

Healing the Hurt Only Slightly

"From the prophet even to the priest Everyone deals falsely. For they have healed the hurt of the daughter of My people slightly, Saying, 'Peace, peace!' When there is no peace." Jer.8:11-12

- A. This rebuke by the lord is directed primarily against the spiritual leadership of the day who had misinterpreted the spiritual climate in which they lived. Because they participated in sin it became impossible for them to see the problem in the nation. Once they had become ok with their own wrongdoing, they were unable to address it in the nation. As a result of this spiritual blindness they became blind to the things of God as well, vainly imaging that He was just as at ease about their conduct as they were. They actually began to teach and prophecy about the goodness of God which covered a multitude of sins all the while neglecting the foundational teaching of repentance for those same sins. As this distortion of the doctrine of God's grace became widespread the people of God began to put their trust in it. While it contained important and valuable truths it did not contain the whole truth.
- B. The prophets and the priest represented to the spiritual leadership of the day. The role of the prophets included the pronouncement of the love of God for His people as well as the specific areas in which God was calling them back to Himself. Their message included both the tender affections of their divine shepherd for them, even in their sin, and the very real consequences for persisting in that sin.
- C. The Lord sums up the message of the prophets in Jeremiah's day by saying, "Peace, Peace!" These prophetic voices were assuring the nation that things would remain as they were, or perhaps even improve because of God's great love and care for them. What they refused to acknowledge was the application of God correction to a wayward people. For these spiritual leaders the doctrine of the judgment of God did not apply to them nor would it. Voices like Jeremiah's seemed out of bounds and dangerous as he boldly announced that God did in fact take issue with Israel's sin.
- D. Yet, it was God's great desire the mercy would triumph over justice which laid behind the clarity of coming judgment (James 2:13). God was calling a nation back to Himself precisely so that they would avert His judgment. The judgment would be brought upon themselves by their own action, or lack of action. God labored for mercy while the people were naturally inclined to disobey, the result of which was ultimately their own destruction.
- E. God is looking for advocates to stand on behalf a wayward people headed to their own destruction (Ezek.22:30). *"When I shut up heaven and there is no rain, or command the locusts to devour the land, or send pestilence among My people, if My people who are called*

by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land." -2 Chron.7:13-14.

- F. In our nation a battle of ideologies rages fiercely. Voices of accusation and agenda, truth mixed with half-truth, pain, sorrow and rage collide with a demand for justice and accountability. Slander and mud-slinging define the political arena as a nation wars against itself to return to the foundation of its Judeo-Christian values or continue marching ever onward and upward into the stratosphere of progressive thought that ultimately rages against its Creator (Ps.2:1-3). With such a vast array of political and cultural distress and confusion who has time to recognize the intense spiritual war blazing wildly behind the scene of it all? And yet the God of ancient scripture beckons earnestly to those who can hear His voice to return to the place of prayer -to the only blueprint given to a nation in crisis.