Samuel chapter 4. I want to give you some illustrations of the difference. Verse 10.

So the Philistines fought. And Israel was defeated. And every man fled to his tent.

And the slaughter was very great. For there fell of Israel 30,000 foot soldiers. The ark of God was taken.

And the two sons of Eli. Hophni and Phinehas died. Now a man of Benjamin.

Ran from the battle line. And came to Shiloh the same day. With his clothes torn.

And dust on his head. Now the two sons of Eli have died. Now I want you to see this.

And when he came behold. Eli was sitting on his seat by the road. Eagerly watching.

Because his heart was trembling. For the ark of God. So the man came to tell it in the city.

And all the city cried out. Well you know what happened. The story goes on to talk about the fact.

That when Eli heard. That his two sons had been killed. That he fell over backwards.

And he died. It broke his neck and he died. And then his daughter-in-law.

His daughter-in-law named the place Ichabod. Because the glory of the Lord had been departed. But I want you to know something.

Here's a man. Here's a man sitting here. And he's eager for the ark of God to come back.

You know how his two sons died? Now I want you to turn to chapter 2. I want you to turn to chapter 2. I want to show you what killed his sons. What killed his sons was not that battle. His sons began to die a death before that battle ever came.

Because he was soft on sin. In 1 Samuel chapter 2. Verse 22. Now Eli was very old.

Now I want you to see if he's got the jealousy of God over sin. Now Eli was very old. And he heard all that his sons were doing to all Israel.

This is 1 Samuel 2 verse 22. Now Eli was very old. And he heard all that his sons were doing to all Israel.

And how they lay with the women who served at the doorway of the tent of meeting. Now they're committing physical adultery. And he said to them.

Why do you do such things? The evil things that I hear from all these people. No my sons. For the report is not good which I hear the Lord's people circulating.

Now what is he more concerned about? What the people have to say or about what God has to say? He's more concerned about what the people have to say. He's more concerned about the rumors circulating about his sons. Than he is what God has to say about the sin taking place before all Israel.

He does not have the jealousy of God. And the result of it. He put his sons to death.

They didn't die in the battle. They died right here. Because the father didn't have the jealousy of God to correct them of their sins.

And every pastor. I believe every pastor is responsible. Who does not speak out against sin.

He's responsible when a child of God. When one of the sheep fall by the wayside and is devoured by the enemy. I believe there's a mark to your account.

I believe there's a mark to the account of every pastor. Now not if they walked off in rebellion. But if they didn't stand.

And they were easy on sin. And what they were concerned about was what the deacons were saying. What the board was saying.

What the people were saying. What the community was saying. When they go easy on sin.

My friends you led them into battle. And when they died it's held to your account. I know that's strong.

But I believe it's the truth. And that's what he means by blood on the hands. Now I want to show you the opposite of that.

The opposite of that is in Numbers chapter 25. Numbers chapter 25. The same thing is taking place right before all the people.

Actually it's the same sin. The very same thing is taking place. Eli was more concerned about what the people thought.

But now there's a man who rises up by the name of Phineas. He's not the same Phineas that was the son of Eli. But he rises up and he has something about him that's different.

Now notice this. Verse 3. So Israel joined themselves to Baal of Peor. And the Lord was angry against Israel.

And the Lord said to Moses. Take all the leaders of the people and execute them in broad daylight before the Lord. So that the fierce anger of the Lord may turn away from Israel.

So Moses said to the judges of Israel. Each of you slaves men who have joined themselves to Baal of Peor. Then behold one of the sons of Israel came and brought to his relatives a Midianite woman.

In the sight of Moses and in the sight of all the congregation of the sons of Israel. While they were weeping at the doorway of the tent of meeting. Right here.

They're standing there at the doorway of the tent of meeting. Weeping over the sins of the nation. And here's somebody that comes with a woman to take her into the tent and commit adultery.

Look what happens. Verse 7. When Phineas, the son of Eliezer, the son of Aaron, the priest saw it. He arose from the midst of the congregation.

He took a spear in his hand. And he went after the man of Israel into the tent. And he pierced both of them through.

The man of Israel and the woman through the body. So the plague on the sons of Israel was checked. Do you see the difference? I say you see the difference.

