

Don't Use the 'J' Word - Judgment
(It Might Lead to the 'R' Word - Repentance)
Joseph Herrin (9-27-01)

On September 11, 2001, America experienced a savage and devastating attack of a type that is without precedence in her history, eclipsing even the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor 60 years earlier. Whereas most of the nation was far removed from the attack on Pearl Harbor, and this earlier attack was aimed primarily at military targets, this most recent attack bore its greatest devastation upon civilian targets in the heart of our nation's most populous city.

It appears that nearly 7,000 people have perished in these attacks and the assault upon the sense of safety and invulnerability that our nation once maintained has affected millions more. The further repercussions are staggering. There was complete destruction of three huge skyscrapers and great damage to the Pentagon. Beyond this there are now four more buildings that were damaged to an extent that they will need to be demolished and there was the loss of four airliners. This combined loss is said to eclipse the largest natural or manmade disaster this nation has ever sustained, totaling into the billions of dollars.

As a further repercussion, the stock market was shut down for four days and in the week that it reopened it suffered the largest drop since the great depression, losing well over a trillion dollars in value. These sums are staggering, but it has not only been our economy that has suffered, but the economies of other nations throughout the world. It has already been announced that 100,000 jobs will be lost in the airline industry due to fewer people flying, and Boeing has announced cutbacks of 30,000 employees in its airline manufacturing operations due to decreased demand for airplanes. On top of this we stand to see tens of thousands of our service men and women involved in the declared war against terrorism.

Truly, the sudden events of 9-11-01 have had a devastating impact on our nation, and we have not yet seen how far the ripple effects will carry. It is a normal reaction for the church and the citizens of this nation to ask, "What does all of this mean?" It is also appropriate that the ministers that Yahshua has given to the body of Christ should respond by seeking the face of God to hear from Him and declare His message to all those who have ears to hear.

[What is desperately needed at this time is to know what Yahweh is saying about these events.](#)

I have noted a couple of responses to what has happened and what continues to be played out. Many in the church have been called to prayer, and indeed many church buildings have been overflowing with people since this calamity occurred. But as I

mentioned in the article “Can America Judge the Wicked”, the Spirit has spoken to me that there are many people talking to God, but few are listening.

I have come across numerous calls to pray, such as the following list which instructs the saints specifically on how they should intercede.

PLEASE KEEP THE FOLLOWING IN YOUR PRAYERS:

1. The pilots and passengers in the aircrafts that may still be in jeopardy and the airline companies under the terrible distress of the hijackings.
2. Those injured at the various sites.
3. The families and friends of those injured or killed in this tragedy.
4. Our President, George W. Bush, Vice - President Richard B. Cheney, President's Chief of Staff - Andrew H. Card, Jr., Secretary of State — Colin Powell, National Security Advisor - Ms. Condoleezza Rice, Secretary of Commerce - Don Evans, Department of Justice - John Ashcroft, Secretary of Defense - Donald Rumsfeld, foreign security advisors and all other advisors involved.
5. Those emergency workers; fire department, police, military, doctors and nurses who are involved..... they will never be the same.....
6. Pray for “Avenues of Evangelism” to be opened to us as we reach out with compassion to those in distress.
7. Pray for “the Peace of Jerusalem”. It is more than likely because of our relationship with Israel that these cowards have attacked our country.
8. For the living terrorists to be apprehended and dealt with properly.

Now, certainly these are things that should be prayed for. Several of these things are even given as commands in scripture. We are told to pray for the peace of Jerusalem (Psalm 122:6). We are told to pray for our government leaders (I Timothy 2:1-3). The apostle Paul asked the saints to pray that an open door of opportunity might be set before him to preach the gospel and that the gospel might spread rapidly (II Thessalonians 3:1). But it struck me that there is something missing from this list. In fact it is the most important thing that people should be praying about. There is no mention of listening to what God is saying. And furthermore, there is no mention of repentance.

Prayer is not just one way communication from man to God. Prayer is also from God to man. There is an aspect of prayer where we are to wait upon Yahweh to hear His

voice. In days as these this is the most essential part of prayer. Tragically this has largely been neglected.

Only by hearing the voice of Yahweh can we respond in obedience that will satisfy His heart. Many churches today are just presenting the saints with a list of items to lift up before God in prayer. Such saints are not in a position to hear what Yahweh might speak to them. They are not coming to listen, but rather to present petitions.

There are some, however, that do seek to hear. Unfortunately, many of these are receiving instructions from ministers and prophets about what Yahweh will and won't speak to them. I have witnessed an outpouring of words stating that these events have nothing to do with the judgment of God and that those who speak on the meaning of these events should refrain from even using the word judgment. This has the effect of causing many to turn a deaf ear to anything the Spirit may speak to them concerning the sins of this nation and the need for repentance.

In an hour when we desperately need to hear from the Father, there seems to be much that is conspiring to keep people from doing just that. I have been weighing these words that are warning against speaking about judgment or correction in relationship to these events, and I have not been quick to answer these words for many of them are coming from men and women of reputation among the body of Christ. As I have examined these words, and the arguments put forth I find them flawed, however.

