

"The Reproach of the Solemn Assembly"

by David Wilkerson

Zephaniah 3:18 - "I will gather them that are sorrowful for the solemn assembly who are of thee, to whom the reproach of it was a burden. "

This is a dual prophecy by Zephaniah. It has to do with the children of Israel . . and also with spiritual Zion (which is the church of Jesus Christ of the last day). First of all, he was speaking to Jews - that God was going to gather together the dispersed . . . but He was only going to bring back those who had a broken heart for the sad condition of Israel. . . . He would remember all who carried the reproach. . . all of the horrible things that were going on in God's House. Those who carried the burden of it, He said, "I am going to gather you". He made great promises to these. . .

This prophecy is also to the Church of Jesus Christ in the Last Day. In the Old Testament, the children of Israel were called to their festivals for seven days. On the eighth day - it was called an Solemn Assembly. That was when they met especially together - putting everything aside in focused worship and praise to the Heavenly Father. The scripture says, "On the eighth day you shall have a Solemn Assembly". This Solemn Assembly is all through the Old Testament representing the congregation that is separated unto God needing to meet the Lord.

This is the Church of Jesus Christ in the Last Day. According to Zephaniah, the House of God in the Last Days is going to be under reproach. The Hebrew word hear means "shame and disgrace".

There is going to be shame and disgrace in the House of God. We are not talking about the backslidden, liberal modern church. . . . The Lord said on the Judgment Day, He will deal with that Church. We can pray for them, but we are not spend any of our grief on that which is not really the Church.

God is looking for a people who will sorrow and grieve over the reproach that is being fostered on the Church of Jesus Christ in these last days. I am talking about the Church that was born at Pentecost. I am talking about the Church that was born in the teaching of the Apostle Paul and the Apostles. The Church born in the doctrine of the Godhead of Jesus Christ. That born-again Church is under attack. That Church is suffering reproach.

It has been prophesied that in this day of reproach, shame and disgrace, God is going to raise up a holy remnant who are going grieve and weep over this defilement. . .

God will have a remnant that will not sit idly by while all of these things invade the Church. God says, "I will have a people that are not going to be satisfied to go their merry way and just ignore what is happening as Charlatans and money-mad false prophets are coming into the House of God and destroying everything in sight."

God is going to gather a people who grieve over this. . . . If you truly love the Lord and you love His Church, you can not look honestly at what is happening today (and I am going to name these reproaches this morning). If after you hear what I have to say about this reproach, and you can walk out of this Church and you can say, "I just stand on Matthew 18 'the gates of hell shall not prevail against the church', I am not going to worry about, God has everything under control".

That is not enough. God uses people. God uses people to perform His work. He does not send angels. Angels weep over it, but God does not use angels to accomplish His purposes. He uses burdened broken-hearted weeping men and women. . . . Judgment is at the door, Jesus is coming. The Day of the Lord is at hand.

Wake up elders. Wake up pastors. Wake up shepherds.

Take a look at the Church. Get the burden. Carry it. Why should we take on the burden of the reproach of the Solemn Assembly? Joel said, "because there is a rotten seed being planted."

A gospel is being preached that is withering everything that is in sight. Everything that is green and Godly and pure is being withered. The seed is rotten there is a famine of hearing the pure Word of the Lord. . . . there is no pasture. The flocks are desolate and hungry. The rivers are drying up. A strange fire is devouring the pastors. Ezekiel says that Shepherds are trampling down the good pasture and eating the best for themselves. What are the shameful disgraceful things that are happening in the Church of Jesus Christ today?

First of all it is the rotten seed that is being preached by covetous Shepherds. This is known as the PROSPERITY GOSPEL.

This is one of the greatest reproaches that the Church of Jesus Christ ever perpetrated since Christ.

This perverted gospel is poisoning multitudes - even in China, Africa and all over the world. It is an American gospel invented and spread by rich American evangelists and pastors. Rich!

It alarms me that so many people can hear the tapes and see videos that are coming out of these prosperity conferences and not weep over them. This poison has spread all over the world. Cuba is about to open and they are itching to get in there right now with their Prosperity gospel to tell them, "you have been poor enough now, God wants all Cubans to be rich."

This past week I was given a video tape recently recorded in Kenneth Copeland's meetings. I listened to the speakers and I was dumbfounded.

