

The Quarrel of God's Covenant

by Carter Conlon

The sermon emphasizes the importance of obedience and worship in experiencing God's presence and avoiding the consequences of disobedience, which include the dark side of unbelief and the coming judgment.

Duration: 54:01

Scripture: Leviticus 9:22, Leviticus 26:25, Hebrews 10:26

Topics: "God's Covenant"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher uses the analogy of a young calf being released into a field to describe the joy and healing that God promises to those who fear His name. He emphasizes that God will set free the oppressed, give sound thinking, and break the chains of addiction and wickedness. However, the preacher also warns that there is a flashpoint where society becomes so entrenched in evil that God's justice becomes necessary. He references Isaiah chapter 4 to highlight the desperation and judgment that will come upon those who reject God's truth. The preacher concludes by lamenting the lack of a living word from the pulpits in a nation that is turning away from God.

Transcript

If you'll go in the Old Testament, please, with me to Leviticus chapter 26, we're going to begin there. I'm going to speak to you this morning about the quarrel of God's covenant. Now, every time the word of the Lord comes, God's word may not particularly apply to you in your present situation, and sometimes, of course, it might.

And for those whom it doesn't really specifically apply to, God's word will strengthen and confirm. Those of us who are trusting in his grace and his strength, it will just entrench you as it is in the strength of God. God's word will come and comfort the struggling and offer them clear direction to a pathway of safety, which, of course, can be found in the life and the strength of Jesus Christ.

His word will caution those who are being neglectful of this great salvation that God has given to us through Jesus Christ. And lastly, his word will warn the defiant, those who are willfully still continuing in lifestyles that are dishonoring to the very presence of Jesus Christ in his name upon your life. God's warning, even to the defiant, is a warning that comes from a heart of love.

Because it's not his will that any should perish, but that all should have everlasting life. And that's my prayer for this gathering this morning. Let's pray together.

Now, Father, I thank you that I know in my heart that you have given me your word. This work that you want to do this morning is deep, and you're going to produce freedom in those whose hearts yearn for it. And I pray, God, that you may allow me just to be a vessel to speak and to be animated in the manner that you want this word to be spoken.

Help me, O God, to not do harm to your word. Help me, Father, to speak from your heart. And I pray mostly that you help everybody in this building to hear with open ears and open hearts that your word and everything you do towards your creation emanates from a heart of divine love.

God, help us to hear this word in that spirit, and we thank you for it in Jesus' name. Leviticus chapter 26, verse 25. Just going to read one verse.

And I will bring a sword upon you that shall avenge the quarrel of my covenant. And when you are gathered together within your cities, I will send the pestilence among you, and you shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy. Now, these are words that are spoken by God before any of the judgments that are spoken about ever happen.

When God delivers his people, when he brings the people to himself, he speaks about the wondrousness of his blessing, his life, his grace, his protection, his power, and all of these things that are all attributes of God that he promises. He said, I will covenant with you. I'll walk with you.

I'll be your strength. I'll be your tower, your life, your health, your healing. I'll be your glory.

I'll guide you. I'll protect you from all sides. But if you take lightly my presence, and this was the warning to Israel, if you begin to dabble in and out of obedience and disobedience, if you begin to develop this, it is a warped view of what it means to walk with me.

He said, I will have a quarrel with you. Because, you see, the Scripture says that two cannot walk together except they be agreed. And God is not required to agree with us, but we as his people are required to agree with him.

I want to read to you just a commentary on it from the Life in the Spirit study commentary on Leviticus chapter 26. Chapter 26 reveals the pathos, the anguish, the heartache of God as he lamented the fact that he might be compelled to punish the people he had redeemed. If they in utter ingratitude rejected his love and were unwilling to have him as their God, he would have no other choice but to bring upon them sorrow and calamity.

The Lord's promises and warnings were spoken from the depths of divine love and with the sincere desire that such discipline and judgment would never be necessary for his chosen people. Now, we know, historically speaking, that the people to whom these words were spoken didn't take it seriously for some reason. It seems to be a frailty of the human heart to somehow feel that God speaks and yet doesn't have to be obeyed.

And because of this, we know that, if we look in the past history, that Israel suffered terrible judgments of God and went into captivity. His own people, his own glory, the psalmist says, went in for a season into the enemy's hand. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 10 and verse 11 that all these things happened to them for examples.

