

Warnings of Judgement

In the 1980's I came to know believers in Dundee, Scotland. They told me of prophecies that they had received over three decades of a coming earthquake that will hit Dundee. At that time God was speaking much to these believers by means of prophecy. In 1957 God spoke of His coming wrath but also of 'revival winds' that would blow all over Dundee.

In January 1957 a vision was received amongst this small group of believers, of Dundee in flames and on the 8th February 1957 a further vision was received of the Albert Institute, a scene of destruction with buildings falling.

Other prophecies spoke of a day when darkness would come upon the whole earth, the day which would also see an event where "the whole city would be cut in two", but in that same day a ministry - "A mighty ministry of My healing power, of covenant promises of My Kingdom which has come."

Some years later, in 1979, during a Sunday evening meeting, a young man was caught by a vision. He seemed obviously distressed by what he saw. He said, "I saw the ground opening on the Fife side of the Tay Bridge. The split, or crack in the ground, came across the river, and as it did so, the bridge fell. It came through the back of Caird Hall ripping it in two, and up Reform Street. The ground opened, it seemed, on the right side of the street as you face north towards Law Hill. I saw the pillars of the High School falling. There followed close up views of shattered glass, he recounted, cars and masonry falling into the opening in the ground. I heard screams and saw lots of blood running down the drains. I wept at the sight of the blood. Just previous to this I had seen the whole city in a hush. I saw people asleep in bed as though all was well, but I knew in my spirit this was just the calm before the storm."

Another young man in the same meeting had a vision of the same scene, only he found himself viewing from above Caird Hall. He said, "Reform Street opened up and the crack seemed to divide at the High School buildings."

In 1980, at a Saturday morning breakfast meeting, a young woman shared, "I had a vision. I found myself standing by a pillar in Reform Street. Suddenly the whole street opened up and buildings crumbled and fell around me. I clung to this post for support and became aware of the presence of Jesus, who told me not to fear. He would look after me and keep me safe." She returned to the scene of her vision later, to find the post and the exact spot where she had stood in the vision.

Shortly after this, the brother who first told me of these prophecies, said that when he was talking with someone about these visions a young woman was listening intently and suddenly burst out - "I had a dream quite recently. My husband and I were in Reform Street when the earth shook and began to open up. I ran away from the scene leaving my husband to look after the people who were in distress. I was concerned for my children whom I'd left with my mother. They were alright and my husband returned safely."

Again, in December 1981, whilst giving testimony at a meeting, a guest speaker from Southern Ireland seemed distracted. I'd heard this same man give his testimony of the change the Lord had wrought in his heart. I knew he was a reliable witness. On this occasion he appeared to be distracted by something else going on in his mind. When questioned about this he said, "I saw a huge angel fly across the room with a drawn sword,

on what appeared to be a mission of judgement. He turned and gave a stern look. This was followed by a vision of huge dark angry waves, he said, like tidal waves which seemed to come rolling towards me. There were many faces of people in those dark waves. Out of these waves appeared the face of Jesus, who held up His right arm with His fist clenched. This again gave the impression of judgement. However, in the next vision, the figure of Jesus again rose out of the waves, but this time He held up two arms, and in His hands He held a large ring.”

The brother who shared these visions with me said that he asked this visiting speaker what he thought it meant. He immediately replied, “I think it is going to be an earthquake!”

My friend felt that he could offer an interpretation of this vision, he later wrote. An earthquake had not been in his thoughts but exactly a week earlier, in a time of prayer with another brother, for a forthcoming meeting, this prayer partner told him, “I’ve had a strange vision. I saw a seismograph, but instead of a needle I saw a sword!” He concluded that this vision foretold of judgement, but that Jesus would use this to bring His people into covenant relationship with Himself, a ring being the symbol of the eternal covenant.

A few months later - it was in October 1982 - another visiting speaker, this time from the south of England, was sharing his testimony in Dundee. Again this is a brother who we’ve met, having hosted him as our own house guest, and one of the most sound and mature Christians we have met. As he stood up to speak, a vision formed on the table in front of him. He saw the city of Dundee on fire. It was widespread, covering the whole city. He had close up views of houses, multi storied buildings being ravaged by fire.

Trying to make sense of these prophetic warnings needs care. Understanding the ‘woes’ God declares over cities and towns is not easy for us to understand. But it seems, on some occasions, the Lord declares his coming judgement before the time. Jesus declared, “Woe to you Chorazin! Woe to you Bethsaida! For if the miracles that had been performed in Tyre and Sidon that had been performed in you, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the judgement than for you. And you, Capernaum, will not be exalted in heaven will you? You will be brought down to Hades.” (Luke 10:13-16)

The towns of Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum no longer exist. Their judgement did come, just as Jesus prophesied!

