

The Storm of the Lord: A Prophecy Concerning False Prophets and Lying Shepherds in the Latter Days

By Jim Sayles

Many years ago My wife and I were in Key West watching the sunset as we strolled the harbor front. Out on the distant horizon was a storm front with heavy dark clouds and a constant array of lightning flashes, but the storm was so distant that we could not hear the rolling thunder associated with the lightning flashes.

As we strolled hand in hand we watched two ships filled with tourists leave the harbor for their respective sunset cruises. The larger of the two ships was diesel powered, and the other was a sailboat. The first ship under its own power went south. The second, under wind power, went north.

Both captains, with their crews and passengers, were certain that the distant storm would not blow in until the cruises were finished and all were safely ashore.

As the first gusts of offshore wind hit us I remember thinking, “They’re not going to make it.”

The event is etched in my memory, and recently the Spirit made the prophetic application by causing me to “see” the ship under its own power as the professing church driven by religion, and the boat under sail, a ship carrying half as many passengers, as the believing church empowered by the Spirit.

Yet, both captains and ALL their passengers presumed erroneously that the storm would not reach them until the pleasant sunset cruise was completed.

Later, both captains and ALL their passengers were shocked when the full force of the storm with driving winds, blinding rain, and the heavens filled with lightning flashes and deafening thunder, hit them.

My wife and I watched the debacle under a store front awning as both ships scurried back to the harbor with their drenched and frightened passengers hoping to make it safely ashore.

I remembered thinking earlier that it might be nice to be on that sailboat with my wife for a pleasant sunset cruise, and then, when the storm struck, being relieved that we had not made that choice.

The most important observation we can make concerning this event is that the captains of these two ships, who were responsible for the safety and welfare of their passengers, should have had better judgment. Neither one knew the truth of their situation, though the truth was available to them, and it is likely that both made the decision on the basis of not wanting to lose the tourist dollars that a cancelled cruise would have represented.

The prophetic applications are obvious, and I will begin this study with the final passage of Jeremiah's prophecy concerning false prophets and lying shepherds in the latter days. Jeremiah 23:20:

***The anger of the LORD will not turn back
until he has executed and accomplished
the intents of his heart.
In the latter days you will understand it clearly.***

In scripture "former" refers to the OT and "latter" refers to the NT. Therefore, this prophecy is clearly for the church, because it is the church who is now "the Israel of God" in the latter days. And, as Paul reminded us, all of the things that happened to natural, ethnic Israel were written down for our instruction upon whom the fulfillment of the ages has come (in these "latter days").

"Latter days," then, includes the entire church age, but the emphasis of this prophecy is on the church during the end times of the latter days, which has already begun.

The vast majority of regenerated believers in Jesus Christ today accept the current condition of the somnolent, divided, and emasculated church as being "normal," because we judge normality on the basis of our own experience or on the basis of recent church history.

Yet, as Watchman Nee, the preeminent founder of the underground house church in China, wrote in his book, "The Normal Christian Life," normal for the church is the standard established by God in Christ, not by our experience, and Paul described this standard in Ephesians 4 as being "...***oneness in the faith and in the full and accurate knowledge of the Son...***," resulting in "...***the completeness of personality which is nothing less than the standard height of Christ's own perfection...***"

Because the sin conscious church cannot imagine the standard revealed by Paul as being "normal," or even achievable, we make excuses for our current status and for the obvious presence of huge amounts of deception and error being preached and taught by false prophets and lying shepherds, even by the beloved shepherds who have ministered the word of truth to us in many ways, but have wounded us spiritually by teaching error in other ways so that we know the truth in some things but believe lies in others without any apparent ability to tell the difference between the two.

This is like the two ship captains at Key West who had safely carried their passengers on sunset cruises before, but who exposed their passengers to extreme danger when the storm that we ALL sense in our spirits out there on the horizon, struck much sooner than they expected.

We are, therefore, the somnolent virgins of the parable of the ten virgins who, because the Lord tarried, ultimately became drowsy and fell asleep. And somnolence is

not what the Lord has defined as “normal” for His church, even if somnolence and division is the only thing this generation has ever experienced.

False prophets and lying shepherds in the church of Jesus Christ today will not recognize or receive this word of warning as being applicable to them, but the warning is intended by the Father to stir the hearts of the remnant within the church who clearly hear the voice of the Lord in these trying and confusing times.

And by the Spirit He will speak the truth into the hearts of those who have “ears to hear” what the Spirit is saying to the church through Jeremiah’s prophecy so that this storm will not catch us by surprise even if the prophets and shepherds with whom we are associated are caught by surprise like the two ship captains at Key West.

***My heart is broken within me;
all my bones shake;
I am like a drunken man,
like a man overcome by wine,
because of the LORD
and because of his holy words.***

Jeremiah reeled in heartbreak at the stinging condemnation of false prophets and lying shepherds in the Israel of his own day, and, like Jeremiah, we are shocked, dismayed, and broken when the corrective word of the Lord comes to us, whether individually, requiring our repentance, or corporately, warning us of His judgment against false prophets and lying shepherds in the church, a warning that applies specifically to the lying shepherds and false prophets of these latter days who expose the unknowing sheep to danger.