And they're written for our admonition, that means for our instruction, for our correction, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Now, listen to what God said would happen to a people who willfully disobeyed or disregarded his word. In Leviticus chapter 26, we carry on and he says in verse 26, When I have broken the staff of your bread, ten women shall bake your bread in one oven, and they shall deliver your bread again by weight, and you shall eat and not be satisfied.

He said there was a surplus of provision, now the provision is going to be scarce. I think of this morning, if we were to take this chapter of Scripture and just superimpose it over our country today, and many countries throughout the world that perhaps have known a measure of God's truth, but have rejected that truth, and by and large are moving away in willful disregard for the commands of God. I see in my spirit, as I was praying last night, ten preachers standing over the Internet and getting their messages from someone somewhere that perhaps they're not even sure where it's coming from.

And they're bringing this borrowed bread as it is to the people who are eating and it never satisfies them. One of the judgments of God on a nation that is rejecting truth is that there's no longer a living word from the pulpits of God. There's no longer a fighting as in the days of Deborah and Barak from heaven.

All that the people are hearing now are reasonings that come out of the spirits and minds of men which cannot satisfy, do not deliver, do not come from the heart of God and produce no life of Christ in those that are called or at least are present to hear it. Verse 29, he says, you shall eat the flesh of your sons and the flesh of your daughters shall you eat. Now it sounds rather gruesome and we know that in some measure this actually did happen in the physical.

But it speaks of a principle about families being devoured, selfishness coming into the hearts of man, evil words being spoken even in Christian homes when there is a disobedience to God and sons and daughters are provoked to wrath by their fathers. Husbands neglect to love their wives as Christ loves the church. The wives do not reverence their husbands and esteem them in the position that God has established them in the home.

And there's a breakdown of divine order in the home. And you see Christian families devoured. And today, as I'm told frequently over the last several years, that the divorce rate in the church rivals that, if not in some places exceeds that of the world and society around us.

Verse 30, and he says, I'll cast your carcasses upon the carcasses of your idols. And it speaks about a false hope and a dead religion, people coming into churches. And there are so mixed between truth and error and they are casting themselves perhaps on this strange mixture.

But it is a mixture of death and it offers no life with it. Verse 31, he says, I'll make your cities waste and bring your sanctuaries unto desolation. And I'll not smell the savor of your sweet odors.

The judgment of a nation and the people who turn from God is decaying cities, empty churches and unanswered prayer. If there is any prayer left at all in the midst of their decaying religiousness. Verse 32, he says, I'll bring the land unto desolation.

And your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it. God says, I will move even before your enemies in your midst. Israel perhaps had enemies that are in there contemplating acts of sabotage or they're contemplating perhaps certain things they want to do to undermine the confidence of God's people.

But God says, I will circumvent them. And their plans will be eclipsed by the severity of my judgment. And even your enemies will look and they'll be astounded because they didn't even have time to perform their plans.

I superimpose my plan over their plan. He says in verse 37, 36, I'll send a faintness into the hearts in the lands of their enemies and the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them and they shall fall when none pursues them. There'll be no power among those people who have played games with me.

He says, they will have no courage to stand because courage ultimately only comes from faith in God. There is no real lasting courage apart from that. They shall fall, not just fail, not just run.

They shall fall when nobody is even pursuing them. They'll have no power to stand. Verse 37, he says, you shall have no power to stand before your enemies.

And verse 39, and they that are left of you shall pine away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands. The end result is the people who knew God, who walked with God, who end up captivated. The people, if you can see the image of this, who are wasting away under the power of their enemies.

Nothing more tragic than meeting a Christian who once had a testimony of God's life in him or her. And you look at this person and you see them captivated once again by the power of some evil. Not necessarily, certainly not because God was not able to save them or help them.

No, but they played some kind of a game with God and they were caught in it. And we see this time and again. I've seen it many times.

It's a heartbreaking thing to view as if you have a shepherd's heart and God's heart is emanating from you. And you love the people of God to see somebody who once had a testimony of God's inner working in their life, captivated and wasting away under the power of their enemies. Now, historically, we see that in the season when God is forced to bring judgment upon a nation or a people or an individual, a strange form of unbelief begins to grip the hearts of those who are taking God's name as their own.

Now, we have a traditional view of unbelief in the church. Our traditional view is that people of God coming to the land of promise and seeing the giants and deciding to stay where they are and unable to go in. And so when we talk about unbelief, it's normally from that frame of reference.