An incident is recorded in the Journal of George Fox in 1651. He says that he was walking along with several Friends when he saw three steeple-house spires and he says, “They struck at my life.” He asked what place this was and learnt that it was Lichfield. Without saying a word, he left these Friends and “went by my eye over hedge and ditch till I came to within a mile of Lichfield, where, in a great field, there were shepherds keeping their sheep. Then I was commanded of the Lord to take off my shoes. I stood still, for it was Winter; and the word of the Lord was like a fire to me.. So I put off my shoes and left them with the shepherds; and the poor shepherds trembled and were astonished. Then I walk on about a mile, and as soon as I was within the city the word of the Lord came to me again, saying, ‘Cry, Woe unto the bloody city of Lichfield.’ So I went up and down the streets, crying with a loud voice, ‘Woe to the bloody city of Lichfield!’ It was market day. I went into the market place and to and fro in several parts of it, and made stands, crying as before, ‘Woe to the bloody city of Lichfield!’ And no one laid hands on me but as I was crying through the streets, there seemed to me to be a channel of blood running down the streets, and the market place appeared like a pool of blood. When I had declared what

was upon me, and felt myself clear, I went out of the town in peace; and returning to the shepherds, gave them some money., and took my shoes of them again. But the fire of the Lord was so on my feet, and all over me, that I did not matter to put my shoes on any more, and was at a stand whether I should or not, till I felt freedom from the Lord so to do. And then after I had washed my feet I put my shoes on again.”

This incident has caused some to question the mental condition of George Fox at this time but we can question that which we do not understand and come to a wrong conclusion. Spiritual things can only be spiritually understood. Such are the movings of the Spirit. But George Fox writes of his own questioning of the matter. “After this a deep consideration came upon me, why, or for what reason, I should be sent to cry against this city, and call it ‘the Bloody City’. For though the Parliament had the Minster one while, and the king another, and much blood had been shed in the town between them, (this was during the English Civil War) yet that was no more than had befallen many other places. But afterwards I came to understand, that in the Emperor Dioclesian’s time, a thousand Christians were martyred in Lichfield. So I was to go without my shoes, through the channel of their blood, and into the pool of their blood in the market place, that I might raise up the memorial of the blood of those martyrs which had been shed about a thousand years before, and laid cold in their streets. So the sense of this blood was upon me, and I obeyed the word of the Lord. Ancient records testify how many Christian Britons suffered there. Much I could write of the sense I had of the blood of the martyrs that has been shed in this nation for the Name of Christ, both under the ten persecutions and since. But I leave it to the Lord and His book, out of which all shall be judged; for His book is a most certain record, and His Spirit a true recorder.” (Journal of George Fox - 1651)

We read of another ‘Woe’ in the Bible, in the prophecy of Isaiah regarding Jerusalem. In this prophecy Jerusalem is referred to as Ariel. meaning ‘Lion of God’: “Woe, O Ariel. Ariel the city where David once camped. Add year to year, observe your feasts on schedule and I will bring distress to Ariel. And she will be a city of lamenting and mourning; and she will be like an Ariel to Me. And I will camp against you, encircling you and I will set siege-works against you and I will raise up battle towers against you, then you shall be brought low.” (Isaiah 29:1-4)

It is clear this judgement comes from God for the prophecy of Isaiah continues, “**From the Lord of hosts you will be punished**, with thunder, and **earthquake** and loud noise, with whirlwind and tempest and the flame of a consuming fire.” (Isaiah 29:6)

This judgement, however, is not final, because blessings are promises beyond this time of judgement. And we need to realise that this judgement was brought with reluctance, yet no repentance was found despite the warnings. Jesus said, “O, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling. Behold, your house is being left to you desolate! For I say to you, from now on you shall not see Me until you say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the Name of the Lord.’” (Matt.23:37-39) O, how the Lord wishes that men would repent and turn from their wicked ways.

The prophecy of Isaiah still lay ahead in Jesus’ time. As Jesus left the temple, He pointed to the temple buildings, “Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, not one stone here will be left upon another, which will not be torn down.” (Matt.24:2)

Jesus' disciples asked when this would be and Jesus went on to say, "When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognise that her desolation is at hand. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let those who are in the midst of the city depart, and let not those who are in the country enter the city; because these are days of vengeance, in order that all things that are written are fulfilled. Woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days, for there will be great distress upon the land and wrath to this people, and they will fall by the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations and Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles until the times if the Gentiles be fulfilled." (Luke 21:20-24)

It is a matter of the historic record that we have the detail of the siege of Jerusalem by the future Emperor of Rome, Titus, in AD70. The siege ended with the sacking of the city and the destruction of the temple, the detail recorded by the Jewish historian Josephus who witnessed this destruction. Indeed, no stone was left standing on another and he estimated a million people were killed and 97,000 thousand led away from their homeland captive and enslaved with many also fleeing from their native land.

