

OASIS: November 20-26, 2025: Hard Places



***"Evildoers live among My people; they lie in wait like those who lay nets to catch birds, but they have set their traps to catch people. Just as a hunter fills a cage with birds, they have filled their houses with loot. That is why they are powerful and rich, why they are fat and well fed. There is no limit to their evil deeds. They do not give orphans their rights or show justice to the oppressed."* Jeremiah 5:26-28 (GNT).**

In the last few weeks we have considered how both leaders and the led have contributed to the Hard Places that is the reality of human life¹ But my focus has been more with the Church, which I consider my constituency, and here I do not mince words because of my understanding of how and what the failure in the Church has contributed to Hard Places as well as the eternal consequences of this contribution. In the passage for our devotional for this week, God spoke through Prophet Jeremiah and placed the blame for the suffering of the generality of the people on His own people. Hear Him, *"But you people! You are stubborn and rebellious; you have turned aside and abandoned Me. You never thought to honour Me, even though I send the autumn rains and the spring rains and give you the harvest season each year. Instead, your sins have kept these good things from you."*² In modern times we will use the word the Church for "My people." It was from among God's people that evil doers who trap human beings as if they were birds, to fill their houses with loots, and to become rich and powerful are found.³ Does this not sound scandalous? Part of the reason they are called God's people or the Church is because they are expected to know God, His Rules And Regulations, and the Responsibility and Obligations that Being God's People Place On Them. Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church and the Deliverer of the whole world, described God's people or the Church as Light and Salt. These descriptions have great implications, and Jesus clearly stated that failure to live up to their Responsibilities and Obligations, makes the Church to be useless, good only for the dunghill!⁴

I believe that people, including those who perpetrate and perpetuate evil, generally feel uncomfortable when others are talking about evil, and even lament that things are worse than they used to be in times past. Really? What 'time past' are such people talking about? Definitely, not according to the record of the Bible, the Word of the God who created the heavens and the earth and all that they contain. He existed before time as we know it, and therefore has the only accurate account of time, whether present, past, and future.⁵ His account does not permit for any romanticising about a better past. Shortly after creation, and after the first couple were placed in a paradise called the Garden of Eden,⁶ the story of the depravity of mankind began. Human beings, the climax – Masterpiece of God's creation, began the spiral into the darkness of evil, into which he has continued to plunge and descend. Adam and Eve fell.⁷ But before this incidence, Lucifer the praise leader for the Almighty God, had fallen, and he took a third of the angels with him.⁸ But he did not take his punishment, banishment from the presence and service to God lightly. He decided to fight back against God by corrupting human beings and causing them to also rebel against God.⁹ This was also to take them along to suffer the punishment that awaits him. A few years after the fall of Adam and Eve, their first son, Cain, committed murder against the clear warning provided by God, and murder became an in thing.¹⁰ Then the fallen angels began to commit abomination with human beings, as they took on women for sexual relationship to corrupt humanity further.¹¹ The list of evils goes on, and God saw and observed that ALL human being were doing, and will think and do will be continuously evil.¹² He was crushed to His heart and decided to wipe them and ALL living creatures away from the face of the earth that He had created.¹³

What is the point of this brief review of the history of mankind? It is as the Scripture said about the Jews, they had sown evil and they will reap evil.¹⁴ This principle applies to all humanity! I always say, and teach that if the Almighty God could punish the Jews, His prized possession, let no one be deceived or deceive himself/herself that God is too kind and loving to punish them. Yes, God is more than kind and loving, He is also Holy and Just, and He is Integrity personified. He will not taint His character and personality.¹⁵ He has said that the Soul which sins will die – eternally.¹⁶ His laws and principles are cut in stone, and they remain for all posterity.¹⁷ The only way to avoid God's judgment is sincere repentance and godliness.¹⁸ He sent His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ

OASIS: November 20-26, 2025: Hard Places



to provide the atonement as well as show human beings the way to return and relate with Him in the true and acceptable manner.¹⁹ Jesus, the Prophets, the Apostles, and contemporary people of God have taught human beings the way of God, challenged and encourage them to return to God and godliness to avoid the wrath of God, but to no avail.²⁰ Hear one among the many appeals to human beings, “No, the LORD has told us what is good. What He requires of us is this: to do what is just, to show constant love, and to live in humble fellowship with our God.”²¹ Apostle Paul among others picked up this theme when the Holy Spirit inspired him to write, What it says it this: “God’s message is near you, on your lips and in your heart” – that is, the message of faith that we preach. If you confess that Jesus is Lord and believe that God raised Him from death, you will be saved. For it is by our faith that we are put right with God; it is by our confession that we are saved. The Scripture says, “Whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed.” This includes everyone, because there is no difference between Jews and Gentiles; God is the same Lord of all and richly blesses all who call to Him.²²

