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I would also encourage you to go to Amazon and pick up a copy of “**Liberating the Book of Revelation, Returning to the Source of the Message.**” This book is intended to help us all know what the Spirit said and how He said it. This book is focused not on interpreting the book of *Revelation*, that is what this podcast is for, but on accurately representing the book of *Revelation* in the manner in which the Spirit originally spoke it to John. It is available in all formats: hardback, paperback, e-book format, and as an *audible*.

In our last podcast, we discussed the power of the Harlot’s delusion and why we must leave her and not look back. We then examined commands 2-5 which requires us to not just leave but to pay her back, double upon double for her deeds including paying her with torment and mourning. Let’s pick back up with the sixth commandment.

EP151 Revelation 18 verses 20, 7-8

Command 6 (Revelation 18:20)

“You are *commanded* to **now** be caused to rejoice over her, O heaven, and the holy ones, and *the holy ones* and the apostles, *the apostles* and the prophets, *the prophets*, because God has pronounced judgment for you against her.”

This judgment is personal in that it is against the great Harlot, but it is also for the people of God, the holy ones, the apostles, and the prophets. Yet, even more specifically, it is for *the holy ones*, *the apostles*, and *the prophets*, those to whom God says, “*mine*.” This judgment is a recompense, a reckoning, a vengeance. God is settling the score on behalf of His people at large, but specifically, for *the holy ones*, *the apostles*, and *the prophets*. The inclusion of the personal pronoun “the” in each instance is extremely intentional.

Just to be clear, “*the holy ones*,” is an adjective, but “*the apostles*,” and “*the prophets*,” are nouns. Each of these phrases are parsed in that they are first rendered in the *nominative* case, which shows that these categories of people are the subject of the command, but they are also rendered in the *vocative* case, to emphatically or with heightened emotion designate the subject of the command. For example, “*the holy ones*” describes the general audience, those who have been set apart for God (which is what “holy” means). It describes those who have been called into His household and separated from the world. But even more specifically, “*the holy ones*” describes those who live set apart for God, separate from the world **and** separate from the great Harlot, i.e., the **Called and Chosen**, many of which are already, **Faithful**.

Why does the Spirit designate separately “*the apostles*” and “*the prophets*” and why are these nouns parsed? Apostles and prophets are the foundation of a Sanctuary, a holy place, designed and built for the inhabitation of God by the Spirit.¹ And they are those to whom the Spirit has revealed the mystery of

¹ Most of the translations say “temple” but this is inaccurate. The Geek word “naos” (Sanctuary) and not “hieron” (temple) is used, indicating the Holy Place that is accessible only to the priests of God.

Christ, for instance, that the gentiles are fellow heirs with the Jews. In other words, they have been given special knowledge and, as apostles, those who are sent out by God and not man, they have the authority to declare that knowledge.

Ephesians 2:19-22, 3:1-7

So then you **now** are no longer strangers and aliens, but you **now** are fellow citizens with the holy ones, and of God's household, **caused to have been being built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets**, Christ Jesus Himself **now** being the corner stone, in whom the whole building, caused to **now** being fitted together, is growing into a holy Sanctuary in the Lord, in whom you also are caused to **now** being built together into a dwelling place of God through the Spirit.

For this reason, I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles — if indeed you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace which was caused to being given to me for you; that by revelation there was made caused to be known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief. By referring to this, when you are **now** reading you are **now** caused to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not caused to be made known to the sons of men, as **it has now been caused to be revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit**; to be specific, that the Gentiles **now** are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel, of which I was made a minister, according to the gift of God's grace which was caused to be given to me according to the working of His power.

When we read the phrase “the apostles and the prophets” we probably tend to restrict our understanding to those who traveled with Jesus. That is just not accurate. Even today, there are those whom God has called and gifted as apostles and prophets.² For the sake of the household of God, for the holy ones, He has gifted certain people to be apostles (which refers to one who has been sent by God and not man) and prophets (those who exercise the prophetic gifting). They are those to whom God has given revelatory insight (the prophets) and those who have the authority to speak it over God's people (the apostles). They are the foundation upon which the dwelling place of God, through the Spirit, is being built.

