

Ezekiel 14
What Distances My Heart from the Lord?
J.D. Farag

KAPONO: Amen and Amen. Thank You, Lord, so much. Would you join me in a word of prayer? Lord, thank You. And I pray that this would be true, Lord, that we would stand on You, our solid rock, Lord.

So as we gather here this evening, Lord, and dig into Your word, Lord, would You just firm up that foundation, Lord, in our lives? Lord, may we just rely on You for everything wholly and completely. May we trust in You, Lord.

So would You speak to us this evening, Lord? We thank You so much for this time that we can gather together, and we ask that You would bless this time. In Your name we pray, Jesus, we say, amen.

PASTOR JD: Amen and amen! Good evening! Welcome! Hey, before you're seated, if you haven't got the elements, you might want to come up at this time and get them, so they're ready.

At the conclusion of the Bible study, we're going to partake together of communion. And then those of you online, if you want to partake with us, you might want to have the elements ready as well.

While you're doing that, I want to mention that this upcoming Tuesday, June 6th, our prayer meeting from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., we're going to do something just a little bit different for this prayer meeting.

I'm just going to briefly share concerning prayer. We'll still have the prayer lists for those that want to pray and intercede for those that have asked us to pray for them. So those prayer lists will be available, but what I'd like to do after a time of just sharing a little bit about prayer is then just open it up so we can pray.

Imagine that; pray at a prayer meeting. And so just as the Holy Spirit leads. So I just want to encourage you to make plans to come and join with us on Tuesday night for our prayer meeting.

Ezekiel *Chapter 14* tonight, one chapter and an interesting chapter at that. You know, before I even, kind of by way of an introduction, this is one of those chapters, again, in God's

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word, where we really would do well to understand God's heart. Otherwise, we're going to misunderstand God's heart in this matter.

And that's really what this is about because God, through the prophet Ezekiel, gets to the heart of the matter concerning the matter of the heart. That was pretty clever, wasn't it? It came out really well, actually; I was quite impressed with that myself.

But what's the heart of the matter?

The heart of the matter is concerning that which distances one's heart from the Lord. Here's the heart of God. He wants our hearts. He wants us back. And what we're about to see is that they had now become so distant in their heart from the Lord for the Lord.

And it's very serious because now they're playing games with God, and God doesn't play games with those who try to play games. And so He knows their heart and He wants their heart. He wants to get a hold of their heart and bring them back to Him. That's the heart of the matter.

Now it's going to get pretty intense again. And this is why I kind of want to preface the study of this chapter, the teaching of this chapter with this understanding that God's heart is that He wants our hearts. He doesn't have their hearts.

What has their hearts?

Idolatry. That's what we're about to see. So what's God going to do to get them back to Him because He wants their hearts back to Him? It's going to get, again, very... well, I'm going to use the word "ugly," really ugly. Very ugly. Did I say ugly? It's going to be ugly.

So with that, why don't we pray? (Chuckling)

Father, thank You for Your word, and particularly this chapter that we have before us tonight. It's here for a reason, and, Lord, we sort of get a glimpse into Your heart.

And what we see is that the reason, as we're going to see at the end, kind of a surprise ending of sorts, is that this is all about getting us back to You, getting Your people back to You who have been distanced from You, whose hearts are far from You to draw near to You, so that You, as James says, can draw near to us.

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So Lord, speak to us. We need this, as hard as it is and as hard as it is to teach certainly, but as well as hard as it is to hear. But Lord, we want to have ears to hear. So speak; we pray in Jesus' name, amen and amen.

All right. Let's jump in *verse 1*. **“Now some of the elders of Israel came to me and sat before me.”**

Now, remember, Ezekiel's back in his house. Apparently, he has a house there in Tel Abib, not Tel Aviv, Tel Abib by the River Chebar there in Babylon. So he has a house. And so now we're told that the elders are going to come and sit with him in his house.

“And [Verse 2] the word of the Lord came to me, saying, “Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their hearts and put before them that which causes them to stumble into iniquity. Should I let Myself be inquired of at all by them?”