In sharing the following items I want to make it clear that it is not my place or purpose to make a judgment against any of Yahweh's servants. Before Yahweh we will all stand or fall, and I have no authority to make judgments about the servants of God. We are commanded, however, to test all words of prophecy and this is my intent. Paul commanded the Corinthian believers:

I Corinthians 14:29

And let two or three prophets speak, and let the others pass judgment.

(NAS)

Paul, as renowned of an apostle and prophet as he was, allowed that even his own words should be put to the test. He commended the Berean Jews as being noble for they searched the scriptures to see whether the things Paul spoke were true. In the same manner we should do likewise. I do not seek to malign any prophet or minister, only to test their words for we all stumble at times, as I myself have. Let us prove the words spoken as we search the scriptures to obtain a second witness for all things must be established by two or three witnesses, and in cases of seeking to determine the validity of prophetic words, the scriptures provide an excellent second witness to confirm or deny what is spoken.

II Timothy 3:16

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for *teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness...*
(NAS)

Because it is not my intent to malign any minister of the gospel, I have chosen to not name any names as I present the following words. Some of these words come from men and women with national and even international reputations, and some with a lesser sphere of influence. It is not important to focus upon personalities, so I would encourage the reader to not even try to guess who said what. It really doesn't matter. What matters is that we arrive at a correct understanding of the mind of the Father in this hour.

Following are some quotations from a word that I have read recently.

Some propose that America has come under judgement and condemnation and this is the first step in her God-ordained destruction. Others (including some who I respect) have suggested that God intends this as a wake-up call for the United States ... a call to repentance ... e.g., sort of a "spanking" or warning rather than a full blown judgement.

Both of those theories troubled my spirit and were not consistent with the what God spoke to me less than 2 hours after the first hijacked plane hit the World Trade Center. So I have been really praying and asking God about this. I want to share what I believe He said to me. I want to cover three different areas: 1) what is going on and 2) why this is not a judgement and 3) how we can respond...

We know from Job 1:10 that God sometimes puts a "hedge of protection" around His servants and even around the nations that name Him as their God. The United States was founded primarily as a Christian nation, and it's laws based primarily on Christian values. The words "In God We Trust" is written on it's currency, as a constant reminder to the people of the United States that they are God's people. Because of this, God placed His hedge of protection around the United States and caused it to prosper. I believe that there were many times in the past where Satan wanted to kill, steal and destroy in the United States on a scale of astronomical proportion; but he was prevented from doing so because of God's hedge of protection around the nation.

Isaiah 5:1-6 show us an important principle about God's hedge of protection. It is offered for a season to allow God's vineyard to cultivate and grow. But if the "vineyard" that God is protecting does not bear good fruit, after due season God tears down the wall of protection and allows it to be "trampled down." He takes away His protective hedge and allows it to be "burned."

This is what has happened to the USA as a nation. This terrorist attack is not a judgement, there is due process. In the past, God had a hedge of protection surrounding the United States. There are many who love and serve God in this country. But as a country, as a whole, we have not born good fruit. As an nation, the United States has brought forth the "wild grapes" of Is 5:4. Because of this, God has lifted His hedge of protection (Is 5:5).

Therefore, the United States is no longer protected from Satan's schemes to kill, steal and destroy in all nations on a massive scale. That is why this terrorist attack was able to hit its target .. in the past that would not have been possible because of God's protective hedge. But time is up.. God looked for good grapes and He found too many wild grapes. So He broke down His protective wall that had previously surrounded the United States. Once that protective hedge was gone, the United States became as vulnerable to Satan's schemes against the nations as any other nation.

The writer here has some very good insights, and I believe the passage from Isaiah is especially applicable. I will include it here since it was not fully quoted.

Isaiah 5:1-6

1 Let me sing now for my well-beloved A song of my beloved concerning His vineyard. My well-beloved had a vineyard on a fertile hill.

2 And He dug it all around, removed its stones, and planted it with the choicest vine. And He built a tower in the middle of it, and hewed out a wine vat in it; then He expected it to produce good grapes, but it produced only worthless ones.

3 "And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, Judge between me and My vineyard.

4 "What more was there to do for My vineyard that I have not done in it? Why, when I expected it to produce good grapes did it produce worthless ones?

5 "So now let me tell you what I am going to do to My vineyard: I will remove its hedge and it will be consumed; I will break down its wall and it will become trampled ground.

6 "And I will lay it waste; it will not be pruned or hoed, but briars and thorns will come up. I will also charge the clouds to rain no rain on it."

(NAS)

What an awesome passage! Yahweh had begun a work with a people. He had provided everything necessary for good fruit to come forth from the people. It is even mentioned that a tower was built in the vineyard. But when Yahweh came to examine the fruit He found that the fruit was not good.