One of them has something burning on the inside of them. Elie didn't have it. Elie was more concerned with what people thought.

And it's not just to the pastors. It's when you walk a life before the people. That looks holy and righteous.

And inside you allow the lust of the heart to rage. When you allow the sins of secrecy to burn. On the inside.

But outwardly you appear to be one of the most righteous persons in the whole church. And you're more concerned about what people think. About the way you look and the way you appear before the eyes of men.

The jealousy of God is not in you. And it creates death. But notice what God calls this.

What is it operating in Phineas? Verse 11. Phineas the son of Eliezer. The son of Aaron the priest has turned away my wrath.

This is God speaking from the sons of Israel. In that he was what? He was jealous with whose jealousy? God's jealousy. He was jealous with my jealousy among them.

So that I did not destroy the sons of Israel in my jealousy. Therefore say behold I give him my covenant of what? Peace. And it shall be for him and his descendants after him a covenant of perpetual priesthood.

Why? Because he was jealous for his God and made atonement for the sons of Israel. Now what I want you to see here is that there's a difference. Whose Eli's heart joined to? Is he joined solely to the Lord his God? No.

Whose Phineas' heart joined to? Is he joined solely to the Lord his God? Yes. And so there's a godly jealousy that burns on the inside. There will be a godly jealousy that burns on the inside of every single person who's joined and locked up with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now what I want you to see is this. Now we could talk about the covenant of peace. We could talk about Malachi chapter 2 talks about the covenant of peace that he makes with the sons of Levi.

This covenant of peace he's talking about here. He says that people will seek instruction from their mouth and they'll turn many back from their iniquity. Literally.

Because of the jealousy of God that's operating within you many will be turned back from their sins. And then he compares it with another person like Eli. And he says they've transgressed the covenant.

They've perverted this covenant of peace. And many are drawn into their deception in the way of perversion. Now what I want you to see though is this.

Thinking about this law of jealousy. I want you to see what happens. Now brother David read a scripture earlier.

You remember what takes place? When the law of jealousy is in operation. And God's dealing with us. When that woman took that water into her stomach.

Something happened. It became bitter. It became like wormwood.

It becomes bitter. Now let's read again that scripture in Deuteronomy 29. Deuteronomy chapter 29.

David read it this morning. Right as we closed. Deuteronomy chapter 29.

Deuteronomy chapter 29. The law of jealousy is operating. By the way I'm not going to have you turn there.

But how many of you remember? I believe it's Psalm 32. In fact let me just read it to you. Don't turn there.

Let me just read this to you. You remember what happens when the woman takes upon herself. She takes this water of bitterness into herself.

What happens to her thigh? It wastes away. Did it not? Now listen. Just listen to me.

How blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven. Whose sin is covered. How blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute iniquity.

And whose spirit there is no deceit. When I kept silent about my sin. My body wasted away.

Through my groaning all day long. For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me. My vitality was drained away as the fever heat of summer.

But when I acknowledged my sin to you and my iniquity I did not hide. I said I will confess my transgressions to the Lord. Thou didst forgive the guilt of my sin.

Therefore let everyone who is godly pray to thee in a time when thou mayest be found. Surely in a flood of great waters they'll not reach him. Now you see the analogy? When the woman took upon herself that water of bitterness.

Inside the law of jealousy immediately took over. And her thigh began to waste away. And the same thing applies today.

God's a jealous God. His name is jealousy. His name is jealous.

And he's jealous over sin. When we acknowledge our sin. He brings a healing.

When we acknowledge our sin before God. He brings a healing to that. He said in Jeremiah I'll heal your backslidings.

And the blood of Jesus begins to clothe us and cleanse us and wash us. Not just confess it but we acknowledge Lord take it away. But when we allow things to stay lodged in the heart.

And my friends some of those things were lodged there before you ever came to Jesus. Then he begins to put his finger on them but you don't deal with them. It becomes a root of bitterness.

Becomes something springing up causing trouble. And you may be standing here tonight sitting here this afternoon. As a person who has peace in your heart.

That this doesn't apply to you. I'm not trying to scare you I want you to understand. The devil is always general about his conviction.

