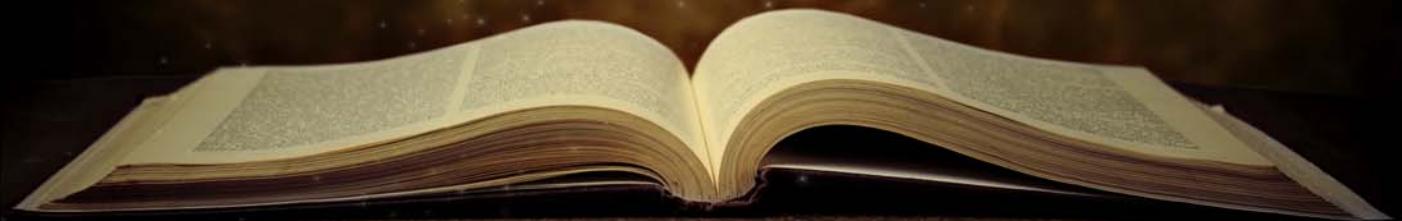


WARNING WORDS

GOD'S CHALLENGE IN SCRIPTURE



Warning Words

God's challenge In Scripture

God is a loving, forgiving Father. The Bible presents Him as being sad when His own people turn away from Him. It presents Him as being angry when His own people are disobedient to Him. It points to the inevitably serious consequences of people and nations rejecting God. These strong assertions in scripture apply equally to us as His people today. We need to carefully consider them. Their message is urgent.

OLD TESTAMENT WARNINGS

- We do not honour God

*"I am the Lord and **there is no other**". (Is. 45.5)*

*"Love the Lord your God, with **all** your heart and with **all** your soul and with **all** your strength". (Deut. 6.5)*

*"There is **no faithfulness, no love, no acknowledgement of God** in the land. There is only cursing, lying and murder, stealing and adultery; they break all bounds and bloodshed follows bloodshed. **Because of this** the land mourns...". (Hos. 4.1-3)*

*"If I am a father, where is the **honour** due to me? If I am a master where is the **respect** due to me?" says the Lord Almighty". (Mal. 1.6)*

*The Lord says; "These people come near to me with their mouth and honour me with their lips, but **their hearts are far from me**". (Is. 29.13)*

- We forget Him and go our own way

*"You have **forgotten** God your Saviour; you have not remembered the Rock, your fortress". (Is.17.10)*

*"you have depended on **your own strength**...." (Hos. 10.13)*

*"They have chosen their **own** ways, and their souls delight in their abominations". (Is. 66.3)*

*"They have turned their **backs** to me and not their faces". (Jer. 2.27)*

*"They do not **acknowledge** me', declares the Lord". (Jer. 9.3)*

*"They did evil in my sight and **chose what displeases me**". (Is. 66.4)*

*"A **spirit of prostitution is in their heart**; they do not acknowledge the Lord". (Hos. 5.4)*

*“They made their hearts as **hard as flint** and **would not listen**....so the Lord Almighty was very angry”. (Zech. 7.12)*

- **We follow false gods and show disrespect for the Lord**

*“...how evil and bitter it is for you when you **forsake** the Lord your God and have no awe of me,” (Jer. 2.19)*

*“...they have **no regard** for the deeds of the Lord, **no respect** for the work of His hands. Therefore my people will go into exile for lack of understanding...”. (Is. 5.12-13)*

*“They followed worthless **idols** and became worthless themselves”. (Jer. 2.5)*

- **We deny and reject Him**

*“...you have now **rejected** your God”... (1 Sam 10.19).*

*“The wise will be put to shame; they will be dismayed and trapped..they have **rejected** the word of the Lord” (Jer. 8.9)*

- **We believe lies**

*“...for we have made a **lie** our refuge and falsehood our hiding-place”. (Is. 28.15)*

*“The prophets are prophesying **lies in my name**...they are prophesying to you false visions, divinations, idolatries and the **delusions** of their own minds”. (Jer. 14.14)*

*“Do not listen to what the prophets are prophesying to you; they fill you with **false hopes**. They speak visions **from their own minds**, not from the mouth of the Lord”. (Jer. 23.16)*

*“Give us no more visions of what is right! Tell us **pleasant** things, prophesy **illusions**”. (Is. 30:10)*

*“Because of your **false words** and **lying visions**, I am against you, declares the Sovereign Lord. My hand will be against the prophets who see false visions and utter lying divinations...”. “Because they lead my people astray, saying, “Peace”, when there is no peace, and because when a flimsy wall is built, **they cover it with whitewash**”. (Ez. 13.8 & 10)*

- **We choose to ignore God’s messages**

*“Hear this, you foolish and senseless people, **who have eyes but do not see, who have ears but do not hear**”. (Jer. 5.21)*