The application to our theme is that it is the deliberate act of disobedience and rejection of the Almighty God by human beings that is responsible for the Hard Places that humanity experience. Furthermore, the Hard Places on earth are only a dress-rehearsal for what is to come in eternity! But do the Bishops, Pastors, and other leaders of the Church not know this truth? Why do they continue to perpetuate this system of Hard places of pain that is leading to eventual condemnation in the Lake of Fire?²³ This is part of the sad irony of the church, set up to be light and salt, but which has become for the most part darkness and rotteness. Corruption has become business as usual, and as prophet Isaiah lamented the few who try to live godly lives are mocked, shamed, frustrated, and even punished as they are the ones deprived of the goods that rightly belong to them.²⁴ The picture of most part of the Church is like that of the Church in Sardis, which thought they were wonderful. But Jesus the Head of the Church told them that they were poor and dead, and that they must take immediate steps to redeem themselves, otherwise risk severe punishment.²⁵ This state of the church, which is presenting as if they are alright when they are everything but alright is partly what Apostle Paul referred to as Blindness among the people of God.²⁶ But the real challenge here is that things seem so ingrained that any attempt to point out the bleakness of the state of the Church often generate severe criticism and even punishment, from the leaders who have become thing gods.²⁷

This rot that has become part of a major section of the Church, which unfortunately has the greater populations and followership is dreadful for some of us. This is because their actions and behaviours are not only creating Hard Places on this side of eternity, which must be seen as the immediate consequence of evil, but also building and preparing the mass of the people for eternal condemnation in the lake of Fire. The fact of the Lake of Fire, which is the ultimate destination for the disobedience of satan, angels, and human beings, cannot be controverted.²⁸ Those who continue to deny its reality and teach others are false prophets and teachers, who the Bible have recognized and identified for human beings.²⁹ They will continue to deceive and they themselves will be deceived and end up in that Lake of Fire that they deny.³⁰ Therefore, if anyone things that he/she is a Christian, you are the reason for this series. Go back to your Bible, and check the pages as Jesus the Head of the Church challenged the leaders of His time here on earth. See for yourself the Word of God, His commandments, His principles, and His conditions for eternal life with Him.³¹ Stop listening to the lies and deceits of fallen leaders, or deceiving yourself that the Bible does not mean what it says. **As the Bible says, everyone has an appointment with death, and the judgment that will follow after death.**³² **Jesus Christ the impartial judge is coming back soon!**³¹

Have a Blessed, God-Centred, and Victorious Week.

Further & Daily Readings: Jeremiah 5:1-31; 1.Jer.5:26-28; Isaiah 59:3-8; 2. Jer.5: 23-25; 3. Jer.5:26-27; 4. Matt.5:13-16; 5.Isaiah 43:10-11; 6.Gen. 2:8-15; 7.Gen.3:1-8; 8.Rev.12:3-4, 7-17; Isaiah 14:9-15; 9. Rev.12:17; 10.Gen.4:1-8,23-24; 11. Gen.6:2, 4; 12.Gen.6:5; 13.Gen.6:7,11-13,17; 14. Hosea 8:3-8; 15.Mal.3:6; Lam.5:19;Hab.1:13; Heb.13:8; 16. Gen.2:16-17; Ezek.18:4, 20; Rom.6:23; 17.Matt.5:17-18, 1Pet.1:24-25; 18. Acts 2:38; Heb.12:14-17; 19.John 1:10-12; 17:3 Acts 2:36; Rom.3:23-25; 20.John 17:3;1Cor.3:11; Eph.2:18-21; 1Pet.5:1-3; 21. Micah 6:8; 22.Rom.2:17-24; 10:8-10; 23. Isaiah 59:12-13; heb.9:27; 24. Isaiah 59:14-15; 25. Rev.3:1-2; 26.2Cor.4:3-4; Rom.11:25; 27. Jer.5:27-28; 28. Rev.20:10,15; 21:8;2Pet.2:4-6; Jude 1:6; 29.Matt.7:15; 2Pet.2:1-3; 30. 2Pet.2:12-20; 31.John 5:39-40; 2Tim.2:14-16; 3:16-17; 32. Heb. 9:27; Acts2:36; John 5:25-27.