The Holy Spirit is very specific. He's very specific about his conviction. And so I'm not trying to scare you into something.

But I want you to understand something. You can have a false peace and be under judgment. We've already seen that.

Let's read it here. Deuteronomy 29. He's been talking in verses 13 down to verse 18.

That don't let your heart go after the world. Don't let it turn away. Verse 18 says, Lest there shall be among you a man or a woman or family or tribe.

Whose heart turns away today from the Lord our God. To go and serve the gods of those nations. Lest there shall be among you a root bearing what? Poisonous fruit and wormwood.

What's another word for wormwood? Bitterness. And it shall be when he hears the words of this curse. That he'll boast saying I have peace.

Though I walk in the stubbornness of my heart. In order to destroy the watered land with the dry. I like what the King James says.

It says in order to add drunkenness to thirst. Now here's what he's saying. He's saying this false peace.

When your heart goes after an idol. And it's a false peace. When some of the things that are errors.

That Don was talking about. Begin to reign in your heart. And you feel peaceful about it.

And you have some preacher or some theology. Or some books or whatever. Reinforcing that this is alright.

And your heart keeps going after the world. A false peace comes. And even when the Lord tries to come.

But see a bitterness is developing on the inside. Something's happening on the inside of you. A poisonous root is developing creating bitterness.

Because it causes your heart not to go after godliness. But after things that you loved when you were in the world. Are you hearing me? Now listen.

I'm going to give you some examples of that in a moment. Jeremiah 4. Don't turn there. Jeremiah 4.14 says that this bitterness lodges in the heart.

And it touches the heart. Now look what God says it's going to bring. Verse 20.

The Lord shall never be willing to forgive him but rather the anger of the Lord. And his what? His what? His jealousy. And what does this jealousy bring? A bitterness.

His jealousy will burn against that man. And every curse which is written in this book will rest on him. The Lord will blot out his name from under heaven.

And the Lord will single him out for adversity from all the tribes of Israel. Now let me just give you an example of something that happened. Some of you who have heard a tape of maybe one of the other conferences have heard this illustration.

But I don't know of anything that illustrates the false peace any better that I've ever seen happen. When I was in Tulsa. I was preaching in a church there.

A lady came up and she was crying out. I mean at the invitation she just kept crying. I'm free.

I'm free. I'm free. And nobody prayed for her.

Nobody laid hands on her. No one had done anything. But the word of God had done a work in her heart.

And all she could say is I'm free. I'm free. I'm free.

And when I finally got her attention to be able to talk to her. She began to relate this story to me. And here's what she said.

She said that three years prior to this particular time. Three years prior to that time she had been under deep conviction. She had read in Galatians 5 a list of some sins.

Of which Paul had said those who practice such things shall not enter the kingdom of God. And she read those scriptures. She got under deep, deep conviction over those scriptures.

It just so happened that that very night she went to a home bible study. And at that home bible study. They're praising and they're worshipping the Lord.

And all of a sudden even during the praise she starts to cry and to weep. And so the leader or some of the people as should be. Begin to gather around her and begin to minister to her and comfort her.

And the leader of the bible study came up and said what's the problem? And she began to tell him. This morning when I was reading the Lord began to convict me over and over again. That this sin is in my life.

And she even named the sin and said I'm practicing it. I'm practicing it. I'm going to hell.

I'm practicing this. I have been practicing this for a long time. And the leader of the bible study said.

But haven't you ever had an experience with Jesus? Tell me about your salvation experience. She related it to him. And he said oh you don't have to worry.

He said read this carefully. He said Paul said you'll not inherit the kingdom of God. Says don't you know there's a difference between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven.

And what that literally means is that if you keep practicing that sin. You're not going to receive all of the blessings you could receive on this earth. But you'll still go to heaven even though you practice it.

Now listen here's what I want you to hear. Now this was her own testimony. She said immediately.

Immediately when she heard that. She said a peace came over her. And she said I can only describe it was such a strong peace.

It felt like a warm flowing waterfall from head to toe. And it washed all over my body. And she said I left that bible study with no conviction over going to hell.

I left that bible study also with no conviction over my sin. And she said I have practiced that sin for three years. And she said tonight I saw I'm going to hell.

