

## A TIME OF TEARING

On the basis of our need and His transforming grace we shall

repair the ruined cities  
rebuild the old ruins  
raise up former desolations.

Those who mourn and be torn by repentance in the rending of heart

they will experience -  
beauty for ashes;  
oil of joy for mourning;  
garment of praise for heaviness.

It's the poor in spirit,  
brokenhearted in emotions;  
captive in will,  
blind in mind;  
bruised in body,

who will qualify for God's programme of restoration. Repentance, the royal honour, a gift from the Prince of Life is the key to usefulness. He comes near to the brokenhearted, who know the tears that tear, and ultimately know the joy of inner harmony of soul.

Study Isaiah 61:3,4 and Luke 4:18 together.

When we go through a season of tearing in our hearts, in our relationships, in geography or in our work, God proposes change of behaviour, another step in sanctification. God's inner peace comes to those who accept the time to lose and the time of tearing. We build the Kingdom of God only on the basis of personal repentance, that continues as we grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord.

A time of tearing can be related to three themes, in the Bible and our experience.

- |     |               |   |                |
|-----|---------------|---|----------------|
| (a) | repentance    | - | Joel 2:13      |
| (b) | judgement     | - | 1 Samuel 15:28 |
| (c) | new direction | - | Hebrews 10:9   |

(A removal of the first things in order to establish the second)

### Repentance

Even evil kings and queens would rend their garments like Ahab and Athaliah. The difference between Saul and David lay in their hearts. Through worship and repentance David had intimate fellowship with God. Saul himself sat on the throne (except for the first year when the fruits of the Spirit were operating!). How many leaders today sit in their positions without the anointing.

God is going to remove proud, self-sufficient ministries who refuse the message of personal repentance. He will tear away their little empires and kingdoms where they have super-imposed their wills over the Lord.

Deep brokenheartedness brings the presence of God in revivals. I knew Donald Macphail, who as a teenager witnessed the Lewis awakening. The repentance was so real, he told me, there was no need for deliverance ministry; the demons had no ground to remain on lives when the precious blood of the Lamb did the cleansing work. The RENT heart knows the RENT veil into His presence, and the RENT heavens confirm the glory of God. Deep brokenness characterized the young Josiah who rent his clothes at the reading of the law of the Lord. He was changed inwardly before his reforms outwardly changed many in Israel. Undoubtedly he was aided by the prophecies of Jeremiah, that heart surgeon whose word brought either rebellion or repentance.

Will we be honest in His searching presence and allow the Lord to give us His hunger for His purpose? God puts His servants on the shelf for a deeper repentance and heart dealings.

## **Judgement**

Matthew 21:44 declares a vital principle of the dealings of God.

*“And whoever falls on this stone will be broken, but on whoever it falls, it will grind him to powder.”*

Repentance or judgement confronts us all. Every one will either fall on the Lord Jesus, the precious cornerstone (1 Peter 2:6), or know His crushing judgement. Repentance means we will judge ourselves and be not judged. If we fail to repent only a torn Kingdom awaits us - something of the activity of the Lord is removed from us. For prophets, the dealing is drastic. Remember the man of God in 1 Kings 13. Implicit obedience was essential in the expedition and execution of the divine will. Thinking again in the Josiah story, his grief at the demands of the law, and Judah's utter failure to obey, brought the repentance that averted the judgement to a later date.

The judgement on Saul (1 Samuel 15:26-28) and Solomon (1 Kings 11:12, 14:8) with the divided kingdom, always follows the kingdom of flesh. How many believers today have played the fool and have been taken up by our own pre-occupations? Choosing eternal life and the foreverness of God's ways means laying down our lives or else self is still on the throne. Foolish virgins have the New Testament Kingdom torn from them for failing to prepare for the second coming of Christ. Ultimately, in Revelation hundreds of millions come under the judgements of God (Revelation 6:8, 9:4-6, 16:2, 16:8-16). The popular idea that the New Testament God is mercy and the Old Testament God is primarily judgement is blown away by 2 Peter 3, Jude, and Revelation. No wonder certain theologians are attempting to rid the Bible of these books.

Christians can be unbalanced.

Some are in sympathy with the judgement of God and have no time for His mercy. Others (and this is much more frequent), emphasize love and grace, and cannot see judgement at work, because they feel all judgement of sin has been accomplished at the Cross. This truth pertains to those who have received the atonement, and been reconciled to God. Children of wrath are under the law (1 Timothy 1:9-11) and prone to judgement. Even believers will reap corruption what they sow to the flesh.