The use of both the *nominative* case and then the *vocative* case when referring to “*the apostles and the prophets*” indicates that like “*the holy ones*” there are apostles and prophets who are still captive in the Harlots house, drinking up her wine of immorality, her wine of religious apostasy, and they are powerful advocates for her ways. They are receiving revelatory insight from far too many sources, and they are speaking, with authority, words that lead “*the holy ones*” astray and which keep them dependent upon the great Harlot's wine. But God always preserves His remnant of the **Called and Chosen and Faithful** and He calls out to “*the apostles*” and “*the prophets*,” and He wants them to recognize that this judgment of the great Harlot is being done for them. God is fulfilling His word to them.

“*You are commanded to now be caused to rejoice over her, O heaven ...*” God commands not just those in His house, but all of heaven to **now** be caused to rejoice over her judgment. The angels, the Four, the 24 Elders, those under the Altar, and all the spiritual beings are to let the Spirit of God cause them to

² **1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11**

rejoice over her demise. Being rendered in the *passive* voice, it must be the work of the Spirit to cause us to rejoice over her demise. Apparently, without His intervention, we naturally are so attracted to this woman that we do not want to see her destroyed. But the Spirit, as an act of grace, wants to cause us and all of heaven to rejoice over her demise.

Her fate has been sealed: *fell, fell Babylon the Great*. And those from God's household are to participate in this judgment, and we are to rejoice that God uses us to enact His vengeance upon this woman who has caused the nations to go mad and has caused the "*holy ones*" to be held captive by demonic entities: spirits, birds, and beasts who have been caused to have been hating.

The Reason: The Arrogance of Semiramis

Let's return to verses **7-8** which describes the arrogance of this Great Harlot, and the reason God will have her destroyed.

Revelation 18:7-8

... for she **now** says in her heart, 'I **now** choose to SIT as A QUEEN AND I **now** AM NOT A WIDOW and **may** never see mourning.' For this reason, in one day her plagues {her strikes our wounds} will in the **future** come, death and mourning and famine, and she will in the **future** be caused to be burned up with fire; for the Lord God who has been judging her is strong."

These boasts, and so much more, are recorded in the **Codex**. From the days of Nimrod and Semiramis, the Harot has bathed herself in confidence and delusion, the same concoction which she mixes in her wine and serves to "*the holy ones*."

Isaiah 47:1-15

"Come down and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon; sit on the ground without a throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans! For you shall no longer be called tender and delicate. Take the millstones and grind meal. Remove your veil, strip off the skirt, uncover the leg, cross the rivers. Your nakedness will be uncovered, your shame also will be exposed; I will take vengeance and will not spare a man." Our Redeemer, **Yahweh Sabaoth** (the Lord of hosts) is His name, the Holy One of Israel.

"Sit silently, and go into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans, for you will no longer be called the queen of kingdoms. I was angry with My people, I profaned My heritage and gave them into your hand. You did not show mercy to them, on the aged you made your yoke very heavy. Yet you said, 'I will be a queen forever.' These things you did not consider nor remember the outcome of them."

"Now, then, hear this, you sensual one, who dwells securely, who says in your heart, 'I am, and there is no one besides me. I will not sit as a widow, nor know loss of children.' "But these two things will come on you suddenly in one day: Loss of children and widowhood. They will come on you in full measure in spite of your many sorceries, in spite of the great power of your spells."

"You felt secure in your wickedness and said, 'No one sees me,' your wisdom and your knowledge, they

have deluded you; for you have said in your heart, 'I am, and there is no one besides me.' "But evil will come on you which you will not know how to charm away; and disaster will fall on you for which you cannot atone; and destruction about which you do not know will come on you suddenly."

"Stand fast now in your spells and in your many sorceries with which you have labored from your youth; perhaps you will be able to profit, perhaps you may cause trembling. You are wearied with your many counsels; let now the astrologers, those who prophesy by the stars, those who predict by the new moons, stand up and save you from what will come upon you. Behold, they have become like stubble, fire burns them; they cannot deliver themselves from the power of the flame; there will be no coal to warm by nor a fire to sit before!

So have those become to you with whom you have labored, who have trafficked with you from your youth; each has wandered in his own way; there is none to save you."