But just before judgment, there's another kind of unbelief. I want to call it the darkest side of unbelief that begins to grip the hearts of a people. First, in the house of God and secondarily, of course, among the people of the land and the nation.

You'll find a scoffing and a scorning of the justice of God just prior to his judgment. You'll find an increase in it. You'll find it historically all through the Old Testament.

You find dire warnings in the New Testament also that this will be the attitude of people's hearts in the last days. And this dark side of unbelief is an unbelief that God will actually judge them for their actions. It's an unbelief that God will actually do what he said he will do.

It's no longer about power and victory over enemies. It's now an unbelief that God will actually judge for the mixture and the compromise and the willful disregard and disobedience, especially to the presence of Jesus Christ in a New Testament believer's life. In the New Testament, please, if you'll go there with me to

the book of 2 Peter.

You've got Hebrew, James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, chapter 3. Now, Peter is talking about the last days. I do believe that we are in those days. I believe that we're closer.

If we know how close we were to Christ's coming, I wouldn't have time to even finish this message. There'd be an exodus into this altar this morning. But Peter's talking about an attitude of heart, this dark side of unbelief that's going to grip a society.

It's going to grip the whole world. And sadly, it will grip a lot of what calls itself the church of Jesus Christ. In 2 Peter, chapter 3, verse 3, Peter says, Knowing this first, there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, given to pleasure, led by the senses, even in the house of God.

Not led by the spirit, not led by obedience to God, not walking deeper into the heart and the life of Jesus Christ, not pursuing a life of intimacy with God that ultimately has to end in the surrender of one's own will to the will of God. Not moving there, but tacking on to themselves as it is the name of Jesus Christ, but walking after their own lusts. This will be the condition of much of the professing church in the last days.

Not all, thank God, but much of it. And they will say, verse 4, Where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. Now, it's twofold, this statement.

Some will just simply not believe that Christ is coming again to rapture his church, to set up a kingdom, to rule and reign. It speaks about an indifference of the hour that they're living in. Just a casual day by day, live my life, not even be concerned about the fact that one day I might be called to stand before the throne of almighty God.

But if you follow the context of 2 Peter chapter 3, I believe that Peter is speaking largely and in measure about the judgments of God. You see, the coming of Christ is a coming not only to set up a kingdom, but it's a coming to judge. Jude said he comes with ten thousand of his saints to judge the ungodly and all those who have spoken hard speeches against the Lord God.

It's a day of justice. You look in the Old Testament very clearly. Malachi says it clearly.

Who will stand in the day of his coming? He's going to come like a refiner's fire, like a fuller's soap, and he's going to purify the sons of Levi. He's going to come as a swift witness against the adulterers and the sorcerers and all those that have used his name falsely. And so there will be this attitude in the last day of, where is the promise of his coming? You talk of this God of justice and judgment.

We don't know this kind of a God. He's not coming to judge. He just loves everybody just the way we are in spite of how we live or how we think or what our actions are or what we're associated with or what table we sit at.

It doesn't matter. God loves me anyway. He says in verse five, for this they willingly are ignorant of.

Speaks about a willing ignorance, I guess, of the fact that God has judged in the past and he will judge again. That by the word of God, the heavens were of old and the earth standing out of the water and in the water, whereby the world, verse six, that was that then was being overflowed with water. Paris, they're willingly ignorant of the fact that God has once judged the world by water.

Verse seven, he says, but the heavens and the earth, which are now by the same word, are kept in store and they are reserved under fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord is a thousand years and a thousand years is one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness, but is long suffering to us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise and the element shall melt with fervent heat. The earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Peter says they are willingly ignorant of this fact.

And something gets a hold of the heart of this last day generation and they say, oh, there's not going to be a judgment. All things are going to carry on just as they always have. Nothing is going to change.

I wonder how many people over the years have thought that just before some calamity has come upon them or some difficulty has come into their borders. Leviticus chapter nine, please go there with me. I want to show you an example of this third book in the Old Testament.

Leviticus chapter nine, verse 22 talks about. Well, let's go back. Let's let's backtrack.

Leviticus 9:22 talks about that Moses and Aaron and the priesthood are setting up as it is the place of the worship of God. And they're doing it according to God's word. Everything is in order.

There's a spirit, as it is of obedience to God and God's favor is about to come upon them. Leviticus 9:22, it's as an Aaron lifted up his hand towards the people and blessed them and came down from offering of the sin offering and the burnt offering and the peace. You can see this this marvelous worship service going on.