Folks, you read the New Testament, you will find that Paul the Apostle named those who he believed were false prophets. He warned and he named their names. I am telling you now that if you can listen to what I am about to tell you, and not be grieved, then you are blind. You are spiritually blind. You have a hard heart. A heart with a shield on it so that the pure gospel can not penetrate it. The mind has been so saturated with this unbalanced gospel that you can not come to many of them. You can not preach the truth. You can not show them anything else in the scripture because they have a shield over their hearts. Hard hearted.

Some of you will not receive it. If you have been feeding your soul on Copeland or Hagin's tapes, you are not going to like what you hear. Folks, I am a Shepherd, I've been called by God. I made this church a promise. As long as we are in this pulpit, if we saw wolves in sheep's clothing coming to rob the flock, we would stand up and cry out against it. It is up to you to do something about it.

I sat this week and listened to the speakers at this conference and I was so shocked and hurt. The burden of the Lord came on me. That is why I am preaching this message. Grieve over it.

I quote word for word what was said. All the speakers could hardly get by because all of the people were running up stuffing their pockets with money. The reason they do that is a new doctrine that has just come out that says, "if you want to be blessed, you have to find the most blessed evangelist or pastor you can find because he that has been given much receiveth much, he that has little, even that which he has will be taken from him. If you find the most blessed prosperous preacher and give him money, then you will be blessed. The more blessed he is, if you give you to those that are most blessed. . . ". it is a pyramid scheme. If these men were in the secular world, they would be in jail. Ponzie schemes. Pyramid schemes. The man at the top who appears to be the holiest and speaks the loudest. Hundreds of people were running up until the pockets were bulging. The sinner says, "is this the free gospel? Dollar bills?"

Listen to what was said. The speaker got up and he said, "if a poor widow on welfare hands you \$5.00, you better take it. Elijah took the widow's last meal. You are the anointed one, you deserve it, you take it."

The same speaker said, "I live in a 8,000 square foot house. I am going to build a bigger one now. One that King Solomon would be proud of. I just paid \$15,000 for a dog. You see this gorgeous ring on my finger, I was in Jamaica and just paid \$32,000 for it. I want you know that when the people in my town come past my mansion and they see my Rolls Royce sitting in the driveway, they know there is a God in heaven."

Now, you tell me, that is the gospel? You tell me that you can't weep over that. One of the speakers got up and said, "We made a covenant along with Brother Copeland that for the next 365 days none of us are going to suffer for a single day. We will not know a moment of discouragement. We will never be sick or in need. We are going to enjoy all the blessings. We reject all suffering, all pain, all financial problems." That is fine if you are on the top of the heap.

Here is what grieves me most. This was preached. "The Holy Spirit can't be poured out upon you until first you are in the money flow. Until you are prospering, the Holy Ghost can not do His work."

Think of it! How does this affect you? What does it do to your spirit when you see poor people who are living from pay check to pay check and suddenly he says, "run for the money" and people are running wildly everywhere and they say as they run, "they are claiming the riches".

Then I see people withering like snakes out of their seats onto the floor. I see the evangelist going up and hissing like a snake and people falling everywhere. Folks, what is going on?

The Reproach of the Solemn Assembly! The prophet called them "greedy dogs, ungodly watchmen". Folks, if you had the heart of God and the burden of the Lord you would be crying out with Isaiah, "they are blind watchmen, ignorant, dumb dogs, sleeping, loving to slumber, yea, greedy dogs which can never have enough."

"I've got 8,000 square foot but I am going to sell it and I'm going to make one now that King Solomon could live in...." Never getting enough.

He said, "Shepherds that can not understand, they all look to their own way, every one for his own gain from his quarter". Jeremiah spared no words. He said, "My people are lost sheep. Their Shepherds have caused them to go astray. " You say, "Pastor, you have no right to speak so strongly on this subject." If you think I'm strong, listen to Ezekiel 34:1-10. [read this scripture]

You take \$5.00 from the widow and you buy a \$15,000 dog. You take the pay check from the widow and the poor and you tell them that they do not have enough faith - that is why they are prospering. You take the very wool from off the back of the sheep. You are not out for souls, you are out for money.

"The Shepherds fed themselves and fed not the flock, therefore O you Shepherds, hear the Word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God, Behold I am against the Shepherds and I will require my flock at their hand and cause them to cease from feeding the flock. Neither shall the Shepherds feed themselves any more, for I will deliver my flock from mouth that they may not be meat for them anymore".

I am going to deliver my flock from the teeth of these men. My God, help us.

Second, the misrepresentation of the blessed Holy Ghost. This is the worst reproach. It should make us fall on our faces. The way and the manner in which the Holy Ghost is being represented to the whole world.