Wow, the judgment of this Harlot is intense and disturbing. However, notwithstanding this prophecy, she still proudly defies **Yahweh** and even now persists in her abominations, believing she will sit as a queen forever and will never see mourning. She dismisses the fact that **Yahweh** always does what He says, it is just a matter of time. Therefore, **Yahweh** adds the double curse. He warned her that she would be paid back, but since she refused to heed the warning and stop her spiritual harlotry, it has now become a double payback.

Here is the kicker; in the same way that the judgment on this woman will be meted out in double, so will the blessing be meted out on the people of God who choose to come out of her.

Isaiah 61:1-2, 6-8, 10.

The Spirit of God (**Adonai**) **Yahweh** is upon me, because **Yahweh** has anointed me to bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to captives and freedom to prisoners; to proclaim the favorable year of **Yahweh** and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn.

But you shall be called the priests of **Yahweh**; they shall speak of you as the ministers of our God; you shall eat the wealth of the nations, and in their glory you shall boast. Instead of your shame there shall be a double portion; instead of dishonor they shall rejoice in their lot; therefore, in their land they shall possess a double portion; they shall have everlasting joy. For I **Yahweh** love justice, I hate robbery and wrong; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.

I will rejoice greatly in **Yahweh**, my soul will exult in my God; for He has clothed me with garments of salvation, He has wrapped me with a robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

In terms of the true people of God (those who avail themselves of this liberty and are freed from their prisons clothed with garments of salvation and wrapped in a robe of **Yahweh's** righteousness), in the day of vengeance of our God, there will literally be a 4x difference in how they are treated verses those who love the Harlot. Those who love the Harlot will receive double judgment and those who escape her *great*

city will receive double blessing. She has glorified herself and given herself every privilege in this life. She has done wrong to the people of God and has robbed them of their freedom. As such, she will receive torment and mourning as payback for her self-pleasure.

Jesus once told a story about a poor and sickly man named Lazarus who was always ignored by a rich man who lived in pleasure and abundance, while Lazarus, a poor man, sat at the rich man's gate covered in sores seeking just a little help. After they died, Lazarus was comforted in the "Bosom of Abraham" while the rich man was tortured in Hades. The rich man was told, "...in your life you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus bad things; but he is **now** caused to be comforted here, and you are **now** caused agony."³

Like this rich man, the reason the Harlot privileged herself with the luxuries and the joy of this life is because in her heart she believes she deserves to live that way. In her heart she says, "*I sit as a queen, and I **now** am not a widow and **may** never see mourning.*" Sadly, this woman is so delusional and drunk with her own power that she is going to believe this to be true until the "**day**" and the "**hour**" that she is suddenly destroyed. It is the lie of an eternal reign that keeps her living so arrogantly.

The passage about her "*sitting as a queen*" never facing loss or widowhood has strong overtones to the legend of Semiramis. If you remember, the tale goes that she killed her husband Nimrod, the king, claiming that in her act she was not actually murdering him but deifying him. Thus, technically she was not going to ever be a widow. Rather, she would be married to a god, which would make her by default a goddess, and her son Tammuz a little god. With Nimrod out of the way and Tammuz just a child, she secured her position, and it is said that she ruled as queen over the Babylonian kingdom for 102 years claiming she would reign as queen forever.

Having been embodied in all the religious systems throughout time as the "**Queen of Heaven**," it seems to her that this dream, this illusion, would go on and on and on. Yet because of her arrogance and audacity, the plagues or the wounds will come upon the Harlot in a one day in her hour of judgment.

One Day

This phrase "*in one day*" is meant to communicate the suddenness upon which this judgment will occur. This idea of a "day" is often used metaphorically, as in the "day of the Lord," to suggest a period-of-time not 24-hours. In this instance, the picture it paints is that despite all the warnings, she will not be expecting her day of doom. She will be carrying on as usual and then whammy, she will be destroyed. The Beast and the 10 horns will turn on her and they will devastate her. She will not be expecting their betrayal, for she thinks that the Beast needs her and that she is the reason the world will worship him.

In addition, it is a "*single day*" because there will not be "another" day of destruction for this woman. She is in her "day" now and when this day is completed, she will have been completely wiped off the face of the earth.

