

October 14, 2001

9-11 & Repentance

I have received an abundance of e mails concerning the events of 9-11. One thing that stands out to me about the e mails is the common consensus that though the attacks were the worse man-made disaster in American history, there has been no spirit of repentance. Rather, the attacks have been a call to unite all religions, which is quite contrary to the Word of God. Bush even honored the Muslim holy day last Friday, when he held off the bombing for that day, no doubt, so he would not offend the Muslims. Yet he will not show the same respect to Christians.

I must admit that I would not envy President Bush. He is on a powder keg. The Feds have worked hard to dilute the WASP influence with every kind of false religion possible, and they have done the job very well.

The attack has not called America nor Christians to repent of their evil ways, but it has called for a joining together with history s most violent and worse enemy of Christ, the Muslims. That unity is only going to call on more distressing times, for the Lord God will not share His glory with anyone, not even Allah.

The message today is motivated by a devotional outline forwarded to me by Bettie. She is on several mailing lists I am not, and one of those list is from a pastor in VA who sends out devotionals every few days.

Amos 3:1 ¶ Hear this word that the LORD hath spoken against you, O children of Israel, against the whole family which I brought up from the land of Egypt, saying, 2 You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities. 3 Can two walk together, except they be agreed? 4 Will a lion roar in the forest, when he hath no prey? will a young lion cry out of his den, if he have taken nothing? 5 Can a bird fall in a snare upon the earth, where no gin is for him? shall one take up a snare from the earth, and have taken nothing at all? 6 Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid? **shall there be evil in a city, and the LORD hath not done it?** 7 Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets. 8 The lion hath roared, who will not fear? the Lord GOD hath spoken, who can but prophesy?

A common prayer that many Christians have prayed for years has been that God would do something to wake this nation up; that He would do something to humble us from our self-reliance, self-indulgence and unbelief. We have known that something drastic needed to happen, and that life just could not go on as it has since WWII, continuing to descend into the pit of destruction. We have been confident that either God would intervene, or we would self-destruct.

Some thought Y2K might be the wake-up call, but, obviously, it was not. On the other hand, the events of 9-11 might be God beginning to answer those prayers. However, the call throughout Scripture is for the people who are called by God s name to repent. According to God s word, the 9-11 events were ordained by God.

In **2 Chronicles 21:12-17**, we see that because God s people turned from God and went whoring after the false gods, that the Lord God Himself stirred up *the Philistines and the Arabians* against His people.

In **Isaiah 37**, Sennacherib, the wicked king of Assyria, was intent on moving against Hezekiah, king of Judah. In order to strike fear into Judah, Sennacherib boasted about what he had done in the past. His past military success make him confident of an easy victory over Hezekiah.

Is.37: 26-29 God tells Sennacherib why he had been able to have such military success, He says, "Have you not heard? Long ago I did it, from ancient times I planned it. Now I have brought it to pass that you should turn fortified cities into ruinous heaps. This is why their inhabitants did not have the strength to resist you. It was because of Me that they were dismayed and put to shame; it was because of me that they were like the vegetation of the field and as the green grass."

The Lord assures Sennacherib that He knows all about him, and because of what he did to Israel, the Lord will judge him. **V. 30**, and God's people will prosper. (Actually, this is a prophecy that reaches forward to the time in which we live, the Church age.

God told Sennacherib, You were successful not because of your might nor of your superior planning, but because I was with you, and I was with you against My own people who I redeemed from Egypt.

Revelation 13 and 17 make it clear God is the One who brings both good and evil plans to pass. Furthermore, the Scriptures teach that He may even be the one to plant the evil and destructive idea. (See 1 Kings 22:22ff., 2 Chron. 35:21, Isa. 10, Jer. 25:9, &c.)

Proverbs 21:31 *The horse is prepared against the day of battle: but safety is of the LORD.*

What took place on 9-11 was a **warning from God** to those who are called by His name. It was a **warning from God to the people of the Linden Baptist Church**. 9-11 was a demonstration of what can happen when God removes His protective hand. It is a call to repent of our sins and of our indifference toward our responsibilities to God and to man.

I think a key passage is found in **Luke 13:1-5**

Some people asked Jesus about two major news events of their day:

First, some Galileans had gone into the temple to offer their sacrifice, and Pilate came suddenly upon them, and killed them. He mingling their blood with the blood of the animal sacrifice they were offering.

