
Becoming Christlike – Learning How from Old Testament Kings and Prophets

Session 26 – The Middle East – What Are WE To Do?

Recorded October 30, 2023, three weeks after the October 7th invasion of Israel by Hamas. We continue to pray for all affected and the entire world situation.

Without an understanding of the Bible, the devil, and scripture it's very difficult to wrap one's mind around the atrocities taking place. Hundreds of families are impacted. It is so foreign and hard to comprehend that there are those who want to cause a maximum amount of physical, mental, and emotional pain.

The desire to annihilate Israel is not new! This prophecy against Philistia is in the very area of Gaza.

Ezekiel 25:15

15 “Thus says the Lord God: **Because the Philistines acted revengefully and took vengeance with malice of soul to destroy in never-ending enmity,**

That is what has existed against Israel as long as they have existed and as long as there has been a devil.

The Philistines had malice of soul and a desire to destroy the Children of Israel in **never ending enmity.**

When people talk of peace between Israel and Palestine and a two-state solution to the Middle East it is utter foolishness because there is a **never-ending enmity.**

16 therefore thus says the Lord God, Behold, I will stretch out my hand against the Philistines, and I will cut off the Cherethites and destroy the rest of the seacoast. **17** I will execute great vengeance on them with wrathful rebukes. Then they will know that I am the Lord, when I lay my vengeance upon them.”

Why does God need to do this? Because they were evil people and they had malice of soul to destroy with never-ending enmity. Unless someone gets born again of God's spirit and has the Word in his mind and is transformed, people who are raised this way to hate (or course there is demonic influence, since it is against Israel) will never change.

17 I will execute great vengeance on them with wrathful rebukes. Then they will know that I am the Lord, when I lay my vengeance upon them.”

Now is really an opportune time to better understand the Bible, our savior, ourselves, and the devil and what happens in the world with propaganda.

The calls for Israel to surrender to Hamas will not happen according to Netanyahu.

“Calls for a cease-fire, or calls for Israel to surrender to Hamas, to surrender to terrorism, to surrender to barbarism, THAT will NOT happen.”

The Bible says there is a time for peace and a time for war, a war for our common future and evil is relentless. Someone is taking a stand, and it happens to be Israel.

“The horrors that Hamas perpetrated on October 7th remind us that we will not realize the promise of a better future unless we in the civilized world are willing to fight the barbarians. Because the barbarians are willing to fight us and their goal is clear, shattering that promised future, destroying all that we cherish and ushering in a world of fear and darkness...

Victory over these enemies begins with moral clarity

He is calling them what they are: barbarians, body and soul individuals influenced by demonic spirits.

Victory begins with moral clarity. We only get moral clarity through the Word because without it people will act in their own self-interests. We cannot be deceived by the propaganda and the deception around the world that is being promulgated. Erdogan in Turkey spoke recently to a huge crowd supporting Hamas. That is insane but people are lining up on both sides of this issue.

Netanyahu said further:

“It begins with knowing the difference between good and evil, between right and wrong. It means making a moral distinction between the deliberate murder of the innocent and the unintentional casualties that accompany every legitimate war, even the most just war.”

Way back in the Old Testament Isaiah said, “Woe to those who call good evil and evil good.”

Netanyahu (not born again, a Jew) speaks with moral clarity because he is basing what he says on principles from the Old Testament Law, which God gave so people knew how to think and how to live. We can learn a lot about the devil by looking at what is happening in the world today.

Psalm 83:1-4

1 O God, do not keep silence; do not hold your peace or be still, O God!

2 For behold, your enemies make an uproar; those who hate you have raised their heads.

We know that Islam seeks to destroy all Jews and Christians, anyone who doesn't follow Mohammed. By being enemies of God's people, they are enemies of God.

3 They lay crafty plans against your people; they consult together against your treasured ones. **4** They say, “Come, **let us wipe them out as a nation; let the name of Israel be remembered no more!**”

3000 years ago this was in the heart and mind of the opponents of Israel. Today you hear the phrase “from the river to the sea”, they want to wipe out Israel.

Psalm 83:5

5 For they conspire with one accord; against you they make a covenant—

The psalm goes on to name a variety of nations. We see all the nations gathering to oppose Israel, including Turkey and Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Syria. They are surrounded by hostile nations. (This has caused some to wonder if this is what is described in Ezekiel when Israel is surrounded, but that can't be the case because the rapture has not happened yet and Ezekiel speaks of events in the Tribulation.)

It is astounding that these verses are in there! This is taking place in Gaza. It was in Gaza that Samson's eyes were gouged out. Gaza today is still called Gaza. Genesis 10 talks about Gaza! That was the time of Noah and the flood.