Revelation 18:8

*For this reason, in **one day** her plagues {her strikes or wounds} will in the **future** come, death and*

³ Luke 16:19-31

*mourning and famine, and she will in the **future** be caused to be burned up with fire; for the Lord God who has been judging her is strong.*

The Harlot will be stripped of life. Her religions will no longer have a platform upon which to operate. The Beast and the False Prophet will ensure that any attempt to worship anyone or anything other than the Beast will result in execution.⁴ Those who participate in her system, those whose livelihood is dependent upon her system, and those who get rich by the merchandising of her wares, will mourn her demise, and will walk away or else they too will be killed.

Death, Mourning, Famine

The text declares that death, mourning, and famine are her plagues or the wounds or strikes which **Yahweh** will deliver to her. Death, mourning, and famine are a string of nouns which stir up a horrific picture which images not just what is done to her, but a state of existence. When her judgment comes, she will exist no longer as a queen but in death, mourning, and famine. We are also told that she will in the **future** be burned up with fire.⁵ Since the burning with fire part is rendered in the *future* tense, we can be confident that this aspect of her judgment refers to her final destruction.

Many translations say “pestilence” instead of “death,” which is mind boggling since the Greek word “*thanatos*” literally means death, as its root word “*thensko*” literally means to die. Poetic license or not, there is a big difference between death and pestilence. So why did they insert “pestilence”? It is mind boggling the way translators have massaged the text according to their own religious licentiousness. It’s like that whole “hills” for “mountains” substitute that most teachers do.

The translators did this same exchange of words, pestilence for death, back in **Revelation 2:23** in the letter to the church at Thyatira. In connection with the judgment of that prophetess who was referred to as Jezebel, Jesus said, “*I will in the **future** kill her children with death*” but the translators changed it to say, “*I will kill her children with pestilence...*” And He said this so that “*all the churches will in the **future** choose to know that I am He who is **now** searching the minds and hearts; and I will in the **future** give to each one of you according to your deeds.*”

So why did the translators change it from death to pestilence? Keep in mind, there is a Greek word for “pestilence,” which is “*loimos*” and that word is not used in either of these texts. It is likely that in serving the Harlot, they did not want to expose the truth surrounding her judgment and what it means to those who do not flee her great city.

This spirit of religious apostasy will know death and her children who do not wake up from their drunken stupor to fall upon the rock, will either leave her and follow the Beast and be eternally doomed or they will be killed by the Beast. Her house will be abandoned, hence the word translated as “*famine*,” which literally means scarcity. She who once sat as a Queen upon the waters of the world, over peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues, will watch as her house is dismantled and deserted.

When the Beast exalts himself as God, there will be a deprivation, a *famine*, as the Kings of the Earth

⁴ See **Revelation 13:15**

⁵ The Greek word “*thanatos*” is used, which means death not pestilence. “will be” is rendered in the *future passive indicative*.

and her merchants will run from her and leave her to die on her own. And since her followers will be forced to choose between her and the Beast, she will know scarcity. This Queen who boasted that she is not a widow and will never see mourning will be starved of all the attention and glory that she once received, and all this devastation will happen in *one day*, that day of her judgment, because **mighty, strong, or forcible is the Lord God who has been judging her.**

Isaiah 43:12-13

I am God. Even from eternity I am He, and there is none who can deliver out of My hand; I act and who can reverse it?"

The answer is simply no one. He has been judging the woman, and in her hour, in one day, she will be destroyed. Therefore, we are commanded to come out of her so we will not be subject to her plagues. **There is a price to pay for sleeping with this woman, that is why she is a Harlot.** One may not have to pay her fee upfront, but make no mistake, payment will be made. And the price for participating in her sins is to share in the plagues that will be poured out upon her: death, mourning, and famine.

The Implications of What We Just Leaned

Before we move on and dive into the lament and mourning of those who love the Harlot, let's take a breath and think about these truths, as shocking as they may be, and the implications for our lives and the lives of those we know who love their religion.

A Son or a Slave

The Spirit revealed that even though we have been brought into the household of God, that does not mean that we have made the choice to become a son of God, and it does not mean that we have chosen to embrace our freedom. We must exercise our right to live free as a son of God.