Has not Yahweh done these things with America? He has placed a people upon fertile soil. He chose a good vine to establish the vineyard - America has a heritage and roots that were clearly scripturally based. America has received tremendous blessings from God until she has become the most prosperous and powerful nation on Earth.

One could argue that America has produced some good grapes, and certainly she has. She has been used to spread the gospel throughout the world. She has had her finer moments in standing against evil as she did in World War II. She led the world in giving recognition to Israel as a nation and she has stood by Israel's side when no one else would. Yet even Judah had its good periods and good actions. Under David, Solomon, Hezekiah, Jehoshaphat, Josiah, and others the land experienced revivals, prosperity, and a removing of idols and a return to Yahweh of varying extent.

But as a time came for Judah to have reached maturity and to bring forth good fruits, so has America come to a place where the Father expects maturity and good fruit. As the writer quoted above states, God has come to inspect the fruit of America and has found that the nation as a whole has not brought forth good fruit, but there are wild grapes in the vineyard. Because of this God has lifted His hedge of protection.

What this writer says is good and insightful. I think there is simply a misunderstanding about what constitutes God's judgment. The statement is made, "[This terrorist attack is not a judgement, there is due process.](#)" But there is always due process in God's judgments. Yahweh does not judge unrighteously. We are given the due process of God in the following passage.

Isaiah 11:3-4

3 and He will not judge by what His eyes see, nor make a decision by what His ears hear;

4 But with righteousness He will judge the poor, and decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth; and He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked.
(NAS)

Removing the hedge about Yahweh's vineyard is a judgment. This is seen in Yahweh's challenge to Jerusalem and Judah, "[Judge between me and My vineyard.](#)" This passage in Isaiah is about a judgment being made. Yahweh is asking the inhabitants of Jerusalem and Judah to review His judgment and see if it was not righteous and fair. Yahweh always uses due process in His judgments and He is not afraid to ask men to review His judgment to see whether He acted in righteousness and fairness.

We could look at what happened to Judah not long after this and ask, "How could this be fair? This seems brutal. A wicked people came in and did as they willed with the people of God." But Yahweh was fair. He waited long for repentance to come forth and He sent many warnings. Judah even saw the results of God's judgment on her wicked sister Israel as she was carried away by the Assyrians, yet she did not repent.

What happened at the World Trade Centers and the Pentagon seems brutal, but Judah suffered much worse than this. They were starved. Women and children were cruelly butchered. Women were raped and beaten. Men had their eyes poked out. The nation's best and brightest were carried away into slavery to a foreign nation.

Did Yahweh commit all of these atrocities against the people? No! But He removed the hedge of protection from them and this allowed the atrocities to occur. **The judgment was the removing of the hedge.** Satan is always ready and waiting to destroy, kill, and devour the children of God. He has many willing and evil servants to carry out his pleasure. He is restrained by the hand of God. It is a terrible judgment for Yahweh to determine that He must remove the hedge of protection from a people, for then all the fury of the adversary can come against them.

I don't believe that the hedge around America has been fully torn down as of yet. There is still room for repentance to come and for the damage the enemy would inflict to be mitigated. But repentance will not come if those who are leaders in the body will not boldly declare that America and the church within her have produced worthless grapes, and that repentance and a return to righteousness is called for. If America responds as Israel and Judah of old, then the hedge will be torn down further and more horror will ensue.

Let no one think that any significant degree of repentance, or a return to righteousness has occurred already. There are myriads who are flying the flag of the USA and who have hung out signs saying "God Bless America." But the nation continues seeking after the same idols as before. The response in America thus far has been very broad, as millions of people have rallied in a patriotic fervor, but it has also been extremely shallow. There is no deep soul searching. There is very little introspection and examination going on. The greatest cry for most Americans is for a return to normalcy; a normalcy that in no way resembles godliness.

Just think for a moment about the direction our nation has been heading. Immorality is rampant. The news of the previous weeks has been speaking of the T.V. networks' upcoming season forging ahead to new excesses as they break long standing taboos concerning the usage of profanity and more graphic sexuality. We have already removed Christianity from the public schools, and the ten commandments have been removed from the public courthouses as well. Violence

is rampant in the public schools and in our cities. Gangs are doing much as they please, terrorizing the citizens of many towns. Drugs are commonplace and the war against drugs is more of a holding action than a war of eradication. The majority of marriages are ending in divorce. Pregnancy out of wedlock is routine, and it is a federally protected right for a woman to murder her unborn baby if she does not want it. Children are being abused and kidnaped in record numbers. We are a nation in a downward spiral of sin, promiscuity, sensuality, materialism, and rebellion.

Many look at the flags that are now flying and the banners that say "God Bless America" and think that something significant has occurred. Yet the foundation of our nation is still worm eaten and has not been rebuilt. We are a nation that has received a sudden shock, but the shock has not yet led to a change of the moral climate of America.