The cities of Ashdod and Ashkelon are still the cities in the Old Testament records. That geographical area has always been full of ruthless people.

Amos 1:6-8

[6](#) Thus says the Lord:

"For three transgressions of Gaza, and for four, I will not revoke the punishment, because they carried into exile a whole people to deliver them up to Edom.

[7](#) So I will send a fire upon the wall of Gaza, and it shall devour her strongholds.

[8](#) I will cut off the inhabitants from Ashdod, and him who holds the scepter from Ashkelon; I will turn my hand against Ekron, and the remnant of the Philistines shall perish," says the Lord God.

Not suggesting this is the fulfillment of this prophecy, but it is interesting that all these places are still there. They are also mentioned in Zechariah 9.

It is an opportune time to look at the simplicity of God and people demonstrating his characteristics and others who demonstrate the characteristics of the devil. We are seeing the very nature of the devil played out in individuals' lives.

His will and his nature are so insidious. We see his intent to STEAL, KILL, and DESTROY, to torment, to torture, to terrorize.

There is a great chasm between Christlike vs Anti-Christlike

The Nature of the Devil in Two Gospel Records

We will look at two records in the gospels to see the nature of the devil. This has to do with every individual and the spiritual contest we are in. You probably know people who are tormented by the devil. They don't know it or recognize it.

Acts 10:38

[38](#) how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. **He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil**, for God was with him.

The only way out of pain and torture whether mental or physical is via the savior, Christ.

This record in Mark 9 occurs right after the Mount of Transfiguration where Peter, James and John go with Christ, and he is transformed before them.

Mark 9:14-17

[14](#) And when they came to the disciples, they saw a great crowd around them, and scribes arguing with them. [15](#) And immediately all the crowd, when they saw him, were greatly

amazed and ran up to him and greeted him. [16](#) And he asked them, “What are you arguing about with them?”

[17](#) And someone from the crowd answered him, “Teacher, I brought my son to you, for he has a spirit that makes him mute.

By this time Christ had exposed enough that they understood that a devil spirit was causing this.

[18](#) And whenever it seizes him, it throws him down, and he foams and grinds his teeth and becomes rigid.

So here is the devil’s nature on full display of wanting to steal, kill, and destroy. Imagine the torment of these parents living with this child! Think again of the torment of parents in Israel whose kids are being held hostage. It is always the devils intent. He hides it. Scripture says he masquerades as an angel of light. We encounter people who smile and seem so nice but are devilish and seeking to deceive. This is why we need to exercise discernment in this day and time...“We have to have our senses exercised to discern good from evil”. Hebrews.

So I asked your disciples to cast it out, and they were not able.” [19](#) And he answered them, “O faithless generation, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you? **Bring him to me.**”

We want to be able to help people. We should be able to say this to people with confidence: Bring him to me. People need to be brought to Christ.

[20](#) And they brought the boy to him. **And when the spirit saw him, immediately it convulsed the boy, and he fell on the ground and rolled about, foaming at the mouth.**

The devil seeks to steal, kill, and destroy!

[21](#) And Jesus asked his father, “How long has this been happening to him?” And he said, “From childhood. [22](#) And it has often cast him into fire and into water, **to destroy him.**

The intent of the devil was to kill the boy. It is crystal clear... casting him into fire and water to burn him up or drown him. We see this acted out by Hamas. We see it in the individual lives of people being tormented by the devil. With the Christ in us we can help.

But if you can do anything, have compassion on us and help us.” [23](#) And Jesus said to him, “If you can’t! All things are possible for one who believes.”

Jesus puts it right back onto the man. “If you can believe!” You need to believe that I can do this. We need to get people to believe in the Christ in us. We are here to help and carry out the commission we have been given.

[24](#) Immediately the father of the child cried out^d and said, “I believe; help my unbelief!” [25](#) And when Jesus saw that a crowd came running together, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, “You mute and deaf spirit, **I command you, come out of him and never enter him again.**”

Not all afflictions have a spiritual cause. One must walk by the spirit to know if the cause is spiritual or not. We have the manifestation of discerning of spirits that we must exercise.

In the record about the Sons of Sceva they went around casting out spirits and they ran into the wrong guy, and it says the spirit jumped on them and beat the heck out of them and they fled naked and wounded.

26 And after crying out and convulsing him terribly, it came out, and the boy was like a corpse, so that most of them said, "He is dead."

The boy looked dead after the spirit came out of him. Many people today are very close to death: mentally, emotionally, spiritually. We look at the figures regarding suicide. People need help!

