

## Wrong Resources for Church Money Part 4

The prophecy of God to the prophet Ezekiel in Babylon about the crimes and corruption in Jerusalem being the reason for God to utterly destroy the city will give us a clear warning about how we need to be careful not to allow people to use their money to manipulate the church.

*“12 In thee have they taken gifts to shed blood; thou hast taken usury and increase, and thou hast greedily gained of thy neighbours by extortion, and hast forgotten me, saith the Lord GOD. 13 Behold, therefore I have smitten mine hand at thy dishonest gain which thou hast made, and at thy blood which hath been in the midst of thee.” (Ezekiel 22:12-13 KJV)*

God was so angry at this point because inside Jerusalem, crimes were committed in the form of usury, greed, extortion and dishonest gain, manipulating the events, and affecting people's life adversely, that He smote his hand. Prophet Ezekiel continued to elaborate on what was going on in Jerusalem:

*“1 Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, 2 Now, thou son of man, wilt thou judge, wilt thou judge the bloody city? yea, thou shalt shew her all her abominations. 3 Then say thou, Thus saith the Lord GOD, The city sheddeth blood in the midst of it, that her time may come, and maketh idols against herself to defile herself. 4 Thou art become guilty in thy blood that thou hast shed; and hast defiled thyself in thine idols which thou hast made; and thou hast caused thy days to draw near, and art come even unto thy years: therefore have I made thee a reproach unto the heathen, and a mocking to all countries. 5 Those that be near, and those that be far from thee, shall mock thee, which art infamous and much vexed.” (Ezekiel 22:1-5 KJV)*

Shedding of blood and idolatry was what going on in Jerusalem. Fighting inside the church can be caused due to the wrong motive in the ministry and especially for financial gain. Corruption, manipulation, lust, and greed are some of the idols that people may worship in the New Testament and that would bring God's judgment on the church. *“5 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. 6 Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. 7 Be not ye therefore partakers with them.” (Ephesians 5:5-7 KJV)* God's wrath will bring curses, lack and ultimately poverty to the church.

When the ministry becomes a source for living, then injustice, accepting gifts, bribery, slander, and lies will be widespread. In such churches, removing faithful people from the ministry and excluding them will become normal when money becomes the real motive. When faithful and genuine people don't accept gifts and bribes offered to keep them silent about the ongoing sin, they will be excluded and/or executed. *“6 Behold, the princes of Israel, every one were in thee to their power to shed blood.” (Ezekiel 22:6 KJV)* David tried to bribe Uriah by giving him food and drink. He got him drunk and made him go to his house to sleep with his wife; he did that with a wrong motive. But when David was not able to bribe Uriah, the latter was killed by the order of David in the battle. *“1 From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? 2 Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye*

*ask not. 3 Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts. 4 Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.” (James 4:1-4 KJV)* In churches nursing wrong motives, where money is the priority, then fighting and quarreling will automatically creep in. When the church leaders are busy fighting for money and there is no one to deal with and rectify the existing sins, more sins will invade the church like dishonoring parents, oppressing the strangers, despising the fatherless and the widows, profaning the Sabbath, adultery, and immorality; all these sins will be rampant. *“7 In thee have they set light by father and mother: in the midst of thee have they dealt by oppression with the stranger: in thee have they vexed the fatherless and the widow. 8 Thou hast despised mine holy things, and hast profaned my sabbaths. 9 In thee are men that carry tales to shed blood: and in thee they eat upon the mountains: in the midst of thee they commit lewdness. 10 In thee have they discovered their fathers' nakedness: in thee have they humbled her that was set apart for pollution. 11 And one hath committed abomination with his neighbour's wife; and another hath lewdly defiled his daughter in law; and another in thee hath humbled his sister, his father's daughter.” (Ezekiel 22:7-11 KJV)*

\* Gradually, the prevalent wicked church leaders and workers will reject the prophets of God and drive out faithful people and persecute them. False prophets will be favored and promoted.  
\* When honest ministers will be terminated from service because they are not yielding to the ongoing corruption of the church, it will end up with no one being left to intercede for the mercy of God upon them and therefore ultimately such ministries will be finally destroyed by God as a result of His judgment. Let's be aware that God's judgment is on its way. *“30 And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.” (Ezekiel 22:30 KJV)*

*“23 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, 24 Son of man, say unto her, Thou art the land that is not cleansed, nor rained upon in the day of indignation.” (Ezekiel 22:23-24 KJV)* Such churches are not cleansed from sins and God in His wrath would withhold His rain and blessings from them.