By way of example, both Ismael and Isaac were children of Abraham, but only one child, Isaac, was the son of the freewoman, the son of promise, whereas the other child (Ishmael) was the son of the bondwoman, the son of slavery. Only the son of promise would inherit the blessings of Abraham. "*For what does the Scripture **now** say, 'You are commanded to cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not in the **future** be an heir with the son of the free woman.'*"⁶ Shocking as it may be, though Ishmael came from Abraham's seed, when referring to Isaac, God described him as Abraham's "*only son.*"⁷ The son of the bondwoman (the slave), was not even acknowledged by God.

This illustration speaks to all those who have been brought metaphorically into "Abraham's tent," into the household of God. Though we are all raised in the same household and as far as anyone can tell, living in the tent of Abraham, we all look like sons and even claim to be sons, but our destinies are ultimately divergent. In the future, there will be separation and division. Those who are enslaved to the law and to their religious deeds through their commitment and dedication to the Harlot, those who are imprisoned

⁶ ***Galatians 4:30***

⁷ See ***Genesis 22:2, 12, 16***

in the great city, Babylon, under the charge of this woman's henchmen (the unclean spirits, birds, and beasts), will not inherit with the sons of freedom, the sons of promise. They will not even be acknowledged. In fact, Jesus will say to them, *"I never knew you, depart from Me."*⁸

In **John 8:35-37**, Jesus declared, *"The slave does not **now** remain in the house forever; the son **now** does remain forever. So, if the Son may make you free, you will in the **future** choose to be free indeed."*

If you want out of the Harlot's prison, if you are willing to come out of her, Jesus will set you free and you will in the **future** choose to be free indeed, you will forsake this Harlot. With the use of the *future* tense connected to our choice (rendered in the *middle* voice) you can expect that obeying the command to *"come out of her"* is a process whereby you must detox from your drunken condition. In other words, you must learn to kick the addiction to your own goodness and to the works of your hands, and you must learn to kick your addiction to the law, and you must let go of your fascination and wonder over this woman and all her amazing deeds of religion. This is where the fires of mercy are so critical to the process.

As to the process, when you leave the Harlot's house, you will, metaphorically, have one killer of a hangover, and crave for her wine and the joy of her delusion. But the slave will not remain in the house forever, the slave will be removed, as Jesus said,

Luke 13:28

In that place there will in the **future** choose to be weeping and gnashing of teeth when you may see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but yourselves **now** caused to being thrown out.

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob will be in the kingdom of God, but there is no mention of Ismael. He was left out, left behind, so-to-speak. And with *"weeping"* and *"gnashing"* being nouns and not verbs, we know this speaks of their eternal existence. They believed they should be in the kingdom of God, they believe they deserve to be joining Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and when they are abandoned to that place of outer darkness, they will exist in an eternal state of wailing, or weeping, and gnashing of teeth.

But We Are Trying So Hard

You might be wondering, "How is this fair"? We are just trying to do what is right, trying to serve **Yahweh**, and trying so awfully hard not to do evil? The truthful answer is very unsettling: **Our intentions and sincere effort matter not! Only the source matters, the source is everything!**

It is impossible for man who has been corrupted through and through to do anything that really matters, anything that is worthy of God. That is why all **Yahweh** asks of us is to be **willing** to let Him have His way; the rest is up to Him; that is what the grace of God is all about. Only the one who is inherently and innately good can do good, whereas the one who is evil, always, and continually, does evil. *"A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit."*⁹

⁸ **Matthew 7:23; Luke 13:24**

⁹ **Matthew 7:18**

We are to lay our bodies on the altar, so-to-speak, as a free will offering such that God can then do what He needs to do to put to death our *flesh*. The *lust of the flesh*, all the “goodness,” all the so called “godliness,” all the miraculous, and all the sincere attempts to honor and worship God, are nothing more than evil that makes up the pile of sins that this woman has stacked as high as heaven. And God has remembered her iniquities!

Outcomes Do Not Equal Evidence

The outcomes of all things belong to God as He alone is the **Alpha** and the **Omega**. Throughout history, He has proven that He will use pagan kings, treacherous prophets (like Balaam), and even donkeys to get His work done. The point being is that the outcome of any work or effort in no way validates the means or the vessel through which God decides to work. This was the fundamental message in the letters to the churches at Ephesus and Sardis, the two most “Christian-like” of all the churches.