And I did something about it sitting right there. I put a stop to it. She said the war I know is not over.

But I'll not rest until I see the Lord Jesus put that thing down. It's a false peace. Now I want to show you some examples of some men.

Who had a false peace. Judas. Just turn with me to Judas.

Excuse me to John. I told you I have a different bible. To John.

John chapter 13. That's like turning to Jude the fifth chapter. Judas is mentioned in John 13.

Now I want you to see what it says about him. A false peace develops now. Now by the way.

I didn't turn there on purpose. But I was going to go to Hebrews 12 earlier. In Hebrews 12.

God warns us about the same thing. Talking about Esau. He says make sure.

That no root of bitterness springs up in you. Causing trouble without holiness. No man shall see the Lord.

That root of bitterness is still in the New Testament. And here's a man who had it. Judas.

How did Judas do what he was able to do? How did he walk with the Lord Jesus Christ for three years? And yet commit the sin he committed. How did he do that? Look. We know what his role was.

John 13. Verse 29. For some were supposing because Judas had the money box.

That Jesus was saying to him. Buy the things we have need of for the feast. Or else that he should give.

I just simply read that to you. Because I want you to see what happens. Who had charge of the money box? Now this Judas.

Sold the Lord Jesus Christ for 30 pieces of silver. Did he not? Now I want you to see what was wrong. Judas didn't just make a decision to do that.

Because Jesus angered him. He didn't just make a decision to do that overnight. He had been practicing something.

And he had a false peace. He had so much peace in his heart. That he could come up and kiss Jesus on the cheek.

While he betrayed him. Now what was it that had been happening in his heart? Look at the 12th chapter. Verse 4. John 12.

Verse 4. But Judas Iscariot. One of his disciples. Who was intending to betray him.

Said why was this perfume not sold for 300 denarii. And given to the poor people. You know what happened.

There was a woman. Mary rather had taken a pound of very costly perfume. And anointed the feet of Jesus.

And he says why was this perfume not sold for 300 denarii. And given to the poor people. Is he interested in the poor people? No because look what he has been doing all this time.

Now he said this not because he was concerned about the poor. But because he was a thief. And as he had the money box.

He used to pilfer what was put into it. Look at this. I don't pilfer money.

Luke said that there is no way. In Luke chapter 21. I won't turn there even.

But in Luke chapter 21 verses 34 to 36. He said there is such a deception coming on the land. That unless you are alert and sober and praying.

You will not escape the deception coming on the land. What do you pilfer in your prayer time with God? What is it in your life that becomes a pilfering. Into the treasury of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Are you hearing what I am saying? There are so many things. God doesn't expose them. You say well I am not a Judas.

What about a Hezekiah? Turn with me to 2 Chronicles chapter 32. 2 Chronicles chapter 32. 2 Chronicles chapter 32.

I am just going to read a couple verses. To describe something about Hezekiah's life. In fact let's start with chapter 31.

Verse 1. Now when all of this was finished. All Israel who were present went out to the cities of Judah. Broke the pillars in pieces.

Cut down the Asherim. Pulled down the high places and altars throughout all Judah and Benjamin. As well as in Ephraim and Manasseh.

Until they had destroyed them all. Then all the sons of Israel returned to their cities. Each to his possession.

That is just a scripture to describe what Hezekiah did. Hezekiah tore down all of the altars of the land. The high places.

The Asherim. He tore them down so the people could worship God. Now here is what I want you to see.

I believe this is speaking to some of you people. There are people here. You've not turned your heart to run after the world.

You've not turned your heart like a Judas. But there's been some of the seeds that was in Hezekiah's life still in here. In Acts chapter 8. Do you remember what happened to Simon? How many remember about Simon? In the 8th chapter of Acts.

Simon was a man. It said that whenever Philip was preaching. Simon used to.

He was a great man of God they called him. A great magician. And it says the people were astonished and called him a great man of God.

He got all of this attention. It just kept building up and building up inside. And then whenever Philip came and began to preach the gospel.

Simon believed and was baptized. Then when Peter comes. And the baptism of the Holy Spirit comes and begins to fall.

Simon looks at that in amazement. And he says. Let me buy.

Let me buy this power from God. Peter looks at him and says to him. I perceive that you're in the gall of iniquity.