Sad to say, there is so little discernment left in the church among so many pastors and even church leaders. They don't even know when the Holy Ghost is being misrepresented or blasphemed. There are thousands of Christians that go to crusades and they see things that they think is the Holy Ghost and

they don't even know what they are sitting under. They are clapping and praising God while a man stands up there blaspheming and misrepresenting the Holy Ghost and they don't even know it.

Entire Charismatic denominations, including the Assemblies of God, are being torn apart, literally torn apart by pseudo revivals. All kinds of things that are happening - there is something new being introduced almost every week. The leaders don't whether to embrace it or to curse it. They don't know what to do. We get letters from hundreds and hundreds of pastors from all over the world. They say, "what is right and what is wrong?" Where are the leaders? Where is somebody to tell us?

Folks, what we are seeing today in what is called so many revivals and things that are happening attributed to the Holy Ghost can not be found in the Scripture. Anything that can not be found in this Book has to be rejected outright. Totally rejected!

I weep when I see these videos that are sent to me from all over the country. Whole groups of bodies jerking out of control, falling on the floor, laughing hysterically, staggering around like drunkards, writhing like snakes, howling like wild animals. We have evangelists that stand and blow on people to knock them down, as if the breath of the Holy Ghost is now incarnated in him. Throws his "designer" jacket at people and says that is the "hand of the Lord".

Now a new Gospel has just hit South America. Folks, it is rude and crude, but I have to tell you. When you get away from the parameters of Scripture, when you get up and say: "Oh, it is a New Thing, God is doing a New Thing? I don't understand it, it is not in the Scripture, but I don't want to stand against the Holy Ghost".

Folks, if it is not in this Book, you must stand up against it. Now the New Thing is that you can't enter the Kingdom of God except you come as a little babe. The people come with diapers under their outer clothing so that they can defecate and urinate in the meetings. This is the New Thing. Folks, where does it end?

A pastor said, "Is it come down to this, that one day some evangelist stands up and says, 'I've got a revelation from the Lord, it is time to add Mary to your worship'. That is what it is going to come to. Another evangelist calls himself the Holy Ghost Bartender. [Rodney Howard Browne] He says, "Belly up to the bar and take a drink of the Holy Ghost." They call that drinking the new wine. I hear ringing in my ears the prophet that said, "The day of the Lord is at hand. Wickedness abounds. Weep between the porch and the altar. Put on sackcloth. Fast and mourn for the backsliding of my people."

Jesus is about to come. The masses are unreached. When I see Christians belly up to what is called the "Holy Ghost Bar", staggering like drunkards, Joel's words come to me loud and clear, "Awake you drunkards and weep all you who drink new wine because the harvest in the field is perished."

Souls are dying by the thousands, what are you laughing about? Anything of the Holy Ghost has to work anywhere on the face of the earth. You have to be able to take it into the most vile wicked places. You have to take it into poverty nations. You have to take it to the dregs of humanity and it has to work there. It can't work just in prosperous America. It has to work everywhere on the face of the earth.

I dare these men take this gospel, the laughing gospel into the Balkans now. Go into the refugee camps where wives are crying because they saw their husbands shot. Their daughters have been raped. Their children are hungry. They have lost their homes and go in there and ask them to "belly up to the bar" - the Holy Ghost wants you to laugh. This so-called revival is coming to Madison Square Gardens this summer. Knowing what you know about the Scripture, carrying the grief and the burden for the Solemn Assembly, how can you even conceive of embracing such a doctrine?

Let me tell you who is laughing. The world. The ungodly, the heathen. It has become a spectacle. In a time so close to the coming of the Lord when the Church of Jesus Christ ought to be shut away in a

secret closet of prayer. Where it ought to be weeping for the lost. Where it ought to have the desire to forsake all and follow Jesus. Where there should never be a mention of the dollar bill. The American god. The American idolatry. We have the world looking at this foolishness and do you know what they are thinking now - that the Holy Ghost is a Ringmaster. It is a Charismatic Circus.

I don't care what anybody thinks any more. I don't care if people drop off the mailing list. I care for their souls and the fact that many are into this blindness. I have a duty before God to stand before the congregation that He has called me to minister to and warn you and tell you that these are reproaches of the Solemn Assembly and the Bible says that you are to be sorrowful about it. The elders are to be sorrowful. The congregation, the Pastors, the Ministers, the Evangelists, We should be praying down these strongholds.