And, as it was in the days of Jeremiah, the lying shepherds and false prophets who do not “hear” and respond to the correction of the Lord WILL be judged, even as their failure to hear and respond to the Lord’s word of correction through the prophet, Jeremiah, will cause them to be plunged into darkness during the time of testing that will come upon us much sooner than any of us expect.

For the land...(the kingdom nation of spiritual Israel)... ***is full of adulterers...***(those in covenant with God who participate in the cup of demons, which are the doctrines of demons and false practices introduced into the church through false prophets)....;

because of the curse...(of adultery)... ***the land ...***(the kingdom nation of spiritual Israel)... ***mourns...***(not understanding why the power and glory of the Lord is not being manifested in any great way among us)...

and the pastures of the wilderness ...(the uncompromised pastures where the unleavened bread intended for the sheep is found)... ***are dried up...***(and the nation of God that dwells there is starving)....

*Their ... (adulterous)... **course is evil...** (referring to the false prophets and lying shepherds and those sheep who follow them),*

*and their **might...** (spiritual authority)... **is not right.***

“Both *prophet and *priest are ungodly;

even in my house ... (the church)... **I have found their evil,**”

declares the LORD.

(*Those who claim status as prophets but teach falsehood; *those who have been assigned responsibility for shepherding but have become “wicked servants” who beat, manipulate, and starve the sheep by feeding them the leavened bread of denominational deception and error)

Therefore their way...** (the way of the false prophets and lying shepherds and all those foolish sheep that follow them)... **shall be to them

***like slippery paths in the darkness...** (devoid of revelatory light)...,*

***into which they shall be driven and fall...** (away from faith in Christ)...,*

for I will bring ... (the)... **disaster...** (of apostasy)... **upon them**

***in the year of their punishment,** ... (upon these whose lies have resulted in the apostasy of the sheep)...*

declares the LORD.

In the prophets of Samaria ... (the false prophets who claim to be of spiritual Israel but are not, like the captain of the ship under its own power)...

I saw an unsavory thing:

***they prophesied by Baal...** (Satan masquerading as an angel of light)...*

and led my people Israel...** (the Israel of God, the church)... **astray.

***But in the prophets of Jerusalem...** (the prophets who are of spiritual Israel, the church)...*

I have seen a horrible thing:

***they commit adultery...** (only those who are in a covenant relationship with God can commit spiritual adultery, and they do this by participating in the cup of demons, which are the doctrines and practices that demons teach)...*

and walk...** (unknowingly)... **in lies;

they strengthen the hands of evildoers,

so that no one...** (of the sheep)... **turns from his evil;

all of them...** (the false prophets and the sheep that follow them)... **have become like Sodom to me,

and its...** (utterly detestable and apostate)... **inhabitants like Gomorrah.”

Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts concerning the prophets:

***“Behold, I will feed them with bitter food...** (I will give them over to the lies and deceits of Satan)*

and give them poisoned water to drink,...(the water of deception that produces death instead of the life-giving water of His revelatory word)
for from the prophets of Jerusalem...(spiritual Israel, the church)...
ungodliness has gone out into all the land."...(into the entire nation of God in Christ, the church)

Thus says the LORD of hosts: "Do not listen to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you, filling you with vain hopes...(of escaping the testing of our faith in tribulation).... *They speak...*(non-revelatory)... *visions of their own minds, ...*(filled with the deceits of the Father of Lies)...*not from the mouth of the LORD. They say continually to those who despise the ...*(revelatory)... *word of the LORD, 'It shall be well with you'; and to everyone who stubbornly follows his own heart, they say, 'No disaster shall come upon you.'"*...(and say, "You cannot lose your salvation by rejecting your faith through the hardness of your stubborn, disobedient heart.")

For who among them ...(among the false prophets and lying shepherds)...*has stood in the council of the LORD to see and to hear his word,...*(with the "eyes of their hearts" and with "spiritual ears"...) *or who...*(among them)...*has paid attention to his word and listened?...*(and obeyed...)

Behold, the storm of the LORD! ...*(the time of testing and of judgment)...*

*Wrath has gone forth,
a whirling tempest;
it will burst upon the head of the wicked.
The anger of the LORD will not turn back
until he has executed and accomplished
the intents of his heart.*

*In the *latter days you will understand it clearly...*(and experience it as reality)....

*The "latter days" includes the entire church age, but the obvious inference is on the final part of the latter days, "tribulation," beginning with the wake up call of the groomsmen, *Behold! The bridegroom is coming*, during which time the church, having already been scattered into thousands of denominations by false prophets and lying shepherds, will experience even greater persecution and intense, demonically empowered deceptions by false prophets and lying shepherds than we have already experienced.

If you have been feeding on the leaven of the Pharisees, the "false prophets" and "lying shepherds" of our faith, may you be guided appropriately to the unleavened bread revealed by the Spirit of Truth who was sent to guide us into all truth, including truth about things to come.

May you, then, be “wise,” and not “foolish,” and in your wisdom prepare for the coming storm through total and complete surrender to the revelatory instructions of the Lord.