*“25 There is a conspiracy of her prophets in the midst thereof, like a roaring lion ravening the prey; they have devoured souls; they have taken the treasure and precious things; they have made her many widows in the midst thereof.” (Ezekiel 22:25 KJV)* Such churches have false prophets who devour souls and take the treasures from them. They will do all that they can to gain finances, treasure, and precious things from the members in whatever way possible. The Pharisees at the time of Jesus had devoured widows' houses. *“14 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.” (Matthew 23:14 KJV)* Paul spoke the following about them, *“6 For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts.” (2 Timothy 3:6 KJV)* They got the treasures and all the peoples' precious things as fees for false and flattering prophecies. *“11 The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money: yet will they lean upon the LORD, and say, Is not the LORD among us? none evil can come upon us.” (Micah 3:11 KJV)* They even prepared war against those who would not give them and put not into their mouths. *“5 Thus saith the LORD concerning the prophets that make my people err, that bite with their teeth, and*

*cry, Peace; and he that putteth not into their mouths, they even prepare war against him.” (Micah 3:5 KJV).*

*“26 Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned mine holy things: they have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they shewed difference between the unclean and the clean, and have hid their eyes from my sabbaths, and I am profaned among them.” (Ezekiel 22:26 KJV)* Their ministers and their teachers had violated the Law of God. They did not expound to the people the difference between sin and righteousness. They did not show to them their sins because they were afraid that they would lose their favor and financial support. Therefore, they did not correct the people when they violated the Sabbath, the Lord’s Day, and the Lord’s name was profaned in such circumstances. They hid their eyes from God’s Sabbaths; they took no care about them; it was all the same to them whether God’s Sabbaths were kept holy or not. They neither gave countenance to those who observed them nor checked those who profaned them. They winked at those who did servile works on that day and looked another way when they should have inspected the behavior of the people on Sabbath days. God’s Sabbaths had such beauty and glory put upon them by the divine institution, but they hid their eyes from them and would not see excellence in them. By all this God Himself was profaned among them; His authority was slighted, His goodness made light of, and the highest affront and contempt imaginable were put upon His holiness. **We need to understand that the profanation of the Scriptures, the Lord’s Day and sacred things, is a profanation of the honor of God Himself. Therefore, when a man is favored and honored above the Lord, then God will be provoked and His wrath will be on its way.**

*“27 Her princes in the midst thereof are like wolves ravening the prey, to shed blood, and to destroy souls, to get dishonest gain.” (Ezekiel 22:27 KJV)* When Naboth was slain, they took possession of his vineyard and seized the treasure which was an inheritance from his father.

*“28 And her prophets have daubed them with untempered mortar, seeing vanity, and divining lies unto them, saying, Thus saith the Lord GOD, when the LORD hath not spoken.” (Ezekiel 22:28 KJV)* The definition of daubing is to cover or coat with soft, adhesive matter, as plaster or mud; to daub a canvas with paint, or to daub stone walls with mud. The daubing prophets were the great supporters of ravening princes but will prove at last that they are great deceivers, for they daub with untempered mortar which will not hold, nor will the wall stand long that is built up with it.

The false prophets, who teach, fail to discipline those who do evil because they want to befriend them for their support. They also appoint such people to take up roles of leadership in the church and those church leaders with their poor testimonies will cause the church members to stumble in their Christian walk within and outside the church and abuse their power and authority.

When the church leaders are in such a pattern, then the people who listen to them will follow the bad example of their church leaders to abuse whoever around them or under them as soon as they are in power and have the opportunity. *“29 The people of the land have used oppression, and exercised robbery, and have vexed the poor and needy: yea, they have oppressed the stranger wrongfully.” (Ezekiel 22:29 KJV)* The people of the land had used oppression and exercised robbery. The rich oppressed the poor, masters their servants, landlords their tenants, and even parents their own children.

*“30 And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.” (Ezekiel 22:30 KJV)* Ultimately, such churches will be devoid of righteous people. For they would be driven away. The wicked leaders will remain and there will be no one to stand in the gap and make intercession and offer prayers to God on behalf of the land.

*“31 Therefore have I poured out mine indignation upon them; I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath: their own way have I recompensed upon their heads, saith the Lord GOD.” (Ezekiel 22:31 KJV)* Therefore God’s judgment is coming, coming fast, coming soon, and on its way to such churches. And instead of acquiring riches and glory, they will end in poverty and disgrace.