Finally, the reproach of downgrading depravity in the Church. Woe unto them that call evil good and good evil - that put darkness for light and light for darkness. They put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter. (Jer. 23:15).

I've seen in the prophets a horrible thing. They commit adultery, they walk in lies, they strengthen also the hands of evil doer and non returns from his wickedness."

I received a letter this past week from an irate Christian woman. She said, "My husband, who is supposed to be a Christian, is a big time gambler, in the millions." She said, "I've been so concerned with the crowd and the danger he is in". I thought, "I'll urge him to go to the pastor."

She said, "Brother Wilkerson, you will not believe what happened. I am so angry, hurt and confused. I sent my multi-million dollar gambling husband to my pastor."

He said, "I have searched the scriptures from Genesis to Revelation and I can't find one thing in the scripture against gambling. I see no sin in it, enjoy yourself." She was dumbfounded, "How can a man of God say such a thing to my husband?"

This is exactly what Jeremiah meant, "the pastors strengthen the hands of evildoers that none doth return from his wickedness." He explains why they have downgraded depravity in their congregation and why they are calling evil good and good evil and bitter sweet and sweet bitter.

He said, "The prophets have committed adultery and are walking in lies." Any man that has sin in his life is not going to get up and talk about sin in the camp. He is convicted by his own adultery, his own sin and his own evil mind.

I am not painting every minister in the country with this brush. The majority of ministers are on fire for God. There young ministers so clean and so pure in this wicked day and age. I've met many of them and I thank God for them. Even in this City I've met some of the most righteous preachers I've ever met in my lifetime.

Multitudes of ministers feel just like I feel this morning and they are looking and waiting for voices to expose that which is evil. "If they had stood in my council and had caused my people to heard my words. . if they were speaking what I really have in my heart. If they were speaking the mind of God, they should have turned the people away from their evil ways and from the evil of their doings"

You can tell if a man knows the Lord. God says of the others, "I didn't send them, I didn't speak to them. They speak their own mind out of their own imagination. Out of the evil of their own hearts."

"They speak of vision of their own heart, I sent them not. I have not spoken to them. They say unto them that despise me, 'the Lord said, you shall have peace' and they say unto every one that walks after the imagination of his own heart, 'no evil shall come upon there.'"

The reproach upon the Solemn Assembly should be the greatest sorrow to every one who loves Christ and His Church. This should be the greatest sorrow in our heart - these reproaches on His name and on His Church. Weep over the condition of the Church.

When you take your stand and when you take on the burden of the Lord, by fasting and prayer. Every child of God needs to be praying that everyone in this snare will be delivered. Don't touch it, don't go near it, if you go in just out of curiosity it will grab you because it appeals to everything of the flesh.

Until you know how to deal with the flesh with the power of the Holy Ghost, stay away from it. Jeremiah said, "The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is Mighty. He will save, He will rejoice over thee with joy. He will rest in His love. He will joy over thee with singing."

Why? Because He has found a people who are sorrowful over the things that sorrow His heart. Who carry the burden that He carries, the Reproach of the Solemn Assembly.

This is going to become a "love-trap" . You will hear this: "We love everybody. It doesn't matter what you preach. It doesn't matter if you are in prosperity. It doesn't matter what your gospel is - or anything else. God is love. Let us all just get together and embrace one another."

How can two walk together unless they be agreed. How can you walk with those when you don't agree with the unscriptural practices, you can not. That is a love trap. They say, "Don't condemn anybody. Don't judge anybody."

That is not what the Bible says. It says that we are to judge righteous judgement. Reprove and rebuke with all longsuffering. I am not on a soapbox, I am on a Rock. God is trying to save you, Church.

What are the riches of God in Christ Jesus? The peace of God, the wisdom of God, the nearness of Christ, all that is in Christ is ours. . . .

Folks, beware! Beware! Have I scared you? Are you ready to take on the burden of the Lord.

You can't do that in your own flesh. Get alone with God!

The time has come to call a Solemn Assembly. If you have any of these tapes or books, get them out of your house. Don't give them away, burn them. If somebody invites you to go to these things, say, "I'm sorry, I don't want a famine of the Word and I don't my heart to wither and dry. I want the pure Word of the Lord that will cause me to grow. I don't want any message that is going to appeal to my flesh or to foster covetousness in my spirit."

God does supply needs and He is a miracle working God, but He does it only His way. Not by misappropriating and not mis-using the scripture.

Abraham was not looking at things on earth, He was looking for a City whose Builder and Maker is God.