The root of bitterness. See there's been something lodged in his heart. He used to get all that attention.

He used to get all that praise. And it was lodged in his heart. And now he's had an experience.

He's become converted to Jesus. He's had an experience and he's walking with God. And it says that he even continued along with Philip.

But there comes a time he never dealt with it. And he had success. But there came a time when it came up.

And it became a root of bitterness springing up causing him trouble. Hezekiah. Hezekiah tore down all the Asherim.

All the idols. He tore them down. This is such a mighty man of prayer we're talking about.

This man. Matter of fact in chapter 32 verse 1. It talks about the acts in the previous chapters being acts of faithfulness. Listen.

Hezekiah is a man that's got such power with God and prayer. Whenever Shennachareb the king of Assyria was coming against the people. Hezekiah set out to pray and turned back and God delivered

them.

He went through the camp and destroyed the enemy. And there are people here. You've had mighty moves of God through prayer.

He's moved in your life. And there came a time. First of all I want you to see what Hezekiah did.

Verse 27 of chapter 32. Second Chronicles 32. Now Hezekiah had immense riches and honor and he made for himself treasuries for silver, gold, precious stones, spices, shields, and all kinds of valuable articles.

Who did he make those for? Read it again. Verse 27. Now Hezekiah had immense riches and honor and he made for whom? Himself.

Verse 29. He made cities for whom? For himself. And there comes a time.

I want you to read on down with me. Verse 30. Now this says a lot now.

Listen. The fact that God's prospering you doesn't mean that God's hand of approval's on your life. Look at this.

Verse 30. It was Hezekiah who stopped the upper outlet of the waters of Gihon and directed them to the west side of the city of David. And Hezekiah prospered in all that he did.

Is that what it says? Verse 32, 31. And even in the matter of the invoice of the rulers of Babylon who sent to him to inquire of the wonder that had happened in the land, God left him alone only to do what? Test him that he might know all that was in his heart. What wonder are they talking about? Two things are mentioned here.

The invoice of Babylon had been sent to Hezekiah. Now I want you to turn with me to Isaiah chapter 38. Keep your finger on 2 Chronicles 32.

And turn to Isaiah 38 quickly. Verse 1. Isaiah 38. In those days Hezekiah became mortally ill.

And Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz came to him and said to him, Thus says the Lord, set your house in order, for you shall die and not live. Look what Hezekiah does. Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the Lord.

And what did God do for him? I won't go and read the rest of the story, but here's what happened. God healed Hezekiah. God must approve of Hezekiah.

Everything must be okay. I mean, here's the man who's prospered in everything he did. He gets healed.

He's so mighty in God with prayer. He's laying on his deathbed and he prays for God to heal him. And God raises him up and performs such a sign it amazes all the land.

He actually moves the sun back 10 degrees on Ahaz's sundial. Here's a man who's got prosperity. He's got healing and he's got miracles.

Look what he prays. Verse 3, this is Hezekiah's own picture of himself. Verse 2 says Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the Lord and said, Remember now, oh Lord, I beseech thee how I have

walked before thee in truth and with what kind of a heart? A whole heart and I've done what is good in thy sight.

And Hezekiah wept bitterly. Now don't turn there, but let me read to you what God said about him. Let me just read this.

Now here's a man, how many of you see what I'm saying? Here's a man who's seen great miracles. He's got a mighty man in prayer. But there's a root of bitterness down deep in his heart.

He prays and God heals him. God performs a miracle. He prospers in everything he does.

And he prays to God and says, God, I followed you with all my heart. I've had a whole heart before you. God, I have followed you perfectly.

I'm going to read this to you. But Hezekiah gave no return for the benefit. I'm going to start back.

In those days, Hezekiah became mortally ill and he prayed to the Lord and the Lord spoke to him and gave him a sign. But Hezekiah gave no return for the benefit he received because his heart was proud. Therefore wrath came on him and on Judah and on Jerusalem.

How many of you heard what I said? Now, what did Hezekiah say about his heart? He said, I've got a whole heart before you. God, I followed you with a whole heart. In 2 Chronicles 32, what did God say about Hezekiah? He said, he's got a proud heart.