And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of the congregation and came out and blessed the people. And the glory of the Lord appeared to all the people, just as I believe that we have experienced in some measure the glory of the Lord in our worship here this morning. And there came a fire out from before the Lord and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat, which when all the people saw, they shouted and fell on their faces.

And this is a type, of course, of what God was going to do in the New Testament when he was going to pour out that same fire, which is going to purify and give new life and new power and new strength to those whose lives are put on the altar, as it is of self of sacrifice to the purposes of God. Those who are going to be set apart for God, that same fire was going to come and did come on the day of Pentecost and is still here in the power of the Holy Ghost for everybody that wants to live for God. And I thank God for that with all my heart.

If you're here today and you're a struggling Christian, don't you be discouraged for a moment. The moment you step out in your heart and say, God, come to me, he comes to you with all the power of heaven behind him. And he will purge and purify the sons of Levi and he will cause you to stand and he'll give you a new mind and a new heart and a new spirit.

He'll put his laws within your hearts and it will become as natural to obey him as breathing the air you breathe around you. It'll be the chiefest delight and desire of your heart to walk with him. He is always covenanted, especially in the New Testament, to walk with those who want to walk with him and to bring you into a marvelous and miraculous new life that is only possible in the power of the spirit of almighty

God.

And so this fire comes down and consumes the sacrifice and all the people saw it was shouted and fell on their faces. And I think of the momentous times of worship that we sometimes experience even in this house. And if there were space, if you were allowed, you would without doubt fall on your face because the presence, the glory, the Old Testament calls it the kavod, the weight, the esteem, the majesty, the abundance of God in Jesus Christ is here in our midst.

And there's this inward recognition that this is God and in him is everything that I will ever require for life and redemption and godliness and protection. It's all found in him. But here in the next chapter, we find two young and very foolish priests as it is now.

Keep in mind that we are called all of us as kings and priests in the New Testament to our Lord and God. And in the zeal of the moment and without the obedience of their fathers, these two young priests took their censures and put fire in it and put incense and offered strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not. Here they are in their zeal as it is of the moment coming and giving God this disobedient worship.

That's really what it was. It's a worship that has a foundation of disobedience underneath it. There's there's no it's not it's not according to the word of God.

And there went out a fire. This is another fire. Now, this time from the Lord and devoured them and they died before the Lord.

Then Moses said to Aaron, this is it that the Lord spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me. And before all the people, I will be glorified. You see, God says those that are mine, I will be sanctified in them.

And when they stand and speak my name, I will be glorified. It will be me. Paul said it this way in him.

We live, we move, we have our being. I will be the resource, the strength of their lives. Those who are mine, I will be sanctified in them.

There will be a change of ownership as it is of their lives. Pride will no longer be on the heart. They will no longer have a lying tongue.

They will no longer steal from their neighbors. They will no longer do violence to other people. There will be an inward change.

I will be sanctified in them. God says. And so Moses called some people out of the sanctuary and they went near in verse five.

It says they carried them in their coats. Out of the camp. Now, we see this same judgment again in the New Testament in Acts five.

You don't need to turn there. Two people. The people had obeyed Christ.

They had gone to the upper room. The sacrifice was ready. The cross was very fresh.

They knew what it would cost to follow Christ. The fire of God came. The same people stood in the open.

And as a type, I suppose you'll see three thousand as in the days of Moses. Who didn't fall on their faces, but they surely said, what must we do? To be saved. We see another two people just like Nadab and Abihu.

Coming. In Acts chapter five and in Isis and Sapphira. Bringing back to God.

A strangeness. Of the inward fire, which has just been outpoured. Coming back and pretending they were more than they were.

Coming back with a lie in their mouths. And lying to the Holy Ghost. I think of the songs we sing today.

Jesus, you're honey on my lips. You're the joy of my heart. You're the delight of my life.

Where you lead me, I will follow. I can't help but wonder. Some of the songs we sing and some of the lips that speak them are we much different than Ananias and Sapphira.

They pretended. They brought this offering as it is and pretended they were more than they were. And the same thing that happened to Nadab and Abihu happened to them.

They were carried out in their coats. And the fire of God killed them. This was New Testament.

This is not Old Testament. This is New Testament. Malachi 3, 6. The first half of that verse.

God says, for I am the Lord. I change not. In verse 5 he says, I will come near to you to judgment.