Let me now move on to another word that was recently published. This writer with national prominence has asserted that what has happened has nothing to do with a judgment against America. Rather, he characterizes what has happened as part of a war of good America, who stands for freedom, against evil countries and groups that represent tyranny.

I reiterate: this is a war of freedom against tyranny. Tyranny is our real enemy. It is the design of Satan for humanity. God's design is for humans to be able to produce and consume as they wish, choose their own leaders, say what they feel they should say, and worship the God that they choose to worship. The Taliban clearly exercises tyranny, and that is the enemy. While Israel deserves our support, that nation would be more in line to receive the blessings of God if people enjoyed freedom of religion there.

No! No! No! No! No! I am appalled at what has been said here. How can this church leader make this statement, "God's design is for humans to be able to produce and consume as they wish, choose their own leaders, say what they feel they should say, and worship the God that they choose to worship"? This is defending the eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. It is man being led by self. God detests this mindset. This is a man-centered, humanistic, and self-righteous mindset. Has he not read that we are being conformed to the image of Christ and that Christ said He never did anything of His own initiative, He never even spoke a word of His own initiative. He lived to do the will of the Father. Our call is not to do as we wish, but to do as Yahweh commands.

I urge the reader to take time to read the book that has just been posted to the website <http://heart4god.8k.com> entitled "Sabbath". As you understand that Sabbath represents man coming to the end of his own works and activities, man coming to

the place where he lives to do only the will of Yahweh, then you will see what a travesty is spoken here. How can this minister say that it is God's will that all men should worship the god that they choose to worship? It is NOT Yahweh's will. He said, "You shall have no other gods before Me." It IS the will of the god of this age, however.

It is unconscionable to defend what has happened as a war of good America against evil. America has too many unconfessed sins of its own. The pace at which Americans kill their unborn babies has not slackened since the tragedies of 9-11. I am aware of no pornographic magazines or websites that have ceased operation since the tragedy. There has been no nationwide call to repentance. The god of mammon still reigns supreme over this nation and there are massive portions of the church that continue to greedily pursue mammon. The church has not yet come to the point of choosing Yahweh over mammon. They want to have both even though Yahshua said this was an impossibility.

Portraying the events of 9-11 as a war of good America against evil will lead only to hardening people's hearts to the call to repentance. Stating that good is embodied by men being able to choose anything they want is reckless theology. Stating that evil is equated with putting restrictions on what is acceptable behavior is equally wrong. Read the word of God. You need not even look to the Old Testament.

This man I have quoted says that America is great because it preaches tolerance and allows people to worship whomever they desire. This is not why America is great. America has been blessed because there has been found within her those who are righteous in seeking after the one true God whose name is Yahweh. Yahweh has not blessed America because America has allowed people to worship Allah, or Buddha, or Confucius, or the millions of Hindu deities.

Romans 1:20-28

20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

21 For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God, or give thanks; but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

22 Professing to be wise, they became fools,

23 *and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.*

24 Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, that their bodies might be dishonored among them.

25 *For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.*

26 *For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural,*
27 *and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error.*

28 *And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper...
(NAS)*

One of the sins of America that needs to be repented of is her blatant homosexuality. Paul states that homosexuality results from men refusing to acknowledge the true God, Yahweh, turning instead to gods of man's own invention. Yet this writer I have quoted states that America is great because she defends everyone's right to worship images in the form of corruptible man, and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures. This same quoted writer condemns the Taliban because they have not been so tolerant, but they have removed idols from their midst.

As wicked and deceived as those in the Taliban are, they are more righteous than America in this aspect. They have not allowed other idols to stand before the god they serve. People, we need to judge things righteously. The God America claims to serve is not honored because all manner of false gods coexist alongside Him. Remember what happened when the Ark of the Covenant was taken to the house of Dagan. The idol fell down before the Ark and its head and hands were broken off.

I was appalled, as all saints should have been, when a minister of Islam was invited to the prayer service in the nation's capital attended by President Bush, four other past presidents, and many dignitaries. America prides herself for her tolerance of wickedness and false religions. Where are the Elijah's that will proclaim, "Why do you halt between two opinions? Choose you this day whom you will serve!"

America, America, my heart weeps for you. You have adopted a form of godliness, but there is no power in it. You are an unholy mixture of the profane and the righteous. It is fire that will bring a distinction between that which is acceptable before God and that which is detestable. Must you call down more judgment upon yourself by calling evil good, and good evil?

It appears that many saints today cannot decide which kingdom they belong to, the kingdoms of this world, or the kingdom of God. Many appear more loyal to America

than they do to Yahweh. As a saint we are ultimately aliens and strangers in this land. We are kings and priests of a heavenly kingdom. Defending America's tolerance for all manner of gods and all manner of perverse lifestyles is not the same as defending the Kingdom of God. It is not even close. If expressing an intolerance towards the worship of false gods make one a tyrant, then Yahweh is the greatest of tyrants. Saints, wake up and judge righteously. Shake off the stupor that is clouding your eyes.

Let me move on to one more voice that is saying this is not about judgment.