But prophecy of scripture would suggest that there will yet be another and separate time of distress when "those who are in Judea flee to the mountains; let him who is on the housetop not go down to get the things out that are in the house; and let him who is in the field not turn back to get his coat, but woe to those who with child in those days! But pray that your flight may not be in Winter or on a Sabbath, for there will be a great tribulation such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall." (Matt. 24:16-21) Again, it seems, as with the siege of Jerusalem in AD70, this calamity comes very suddenly.

Some consider this prophecy of Jesus recorded in the gospel of Matthew to be the same judgement as AD70, as foretold in the gospel of Luke, but Matthew records that this similar judgement will come "when you see the abomination of desolation which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place, [Let the reader understand]." (Matt. 24:15) and rather than the distress coming just upon the 'land', as foretold by Luke, the distress will effect all nations as prophesied by Daniel. (see Daniel 11:31 and 12:1) Jesus also goes on to say that **immediately** after this tribulation then the sign of His (second) coming would be seen in the sky. (cf. Mat. 24:29-31) He comes to catch away His Church before God's wrath is poured out, a judgement far more severe than any that has ever been seen before!

It seems these judgements we are considering are but warnings for a day has been fixed in which Jesus will judge the world in righteousness: "He (God) has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead." (Acts 17:31) "Having overlooked the times of ignorance God" *is still* "declaring to men that all everywhere should repent." (Acts 17:30)

Who considers that judgement far more severe than anything the world has seen before is prophesied to come at the end of this age? Who is heeding the warnings in this hour? The Old Testament prophets refer to it as the 'Day of the Lord': "For the day of the Lord is near and it will come as destruction from the Almighty." (Joel 1:15) "The day of the Lord is indeed great and very awesome, and who will endure it? 'Yet even now,' declares the Lord, 'Return to Me with all your heart and with fasting, weeping, and mourning; and rend your garments.' Now return to the Lord your God for He is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, abounding in loving kindness, and relenting of evil." (Joel 2:11-13)

Before that awesome day let us learn the lesson of the reluctant prophet, Jonah, who was told to pronounce judgement upon Nineveh. "The people of Nineveh believed God and they called a fast and put on sackcloth from the greatest to the least of them," (Jonah 3:5) then "God relented concerning the calamity which He had declared." (Jonah 3:10) We can be assured God's judgements are just and always follow His warnings to turn and repent.

In the New Testament the judgement of the day of the Lord is described simply as the 'wrath of God'. Paul writes, "For God has not destined us for wrath but for obtaining salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Thess.5:9)

When Jesus returns in the clouds He comes as Judge and God's wrath is going to be poured out in preparation for Jesus' return to the earth, when He will reign and rule from Jerusalem for one thousand years. This day of judgement is far more severe than the warnings that have preceded it. The book of Revelation describes these seven bowls of wrath and seven trumpet judgements. In just one of these judgements a third of mankind is killed, such is the extent of the judgement on wickedness! "Woe, woe, woe to those who dwell on the earth," is declared at this time. (Rev.8:13) It is prophesied, yet men still chose to ignore the prophets He sends to warn those guilty of judgement, to turn from their wicked ways. The Lord is "not wishing for any to perish, but for all to come to repentance." (2 Peter 3:9)

A way of escape has been made, through Jesus who died for the sin of the whole world, that all who would believe in Him would not perish but have everlasting life. (John 3:16) But who is hearing the warnings of God? Does God, in His mercy need to shake us yet more so we will consider the salvation available in Jesus that we so desperately need? The final ministry of His true Church is to lay down their lives that men might yet repent. Such is the seriousness of this hour we are fast approaching.

"See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking. For if those did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less shall we escape who turn away from Him who warns from heaven. And this voice shook the earth then, but now He has promised, saying, 'Yet once more I will shake not only the earth, but also the heaven.' And this expression, 'Yet once more,' denotes the moving of those things that can be shaken, as of created things, in order that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore, since we receive a Kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, for which we offer God an acceptable service with reverence and awe. For our God is a consuming fire!" (Hebrews 12:25-29)

Beyond God's judgement there is an eternal hope. "Why should any living mortal or any man offer complaint in view of his sins? Let us examine and probe our ways and let us return to the Lord." (Lamentations 3:39-40) "The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases. His mercies never come to an end. They are new every morning." (Lamentations 3:22-23)

Colin Winfield - August 2014

Note - Copies of the book that tell of the visions of Dundee, 'Everlasting Covenant: The Key To A Perfect Relationship', co-authored by Bill Kettles and Richard Booker, is still available under ISBN-13 978-0951044704