**My dear and beloved:** \* As church leaders, we need to examine the people’s lives and help them to live for God in holiness. We should not be interested to receive from those who are living in sin and are unwilling to live in holiness tithes and offerings. \* The church’s income should not come from secular ways of selling, buying, and making businesses, auctions, or use the church as a base for such things. \* What is ordained for the church to earn income from are the tithes, firstfruits and the various offerings of the committed members (disciples) of the church. \* The church should not go to rich people or influential people who are not part of the church in order to collect money from them. That is against God’s principles. \* Also, the church should not tolerate sin and sinners for the sake of keeping the income of the church high. God will never meet the needs of such a church. In *Micah 1:6-7*, we can read that God would destroy the place of worship in Samaria for the place of worship was full of idols and was made rich by the offerings of people who prostituted themselves with the world, idols, and demons, and did not dedicate their lives to honor and follow God, **“6 Therefore I will make Samaria as an heap of the field, and as plantings of a vineyard: and I will pour down the stones thereof into the valley, and I will discover the foundations thereof. 7 And all the graven images thereof shall be beaten to pieces, and all the hires thereof shall be burned with the fire, and all the idols thereof will I lay desolate: for she gathered it of the hire of an harlot, and they shall return to the hire of an harlot.” (Micah 1:6-7 KJV)** \* If the church will not keep rebuking the people for their sins and keep silent so they will continue giving money to the church, then the church is giving them a wrong message and is encouraging them to continue to sin and to live in sin. \* As we had read in *Micah 1*, the final outcome will be destruction; both the church and the people will be consumed if sin is not dealt with properly.

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 the dead to give me eternal life. Lord thank you for your Word and the teaching that we received about the wrong resources for church money and how greed and the love of money destroy your church. Lord thank you for all the corrections the rebukes and the admonishments that we received in this message.

Repent and renounce all your sins. Renounce your stealing, cheating, corruption, compromises, idol worship, flattering and condoning sins in doing the ministry of God. Repent of oppressing faithful people because they are not willing to go along your wickedness and condoning your sins. Repent of manipulation and using money to manage and manipulate

*people and church workers. Repent of your worldliness, your love for material things, your greed and your love for money. Repent of your wrong motive in serving God. Repent of using the ministry for living and repent of using money to get ministries. Repent of taking and receiving gifts and bribes from people who are in sin and your refusal to correct them or admonish them with God's Word. Repent of your lack of fear in God and your lack of trust on Him that He will provide all the needs for the church and the ministry. Repent of serving God with people who are not living in holiness. Repent of your non willingness to stand firm on the Word of God. Repent of your non willingness to suffer for Christ and to serve Him. Repent of your immoralities, dishonoring parents, profaning the Lord's Day, and your disobedience to God's commands. Lord I repent and renounce the following sins*

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*Lord thank you for your Word that explained to me the bad effects of the love of money and putting money first before other things how can bring more sins, corruption and more troubles in the life of the church. Lord I am coming back to you, receive me Lord, I am willing to stand with you on your Word and to do your will in full. Lord I commit myself to cleanse myself from any wrong motive in serving you, and Lord I commit myself to work with honest and faithful people trusting you that you will provide all the needs including honest workers who love you and love your Word. Lord I trust you that you will continue to provide for us so we can serve you.*

*Lord, thank you for my Brothers and Sisters who repented of their sins and decided to amend their ways and start to serve you with honest people and with pure motive. Lord sustain them, protect them, provide their needs, remove obstacles from in front of them, so they will continue to serve you*

*Lord bless us as your church and help us to continue to deal with sin and corruption in the life of your church and your people. Lord help us to deal with those false workers who serve devil and to cleanse them from their wrong motive in the ministry and in joining the church. Lord help us to continue to combat the sin of stealing, cheating, compromises, corruption, immoralities, breaking the Lord's Day, etc, in the life of your church and your people. Lord help us to deal with those who are using the church and ministry for living. Lord refill us with the Holy Spirit and give us the Spiritual gifts that we need in our lives to go on and evangelize, and make new disciples and train new workers to go and plant new Bible studies and congregations for the church. Lord we pray for more people to be water Baptized and receive the Holy Spirit Baptism. Lord cleanse your church and prepare us for your coming to go with you when you come. Lord take the message and spread it to bring the fruit that you desire to see in the life of your church and your people. Lord fulfill the vision of the church, 'Multiplication in peace with implementing the whole will of God.' 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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