

## FAMINE COVERS THE LAND

*“Behold, the days are coming,” says the Lord God, “That I will send a famine on the land, Not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, But of hearing the words of the Lord.*

*They shall wander from sea to sea, and from north to east; They shall run to and fro, seeking The word of the Lord, But shall not find it”. (Amos 8:11,12)*

Today, we the Church are in the midst of a famine that is literally as deadly as any famine that man has ever seen! This famine has weakened the Church spiritually to a point where she is virtually powerless. This famine has caused strife, division and every sort of foul and unclean thing to enter into the church. This famine has resulted in man’s order replacing GOD’S order in the Church. The famine that I am referring to is a famine that has caused blindness and deafness to cover much of the Church like a heavy wool blanket. The famine that we are now in has resulted in the loss of the “spiritual manhood” of vast numbers of the men of GOD. So serious is this famine that if left unchecked, IT WOULD EVENTUALLY DESTROY THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST! For that reason alone, our FATHER will raise up the voices of holiness and righteousness that He can entrust with His word! These voices will deliver the “timely” word of GOD in demonstration of power and with much assurance. These prophets of GOD will speak with such authority that holy fear will fill the hearts of the people. Yes, FATHER will have a separated people – separated wholly unto Himself, without spot or wrinkle before He declares ENOUGH! A separated people are a people who hear the call of the prophet and deep within their heart there is a “Yes” and “Amen”. The call of our FATHER to His people has not changed from the day He spoke to Abram:

*When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, “I am Almighty God; walk before Me and be blameless.” (Genesis 17:1)*

The Apostle John then spoke to us who believe:

*“He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.” (1 John 2:6)*

Jesus, Himself has spoken to us:

*“Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your FATHER in heaven is perfect.” (Matthew 5:48)*

These words calling us to come out of the world and walk as a “separated” people before our FATHER, are holy words. They represent the very heart of GOD Himself, and He will not look favorably upon those who knowingly turn a deaf ear to His commands. And make no mistake about it, **THESE ARE THE COMMANDS OF OUR GOD!** Walking before GOD in holiness is man’s highest calling and our failure in this area is our greatest spiritual weakness. In fact, for the most part, the church today is as vulnerable to the enemy as fish in a barrel are to an expert marksman. And I am fully persuaded that this condition exists in the Church today due to the “famine of hearing the word of GOD”!

Please note that the prophet Amos did not say that there was a “famine of the Word” in the land, but rather there was a famine of “HEARING” the word. Today, we are covered up with the word of GOD. The radio, TV and tapes proclaiming the word of GOD are available to virtually anyone who desires it. It would be difficult to count all of the conferences and special meetings that are held each year in the United States alone. Not to mention the thousands upon thousands of sermons that are preached every week from the pulpits of our churches. We have been preached to over and over and over again! We

have been taught and taught and taught and yet when we hold our FATHER'S word up as a mirror and examine our spiritual maturity and "true" spiritual condition, we can only cry out – MY GOD HAVE MERCY ON US! It is true, we have become a spiritually deaf people. Our present condition is not new to the people of GOD. This "famine" of hearing the word of GOD has existed off and on from the days of old right up to our present day. It was a problem in the days when JESUS walked the earth. Listen to our Lord:

*"Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand."* (Matthew 13:13)

Our Lord was referring to the prophet Isaiah when he reported that GOD Himself had spoken and said:

*"Go tell this people: Keep on hearing, but do not understand."* (Isaiah 6:9)

In the days of the prophet Samuel we are told that there was a "famine" of hearing the word of GOD:

*"And the word of the Lord was rare in those days; there was no widespread revelation."*

(1 Samuel 3:1)

The author of Hebrews spoke to the people of God and said;

*"- - -you have become dull of hearing."* (Hebrews 5:11)

Today we find ourselves living in a time and place where the prophecy of Amos has once again been fulfilled. Not only is there a "famine" of hearing within the church, we have also fulfilled the second part of Amos' prophecy. Today we run to and fro from sea to sea, from north to east, seeking the word of the Lord, but we are not finding it. It's the absolute truth, whether we will admit it or not.

As this message began to come alive in my heart, I have asked, why? Why is the church so spiritually deaf? What has brought on this famine of hearing the word of GOD? I believe I have at least a part of the answer. I was led to Psalm 74, verse 9, listen:

*"We do not see our signs; There is no longer any prophet;"*

Psalm 74:9 confirmed 1 Samuel 3:1 WHEN THE PROPHET OF GOD IS SILENT, THE PEOPLE CANNOT HEAR THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY! My study bible makes the following observation concerning Psalm 74:9;

*"When we reject GOD'S way, the blessing and guidance of His Spirit may be withdrawn leaving us in spiritual drought."*

That great man of GOD, T. Austin Sparks, addressed our problem when he said:

*"Dear friends, there is a terrible limitation in the Church just now, limitation of the knowledge of the Lord, even on the part of many who have been the Lord's servants for a long period of years. There are many Christians, even of years standing, to whom it is actually difficult to talk about the things of the Lord."*

I have personally experienced this truth! I know even ministers that cannot discuss the deeper things of GOD. They can talk a lot about their church, their works or what they think we ought to do about church growth through various programs. But when it comes to discussing the things of the Spirit of God and what God is saying to His people today, they draw a blank and look at you like you were from Mars! May God have mercy on the Church today!

Brother Sparks goes on to say – "are we not, almost everyday of our lives, in trouble because the Lord hides from us everything that He is doing and starves our souls of their ambition to see things, to have things? Is that not the basis of a great deal of our trouble?" Brother Sparks goes on to say that we want

all of the blessings of God, without paying the cost of “utter self-emptying, being brought to an end of everything but the Lord Himself.”