Second, there was a tower in Siloam that fell and killed 18 people.

Christ's answer to both of the news items of his day was ***except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.***

Christ did not say that those who died were examples of divine judgment against sin. Christ did not speak against Pilate who killed the people who were making their sacrifices.

Christ did not speak against the contractor who built an unsafe tower, though the contractor was guilty of murder under the law.

Christ did not mourn for the victims.

The context of the Lord's words in Luke 13 is Luke 12. In Luke 12, the Lord preached a strong message concerning faithfulness. He warned His hearers about knowing their master's will, yet not doing it. The entire chapter is calling men to faithful service to the Lord Jesus Christ, and doing His word.

Luke 12:1-4, Christ was speaking primarily to disciples, but there was also a great multitude of people listening to Him.

Vv. 5-12, they were fearful of what others would think if they would serve the Lord first of all. One is to fear God, for He will take care of His own.

Vv. 13-21, one hearer was fearful that he would not get his proper inheritance. And Christ warned of covetousness that is, gathering unnecessary and unneeded material possessions around him. Life could be cut off in a moment.

Vv. 22-35, our first responsibility is to be faithful to the Lord God that is, please Him by doing His word, and He will take care of His own.

Vv. 35-40, if we are not faithful, the Lord will call us into account at the most unexpected moment. So the call is to watch and be busy about His business no matter how long He delays His judgment.

Vv. 41-48, Peter asked to whom the Lord was talking. Was He speaking to just the 12 or to the whole multitude that was listening? The Lord answered Peter with another warning BE FAITHFUL TO WHAT YOU KNOW TO DO ACCORDING TO THE WILL OF THE FATHER.

Vv. 49-53, the Lord warns that His message will split even families.

Vv. 54-59, Christ rebuked both the 12 and the multitudes. He called them *hypocrites* because they could tell by the looks of the sky what kind of weather was on its way, but they could not see that Christ among them demanded their faithful service.

Christ turned to those questing Him, and used these news stories as a call to the people following Him to repent. Death came suddenly upon both the Galilaeans and the people in the tower. **Death will come unexpectedly upon us**, so now is the time to repent of our indifference and serve the Lord.

In a situation such as we had on 9-11, its easy for us to focus on the sins of those around us. But in this passage, Christ tells us that terrible events are a call for us to examine ourselves WHERE HAVE WE COMPROMISED OUR TESTIMONY? Yes, thousands of people perished on 9-11, but **the most important thing in that the tragedy is the issue between us and our God.**

Certainly, God hates the sodomy, adultery and the murder of about 4000 babies a day that is going on in our nation. And it is so convenient for us to point to those sinners and say, They brought this about. But we see from Luke 12 and 13, CHRIST DID NOT SAY THAT UNLESS THE SODOMITES, WHOREMONGERS AND MURDERERS REPENT, EVERYONE WILL PERISH.

Christ is speaking to those who were following Him, including the 12 Apostles. He **TOLD HIS FOLLOWERS, *except you repent, you shall all likewise perish.***

He is speaking to us who are consumed by materialism, love of money, complacency, self-assurance, unbelief, self-centeredness, arrogance, idolatry (sports) and love for human approval above God s approval.

In **Isaiah 2:12-22**, the Lord promises to humble the pride of man, and exalt Himself. In that day, all the material and financial preparation man has done will be useless.

In **Genesis 11:1-9**, the people said "Come, let us build for ourselves a great tower whose top will reach into heaven, so we can make a name for ourselves." And the Lord confused their language and scattered them over

the face of the whole earth; so they had to stop building. **How many new church buildings** have been built as a memorial to a man? We are prone to love the displaying of our own abilities. We are impressed by ourselves. And God does not like it, and will not have it.

The Apostle Paul reminds us in **1 Corinthians 4:7** that we have noting that we were not first given by God, so why do we boast as though we received it by our own might and power?

Certainly, this is a time for mercy - there are many who need love, many who need help.

This is a time for bringing to justice those who planed and did this terrible thing.

But first and foremost, this is a time for **pointing the finger at our own wicked and unfaithful hearts**. It is a time for **humbling ourselves**; it is a time for weeping over our sin; it is a time for acknowledging that He is God. "Unless you repent, you will all likewise perish."

Luke 12:4 *And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. 5 But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him.*