*"I appointed watchmen over you and said, 'Listen to the sound of the trumpet'. **But you said. 'We will not listen.'** Therefore hear, O nations; observe, O witnesses, what will happen to them. Hear O earth: I am bringing disaster on this people, the fruit of their schemes, because they have not listened to my words and have rejected my law."*

(Jer. 6.17-19)

*"You have seen many things, but have **paid no attention**; your ears are open, but you hear nothing". (Is. 42.20)*

*"These people have **stubborn and rebellious hearts**". (Jer. 5.23)*

- **We stir up the wrath of God**

*"The Lord is **angry** with all nations" (Is. 34.2)*

*"My **anger** and my **wrath** will be poured out on this place...."*

(Jer. 7.20)

*"The Lord has **opened his arsenal** and **brought out the weapons of his wrath**...". (Jer. 50.25)*

*"But they refused to pay attention; stubbornly they turned their backs and stopped up their ears. They made their hearts as hard as flint and would not listen to the law or to the words that the Lord Almighty had sent by his Spirit through the earlier prophets. So the Lord Almighty was **very angry**. 'When I called, they did not listen; so when they called, I would not listen,' says the Lord Almighty". (Zec 7:11-14)*

- **God is angry with His people**

*"Why have they provoked me to **anger** with their images, with their worthless foreign idols". (Jer. 8.19)*

*"They provoked me to **anger** by burning incense and by worshipping other gods that neither they nor you nor your fathers ever knew. Again and again I sent my servants the prophets, who said, 'Do not do this detestable thing that I hate!' But they did not listen or pay attention; they did not turn from their wickednessTherefore **my fierce anger was poured out**;.....Why bring such great disaster on yourselves.....**Why provoke me to anger**....You will destroy yourselves...". (Jer. 44.3-8)*

*"...the **anger** and wrath pronounced against this people by the Lord are great". (Jer 36.7)*

*"God is a righteous judge, a God who expresses his **wrath** every day". (Ps. 7.11).*

- **We face God's judgement**

*"What will **you** do on the day of reckoning, when disaster comes from afar? To whom will **you** run for help?" (Is. 10.3)*

*"Look! Disaster is spreading from nation to nation: a **mighty storm** is rising from the ends of the earth". (Jer. 25.32)*

*"**Your** wickedness will punish you; **your** backsliding will rebuke you. Consider then and realise how evil and bitter it is for you when you forsake the Lord your God and have no awe of me, declares the Lord, the Lord Almighty". (Jer. 2.19)*

- **We abuse the sacred name of God**

"You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God". (Ex. 20.7)

*"...foolish people have **reviled** your name" (Ps. 74.18)*

*"...all day long My name is **constantly** blasphemed" (Is. 52.5).*

- **God calls us to repent**

*"'Even now', declares the Lord, 'return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning. **Rend your heart and not your garments**. Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity". (Joel 2.12-13)*

*"Come near to God and he will come near to you. **Wash your hands**, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you who are double-minded. Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up". (Jas. 4.8-10)*

*"Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. **So be earnest and repent**. (Rev. 3.19)*

- **God calls us to take a stand**

*"**Who** will rise up for me against the wicked? Who will take a stand for me against evildoers?" (Ps. 94.16)*

*"I looked for a man among them who would build up the wall **and stand before me in the gap on behalf of the land** so that I would not have to destroy it....". (Ez.. 22.30)*

- **God's promise**

*"...call upon me in the day of trouble; **I will deliver you, and you will honour me.**" (Ps 50:15)*

*"Although the Lord gives you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, your teachers will be hidden no more; with your own eyes you will see them. Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, '**This is the way, walk in it.**'"*
(Is. 30:20-21)

*"...if my people, who are called by my name, will **humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.**"*
(2 Chron. 7.14)

NEW TESTAMENT WARNINGS

- **We deny Jesus**

*"**whoever** disowns me before men, I will disown him before my Father in heaven." (Matt 10. 33)*

*"If anyone is **ashamed** of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him.."* (Mk. 8.38)

*"he who **disowns** me before men will be disowned before the angels of God". (Lk. 12.9)*

*"..those who have once been enlightened...if they fall away... are **crucifying** the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace". (Heb. 6.4)*

- **We are disobedient to God**

*"You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to the traditions of **men**". (Mark 7.8)*

*"everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a **foolish** man who built his house on sand". (Matt. 7.26)*

*"**No-one** can serve two masters. You cannot serve God and money". (Matt. 6.24)*

*"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven but only he who does the **will** of my Father in heaven". (Matt. 7.21)*

*"there are many **rebellious** people, mere talkers and deceivers...they must be silenced."* (Titus 1.10,11)

