

Prayer Transformation Ministries Email Newsletter – Teaching for 2/21/07

Standing in the Gap for the Land

God is looking for someone to stand in the gap on behalf of the land. His invitation in Ezekiel 22:30 is for one heart to be closely aligned with Him. His desire to heal the land does not seem to be dependent on masses of people being mobilized. One person being willing to build a wall of righteousness and stand in the gap is enough for God to relent on destruction of the land!

This invitation in Ezekiel 22:23-30 provides great insight into the heart of God and the kind of people He searches out to bring healing to the land. It also describes the kind of spiritual leaders who stir up His wrath and judgment.

The Lord gives a list of His grievances against priests, prophets, teachers and leaders, including how they had forgotten to distinguish between the holy and the profane. From God's perspective, the leaders were most concerned about lining their own pockets and benefiting themselves. In their self-centeredness, they destroyed people and left widows in their wake of greed. The priests could no longer discern the holy things of God apart from worldly influences, and they had also closed their eyes to violations of God's Sabbath. God described the spiritual leaders as wolves who were destroying the very people they were called to serve.

In addition, those who were supposed to be bringing God's Word to the people were making up things with their own imaginations. They were claiming to speak on behalf of God when in fact God had ceased to speak because they were not bothering to listen. Telling lies and oppressing people had become a way of life in society—and apparently also in the church. Much of the impurity of the land came through the sinful lives of God's people.

God's description of the grievous conditions at that time sounds like reading today's newspaper. If the conditions of today's church and society reflect the conditions that grieved God back then, we had better pay attention to this passage! God declared the land to be unclean in Ezekiel's day, and it seems the same land defilement is present today. God's expectation is that there be purity and holiness in the land, for that was His intended purpose in creating this earth.

The Hope for Healing

How does the cleansing come? In verse 30 the Lord says that He expected to find a pure and committed heart in the midst of the defilement of the land. He was looking for someone whose heart beat after His heart, and who would have the courage to build up a wall of righteousness and protection over the land. He was looking for someone to stand in the gap in intercession on behalf of the healing of the land. The word "stand" has the idea of "to stand, remain, endure." God was looking for even one person who would stand and remain before His face on behalf of the land until it is cleansed.

The sad part of this passage is that the Lord found no one—and therefore He had to bring judgment and destruction upon the land.

God is still looking for such people today. On behalf of our cities, communities, and land, we need to step forward and be willing to be those whose hearts are touched with the heart of God. We need to declare to the Lord that we will determine to stand before Him in prayer until He comes and answers our prayers. Are you willing to carry in your heart God's burden for the city where you live? God is looking for someone willing to bear the load of grief and the mantle of prayer until a breakthrough comes.

Imagine a mighty army of intercessors and leaders who are willing to stand in the gap for their land. It will greatly please our God to heal our land in answer to those prayers!