

Famines Part 2

“13 Son of man, when the land sinneth against me by trespassing grievously, then will I stretch out mine hand upon it, and will break the staff of the bread thereof, and will send famine upon it, and will cut off man and beast from it:” (Ezekiel 14:13 KJV)

V. “1 Then spake Elisha unto the woman, whose son he had restored to life, saying, Arise, and go thou and thine household, and sojourn wheresoever thou canst sojourn: for the LORD hath called for a famine; and it shall also come upon the land seven years. 2 And the woman arose, and did after the saying of the man of God: and she went with her household, and sojourned in the land of the Philistines seven years.” (2 Kings 8:1-2 KJV)

This is an example of a famine that affected the people of God and not the Philistines, who were unbelievers. Sometimes God sends famine to His people in order to discipline them and judge them. **This example of Scripture can be an answer to those who refuse to accept that the people of God can face famine when they sin against God. But God will spare the righteous among His people as He spared that righteous woman who honored Elisha.**

VI. “10 And David's heart smote him after that he had numbered the people. And David said unto the LORD, I have sinned greatly in that I have done: and now, I beseech thee, O LORD, take away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly. 11 For when David was up in the morning, the word of the LORD came unto the prophet Gad, David's seer, saying, 12 Go and say unto David, Thus saith the LORD, I offer thee three things; choose thee one of them, that I may do it unto thee. 13 So Gad came to David, and told him, and said unto him, Shall seven years of famine come unto thee in thy land? or wilt thou flee three months before thine enemies, while they pursue thee? or that there be three days' pestilence in thy land? now advise, and see what answer I shall return to him that sent me.” (2 Samuel 24:10-13 KJV) When David sinned against God by counting the men of war, the Lord sent him the prophet to choose what kind of judgment he wanted to receive from God and one of the options was a famine for seven years.

VII. “1 Then there was a famine in the days of David three years, year after year; and David enquired of the LORD. And the LORD answered, It is for Saul, and for his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites.” (2 Samuel 21:1 KJV) **God might call the attention of people to sins they had done in their past in order for them to correct it.** God called the attention of David to a particular sin by causing a famine in the land for three years, that forced him to inquire of God and finally, God spoke to him of what he needed to correct. **Famine can be also used by God to lead us to correct certain errors that had happened in the past. Therefore, God may send famine for various reasons and we need to find out why.**

VIII. “1 Now it came to pass in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Bethlehem judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons.” (Ruth 1:1 KJV) This is another famine that had happened in the land of the people of God at the time of the judges.

IX. “11 And he said, A certain man had two sons: 12 And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living. 13 And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his

journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. 14 And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want.” (Luke 15:11-14 KJV) When the lost son left his father's house, he squandered his money on wild living. The lost son was faced with a famine that God had ordained to bring him back to God. **Many workers and churches are doing now the same as the lost son did when he left his father's house. They are squandering the money in their custody on wild living. Those who think like that are selfish and lack wisdom.** Famine will come on such people to wake them up and to draw them back to God, to change their lives from sinful styles of squandering, saying, 'My money', living a life without the word saving in their vocabulary, to a Godly life of humility, careful spending, saying, 'It is God's money', living a life with the word saving in their vocabulary.

The common name for this parable in *Luke 15:11-14* is the prodigal son. The meaning of prodigal is wasteful, reckless, profligate, extravagant, dissolute, and uncontrolled. His sin as described by the elder brother is that he devoured the father's living, ***“30 But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf.” (Luke 15:30 KJV)***

The Greek word for 'devoured' is 'Katesthio', which means to consume by eating, or devour by squandering, waste, strip one of his goods, or to devour by fire. **Now church members and churches who are in debt and that spend all that they receive without the mind or prospect of saving are devouring the resources of God.** The lost son has devoured the resources that he took from his father with harlots. **The believers and churches today who entertain and indulge in worldliness as the non-believers do are disobeying God, breaking their covenant with Him, prostituting themselves with other gods of the nations around them, and devouring all the resources and means that God gave them for living on idols or demons.** They do as the Israelites did after entering the Promised Land: ***“17 And yet they would not hearken unto their judges, but they went a whoring after other gods, and bowed themselves unto them: they turned quickly out of the way which their fathers walked in, obeying the commandments of the LORD; but they did not so.” (Judges 2:17 KJV)*** Jesus called Satan the prince of this world, ***“30 Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.” (John 14:30 KJV)*** **Born again Christians and churches who are following worldly practices and celebrations are idol worshippers.**

Wrong ways of spending and wasting resources on nonscriptural ways is spiritual adultery, ***“a whoring after other gods.” (Judges 2:17 KJV)*** Like the lost son who spent his father's money on harlots; devouring his living on harlots, and ending up in poverty and famine without the ability to even fill his stomach with food, ***“14 And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. 15 And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. 16 And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.” (Luke 15:14-16 KJV)*** **I have seen many people, even those having big salaries, squeezed and unable to eat adequately because once their salaries are deposited in banks, the salaries are eaten by loans and high interests of credit cards and debts, and what is left is little and hardly enough to fill the stomach.**

Wasting and devouring resources is sinful and bring people away from God, away from serving God's purpose, and causing them poverty, misery, and hunger as He promised,

“13 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, my servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry: behold, my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty: behold, my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed: 14 Behold, my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall howl for vexation of spirit.” (Isaiah 65:13-14 KJV) Therefore, when the lost son came back to his senses, he thought that those who serve God are in plenty while he is starving, ***“17 And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!” (Luke 15:17 KJV)*** Therefore he made his decision to come back to God, ***“18 I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee.” (Luke 15:18 KJV)*** When we believers and the Church of God start to go back to the Godly principles of stewardship, consider saving, and value all the resources of God, spending wisely, repenting of the sins of devouring the resources of living, and giving honestly what belongs to God, will receive plenty from God.