Well, we're off to a great start, aren't we, first three verses? What's going on here? Well, you might say that God has given Ezekiel a heads up about why these guys are there in his house.

He's giving Ezekiel a glimpse into their hearts because God sees their hearts; Ezekiel doesn't. He only sees these guys sitting in his living room on his couch. They're there for a reason.

They want to ask and inquire of the Lord, but the Lord is kind of going before him and giving him a heads up. Hey, these guys are playing games. Their hearts are far from Me. I see what's in their hearts. I want you to see what I see that's in their hearts.

What's in their hearts?

Idolatry. See, they had to leave their idols in Jerusalem, but their idols might be in Jerusalem, but there's still idolatry in their hearts. This is probably as good of a time as any to redefine as simply, without the risk of an oversimplification, of what idolatry actually is.

What is an idol?

Anything that takes the place of God in our hearts. It can be anything or anyone that has our devotion, affection, attention, love. That's idolatry. It can be someone. It can be some thing.

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But it's not the one thing and the one person it needs to be, and that's the Lord. So now the Lord is no longer in the heart, at the center of our lives, the center of our devotion and affection.

That is, or they are. That's idolatry. Anything that takes God's place in our hearts, it's an idol, idolatry. So God is preparing Ezekiel now.

These guys are here. They're in your home. They're here for a reason. They're going to ask you for My word. They're going to ask you to inquire of Me, and what does the Lord say? Their hearts aren't right. These men that are there; they've set up their idols in their hearts.

And by the way, this is what causes them to stumble into iniquity. And here's the rhetorical question of: Why should I even bother? They're going to inquire of Me? Why should I let Myself be inquired of at all by them? You want to inquire of Me? Why don't you inquire of your idols?

Oh, never mind. You can't. What are they going to say? Your idols, your gods are dumb. They don't speak. In fact, they can't do anything for you. They can't care for you. In fact, you have to care for them.

You know you're in trouble when you got to take care of your God. That's what they were doing. The physical idols, these wooden idols they would fashion and make, and they became these objects of idolatry.

And now they don't have them, but they're still there in their hearts. Why should I even bother? Why should I let them inquire of Me? Okay, so Ezekiel, they're not — they can inquire. They're not going to like what I say.

So let's do this, *verse 4*. **“Therefore speak to them, and say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “Everyone of the house of Israel who sets up his idols in his heart and puts before him what causes him to stumble into iniquity, and then comes to the prophet, I the Lord will answer him who comes, according to the multitude of his idols, that I may [And here it is, please don't miss this] that I may seize the house of Israel by their heart.”**

I'm going to grab them by their heart. I'm going to seize them by their heart. I'm going to get a hold of their heart.

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Why?

“Because they are all estranged from Me by their idols.” Their idols have taken and stolen their hearts from Me, and I want to seize their hearts back to Me. That's what I'm going to do, and that's how I'm going to answer, by the way.

You want to inquire of Me? Okay, you can inquire of Me, and I will answer your inquiry. I will answer him who comes, and My answer will be according to the multitude of their idols, their idolatry. And here's what I'm going to do. I'm going to get their hearts back because their hearts are far from Me.

Let me just insert this parenthetically. We've talked about this many times before. It's important to understand this, that really the litmus test in our lives is does that or them, that person, that thing, does anything or anyone take me further away from the Lord or draw me nearer to the Lord? That's the ultimate test. That's the gauge, if you will.

And this is what God is saying through the Prophet Ezekiel concerning those who are inquiring of Him. You've been distanced from Me. Who distanced you from Me? Your idols. The idolatry in your hearts has taken your hearts away from Me, not drawn you closer to Me. Your hearts are far from Me.

Oh, outwardly? No. Listen to what *Isaiah* says 29, verse 13 of the people of that day.

“Therefore the Lord said: “Inasmuch as these people draw near [Watch this] with their mouths and honor Me with their lips, [Praise the Lord] but have removed their hearts far from Me, and their fear toward Me is taught by the commandment of men.”