And I'll be a swift witness against the sorcerers. The Lord is coming. And all those who are standing in the house of God.

And prophesying over people's lives. But it's not the Holy Spirit speaking through them. It's a divination.

He says, I'm coming as a witness against all of these. Those that have stood and said, thus saith the Lord, and I have not spoken to them. And against all the adulterers.

And against false swearers. Those who say, God, I am yours, you are mine. The world has nothing in me and I have nothing in the world.

And against those that have pressed the hireling in his wages. That means the greedy. Those who profess to know me, but they are moved by an inward greed.

And the widow and the fatherless. Those who oppress them. Those who have no care or concern about the powerless in their society.

They really don't manifest the heart of God. And they turn aside the stranger from his right. God says, the stranger has a right to come into your fields and glean.

He has a right to come to you. And he should find me sanctified in you. He should find my care and compassion emanating from your life towards him.

And those that fear me not, saith the Lord of hosts. And my question simply is this. If Christ comes near to you today.

I'm speaking to everybody in the annex on this platform. The balcony. Is it to give you strength because you're an honest seeker of him? Or does he have a quarrel with you because of his covenant? This is an honest question, beloved, that we have to ask ourselves.

Let me read to you. From the book of Hebrews. Chapter 10.

Actually, go there with me, please. Hebrews chapter 10. Verse 26.

Now, you know what? Times Square Church. We don't hesitate to declare to you the whole counsel of God. But if you're here today with an honest heart, you know that it's the loving hand of God that is speaking to you.

Hebrews 10. Twenty six says, for if we sin willfully. And that's the key word.

If we sin willfully. After that, we receive the knowledge of the truth. There remained no more sacrifice for sins.

But a certain fearful looking for a judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses law died. Without mercy under two or three witnesses.

Of how much sorer punishment suppose you shall be thought worthy was trodden underfoot the son of God. And has counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing. And has done despite.

To the spirit of grace. And here's really what it means. Under the Old Testament law.

Anyone who despised the truth of God. Died. For their transgression.

In certain circumstances, of course. The writer of Hebrews says of how much. More of a punishment.

Do you not suppose he'd be thought worthy. Who has been redeemed or cleansed or at least by profession of his sin by the blood of Jesus Christ. He has been sanctified.

In other words, set apart. It means no longer filthy or common. He's been invited into the fellowship of almighty God.

He has received in his heart supposedly the sacrifice. But he's taken lightly this invitation to be in the presence of the king of the universe. And he has done despite.

In other words, he isn't. The word despite means to simply insulted the spirit of grace. For we know him that has said vengeance belongs to me.

I will recompense the Lord. And again, the Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands.

Of the living God. Now, go with me to Isaiah, please. In the Old Testament, chapter four, Isaiah speaks about the last days.

Actually, it's interwoven in chapters one, two, three and four. It has an application to then Israel, which has been fulfilled the physical. But it has a prophetic application to all generations and especially ours in the last day.

Now, in Isaiah, chapter four, Isaiah contrasts the desperation of the deceptive with the glory of the godly. Listen to Isaiah, chapter four, verse one. In that day, seven women shall take hold of one man saying we will eat our own bread and wear our own apparel.

Only let us be called by thy name to take away our reproach. And it speaks about a desperation. Even among those who were called by the name of God.

In that day, this is a day of justice and judgment. If you take time to read how it applies, it's talking about a day of destruction. It's the day of the Lord.

It's the day when God comes to judge the world. There will be this desperation among those who did know, but perhaps played games with the truth of God. They'll be looking and grasping for anybody that can offer them a covering.

There'll be this fleeing. The scripture talks about people will flee into their own lands. There will be a terror come upon so many in society.

They will be desperately looking for truth. We saw that when the towers came down here in 2001. When our aisles were filled to the every night with kneeling people desperately, at least it seemed looking for God.

Verse two, he says, in that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious. And the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel. Now, for these, for those who are not part of this justice and judgment that is coming upon everything that offends the nature of God.

He says, in that day, the branch of the Lord. Now, we know the branch of the Lord is Jesus Christ. He is the vine.

In a sense, he said himself in the New Testament. We are the branches. We are grafted into Christ.

His life is our life. We are in him. He is in us.

Everything that applies to him applies to us. In that day, that fateful day, that fearful day, the branch of the Lord will be glorious and beautiful. And you look it up in the original text and it says, will be crowned with abundance, wealth and the majesty of Jehovah God.