But one might debate, "But God is holy. America has sinned and needs to be punished." I ask, what does "holy" mean, that God is cruel?" Does holiness mean severe? The Lord's holiness is the composite of all His other attributes. He cannot be "holy" without simultaneously remaining the universal source of unrelenting love, infinite goodness, unfathomable wisdom and unfailing justice. Holiness is not something distinct from God's other characteristics; it is the sum of them.

The argument continues, "The Almighty is a God of judgment." Yes, He is. Judgment means "justice" and speaks of God's verdict, His unbiased analysis of every situation. Isaiah tells us that "when the earth experiences Thy judgments the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness" (Isa 26:9). We assume Isaiah means wrath, but he does not. He is speaking of God's great wisdom and justice...

The Lord is willing to allow evil to exist side by side with good rather than risk accidentally uprooting the good with the evil! This is God's heart. There were many Christians who died in the Twin Towers, Pentagon and in Pennsylvania, thus I do not believe God was acting out His wrath against America. I'm not saying we don't deserve it, but that this is not the wrath of the Almighty. When the righteous do die with the wicked, with very limited exceptions, it is because there is another power at work, one that is either hellish, manmade or geophysical...

People have said, "God is judging America for its sins, for the flood of pornography, drug abuse, violence and abortion coming from this nation." This argument amazes me. I doubt that there was one pornographer that died at the World Trade Center. There were no abortion clinics there. Indeed, many who died in the attacks were Christians. It is as though people are saying, "To teach pornographers, abortionists and adulterers a lesson, God killed and wounded business people, tourists and rescuers in New York." How can we believe that God, while justly angry with pornographers in LA, would strike soldiers and airline passengers at the Pentagon? Not only is such thinking

fundamentally skewed, it actually describes the mind of the terrorists, who will destroy people who are unrelated to the issues which inflame them.

So, if you are confused by the myriad of prophecies that the terrorist act was actually God's judgment upon modern Babylon, then you need to return to basics: the Lord is good, the devil is bad. God did not cause, authorize or condone these terrorist acts. I am not saying the Lord will never deal with America's sin in His anger, only that when God judges Babylon He will not hire a terrorist to do it.

People, there is so much confusion that has been sown among the saints as they have tried to understand how to balance the love of Yahweh with His holiness and righteous judgments. We tend to associate love with all things that are pleasant and appealing, and there is nothing appealing to the natural man concerning judgment. We look at the judgments that came upon those in scripture and we are troubled by them. Why did Yahweh tell the Israelites to kill all of the people in the nations that surrounded them? Why did He tell them to kill women and children?

Our minds revolt at this and we can see no love in it. Yet did God suddenly become a God of love in the New Testament, while in the Old Testament He was some kind of other God? We know this is not true. God is immutable, He does not change. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Is God then schizophrenic, and sometimes He is manifesting a cruel and harsh side, while at other times He is manifesting a loving and merciful side? We know this is not so, either. We are told that there is no variation or shadow of turning in Him (James 1:7). We can only conclude that the severity of Yahweh does not constitute any type of contradiction with His evident love and mercy. The church today wants to embrace the more appealing and soft aspects of Yahweh's nature, while throwing out the harsher aspects. We do so to our own peril.

Paul speaks to the Roman believers in this manner concerning the Jews being cut off from Yahweh for a time.

Romans 11:20-22

20 Quite right, they were broken off for their unbelief, but you stand by your faith. *Do not be conceited, but fear;*

21 for if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will He spare you.

22 *Behold then the kindness and severity of God; to those who fell, severity, but to you, God's kindness, if you continue in His kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off.*

(NAS)

There is no mush in Paul's words here. This is the same Paul who wrote the love chapter of I Corinthians 13. Paul recognized that the love of God does not negate or interfere with His holiness. Where is the preaching today that men are to fear God? How many saints are offended at the mere mention of a need to fear God? I have been rebuked before because I have spoken of it, yet it is clearly revealed throughout scripture. I will include a section here from an article I wrote entitled "The Necessary Fear of God."

Why has the church of our day fallen to the depths in which it is mired? Why does it fit the description that Paul and Jesus and others gave of it? I am convinced that one of the greatest reasons is that there is no longer any fear of God before the eyes of man. The church has rewritten the image of God in a manner that allows for sin to be tolerated and for evil to be winked at. They have taught a grace that is cheap, and they have embraced fables and myths about heaven, judgment, and the following ages that leads to careless living. They have embraced the kindness of God, and rejected the severity of His character.

In the early days of the church God brought swift judgment on sin and it caused the body of believers to walk carefully for a season, knowing the fear of God. We read the following from the book of Acts.

Acts 5:4-5, 9-11

4 Why is it that you have conceived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to men, but to God."

5 And as he heard these words, Ananias fell down and breathed his last; **and great fear came upon all who heard of it...**

9 Then Peter said to her, "Why is it that you have agreed together to put the Spirit of the Lord to the test? Behold, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they shall carry you out as well "

10 And she fell immediately at his feet, and breathed her last; and the young men came in and found her dead, and they carried her out and buried her beside her husband.