27 But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose. **28** And when he had entered the house, his disciples asked him privately, "Why could we not cast it out?"

29 And he said to them, "This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer."^e

Commentaries differ on what this means but the essence is one needs to be tuned in and walking with God. This is serious business. They may have been timid, or frightened we don't know but we do know they were unable to cast this one out.

God has equipped us with holy spirit so that we can help people. In Acts 16-19 you can read about Paul and others casting out spirits.

30 They went on from there and passed through Galilee. And he did not want anyone to know, **31** for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, "The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him."

Mark 5

This is right after Jesus calms the great windstorm.

1 They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gerasenes.^a **2** And when Jesus^b had stepped out of the boat, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit. **3** He lived among the tombs. And no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain, **4** for he had often been bound with shackles and chains, but he wrenched the chains apart, and he broke the shackles in pieces. No one had the strength to subdue him.

He had supernatural strength. He was isolated and marked, a devilish man, a crazy man. They would not let their kids go near this area.

5 Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always crying out and **cutting himself with stones.**

We hear of young people today who are cutting themselves. This is not new. This is likely caused by a sense of self-loathing. One feels he is only good enough to inflict pain on himself.

This can be demonic. One gets to the point of opening himself up to devil spirit possession and self loathing wanting to hurt yourself and can lead to suicide as well.

There is only one answer and that is to bring them to Christ via the Word and to help them with the Christ in us. We have such an opportunity to help people in this dead and dying world.

6 And when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and fell down before him. **7** And crying out with a loud voice, he said, “What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me.”

This is rich. The devil spirit who is tormenting the man tells Jesus (the one who can deliver) not to torment HIM. The devil is the great accuser. He always accuses others of doing and being who he is.

8 For he was saying to him, “Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!” **9** And Jesus asked him, “What is your name?” He replied, “My name is Legion, for we are many.” **10** And he **begged** him earnestly not to send them out of the country.

The devil spirits are begging Christ not to cast them out.

11 Now a great herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside, **12** and they **begged** him, saying, “Send us to the pigs; let us enter them.” **13** So he gave them permission. And the unclean spirits came out and entered the pigs; and the herd, numbering about two thousand, rushed down the steep bank into the sea and drowned in the sea.

14 The herdsmen fled and told it in the city and in the country. And people came to see what it was that had happened. **15** And they came to Jesus and saw the demon-possessed^c man, the one who had had the legion, sitting there, **clothed and in his right mind**, and they were afraid.

He was unclothed and naked before, crazy, and demonically possessed. Now they see him clothed and in his right mind and they are afraid.

16 And those who had seen it described to them what had happened to the demon-possessed man and to the pigs. **17** And they began to **beg** Jesus^d to depart from their region.

They beg him to leave because he is threatening their livelihood. He is an economic threat to them.

18 As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed with demons **begged** him that he might be with him.

The man however begs Jesus to let him stay with Jesus. That is the dividing line we see to this day. People will tell believers to leave. You are bringing up things I don't want to deal with. And those who want deliverance will beg to be with us and hear what the Word says.

19 And he did not permit him but said to him, “Go home to your friends and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you.” **20** And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him, and everyone marveled.

These are just two of the many records in which we see the devil the intent of the devil and the torment inflicted on individuals and the intent of God to bring deliverance and healing.

It is incumbent on us who know the scriptures and have the spirit of God to do what we can to help people.

In I Corinthians 12:12-31 the Bible speaks of our body parts as “members”. Everyone has members. We can either use our members to do evil or we can use our members to do good and work for the Lord.

Romans 6:12

12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions. **13** Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness.

This is the opportunity we have to do good. We have members to do the will of God. We can choose to do this. That is why God has given us this body.

14 For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

15 What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means!

16 Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves,^c you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? **17** But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, **18** and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. **19** I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, **so now** present your members as **slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification.**

Now you have a choice. Now we are in a position to help people. To demonstrate again the contrast of what we came from and are now able to do.

Ephesians 2:1-3

1 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins **2** in which you once walked, following the course of this world, [THE WORLD] following the prince of the power of the air, [DEVIL] the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— **3** among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body^a and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.^b[FLESH]

There we were following the World, following the Devil, serving our Flesh. That is the predicament that people are in that we can rescue them out of by presenting the Word to them and the choice of the Gospel.

4 But^c God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, **5** even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— **6** and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, **7** so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. **8** For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, **9** not a result of works, so that no one may boast. **10** For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

There are good works that we can walk in. We can rescue people. There is a way up and out and it's the gospel of Jesus Christ. We can present that to people and help them. There is hope healing and deliverance available in Christ.