The church, the fruit of the earth will be excellent and comely. Majestic is what it means as in a parade. Ornamented with beauty, magnificence and honor.

God says, those who come to me, those who walk with me in truth, even though calamity may be all around them. I am going to allow the weight of my presence to come upon them. They're going to rise out of the ashes.

They're going to be crowned with abundance, wealth, the majesty of the life of Jehovah God. They're going. I'm going to set them up as a display.

They're going to be as a sign upon a hill. In the midst of the fires, Isaiah said, they're going to be shouting glory to the righteous one. There'll be a song of praise in their hearts.

There'll be light in their eyes. There'll be strength in their physical body and countenance. They'll not be fleeing when people are running on every side.

They'll be standing in the grace and glory of Almighty God. He says, I will ornament you with beauty, magnificence and honor. My kavod as it is, my weight will be seen upon you.

My glory will be in you. You'll be changing from image to image and glory to glory. You'll be exceeding in knowledge and wisdom.

Out of your mouth will come the law of God and understanding. There'll be an entreating in your hands and in your voice. You'll be reaching out to a fallen society all around you with the strength and the honor and love of Almighty God.

He says that it shall come to pass that he that is left in Zion and he that remains in Jerusalem shall be called holy. Even everyone that is written among the living in Jerusalem. The word holy means separate and dedicated to the service of God.

Beautiful, ornamented, magnificent, honored and separate and dedicated to the work of God. Walking as lights in the midst of an unclean and perverse generation. Not partaking of the cup of the Lord and the table of devils at the same time.

Separate, holy, harmless and undefiled. Walking clean with one issue in the heart. Oh Jesus, I want to glorify your name.

I want you to be glorified. Even if the whole world is shaking. Even if the sky is on fire.

I want you to be glorified in my life. Be glorified in my home. Be glorified in my marriage.

Be glorified in my family. Be glorified in my community. Be glorified in my job.

Let the majesty of Christ be upon me. Let it be evident, oh God, do such a work in me. That when I walk in the office on Monday morning, it's like a parade coming through the door of the glory of God.

Make the vilest of sinners have to stand up and take notice. That Jesus Christ is alive and sits at the right hand of all power. Verse 4, he says, Whom the Lord shall have washed from the filth of the daughters of Zion.

And he shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning. Washed. Washed.

God said it to Ezekiel when Ezekiel prophesied to the captives that one day the Lord was going to bring them home into their own land. And it's a word that speaks not only to the physical restoration, but the spiritual restoration even of our day. And he says, I'm going to cleanse you from all the filthiness in your spirit.

I'm going to wash you with pure water after I've brought you home again into your own land. These are a people who have cried, oh God, judge sin in me and burn it out with the fire of your presence. Judge it, oh God.

Let me not agree with the depravity of my own heart. Let me not agree with the depravity of this world around me. Let me find no agreement in my heart with sinners and a society that is hell-bent on rejecting God.

Let me not be found there. Let me not be found in the seat of the scornful. Standing in the counsel of the ungodly.

Let me not be there. Let me be found with you. And I'm calling on you, God, to burn out of my heart that which offends you.

Even if I like it. Even if it seems good. If it offends you, burn it out.

Burn it out of me, God. Crowned with abundance and glory, majesty. A parade ornamented with beauty, magnificent, with honor to God.

Separated, dedicated to the service of God. A people washed by the word of Almighty God in the blood of the Lamb. Who cry out, God, judge sin in me.

Burn it out of me, God. Glorify your name. Nothing else will do in this generation.

No other kind of Christian will have a testimony. Many, many, many are going to be captivated. They've been playing games and don't know the power of their enemy.

They've misunderstood the power of their enemy. In verse 5 it says, And the Lord will create upon every dwelling place in Mount Zion and upon her assemblies a cloud and a smoke by day and the shining of a flaming fire by night. And upon all the glory shall be a defense, or it means a covering.

Simply means this. I will lead you. As I've always led people that belong to me.

I will lead you in the darkest times with a fire that goes before you. You will know, you will hear a voice saying, this is the way. Walk in it.

I will protect you. I'll be light to you and darkness to your enemies. I will lead you in the daytime.

I'll be your glory in the midst of your life and heart and mind. You'll not be afraid of evil tidings. For your heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord.

And I will cover you. There shall be a tabernacle, verse 6, for a shadow in the daytime from the heat and for a place of refuge and a covering from the storm and from rain. God says, I'll cover you with my divine hand.