11 **And great fear came upon the whole church, and upon all who heard of these things.**

(NAS)

The effect of the great fear that came upon the church was that the church walked very carefully before God. The result of this holy walk was that the reputation of the church was very great, verse thirteen of this same chapter states that "the people held them in high esteem." This is quite the opposite of the church today. Today the church is a laughingstock, a derision, and its reputation and esteem in the eyes of

the world is very low. This is not because they fail to preach Christ. Rather it is because they hold to a form of godliness, but deny the power of true godliness...

I can state without equivocation that there is no holiness apart from a fear of God. I can say this not only from my own experience, but from the scriptures. ***It may be the kindness of God that leads men to repentance, but it is the fear of God that makes them holy.*** The fear of God is just what it says, it is FEAR of God. It is not just a reverent respect as some teach. A reverent respect will not cause men to turn away from sin, but a real holy terror of the awesome and righteous nature of God will lead men to holiness. Does such a feeling of fear and terror have a place in the church of the New Testament? Examine the following verses.

II Corinthians 7:1

Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, **perfecting holiness in the fear of God.**

(NAS)

II Corinthians 5:10-11

10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

11 **Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men...**

(KJV)

Romans 11:20-22

20 Quite right, they were broken off for their unbelief, but you stand by your faith. **Do not be conceited, but fear;**

21 for if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will He spare you.

22 **Behold then the kindness and severity of God;** to those who fell, severity, but to you, God's kindness, if you continue in His kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off.

(NAS)

Hebrews 10:26-31

26 For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,

27 **but a certain terrifying expectation of judgment, and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries.**

28 Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.

29 **How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who**

has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace?

30 For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay."
And again, "The Lord will judge His people."

31 It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.
(NAS)

These things were written to the church, not the lost. Some may ask, "Why then does John say that perfect love casts out all fear?" The answer should be plain. If we walk in obedience we have no reason to fear, but if we walk in disobedience we have much to fear. John said this was his meaning when he stated,

I John 4:18

There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment...

(NAS)

If you are perfected in love then you will not sin and you will have no reason to fear any punishment. In the very next chapter John states, "We know that no one who is born of God sins" (I John 5:18). Is John teaching sinless perfection? He is stating that living a sinless life should indeed be the goal of every believer. We should not make any provision for the flesh (Romans 13:14). What does this mean? If you develop a mindset that says, "It is no big deal if I sin. I can just confess my sin and receive forgiveness", then you have made a provision for the flesh. You have made a way for the flesh to do what it desires without any repercussions. This is simply delusion, no matter how many pastors are preaching it. The word of God says,

Galatians 6:7-8

7 Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.

8 The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.

(NIV)

Yes, if we do stumble and sin then we do have an advocate with the Father. We can confess our sin to God and He is faithful and just to forgive us our sin and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (I John 1:9). But let us never make this a license to sin. God judges the thoughts and intentions of the heart and He will not be mocked. He will not tolerate one of His children trampling under foot the Son of God, or treating as unclean the blood of the covenant, or insulting the Spirit of grace. Yes there is great grace, but we can also insult, or offend the Spirit of grace. We do this by

carelessly sinning with no fear of the consequences. We do this by thinking sin in our life is of no, or very little, consequence.

[end excerpt]

The church knows little of this harsher aspect of Yahweh's nature today. They treat Yahweh's holiness as a light thing. They have not discerned why John, the beloved disciple who knew great intimacy with the Lord, fell down as a dead man when He saw Yahshua revealed in His holiness. We have brought God down to the level of man and we have imbued Him with the characteristics of fallen man that tolerates sin and winks at evil.

Let me return to the writer's words that I have before quoted. He has questioned, "What does "holy" mean, that God is cruel?" Does holiness mean severe?" The answer is that the holiness of God is severe. Paul uses this very word when he urges the saints to behold the "kindness and the severity of God." Yes! Yes! Yes! There is a severity to Yahweh that His children today have fled from even as the Israelites fled from the mountain of His presence when it quaked and lightnined and thundered.

This author continues to tell us, "Isaiah tells us that "when the earth experiences Thy judgments the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness" (Isa 26:9). We assume Isaiah means wrath, but he does not. He is speaking of God's great wisdom and justice..." Is this indeed that of which Isaiah is speaking? Strong's Dictionary renders the word for judgment in this manner.

4941 mishpat (mish-pawt');

from 8199; properly, a verdict (favorable or unfavorable) pronounced judicially, especially a sentence or formal decree (human or [participant's] divine law, individual or collective), **including the act, the place, the suit, the crime, and the penalty...**

We need only look at the rest of the writing of Isaiah to see how he intended the word to be used and interpreted. Here is but one example.

Isaiah 3:14-4:4

14 [Yahweh] enters into **judgment** with the elders and princes of His people, "It is you who have devoured the vineyard; the plunder of the poor is in your houses.