Of the Pharisees, Jesus said, *Matthew Chapter 15:8-9*, **“These people honor Me with their lips, but their hearts are far from Me. Oh, they worship Me in vain. Their teachings are but rules taught by men.”**

Let me just bring this closer to home for all of us, myself included.

It's like this: You're worshipping, you know the words to the song. So Kapono leads us in worship, and you're singing with your lips, but your heart nowhere near, nowhere to be found. Where is your heart? It's far from the Lord.

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Oh, but outwardly you're praising the Lord. Oh, yeah, with your lips, with your mouth, with your words, but not with your heart. The disparity between your words and your heart; there's this huge chasm between the two.

Oh, yeah, you might honor Me outwardly with your lips, but here's the problem: I see the heart. Man sees the outward appearance: Look at them worship. Look at their Bible. Wow! That's big — that's one big Bible. Or that's one worn Bible, Ho! They must really be in the Word.

Well, that's what you see outwardly. But God sees their heart far from Me, far from Me. Distanced from Me. And I want to get them back and I'm going to get them back.

Verse 6, “Therefore say to the house of Israel, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “Repent, turn away from your idols, and turn your faces away from all your abominations.”

That's what the word “repentance” means. Do a 180, an about face, turn from and turn back to. It's a change of mind. You're changing your direction.

Here you're going in this direction. **“There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it is the way that leads to death.”** Turn, repent.

This is not for salvation. This is for those who are God's people. Repent, come back, turn around, come back to Me. Turn away from and turn to Me.

“For anyone [Verse 7] of the house of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell in Israel, who separates himself from Me...” [Stop right there]

They have no one to blame but themselves. They did this themselves. What did they do themselves? They separated themselves from the Lord.

How did they do it?

Oh, we're told. **“And sets up his idols in his heart and puts before him what causes him to stumble into iniquity, then comes to a prophet to inquire of him concerning Me, I the Lord will answer him by Myself.”**

Are you really doing this? You think you can pull one over on Me? You come to Me, you inquire of Me, and I see you. Do you realize? I see your heart, man. You're coming to Me

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like that, and you're inquiring of Me? Okay, I'll answer you. In fact, I'll answer you personally.

Uh oh, you know you're in trouble when "I'll answer you." I'm not going to have someone else return your call, your inquiry. I'll take care of this one. I, the Lord, will answer him by Myself. Well, what's your answer?

Verse 8. "I will set My face against that man and make him a sign and a proverb, and I will cut him off from the midst of My people. Then you shall know that I am the Lord.

"And if the prophet [Verse 9] is induced to speak anything, I the Lord have induced that prophet, and I will stretch out My hand against him and destroy him from among My people Israel. [Now stay with me, verse 10] And they shall [This is — this is wow!] they shall bear their iniquity. The punishment of the prophet shall be the same as the punishment of the one who inquired, that the house of Israel may no longer stray from Me, nor be profaned anymore with all their transgressions, but that they may be My people and I may be their God," says the Lord."

I want you back. You belong to Me. Your heart is far from Me. You have strayed from Me.

So I'm going to hold the prophet, the false prophet, by the way, so you don't like — I'm going to get a second opinion. I don't like Ezekiel's answer.

What did Ezekiel say when he inquired of the Lord?

He told — he said, "Repent."

Let's find another prophet then. No, that's not going to help because God's already — God already knows that false prophet you're going to go to for that second opinion, let's get a second prophetic opinion because I don't like that answer.

So we're going to go to Prophet So-and-so over here. God doesn't know that? So God says, okay, you going to go to them? Okay, I'm going to — I'm going to give you the same answer, only this one is going to be worse. You're going to go to them? I'm going to induce that prophet, and then I'm going to hold that prophet as guilty as I'm holding you for inquiring of them. How about that?

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Well, oh, I don't know. Is it just me or is this just wow!? I mean, did you notice the words — I don't like this word. Punishment?