Jesus also addressed this dynamic in one of the most terrifying passages in all of scripture.

Matthew 7:21-23

Not everyone who is **now** saying to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will in the **future** choose to enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who is **now** doing the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. Many will in the **future** say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' And then I will in the **future** declare to them, 'I never knew you; you are commanded to **now** depart from me, you that chooses to **now** be practicing, **you that chooses to now be practicing** the lawlessness.'

One of the biggest sources of delusion in the realm of Christianity that comes from drinking the Harlot's wine is the focus everyone has on the results versus the **source**. This is a very confusing situation. Few ask whether the works they see, and experience, were assigned by the Father and resulted from Jesus living His life in-and-through a person, or whether it was just the mercy of God reaching hurting and broken people. And it is this tendency within us that will cause many to be swayed by the miracles performed by the False Prophet and the Beast.

It is hard to imagine, but in **HIS NAME**, people perform many miracles, prophecy, cast out demons and do all manner of ministry to those who are hurt and needy. But as with the church at Sardis, from a spiritual perspective, unless those deeds were sourced, appointed, and approved by the Father, and performed before His face, they are merely an exercise of religious sensuality and are deemed to be “the lawlessness” or the unauthorized works. And those who indulge in such religious sensuality are not known by Jesus.

How does it all work? How can someone perform such great feats in **HIS NAME** and the deeds be lawless or unauthorized, not performed before the face of the father? Perhaps, our God is so merciful that just as He used a donkey to speak to Balaam, to protect Balaam, He will use even these individuals to extend His mercy to the hurting and needy. Things are not always as they seem; therefore, we must remember that **the source matters, the source is everything!** We must not be fooled by what we see; the Beast and the False Prophet will do many amazing feats. The test of legitimacy is not found in supernatural

works, but in the fruit of *agape* love, which is the only evidence that Jesus is expressing Himself in-and-through a person.

We must not be moved or persuaded by all manner of religious activity, for this Harlot made her dwelling, her place of belonging, amidst the people of God.

THE OUTCOME OF ANY WORK OR EFFORT IN NO WAY VALIDATES THE MEANS OR THE VESSEL THROUGH WHICH GOD DECIDED TO WORK.

As a culture of Christians, we have convinced ourselves that a tree full of leaves must be a good thing. We think God is moving because people are busy serving in church, people are getting “saved,” sacrificing their time and money, worshiping, reaching out, and doing all manner of church related activities.

But that is simply not the case. It is a delusion to think that such works and sacrifices are equivalent to letting God cause you to be dying to your *flesh* such that He can live in-and-through your life and do His works. **IT IS NOT.** In fact, it is usually an alternative that people choose to justify not walking down the pathway of the valley of the shadow of death, i.e., not presenting themselves to God as a living sacrifice, and not letting His will be done.

In that same reasoning, taking care of others in the church with acts of compassion and service is not akin to an outpouring of God’s *agape* love. They simply are not equivalent. With that said, they are also not mutually exclusive, they are just not equivalent.

Mark 11:13-14, 20

Seeing at a distance a fig tree **now** having leaves, He went to see if perhaps He would in the **future** find anything on it; and when He was coming to it, He found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. He was caused to be addressing it, "May no one ever eat fruit from you again!" And His disciples were listening...As they chose to **now** be passing by in the morning, they saw the fig tree having been caused to be withered from the roots up.

In the story of the fig tree, it is interesting that the tree was cursed from the bottom up. This is significant. If you cut off the tree at its trunk, it will once again, given enough rain and sun, sprout new branches and grow again. We see an example of this when the Spirit used a tree to picture the spiritual life of King Nebuchadnezzar. The tree was cut down, the branches chopped off and stripped of its fruit and foliage. The stump, however, was left in the ground and over time as the stump was drenched with the dew of heaven, it grew once again.¹⁰

In contrast, Jesus cursed the tree and it withered from the roots up. This is a picture of Jesus destroying this entire system of religious belief that does not produce the fruit of righteousness, the blasphemous

¹⁰ See **Daniel 4**

system that is based on the works of our hands and on what we can do for God and what we need to do to be right with God.

