



Messiah: His Final Call To Israel

The essence of this message is “Prepare to meet thy God, O man.” Every Bible student will recognize that this language found in Amos 4 was addressed to Israel. In order for us to see the full force of this exhortation, we must read the entire context. When the import of the chapter is seen, we immediately recognize the fact that these words have a different meaning from what I am pouring into them. According to the prophet, God has sent one judgment after another upon the nation of Israel in order to win her back from her apostasy and sin. Instead of profiting by her mistakes and returning to God, the nation went farther and farther into sin and idolatry after each successive judgment. To this fact the prophet called the people's attention and then in a dramatic manner declared, “Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel.” This exhortation in the light of the context can simply mean that, since the people had defied God and had gone farther into sin, they should make ready to receive another judgment more severe and thorough going than any of the former ones.

Every time the Lord brings trouble or disaster into the life of an individual or nation, it is designed in love for good of all concerned. The Lord God Almighty loves all people, both nationally and individually, and is doing all that He can, without hampering the power of choice, to win and woo every one to a life of love designed to draw people closer to God in order that they might be prepared to meet Him in peace. If however, they refuse His chastisement, they will have to meet Him with His wrath resting upon them.

The exhortation, “Prepare to meet thy God,” assumes that man is in an unprepared condition and is not ready to go into the presence of his Creator and Maker. Is this assumption correct? Instantly the one who knows his Bible answers in the affirmative. The Scriptures clearly teach in Genesis 2 and 3 that man was created in a state of purity and innocence. While he was in this condition, God came and had blessed fellowship and communion with him. According to the Genesis account, Adam and Eve, were placed in the Garden of Eden which the Lord had graciously prepared for them. Everything that was calculated to be a benediction and a blessing to man had been placed there for his use and happiness. The garden of Eden was indeed an ideal home. Nothing that could contribute to man's well-being and joy was omitted.

When God created man and woman, He made them in His image. They were the crowning work of His creative activity. In this connection let me say that man did not evolve from some of the lower forms of life. In the light of modern scientific research it is improper, as some do, to speak of the “missing link.” According to comparative anatomy, as reports show, all animal life is classified on the basis of skull capacity in its relation to the spinal column. In the animal register there are found creatures whose brain capacity ranges from practically zero up to 600 cc. On the other hand, in the human register we find men with brain capacities ranging from approximately 1000 cc. up to 1960. There is a wide gap of 400 cc. — from 600 to 1000 — which separates the

human register from that of the animal creation. In view of these facts it is absolutely unscientific and positively erroneous to speak of the missing link. According to the doctrine of the evolution of man as popularly held today, there would have to be literally tens of thousands of missing links bridging this chasm of 400 cc. Therefore I am driven by cold facts to reject the so-called evolutionary hypothesis and to accept the biblical account of man's having been created in the likeness of God. Being in the image of his Maker, man of necessity was in a pure and holy state when he was created. At that time man knew nothing of sin and rebellion against God. His thoughts were always on the highest plane, his emotions holy, and his actions pleasing to God.

Being the offspring of God, as the Apostle Paul declared, man was the special object of divine love and compassion. As every true parent has his heart centered upon his child, so God constantly has been engrossed with the interests of His offspring. The Lord through Moses told us that it was His custom to appear in the Garden and to hold communion with man. In order to do this, evidently the Lord assumed the form of man and conversed with him in his own language. From the account in Genesis we may conclude that these visits were regular and most delightful both to man and to his God. So to speak, heaven and earth were connected.

Finally, all of this bliss was marred by the subtle, diabolical machinations of Satan, who suddenly, according to the third chapter of Genesis, appeared upon the scene, playing the role of a friend. In order to deceive our first parents, Satan — a malevolent, wicked, spirit being — veiled himself and became incarnate in the serpent and approached the unsuspecting woman. From that day until the present Satan has always adopted the method of camouflage. He and his servile spirits under him are constantly approaching every man and woman in an effort to drag them down to perdition.

Having disguised himself and having the confidence of the woman, Satan did not question directly the love and honor of God. He did it in an indirect manner by expressing surprise that God would withhold anything that was calculated to make man wise. Not realizing the situation, Eve accepted without question what Satan said and partook of the forbidden fruit.

This fatal act brought sin with its train of myriad evils in the world. Adam, realizing what had been done, and loving his wife with a holy affection, deliberately transgressed the one and only prohibition God placed before man and in an instant was reduced to the condition of his wife.

That which came upon both Adam and Eve is, among Christians, called the Fall. Figuratively speaking, the image of God in man's soul was dashed to the ground and shattered by that one sinful, rebellious act of disregarding God's command. Sin, an invisible, corrupting, satanic power, immediately entered into every atom of man's being and defiled his nature — his thoughts, his imaginations, his feelings, his emotions, his plans, and his conduct. Again, speaking in a figure, I might say that when our foreparents sinned, and electrical current which changed their entire nature was sent coursing through their being. This new experience doubtless startled them, for they could not realize fully what had occurred. Like a hurricane this foreign power swept over their souls and wrecked their innermost being. The result of this great change, which at that time took place, is accurately mentioned by the prophet Jeremiah who said, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and it is exceedingly corrupt: who can know it?" (Jeremiah 17:9). All

the prophets and the writers of the New Testament are unanimous in declaring the fallen ruined nature of man.

In his fallen and corrupt condition man cannot go into the presence of his Maker in peace. This fact becomes immediately apparent when we remember that as soon as man fell, God withdrew His presence from Him and ceased to have association in a personal manner with him. The Lord Almighty still loves everyone and is yearning after his soul. It is the will of God that none should perish but that all should come to repentance and prepare to meet Him in peace.

In order to be ready, one must have that experience to which the Lord Jesus Christ referred when He said to Nicodemus, "Except one be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3). This statement of our Lord startled this learned rabbi of Israel. Jesus in illustrating what He meant said, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (John 3:5,6). This one must yield himself to God and the Lord Jesus Christ and have this experience, usually termed the new birth, in order to come into the kingdom of God and enjoy His blessings forever.

The new birth is likewise called regeneration. This word means literally "to be generated again." Man was created originally, as we have already seen, in the image of God. His spiritual nature became corrupt. Now in order for him to be acceptable to his Maker, this image must be reconstructed by the supernatural operation of the Spirit of God in the heart. This fact is seen in Ephesians 4:20-24. Here Paul exhorted the brethren to "put on the new man, that after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth."

This new nature of man is after God created in righteousness and holiness of truth. The Lord saves men by the washing and renewing of the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:4-6):

But when the kindness of God our Saviour, and his love toward man, appeared, not by works done in righteousness, which we did ourselves, but according to his mercy he saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit."

One may ask, "How may I be born again? or be regenerated?" A person may be born again by placing his trust in the Lord Jesus Christ as his all sufficient Saviour and Redeemer. The Lord came to earth and gave His life a ransom. He became the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world (John 1:29). He poured out His precious blood for the redemption of the human family — for all who will accept Him. In order for a person to appropriate the benefits of His death, he must believe on Jesus Christ as God's Son and his Saviour. To believe on Him is to accept Him as his Lord and Saviour and to trust Him for life and salvation.

Everyone must do this — Jew, and gentile alike. There is no distinction; there is but one way, which is the way of the cross. Will you not, my friend, accept Jesus as your personal Saviour? May you do this now.

This is the seventh of a series of tracts which give an epitome of the various books comprising the "Messianic Series."