15 "What do you mean by crushing My people, and grinding the face of the poor?" Declares the [Yahweh Adonai] of hosts.

16 Moreover, [Yahweh] said, "Because the daughters of Zion are proud, and walk with heads held high and seductive eyes, and go along

with mincing steps, and tinkle the bangles on their feet,
17 Therefore the Lord will afflict the scalp of the daughters of Zion
with scabs, and [Yahweh] will make their foreheads bare..."
24 Now it will come about that instead of sweet perfume there will
be putrefaction; instead of a belt, a rope; instead of well-set hair, a
plucked-out scalp; instead of fine clothes, a donning of sackcloth; and
branding instead of beauty.
25 Your men will fall by the sword, and your mighty ones in battle.
26 And her gates will lament and mourn; and deserted she will sit on
the ground...
4 When the Lord has washed away the filth of the daughters of
Zion, and purged the bloodshed of Jerusalem from her midst, **by the
spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning...**
(NAS)

The writer I have quoted says that Isaiah is not speaking of Yahweh's wrath, merely His wisdom and justice. This is not the case. Judgment speaks of His justice combined with the decree of Yahweh "**including the act, the place, the suit, the crime, and the penalty.**"

This writer continues on to argue that God does not punish the righteous with the wicked so this could not be evidence of the hand of God. The argument is flawed, however. When the Father lowers the hedge of protection upon a people they are all affected. Were not righteous Daniel, Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishael all carried off into captivity to Babylon along with the rest of the people? Did not many children perish who had yet to participate in the sins of their parents? When David sinned with Bathsheba did not the child born to them suffer the consequences and die?

The author further asserts that Yahweh would not exact His discipline through the hands of terrorists. Has He not done so all along? Did not raiding bands of Philistines invade the land of Israel whenever Israel strayed from God? Did not the Assyrians, Babylonians, Midianites, Moabites, Edmoites, and many others send their raiding bands into Israel? What was significantly different between these groups and terrorist organizations today?

The prophet Jeremiah used the term we have translated as *raiders* to describe those whom Yahweh would bring upon the children of Israel to execute judgment upon them. The term raiders is the equivalent of what we would call terrorists today.

Jeremiah 18:19-22

19 Do give heed to me, O [Yahweh], and listen to what my
opponents are saying!
20 Should good be repaid with evil? For they have dug a pit for me.

Remember how I stood before Thee to speak good on their behalf, so as to turn away Thy wrath from them.

21 Therefore, give their children over to famine, and deliver them up to the power of the sword; and let their wives become childless and widowed. Let their men also be smitten to death, their young men struck down by the sword in battle.

22 May an outcry be heard from their houses, when Thou suddenly bringest raiders upon them...

(NAS)

Quite interestingly this passage speaks of Yahweh's wrath (vs. 20), and His wrath is associated with raiders being loosed upon the people. Oh how this offends the innate sense of love and fairness within man. But we cannot judge matters by emotion. We must substantiate things with the word of God.

Finally, the writer quoted has said that there were probably none of the people present within the World Trade Center and Pentagon that are closely related to the sins for which Yahweh would judge America. I am not unsympathetic towards those who perished there. However, I ask you, before the calamities that occurred in these places, would any saint have described these locations as bastions of righteousness and holiness?

The scriptures state that the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. The World Trade Centers and the companies that occupied them were largely related to the amassing of wealth. Much of this wealth comes from enslaving others with great burdens of indebtedness. Many of the pornographers, and abortionists the quoted writer has mentioned are in business to make money. Pursuing mammon is the bottom line for most of them. Undoubtedly some even invested their money with some of the companies that had residence in these buildings.

But his argument is actually pointless. When the Father desires to discipline a nation He touches her in her point of greatest pride and strength. The economy and the military of America have been her two strongest points and the sources of her greatest pride, boasting, and self-confidence. Yahweh has to touch a people's natural strength even as He touched Jacob in the socket of his hip and crippled him to get them to no longer put their trust in man's abilities. Only then will a proud people turn to God and begin to lean on Him and seek Him earnestly.

It is obvious the church has become corrupted with a love of money. The church resembles the description of the Laodicean church who equated material wealth with spiritual prosperity. Could a more poignant and focused judgment be brought upon the church and the nation than to have the economy of our nation left in ruins? The economy is not in ruins yet, but it is descending rapidly. It is through an abundance

of trade with the things of the world that the church has become defiled. Read the following scripture about Satan's fall and ask for discernment as to what it means.

Ezekiel 28:18

**By the multitude of your iniquities, in the unrighteousness of your trade, you profaned your sanctuaries. Therefore I have brought fire from the midst of you; it has consumed you, and I have turned you to ashes on the earth in the eyes of all who see you.
(NAS)**

If we did not know that this passage refers to Satan, one might conclude that it is a terrifying description of what occurred at the World Trade Centers. The word trade is mentioned here. Profaning of sanctuaries is mentioned here. Fire coming from the midst and consuming and turning to ashes before the eyes of all the people is mentioned here.