Hallelujah. I'll cover you. No matter what happens around you.

It's not a covering of indifference. It's not a covering of uncaringness. It's not a covering of selfishness.

It's a covering of the glory, the mind of God. I'll cover you. I'll cover you.

To live, you'll want to glorify. And if you die, it will be gain. You'll no longer be bound by the fear of death.

You'll be a people engrossed, gripped with the purposes of God, which have never changed. God so loved the world. He gave his only begotten Son that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have

everlasting life.

Lastly, I want to turn to Malachi chapter 4. Malachi speaks, the last book of the Old Testament before Matthew. Malachi really is the last word before John the Baptist that is recorded, at least in Scripture, for 400 years. In Malachi chapter 4, he talks about the day of the Lord that is coming, a day of justice and judgment.

That the whole world has defied. It's a dangerous time we're living in, beloved. The whole world is moving very quickly into darkness.

This society is very unhealthy. Most of you must be aware of that by now. Unless you're mixed in it, then you don't see it.

For behold, he said, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven, and all the proud and all that do wickedly shall be stubble. And the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. In other words, the devouring of God's judgment will be so complete, there'll neither be root nor fruit.

Nothing will be left. But to you that fear my name shall the Son of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings. You shall go forth and grow up as the calves out of the stall.

He said, to you who fear my name, yes, justice is coming to the world. It has to, because God is just. He has waited, because he's not willing that any should perish.

But there is a flashpoint. There is a time, a season, where society gets so entrenched in evil. Where homes are so savaged by pornography.

Where men's minds become so corrupt. Where those who once knew God have so rejected him, they've left God no choice. But to bring his justice, that we have seen throughout history and we will see again in our day.

But he says, to you that fear my name, I will arise in you, in the midst of you, with healing in my wings. I will lift myself up as it is. And I will bring healing and wholeness into your lives.

So much so, that you will go forth and grow up as calves of the stall. Now, I lived next door to a dairy farm years ago. And I know what that is.

I have a mental picture of that. When a calf has been born, they're put in a very restrictive enclosure. Where they are nursed by their mother until the day that they are released, as it is, from that confine.

And if you've never seen it, it's worth seeing a video of a young calf. The first time they're released. How they go out into the field and they leap and dance.

And their tail is flying up in the air and their head is going one way. And they go around in circles. And this is the picture that God chooses to paint for his people in the midst of a time of justice and judgment.

Those who fear my name, I'm going to arise in you in such healing, that you're going to leap and dance uncontrollably. You're going to have a joy in you that cannot be expressed in any other way but just to let go. And glorify me with everything that is in you.

I'll set free the oppressed. I'll give you sound thinking. I will break the chains of drug addiction.

I will vanquish pornography. I will set you free from wicked thinking and speaking. I'll do such a work in you that you can't do anything but understand it's supernatural and begin to dance.

And give me glory in my presence. Not only that, he says in verse 3, you will tread down the wicked. There will be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts.

That which once held you captive. That which invited you to its table. That which wanted to own your mind and govern your spirit and dampen your testimony.

You will turn against it with a sword in your hand. And he says I'm going to through you take your captivity captive and give you giftings that can only come from the heart and mind and life of God. And you will tread these powers of hell under the soles of your feet.

As you are dancing before me, you will be treading on them. Glorious, full of the weight of God. Abundant as a parade in the sight of all humanity.

Separated, harmless, holy and defiled. Set apart for the purposes of God. Oh no, no.

The true church is not hiding in a bomb shelter with a can of beans. The true church will be glorifying God on a hilltop. And he says remember the law of Moses my servant which I commanded unto him in Orab for all Israel.

And the statutes of judgments. Behold I'll send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children and the heart of the children to the fathers.

Lest I come and smite the earth with a curse. And really here's the issue. You will become unselfish.

You see selfishness is what causes this whole blindness. It's this love of self. It's this gravitation to self.

It's even approaching Christ with what can Christ do for me today. As opposed to Jesus what do you want to do through me? He said you won't be selfish anymore. You will be given my heart.

You will look out from your own need. There's much greater need around than yours. I'll look after you.

He says you look after my purposes. I'll turn your heart to fatherless children. I'll turn your heart.

And I'll turn their hearts to you. And you'll see a harvest. Last night when I was in prayer.

The Lord told me very very clearly. That we were going to experience in this service this morning the weight of God. The kavod.