Wait; and they shall bear their iniquity? The punishment of the prophet shall be the same as the punishment of the one who inquired? Did you get that?

Okay, so you're going to go get your second opinion from this prophet. Okay, I got — I'm going to speak to you through this prophet who's going to speak falsely. I'm going to induce him, and then I'm going to hold him accountable, and I'm going to punish him the same as I'm going to punish you for inquiring of him. Yeah, I didn't think that — that didn't...

Verse 12. “The word of the Lord came again to me, saying: “Son of man, when a land sins against Me by...” [You know, what? Can I just back up?]

I'm sorry. Forgive Me. I can't let that go because I won't be able to sleep tonight now. This is where disconnect comes in, right?

It's kind of like, oh, I would never do that.

We do it all the time.

Well, I didn't really particularly care for the teaching today.

Oh? Oh, that's interesting.

So you know what? I'm going to go down the street, find somebody else that's going to tell me what my ears are itching to hear.

God's like, oh, oh, yeah, I already know the address. I know exactly who that is. Okay, go ahead. So you go ahead, and then he tells you, and He's already induced this false teacher, not false prophet, false teacher, they're false teachers.

And by the way, He will not hold them guiltless. They're just as guilty as the one who's inquiring.

Let's hear what this guy has to say. Maybe it's more amicable. Maybe it's more plausible because I didn't like that guy! I mean, he's telling me I'm a sinner, that I need to repent! No, let's find another guy.

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Oh, okay. I feel a little bit better. I think we could probably close that file, and let's start now *verse 12*. Are we okay? Thank you for indulging me. I think I might get some sleep tonight now.

“The word of the Lord came again to me, saying: “Son of man, when a land sins against Me by [And I want you to pay particular attention to these two words because they're key] persistent unfaithfulness, I will stretch out My hand against it. I will cut off its supply of bread, send famine on it, and cut off man and beast from it.”

Now, before we go to *verse 14*, I need you to hear me on this. This is not speaking about when we sin, confess, repent. We're forgiven.

No, this is willful disobedience, persistent unfaithfulness. It's a lifestyle of sin. It's deliberate. It's persisting in that sin. That's what this is talking about.

Don't let the enemy start working you over on this one. Because he'll work you over and condemn you. Man, you blew it. No, no, this is not talking about that.

This is a deliberate act of willful disobedience and persistent unfaithfulness. It's a lifestyle of sin. That's what God is dealing with here.

Now, this will help a little bit with *verse 14*, which is so fascinating. **“Even if these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they would deliver only themselves by their righteousness,” says the Lord God.**”

What? Wait a minute. Okay, First of all, Daniel is in with Noah and Job, who was like unto a Noah, who was a preacher of righteousness, a man of righteousness, a man of God. And Job? I mean, you want to talk about righteous?

So righteous was this righteous man of God, Job, that Satan made a bet with God that the only reason he's so upright and so righteous is because You bless him. You let me have him. He'll curse You to Your face.

God says, Deal. Because God knows the end from the beginning. Otherwise He would have never allowed Job to even touch — I mean the devil to even touch Job.

So Daniel is a few miles away from Ezekiel. He's a contemporary of Ezekiel and Jeremiah, too, by the way.

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And if I'm Daniel and word comes, you know, this is before email and text, Hey, did you hear what, you know, Ezekiel tweeted about you, hashtag Daniel, hashtag Noah, hashtag Job?

Me? What?

Yeah, he said that God told him that even if you and Noah and Job were in this land, that they were so wicked, and it was so serious that they would only deliver themselves by their righteousness.

He put me on that list?

I don't know — you'll forgive me — but if I'm Ezekiel, I'm going, Wow, my bro, Daniel's on here. I'm not.

[Laughter]

Oh, come on. You would have done the same thing. I mean, I would have much rather, you know, if I'm Ezekiel, it would be Noah, Daniel, and Ezekiel too, and Job. But no, he's — no, Daniel.

You know what that tells me? Already by this time Daniel was known as a man of God, a righteous man.