The church is not driven by a pursuit of Yahweh in these days. She is driven by a pursuit of the things of the world. She wants all the things the world has, but she seeks to have "Christianized" versions of the same. The church is not content to work for that which is imperishable, she wants the temporal and immediately gratifying. In pursuit of these things she has profaned her sanctuaries. It may be necessary that she be stripped of all of her adornments and trappings and signs of worldly success for her to begin to seek that which truly is of value.

My heart has been heavy ever since September 11th. It has grown heavier as I have watched the response of ministers and the nation to this tragedy. There has been no soul searching, just a firm resolve to exact retribution against those who did these things. There has been no widespread pressing in to know the mind of God. There has been no call for repentance.

What we have seen is an outpouring of words that have warned the saints to not characterize these events as judgment. Where there is no judgment there is no repentance. Where there is no fear of God, there is no holiness. Cannot the church leaders see that repentance has been totally absent in the aftermath of these horrific events? Our nation and its leaders have not even considered calling the nation to repentance and correcting the evil practices that are protected by force of law. Could it not be surmised that this lack of repentance is partially due to the attempts to characterize these events as something other than a warning from God; failing to recognize a clear sign that the hedge is already being lowered around this nation due to her sins?

Yesterday I received a rebuke from a sister who said she must part ways with me "most vehemently." She does not believe in the concept of God judging people at all.

She wrote me the following:

The concept of "Judgment" -- of "Punishing us" for choosing what HE doesn't Like or Approve of after HE Gave us the Free Will of Choice -- in essence offers forth two implications about our LORD (the only implications that would bear out a justification for "Judgment," & both of which I will choose to pass on, thank you very much):

1 GOD is some kind of Idiot WHO had no idea what HE was Doing when HE was involved in Creation, & thus things "went unexpectedly haywire".

2 GOD Lied to us when HE Said HE Gave us Free Will Choice, for that is exactly what HE would be doing if HE Said, "Here, I am Creating you to be MY Children & Heirs to MY Kingdom. Therefore, you are free to choose -- I do not want you to be in bondage to ME because you have no other choice. Oh ... and by the way ... just FYI only, no big deal really ... if I don't like what you choose & you don't choose ME, I am going to Zap you straight into everlasting damnation & Consign you to burn in torment in the lake of fire for all of Eternity. Now, go choose freely, MY Children, & you have a nice day, OK?"

THAT IS EXACTLY WHAT THE JUDGMENT-MONGERS ARE IMPLYING; THERE IS NO WAY AROUND EITHER OF THOSE TWO OPTIONS.

For GOD to Punish us for choosing apart from HIM would be a Violation of HIS Own Divine Laws that Govern our free will choices...

And THIS is why I take angry exception to the "doomers & gloomers" about this being the "Punishment of an Angry, Vindictive, Vengeance-Driven GOD" (it always blows me away how people attribute NEGATIVE HUMAN ATTRIBUTES TO OUR FATHER OF "PERFECT LOVE" & NEVER SEE WHAT THEY ARE DOING IN THEIR BLINDNESS).

Last night I went to bed in greater weariness than I ever remember. I was overwhelmed by the obstacles set before this nation and the church to bring her to a place of humility and repentance before God. I felt that my small voice was simply being swallowed up in the vast darkness that has enveloped the church and the world.

The person who wrote this rebuke to me sends out a prophetic newsletter. If even those who stand and claim to prophesy in the body of Christ cannot accept the fact

that God is not mocked and He will mete out punishment to those who walk in wickedness, then what chance do we have to get right with God? To say that for God to judge the sin of man would prove Him to be an idiot or a liar was more than I could stomach.

It is not just darkness, but gross darkness that has overcome the church and the world. Yes, I am weary. As Jeremiah, I have even considered speaking no more to a people who will not hear. But then the Father renews me and says that I am to speak once again.

I do not ask you to hear my voice. I ask you to look at the witness of the scriptures. Every time a people strayed from righteousness and holiness, every time they chose the world and its idols over Yahweh, the hedge was lowered around their nation and they began to reap the consequences of their rebellion and sensuality. We are like a bunch of frogs in a boiling pot of water. We have not noticed the change in our environment because it has been gradual and consistent.

How shocked would the people of a hundred years ago be if they were suddenly placed into the cesspool of sensuality and materialism that America has become? How appalled would they be to see the appearance of the youth of our day and to observe their manners, their conversation, their music, their videos and on and on? How amazed would they be to read the headlines describing the corruption and crimes that are now overwhelming our nation and filling up prisons with convicts as fast as the prisons can be built?

What is even more tragic is that the knowledge of God's holiness has been lost. We see devastation come to our nation and we fail to even make a connection to the sins that are rampant within her borders. We have created a mush God who is all love and whose righteous judgments are unknown.

Wake up America. Let us open our ears to the word Judgment that we might respond with Repentance.