Concerning the prophetic voice, Leonard Ravenhill said;

“The prophet comes to set up that which is upset. His work is to call into line those who are out of line! He is unpopular because he opposes the popular in morality and spirituality. He shares some of the fore knowledge of GOD and so is aware of impending judgement. He is against the establishment in ministry. He announces, pronounces and denounces! He talks to men about God.”

### **WHERE IS THE PROPHET TODAY?**

*“Surely the Lord God does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets.*

*A lion has roared! Who will not fear? The Lord God has spoken! Who can but prophesy?”*  
(Amos 3:7,8)

Oh, I know we have our “self proclaimed” prophets today, especially in the full Gospel, charismatic church. And while their intentions are good, what we hear for the most part is not prophecy, but rather it is nothing more than a “word of comfort”. Maybe it is from GOD and maybe not, but one thing is for sure – it is not prophecy. Then we have our “copy right prophets”. These produce books and tapes “for sale” and many of these same persons hold conferences from sea to sea for the rest of us to run to, in search of the latest thing from heaven. I believe the true prophet of God, Micah, spoke of many of these when he wrote:

*“Her heads judge for a bribe, Her priests teach for pay, and Her prophets divine for money. Yet they lean on the Lord, and say, “Is not the Lord among us? No harm can come upon us.”* (Micah 3:11)

Jeremiah also addressed this problem:

*“From the least of them even to the greatest of them, everyone is given to covetousness; and from the prophet even to the priest, everyone deals falsely.”* (Jeremiah 6:13)

Jeremiah goes on in chapter 5 verse 31 to say:

*“The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests rule by their own power; and My people love to have it so but what will you do in the end?”*

**WHEN THE VOICE OF THE PROPHET IS REJECTED BY LEADERSHIP IN THE CHURCH, FATHER WILL THEN WITHDRAW HIS VOICE OF WARNING AND CERTAIN JUDGEMENT WILL SOON FOLLOW! THAT JUDGMENT WILL FALL FIRST ON THE HOUSE OF GOD, BEGINNING WITH THE PRIEST!**

Thus says the Lord:

*“Stand in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where the good way is, and walk in it; then you will find rest for your souls. But they said, we will not walk in it. Also I set Watchmen over you, saying, listen to the sound of the trumpet! But they said, we will not listen. Therefore hear, you nations, and know, O congregation, what is among them. Hear, O earth! Behold, I will certainly bring calamity on this people – The fruit of their thoughts,*

*because they have not heeded My words, nor My law, but rejected it.” (Jeremiah 6:16-19)*

My brothers and sisters the silence of the voice of the prophet in the church today is deafening! The famine of “hearing” the voice of the word, is resulting in the loss of souls, it is causing all sorts of destruction to take place. Homes are breaking apart, lust is running rampant, covetousness is spreading like cancer, debt is on the increase, more and more people of God are dying prematurely, strife and division are the rule rather than the exception, the fear of GOD is gone and there is no reverence of Him. Who among us now trembles at His word? I am not talking about the secular world, NO – I am talking about the Church!

You tell me that the Church is healthy! You tell me that our GOD is pleased with our behavior. You tell me that we are experiencing the full blessing of our great GOD! You tell me that the Church is lining up with the word of GOD – and I will boldly tell you, - THAT YOU ARE DECEIVED!

The truth is, that we are right on the verge of our GOD’S getting our individual attention, through His judgment. I believe that it would go much easier on us if we would acknowledge our sin, our weakness, and turn from our evil ways. Whenever GOD’S people have repented and turned back to Him and His word, He has always – always responded in love! His greatest desire in this hour is to perform His word and bless his children – **if** – they will only listen to and obey Him.

I must tell you that even in the face of this truth, I am encouraged and excited about the future. Even though I know for certain, that judgement is coming, I am also certain that FATHER is going to raise up a remnant that will be used of Him to perform His word, as He ministers to a lost and dying world. In the past two years or so I have crossed paths with a number of men who are, I believe, a part of the voice of prophecy that will call the remnant out of the world. These men are unknowns, they are not for hire, they have no hidden agenda and are walking in the freedom of Abraham. They have secluded themselves with our FATHER for long periods of time, one for eight years. They are not bound to any denomination nor do they consider themselves to be charismatic or any other of man’s religious design. They are simply men who desire to be real before GOD and to reach full maturity in Him before they leave here. Some are young, in their early forties, at least one is in His eighties. As I have gotten to know these men, I have been assured that all is not lost and that our GOD is, in fact, going to have the last word and that word will be in perfect harmony with His holy word as it is presently written.

As I close, I challenge you to listen for the voice of the prophet. It is this voice that will signal the end of the famine of the hearing of the word of GOD. The true prophetic voice will call you to repentance to a walk of holiness, to a walk of separation. The true prophetic voice will always point you to JESUS alone and to His word as being the absolute truth! Frequently the true prophetic voice will challenge the status quo and point out that which is in opposition to FATHER’S word. The true prophetic voice will speak boldly regardless of whether leadership or anyone else agrees or not. The prophetic voice will appear to be radical, as radical as JESUS was in His day on earth. The voice of prophecy will demand the pursuit of holiness and righteousness. Finally, the true prophetic voice will not be well received by the majority in the Church and sadly that includes those in places of leadership.

Watch and pray! Ask FATHER to raise up His voices that He can entrust with His word and to give us who listen – ears to hear!

GOD BLESS

Tom