X. “27 And in these days came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch. 28 And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar.” (Acts 11:27-28 KJV) Famine also happened in the life of the New Testament church. Therefore, we can conclude from the various examples that there are various reasons and purposes for famine to strike the land and we need to be aware and discerning how to face each and every one of them.

XI. “11 Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD. 12 And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it. 13 In that day shall the fair virgins and young men faint for thirst.” (Amos 8:11-13 KJV) This the worst of all famines that people are experiencing now, especially the people of God, who have turned their backs to the Word of God and started to listen to false prophets and take delight to live in lies. They live in disobedience and fall short of the promises of God.

Lack of stewardship, lack of saving, and lack of thriftiness will result in famine in the form of debts, loans, and lack of wisdom in managing finances, which are the manifestation of the famine in the Word of God and lack of teaching in respect to the topic of finances that many of the churches lack today.

The promise of God is this, ***“I And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the LORD thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: 12 The LORD shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow.” (Deuteronomy 28:1, 12 KJV)*** God’s Word declared, ***“and thou shalt not borrow.”*** Disobedience to the commands of God will put us in debts and make us borrowers rather than lenders.

The church that has members and workers in debt and with loans to pay is lacking in the teaching of good stewardship and the discipline involved in managing finances and that church

is in urgent need of an expert to counsel her members, workers, and the church leaders. The following is a questionnaire to find out the financial status of each and every individual.

Answer the following questionnaire:

1. Do you have work?
2. Do you have enough income to manage?
3. Do you have credit?
4. Do you have loans?
5. Do you tithe your income?
6. Do you give your firstfruits?
7. Do you give your offerings?
8. Do you help the poor and the needy?
9. Do you have savings?
10. Does your church teach you from the pulpit about finances?
11. Does your church have someone available to counsel you about finances?
12. Does your church try to find out if you have financial struggles in order to counsel you and advise you?

If the answers to questions 3 and 4 are yes and the answers to the rest of the questions are no, then you are in a critical situation and need an experienced person to counsel you. You can approach us to help you get out of the rut.

If the answers to questions 3 and 4 are no and the answers to the rest of the questions are yes, then you are on the safe ground but you still need an experienced person to counsel you in order for you to be more equipped in the matter of finances.

My dear and beloved: Let us come now to God pondering on the message and see how sins and bad stewardship can cause famines to enter into our lives. Let us take the opportunity to repent and to come back to Him, committing ourselves to live in the fear of God according to His Word and in doing His will. Let us pray ...

My Prayer: Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus, who died on the cross for my sins and rose from death on the third day to give me eternal life. Lord thank you for your Word that showed me the truth and the reasons of how famines can enter into our lives. Lord thank you for all the teaching, the rebukes, the corrections, and the admonishments that we had received in this message.

Repent and renounce all your sins. Repent of your bad stewardship, wasting and squandering your resources in wild living and on the idols of this world. Repent of doing your own will and plan and not the will nor the plan of God in your life. Repent of the rest of your wrong doings. Repent of not living the style of life that God wants you to live. Repent of not reading the Bible and your lack of prayers. Repent of your non willingness to serve God and suffer for Him. Lord forgive me I repent of the following sins: _____.

Lord I commit myself to live the style of life and the plan that you have for me to live and to do your will. Lord I commit myself to be good manager to all what you entrusted to me from resources. Lord I commit myself to save whatever extra you are giving to me to be ready for the coming days of famines that you may allow to pass into my life. Lord I commit my life to start to serve you and to do the good works that you prepared for me to do.

Lord, thank you for all my Brothers and Sisters who had committed themselves to go along your plan and will and along the teaching that we had received in this message, to be good stewards to their resources and to save for the future. Lord use them to serve you and to do the good works that you called them to do. Lord make their lives good example to others to follow you.

Lord, bless us as your church and enable us to continue to teach your people with your Word and to train them to be good stewards to their resources. Lord help us to declare your will and give us wisdom to give advices to your people according to your will. Lord, fill us once again with the Holy Spirit and enable us to evangelize and reach new people with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and with the Word of God. Lord, we pray that you will enable us to plant new Bible studies and new congregations for the church. Lord we pray for more people to be water Baptized and receive the Holy Spirit Baptism. Lord fulfill the vision of the church, 'Multiplication in peace with implementing the whole will of God'. Lord prepare us for your coming to go with you when you come. Lord Bless us, enlarge our territory, let your hand be with us and free us from harm so that we will not feel pain. May the grace of the Lord Jesus and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all in Jesus name, Amen.

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