The truth is that there simply is no way to be right with God other than through a life of faith, for without faith it is impossible to please God.¹¹ One simply must **bet their lives** on all that God has said about Himself and all that He has said about who we are to Him. One must bet their lives on His name, **Yahweh**, trusting Him to live up to His name.

And since this fig tree (a picture of the spiritual life of Israel) was withered from the roots, there will be no way it can be restored. It is dead and done. This is like those double dead trees we read about in **Jude 12**, the people and the system are dead.

Death of the Old Covenant

Hebrews 8:13

When He **now** says, "A new," He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is **now** caused to becoming obsolete and is **now** growing old is ready to disappear.

The Spirit tells us that in ushering in the new covenant of God's grace, God made the old covenant of the law (the system of works) obsolete. This is rendered in the *perfect active indicative*, therefore, we know that it was determined by God, sometime in the past, to come to an end. And being in the *indicative*, we know this is an unqualified statement of fact.

It was God's plan for the old covenant, the system based on law, to become of no effect, obsolete, and at that time of the writing of the book of **Hebrews**, God was the one who was causing it to be decaying and growing old and getting ready (or near) to disappear completely.¹²

It is important to note that "*disappear*" is a **noun** and not a verb; thus, it speaks of a state of existence, a state of being. The old religious system of the law was being dismantled and torn apart and soon would be non-existent or exist in a state of disappearance.

The Spirit was saying that **Yahweh** determined that the old covenant of law is obsolete, and it is just a matter of time before we see that permanent obsolescence manifested in our lives. And sure enough, in 70AD the Jewish system of worship was wiped off the face of the earth by the Romans, and it will not be resurrected despite all the modern folklore of a 3rd Temple and so on. It is not going to happen because this system has been vanquished by God and now exists in a state of obsolescence.

The delusion associated with the old covenant is that it provided a system of religious worship, sacrifice, and service such that the tree looked good, the trunk grew thick, and was covered in leaves, but it did not produce the fruit of God's *agape* love. Therefore, it had to be discarded when the new covenant arrived, a covenant that is based on grace, based upon all that God does for us and not what we can do for Him, so that no man may boast. This new covenant is the vehicle through which *agape* love (Jesus

¹¹ ***Hebrews 11:6***

¹² Note: "obsolete" is rendered in the *present passive participle*, "growing old" is rendered in the *present active participle*

Himself) can be expressed in-and-through our lives.

The point of all this is that we must not be fooled by a tree with big bright green leaves. Yet, for the most part, we have been fooled and we have adopted that old system of worship into the church, and it has replaced true faith. We have adopted the mannerisms and practices of the Harlot and willfully drink of her wine mixed with all manner of blatant and subtle forms of legalism. And no matter what anyone may tell you, even a little bit of legalism will kill you, it is just a matter of time before the leaven permeates the entire loaf.¹³

Agape Love: The Obedience of Christ

Beautiful foliage does not equal the obedience of Christ, which is the production of God's *agape* love.¹⁴ The ability to be a vessel of God's *agape* love (and thereby be obedient to His commands), comes only through the corridors of death and judgment whereby all the wrong belief and unbelief deep within our being is removed and burned away from our lives, giving room for Jesus, the one who is *agape* love, to rule in our lives.¹⁵

We learned this truth in our study of the seven churches. The obedience of Christ is not about being good, it is not about our not being bad, serving, witnessing, sending missionaries, reading the Bible, studying, going to Bible School, going to church, serving in church, arguing for the faith, giving, and so on.

**THE OBEDIENCE OF CHRIST IS PURE AND SIMPLE: IT IS HIS DIVINE AGAPE LOVE
FLOWING IN-AND-THROUGH OUR LIVES, WHICH IS ONLY POSSIBLE IF THE ONE WHO IS
AGAPE LOVE IS LIVING IN-AND-THROUGH OUR LIVES.**

Let's stop here and in our next podcast pick back up as we continue to look at the implications of what we have learned and what it means for Christianity.

I am glad you "tuned in" and have been "ready to listen."

¹³ See **1 Corinthians 5:6-8, Galatians 5:9**. See also **Matthew 13:33**

¹⁴ **John 15:10**

¹⁵ **The Obedience of Christ**: See **John 15:12-14; 1 John 2:7-11, 3:23, 4:21; 2 John 4-6; Galatians 5:22-24**