- **We turn away from God**

*“they will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to **myths**”.*
(2 Tim 4.4)

*“You will be every hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving. For this people’s heart has become **calloused**; they **hardly hear** with their ears, and they have **closed** their eyes”.’ (Matt. 13.14,15)*

*“He who belongs to God **hears** what God says. The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God”. (John 8.47)*

- **We are antagonistic to God**

*“He who listens to you listens to me; he who rejects you **rejects me**; but he who rejects me rejects him who sent me”. (Lk. 10.16)*

*“God’s name is blasphemed among the gentiles **because of you**”.*
(Rom. 2.24)

*“many live as **enemies** of the Cross of Christ..Their destiny is destruction”. (Phil. 3. 18,19)*

- **We are deceived and deceiving**

*“You are like whitewashed tombs...on the **outside** you appear to people as righteous but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness”.*
(Matt. 23.27)

*“Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep’s clothing but **inwardly** are ferocious wolves”. (Matt. 7.15)*

*“Woe to you...you clean the **outside** of the cup and dish, but **inside** they are full of greed and self-indulgence.’ (Matt. 23.25)*

- **We dishonour God**

*“Do not be deceived; **God is not mocked**. A man reaps what he sows”.*
(Gal. 6.7)

*“You **hypocrites** ! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you: ‘These people honour me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me’” (Matt. 15.7,8)*

*“I am astonished that you are so quickly **deserting** the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel”. (Gal. 1.6)*

- **We do not trust God**

*“Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by **human** effort?” (Gal. 3.3)*

*“How foolish you are, and how **slow of heart** to believe all that the prophets have spoken”. (Lk. 24.25)*

- **We follow false gods**

*“I tell you the truth, it will be hard for a **rich** man to enter the Kingdom of heaven”. (Matt 19.23)*

*“any of you who does not give up **everything** he has cannot be my disciple”. (Lk. 14.33)*

- **Do we believe in the judgement of God?**

*“men will have to give account on the day of judgement for **every** careless word they have spoken”. (Matt. 12.36)*

*“What you have said in the dark will be **heard** in the daylight, and what you have whispered in the ear in the inner rooms will be **proclaimed** from the housetops”. (Lk. 12.3)*

*“From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded, and from the one who has been entrusted with much, **much more** will be asked”. (Lk. 12.48)*

- **God is calling us to unity**

*“If a kingdom is **divided** against itself that kingdom cannot stand. If a house is **divided** against itself, that house cannot stand”. (Mk. 3.24)*

*“Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name..., **so that they may be one as we are one**”. (John 17.11)*

- **God is calling us to commitment**

*“being **strengthened** with all power according to his glorious might...you may have great endurance and patience”. (Col. 1.11)*

*“Continue in your faith, **established** and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel”. (Col. 1.23)*

*“Let us **hold unswervingly** to the hope we profess, for he who has promised is faithful”. (Heb. 10.23)*

*“Let us run with **perseverance** the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes upon Jesus...who for the joy set before him endured the cross...”. (Heb. 12.1,2)*

*“Be **strong** in the Lord...Put on the whole armour of God so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes”. Eph. 6.10,11)*

- **God’s presence**

*“Now the dwelling of God is with men, and He will live with them. They will be **His people** and God Himself will be with them, and be their God. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away”. (Rev. 21.3,4)*

OUR NEED TO RESPOND

God is not absent; He is with his people today. God is not ignorant; He knows us through and through. God is not silent; He is speaking to His people today. If we do not listen we will not hear him.

The Holy Spirit reveals to us the magnitude of our guilt and convicts us of our sin. Jesus says **“Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near”** (Matt. 4.17). Our Father God is loving and the Psalmist tells us **“The Lord is close to the brokenhearted”** (Ps. 34.18). Jesus says **“I have not come to call the righteous, but **sinner**s”** (Mk. 2.17).

When we confess our sins, repent, seek forgiveness from God and cry out to Him, our faith is renewed. When the Church repents there is revival. In the face the sickness of our Nation today with violence, crime, broken families, broken relationships, the hell of drug and alcohol addiction and the destructive influence of pornography, it is the **people of God** who need to repent. Throughout the Bible the call of God is to **his own people** to repent.

When we repent we admit that we have rebelled against God and refused to let Him reign over our lives. Repentance involves a radical change of direction in our lives - a turning. When we repent we reject all wrong relationships and enter into a right relationship with God, with our self, with others and with all Creation. Right relationship means righteousness. **“Righteousness exalts a nation”** (Prov. 14.34). Jesus says **“seek first His kingdom and His **righteousness**”** (Matt. 6.33).

THERE IS AN URGENCY IN GOD’S CALL TO HIS PEOPLE



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