And here God is just basically saying that even if they, as righteous as they were, were there, I would still destroy the land.

I would deliver them, but I would not spare them on the — remember when Abraham was pleading with God concerning Sodom and Gomorrah?

So God, if there were 50 righteous, would You stave Your hand from bringing the judgment?

Yeah, I would on the account of 50 righteous.

There wasn't 50. And so it comes all the way down. There were not — the implication is were there that number of righteous there, He would not have brought the judgment.

You know what He's saying here? I don't care who or how many righteous are there. I'll deliver the righteous, but judgment is coming.

That's just chicken skin, man. That's how serious this is. And it needs to be so.

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Idolatry, the — how do I say this? The irrationality of idolatry. It just rises to the level of, I mean, when you start talking about Noah and Job? I mean Job's at the top of my list, probably yours too. If there was ever a man that I would put at the top of a righteous list, it would certainly be Job.

I mean, everything he went through, and yet he would not curse God. I mean, you would think that that would — it would only take Job. But no, not even Job, not Noah, not Daniel. I will deliver them, but only them.

Verse 15, “If I cause wild beasts to pass through the land...” [This is a real thing, by the way]

We're going to see four of these, and these would be considered the most fearful and dreaded things to come to pass. And God's going to hit on every single one of them.

So verse 15, “If I cause wild beasts to pass through the land, and they empty it, and make it so desolate that no man may pass through because of the beasts, even though these three men were in it, as I live,” says the Lord God, “they would deliver neither sons nor daughters; only they would be delivered, and the land would be desolate.”

You mean even if Noah and Job and Daniel were there?

Yeah.

“Or [Verse 17] if I bring a sword on that land, and say, ‘Sword, go through the land,’ and I cut off man and beast from it, even though these three men were in it, as I live,” says the Lord God, “they would deliver neither sons nor daughters, but only they themselves would be delivered.

Or [Verse 19] [How are you doing?] [We only got a couple more] if I send a pestilence...” [A plague like that in Egypt, which by the way, is going to tie into our celebration of communion]

I just want to leave enough time because there's just something I've never seen this before, and I want to share it with you. And it's huge, especially if you're someone that is prone to fear, prone to anxiety and worry and fretting and fear.

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And they would have feared this. This would have been the most feared, along with the others.

“Send pestilence into that land and pour out My fury on it in blood, and cut off from it man and beast, even though Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it, as I live,” says the Lord God, “they would deliver neither son nor daughter; they would deliver only themselves by their righteousness.”

For thus says the Lord God: [Verse 21]: “How much more it shall be when I send My four severe judgments on Jerusalem— [And here are the four] the sword and famine and wild beasts and pestilence— to cut off man and beast from it? Yet...”

Oh, I've never wanted to see that word “yet.”

Verse 22, “Yet...”

Now here's the heart of God, and this is why I wanted to preface this chapter this way.

“Behold, there shall be left in it a remnant who will be brought out, both sons and daughters; surely they will come out to you, [That's my heart] and you will see [Now watch this] their ways and their doings. Then you will be comforted concerning the disaster that I have brought upon Jerusalem, all that I have brought upon it.”

And before we go to this last verse in *verse 23*, which again ties into communion, notice two things.

First, **“you're going to know their ways,”** not My ways because God's ways are too high for our understanding. **“His ways are not our ways.”** But that's not the focus here.

The focus is their ways. We question the ways and the whys of God. No really, the question is not God's ways, God's whys, it's your ways.

And now watch, *verse 23*, **“And they will comfort you, when you see their ways and their doings.”**

How's that going to comfort me? And who are “they,” by the way?

They are the ones that will now be taken captive to Babylon in the third and final siege when finally Jerusalem has been destroyed.

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See, up to this point, there's only been two sieges, and two groups have been taken captive. They take the best of the best in the first one. That's when Daniel and Ezekiel were taken. They take the cream of the crop. That's who they take.

That's why Daniel ended up — by the way, they knew Daniel was unique and special. That's why he ends up in the position that he's in.