He's got a false peace. And there's a root of bitterness down deep inside and it springs up. Now, you remember we read that Babylon sent invoices.

I want you to see what happens. Verse chapter 39. Turn with me quickly because we're coming to a close.

Chapter 39. Isaiah chapter 39. Just the next chapter over.

At that time Merdok, son of Baladon, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present to Hezekiah, for he heard that he had been sick and recovered. Now, who's sending him this present? The king of whom? Babylon. And Hezekiah was what? He's pleased.

And he showed them all his treasure house, the silver and the gold and the spices and the precious oil and the whole armory. Now, who did he build all those things for? Himself. And his whole armory, all that was found in his treasure.

There was nothing in his house nor in all his dominion that Hezekiah did not show them. Then Isaiah the prophet came to Hezekiah and said to him, what did these men say? And from where have they come to you? And Hezekiah said, they've come to me from a far country, from Babylon. And he said, what have they seen in your house? So Hezekiah answered, they've seen all that's in my house and there's nothing among my treasures that I've not shown them.

Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, hear the word of the Lord of hosts. Behold, the days are coming when all that is in your house and all your fathers have laid up in store to this day shall be carried to Babylon. Nothing shall be left, says the Lord.

And some of your sons who shall issue from you, whom you shall beget, shall be taken away and they shall become officials in the palace of the king of Babylon. Now, was that a good word? I say, was that a good word? Was that a word of judgment? I want you to see that this root of bitterness and this false peace in Hezekiah's heart has so deceived him, he's lost all discernment. Look what he says.

The prophet Isaiah has just delivered a word of judgment to him and what does he call it? Then Hezekiah said to Isaiah, the word of the Lord which you've spoken is what? Is good for he thought for there will be peace and truth in my days. How many of you see that? He's had miracles. He's had great prayers answered.

He's been healed. He prospered in everything he did and the prophet finally comes to give him a word of warning and judgment. He can't even recognize it.

He thinks it's good. This false peace has settled in. You know why? Because he had pride in his heart all the time.

He's building these treasuries and making them for himself. He's had pride. He never dealt with it.

He cried to God for healing but he never dealt with the pride. He's dying and God heals him in his mercy and grace but he was silent about the pride. Hezekiah's going to have to deal with him.

The enemy, the king of Babylon sends him a present and he opens up his whole treasure and shows everything there including the armory and that's exactly what you and I do when something's been lodged in our heart and the temptation comes and we lust over and over and over. We covet over and over and over. We get angry over and over.

We lose our temper over and over and over. You literally give the devil a blueprint of what's in the treasury of your heart. It's a root of bitterness that springs up on the inside.

I have felt more of a battle preaching this message this afternoon than I have felt in a long, long time and not because it was such a great message or something but I know, brother, I need to just take the time to do this. I know God's speaking to me. God is wanting us right now to deal with roots of bitterness and there's been a false piece there.

I'm not going to try to name your root of bitterness. I'm not talking about just being bitter towards somebody but something that you may have had great experience with God answering your prayers but it's been there. But the Holy Spirit right now has put a finger on something.

I want you just to come to the altar. God wants to do a work of breaking it. I want you just to come.

Don't hesitate. I don't care if there's one or two, if there's how many there is but I want you to come. I know the Lord's told me to do this.

It's going to take some real humbling for some because you've had prosperity with God. You've had a walk with God. You've had things happening in your life with God.

But there's sin. There's some things that God has put his finger on. He's been dealing with over and over and over and over again and you've had a peace that God's judgment is not on that thing.

I want you to come. We're going to ask God to bring a brokenness over that thing so that you can be free. If this message has not been clear, I apologize because I've had a real battle.

I mean, I have had a battle from the time I've started this thing but I know it's what God wanted me to speak and so I'm not trusting in this message. I'm trusting in the Holy Spirit to touch a heart right now and to say, you need to come. Pastors, there's some pastors that haven't come.

You need to come. And I want you to just get on your knees before the Lord. Holy Spirit, I ask you to move in power and bring a weeping and a brokenness.

Holy Spirit, we come to lay it down. We come to destroy it, Lord, because you're faithful to break it. Lord Jesus, bring a brokenness over this thing.

Anyone else, you come right now. Right now.

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