Today Europe is the strategic center for God's judgement in two ways:

- (a) EU is driven by the glorification of man's desire.
- (b) Islamification of Europe will intensify because politicians will do and say things out of fear of Islam.

With anti-semitism on the rise in Europe we can see how God is preparing the ground for Armageddon, the ultimate judgement of goat nations. The new Iranian president, aware of the supernatural help in September 2005 in a speech to the UN - is a worrying sign of the times. Just like Hitler was aided by supernatural evil powers, world dictators in the next two decades will be more of a problem than the secular Saddam Hussain.

A massive geopolitical tearing draws near in the climax of the ages.  
Luke 19:27 declares

"But bring those enemies of mine here,  
who did not want Me to reign over them, and  
slay them before Me."

The wicked, lazy servant of Europe with its institutions has become God's principal target for judgement. Where Jesus cannot bring His Lordship, the word of God will bring the discriminatory judgement of death - first a spiritual death, then the physical.

## **New Direction**

The pain of tearing can be very real in those transition stages of life.....unemployment through recession or unjust dismissal, divorce or being a victim of fraud or violence. The God of purpose has the right to tear way from our lives any hindrance.

- \* personal ambition for status.
- \* fortune or love of money.
- \* love of position.
- \* narrowness in doctrinal correctness to a particular grouping.
- \* a wrong relationship.
- \* exclusive reliance on frontal lobe thinking.
- \* tender family ties that oppose the call of God.

The three pretty bubbles of fame, fortune and fun must go POP! POP! POP! God

will take away the first in order to establish the second says Hebrews 10:9. God's seconds are better than His firsts - the only potter where this is true. Tearing in pursuit of the next stage of God's will can be painful and devastating, but new connections will be formed, and a time of sewing begin.

In Acts 21 we read of a deep emotional tearing. Paul's future was charged with uncertainty, he was in the grip of a dilemma. The apostle knew by the imposition of the Spirit he was not returning to Jerusalem on furlough (Acts 20:22-25). He was coming to his worst crisis, inescapably. At Tyre (Acts 21:4) the human element was uppermost in the disciples and the prophecy was deeply influenced by that. Finally Agabus came, sent by the Spirit, confirming Jerusalem was the destination.

For Paul, like Jesus, Jerusalem equals Calvary. Things can be in the background recess of the memory and the Holy Spirit through a holy prophet, bring the recall so we don't just sit on a revelation. Agabus was vital and necessary to bring a holy reminder, because

#### DELAYED OBEDIENCE = DISOBEDIENCE

However, in Acts 21:12, the people tried to stop Paul even though the prophet had confirmed an earlier witness in Paul's spirit. The tie of human sympathy can be the strongest in preventing the will of God. Paul's reply in verse 13 mentions the tearing:

*"What are you doing weeping and breaking my heart?"*

The criterion for the will of God is the Cross. The God idea of the new direction will be contested often by the nearest and dearest.

Will we allow God to tear?

Will we be strong enough to resist human pressure and go forward even if it means the breaking of fellowship?

The secret of Paul's strength was that he had already lost his life to the demands of the Cross and would take up the daily cross to follow His Master. The Lord's body was revaged, torn, smitten by God, pierced by nails and spear. He also died of a broken heart, suspended in mortal anguish physically and emotionally, utterly abandoned, naked, stripped of all clothes, like a meek and silent lamb! The time of tearing had troubled His soul, tormenting mind and terrifying heart. Whatever loss we go through as His servants the grace of Calvary will heal, and make all things new.

Tearing is the precursor of triumph and resurrection when God sovereignly brings such a season. In the midst of being torn, Jesus gave a new direction to John and Mary, those remarkable stalwarts of the Cross. John would know a brother's care for Mary and Mary would flow in maternal fidelity for John. In the precious moments of being torn away from the familiar we must never allow bitterness, but worship our God, who works all things together for good. Even the exile Jeremiah prophesied was for Israel's good. (Jer. 24:5).

On the Cross, Jesus Christ became

poor in spirit,

brokenhearted in the emotions,

captive in will,

blinded in eyesight,

bruised in body

in order that we may know unsearchable riches, healing and wholeness of heart,  
liberty of action, seeing in the spirit and healed in our bodies.  
Hallelujah for His tearing and our redemption!