This weightiness of his presence was going to come. That this worship time would be very solemn and would be holy. But he told me something.

He said it's not for. Now the backslidden that are here today. You would also feel this weight of God.

This touch of God would come upon you. You would not be outside of it. You would actually feel it.

Those that are living in willful sin. Disobedience and rebellion to God. You would also feel this weight.

And this glory of God would touch you. And the Lord told me to tell you something. That this would not happen to you to confirm your lifestyle.

This would happen to you to show you what your life can be. If you will have the courage today to yield to God. He told me to tell you.

This same glory. This weight of his presence that you felt will become yours. And will become yours not just for time but for eternity.

And he will give you a sample of what your life can be. The cry of every true child of God has to be. God judge sin in me.

And judge it now. There is a season of mercy. There is a time that God gives when we can get right with him.

Today the scripture says if you can hear his voice don't harden your heart. He offers rest. He offers forgiveness.

He offers life. And ultimately the bible says that the goodness of God leads us to repentance. It's God's goodness.

He loves you. He wants to give you his life. He makes the offer.

But the choice now is yours. And mine. He will not force you.

Even in revelation he stood at a backslidden church door and knocked. Even though he had every right to go in he didn't go in. He waited for somebody to open the door.

And that's the way it is with God. If you are living in a manner that you know from the preaching of this word say God what's happened to me? I am so caught and captivated that I'm beginning to believe that you will not judge me. But yet you will because you are truthful.

You are God. But today by God's grace you say I can hear. Thank God I can hear.

That means God is speaking to me. That means he's calling me. If he wasn't you couldn't hear.

You can't come to the Father unless the Holy Spirit draws you. You can't come. It's impossible.

You can't get out of your seat. You can't even hear me unless the Holy Spirit is drawing you. But today if you hear that's the time to get up and say God judge this in me.

I judge it. You judge it. I agree with you.

Now God I'm going to give it to you. You burn it out. Lord I have no power over this.

But you promised me power. You said that you're going to give me the ability to take this captive. And I'm trusting you for this.

I don't want to live this way anymore. If this is the cry of your heart I'm going to ask you unashamedly today to get out of your seat in just a moment. Make your way to this altar and we're going to pray a prayer of repentance.

And we're going to believe God for the victory, the majesty that he promises will be yours in Jesus Christ. Beloved listen to me. Don't play games with a holy God.

Would you stand please in the annex. You can step out and go forward between the screens. Main sanctuary.

Please step out wherever you are. The Holy Spirit is speaking to you. Come and meet me here.

We're going to pray together and we're going to believe God for victory. Every thief. Every liar.

Every adulterer. Every evil speaker. Everyone who's sitting and you're stared by pornography.

You need to get out of your seat now and make your way here quickly. You're careless and indifferent with the things of God. You don't appreciate the greatness of the salvation that God has given you.

And numerous other things. Everyone who's caught in immorality. You're in an adulterous relationship.

You need to get out. You're having sex outside of marriage. You're a fornicator.

You need to stop. You cannot you cannot sit at that table in the table of God at the same time. God gives you great promises.

Just slip out of your seat, please. And there are many others. You know what it is that God speaking to your heart.

Slip out, please. Make your way here. It's the goodness of God that is leading you today.

You'll walk out of this service and you'll have joy in your heart again. Majesty of God will come and touch your life. Pray with me.

Lord Jesus. I come before you. To acknowledge.

That your word is the truth. And the sin in my heart. Deserves your justice.

But today. I have heard of your mercy. And I come.

In agreement with you. The things that you call wrong. In my life.

Are wrong. You promised me. The power.

To live a victorious life. Because you are willing. To let your life.

Be intertwined. With mine. I invite you, Holy Spirit.

To burn out of my heart. My mind. My life.

My actions. Everything. That offends.

The nature. Of Jesus Christ. And the name.

Of Jesus Christ. Upon my life. I trust.

That you will raise me up. And give me victory. A new heart.

And a new mind. And I will take captivity. And it will become.
My captive. You promised me joy. And the majesty.
Of Jesus Christ. In my life. You said.
That I would dance. On all the weapons. Of the devil.
That have been formed. To destroy me. This morning.
I received my forgiveness. I thank you for cleansing. I thank you for mercy.
Oh God. I trust you. From this day forward.
That you will always. Speak to my heart. And keep me.
On a path. That will glorify. Your holy name.
Now Lord I give you praise. And I glorify you God. For your goodness.

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