

## *The Visitation Of Consequence*

One of the strongest uses of the word **visit** in the scriptures refers to the manifestation of God's judgment against sin that has been committed. Throughout the scriptures God's includes statements of blessings and warnings concerning consequences that will result for unfaithfulness. Throughout the biblical narrative we see God implementing these.

The children of Israel sinned against God in spite of the wonders he performed to liberate them from Egyptian bondage. At Mount Sinai they pressured Aaron into creating an idol they worshiped while Moses was on the mountain receiving the laws that were to govern their lives. God intended for them to be a special people, a treasure among the nations to keep his name alive and become a nation of priests (**Ex 19.5-6**). Although the people repented when confronted about this, God pronounced a judgment against them. God instructed Moses, "***Therefore now go, lead the people unto the place of which I have spoken unto thee: behold, mine Angel shall go before thee: nevertheless in the day when I visit I will visit their sin upon them.***" (**Ex 32.34**). The Hebrews frequently rebelled against God and suffered the consequences for their transgression.

The patriarch Job knew God acted in this manner and mistakenly concluded he was being punished for unknown sins. Job asked, "***What is man, that thou shouldest magnify him? and that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him? And that thou shouldest visit him every morning, and try him every moment?***" (**Job 7.17-18**). During the Patriarchal period, and the Mosaic dispensation, God often acted against individuals and sometimes nations physically for their evil.

David speaks of the judgment of God against those who wouldn't obey when he writes, "***If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes.***" (**Psm 89.31-32**). Warnings were clearly stated in the Law, and later, when the nations of Israel and Judah departed from God, He sent prophets to call them to remember what God had done for them and to repent before they were destroyed. Notable are the writings of Jeremiah, who lived to see the destruction of the kingdom of Judah, and who warned the people of what lay in store for them if they didn't heed the word of the Lord revealed to him. Jeremiah writes, "***Therefore thus saith the LORD God of Israel against the pastors that feed my people; Ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them: behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the LORD.***" (**Jer 23.2**). False prophets and idolatry had become so entrenched in the land that the way of God had been violated to the point the Lord God allowed them to be overtaken by their enemies and taken into captivity for their sin.

God also demonstrates His power and right to render judgment against the wickedness of other nations as well. Speaking of His judgment against Babylon, Jeremiah writes, "***The LORD hath opened his armoury, and hath brought forth the weapons of his indignation: for this is the work of the Lord GOD of hosts in the land of the Chaldeans. ... Slay all her bullocks; let them go down to the slaughter: woe unto them! for their day is come, the time of their visitation.***" (**Jer 50.25,27**). The Babylonians, or specifically the Chaldeans, were overtaken by the Medes and Persians as Jeremiah refers to in this passage.

God has always hated false doctrine and the introduction of idols that took people away from true worship. Amos states, "***That in the day that I shall visit the transgressions of Israel upon him I will also visit the altars of Bethel: and the horns of the altar shall be cut off, and fall to the ground.***" (**Amos 3.14**). Jeroboam introduced idol worship in the Northern kingdom of Israel out of fear that he would lose the kingdom that God had given him (**1 Kng 12.26-30**). The departure from God eventually cost them

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their nation because of their rebellion against the Lord. We can learn much from these events and the actions of individuals and nations. We learn that God has sent blessings on us and we should strive to remember Him in all that we say and do. We need to worship God in the way He's commanded and turn from any and all doctrines that aren't consistent with His word.

One might think that these warnings and consequences only pertain to those who lived under the Patriarchal dispensation or the Law of Moses. Biblical principles demonstrate that God is mindful of human activity and works against evil regardless of the time or who's involved. This principle can be found in the New Testament as well. Paul writes, "***Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.***" (Gal 6.7-8). In these last days we're living in we exist in the presence of God's patience and grace extended through Christ and the presence of the Gospel in the world. We have to remember that "***As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.***" (Rom 14.11-12). Paul also tells us we "***must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.***" (2 Cor 5.10). And the writer of Hebrews reminds us that "***It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.***" (Heb 10.31).

Peter, speaking of judgment and the end of the world states, "***Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness***" (2 Pet 3.11). This definitely gives us something to think about and decide what kind of **visitation** we want from the Lord.