And again, I don't know — I'm sure, you know — but if I'm Ezekiel, I would have thought, man, I wish it was me. But it's not. But anyway...

But Daniel was positioned. He was taken — one of the first ones taken.

So who were they that are going to comfort me when I see their ways?

Oh, they're going to come from Jerusalem that just got destroyed. And when you see them and their ways, you're going to take comfort.

How is that going to be a comfort to me?

Because then you're going to realize that what I said I did. And they're going to bear witness to it because see, up to this point and until this third group of captives were taken captive and until Jerusalem was destroyed, they still thought, hey, we're going back. Jerusalem is not going to be destroyed. God would never do that to His temple and us, His people. This is His temple; He's not going to let anything happen to it.

Oh, really? Well, then — and by the way, they know them. Oh, Uncle, Uncle, come third, third one, third time. Jerusalem's destroyed, Uncle, Auntie, what happened?

Ho, man! Ho, everything's destroyed!

And **“when you see their ways and their doings, and you shall know that I have done nothing without cause that I have done in it,” says the Lord God.**”

Now that seems a little bit wordy, doesn't it? But there's a reason. You know what God's saying here? He's saying, I did what I said I was going to do. But what I did, I did with cause because there was a purpose in doing it.

What was the purpose?

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To get you back, to get your heart back to Me. Do you know that after the 70 years of captivity in Babylon, that Israel never dealt with idolatry ever again? It worked. It worked. It cured them of their idolatry problem, and that's what it took.

So what God is saying here is that you can take comfort in knowing that what I've done I did with cause. I do nothing without cause. What I do has a purpose, and it's in your best interest. I have your best interests at heart. I'm doing this for you because I love you.

To which we usually say, can You love me less? (Chuckling) It's like when we discipline our children, right? I'm doing this because I love you.

Really?

This is going to hurt me a lot more than it's going to hurt you.

You think your children really believe that?

No, I have to do this. **"I do nothing without cause."** This is why I'm doing what I'm doing.

Now why does that or why should that bring me comfort?

Because God is doing what He's doing because He loves me. He's doing this because, with cause because He loves me, and He wants me to return to Him. And if this is what it takes, this is what it takes.

See, God will never do anything without cause. It ultimately has in the end our good at heart and His glory in the end. It's the in between part that's the hardest, isn't it? Because we don't understand why; God, why?

Well, you don't know what I'm doing. I have a cause for doing it because I have done nothing without cause. But I know what I'm doing. And what I'm doing, I'm doing with a cause, a purpose.

You know, we, in our day, would see it and say it this way: Well, you know, I have a cause; I have a purpose. I'm part of this cause.

That's what God's saying. I have a cause.

What's your cause?

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You. And that's why I'm doing this. If you think about it, if God didn't love us, He wouldn't bother, would He?

Yeah, well, I don't care.

No, I love you. That's why I'm doing this. You're My cause. How's that? You're My cause. How do you like being a cause?

Doesn't sound very appealing, does it? Oh, I'm a cause, man.

Yes, you are. You're a cause. And God does nothing without cause. But God does it.

And notice, again, the wording, and I know it's kind of interesting, but **“you shall know that I have done nothing without cause.”**

Why didn't God say, You shall know that everything I do has a cause? Because that's not how we think. How we think is that God does things without cause. There's no reason for God to do it, which is why we question it, why doubt sets in.

God, I don't know what Your cause is. I don't know what Your purpose is. I don't know what Your reasons are. I don't know what Your ways are. I don't understand why, and I don't know Your ways. What are You doing and why are You doing what You're doing?

Well, I know what I'm doing, and I know why I'm doing it. I don't know why You're doing it. Well, You'll see why. You'll see why in the end. And You'll take great comfort.

Notice that it took all of that and it took coming to this end because, see, this is yet future, not that far off. It might be a couple of years away from when *Chapter 14* is recorded and when it actually happened.

Because notice — let's back up just real quick to verse...

We're not going — we're going backwards? Great, we were so close.

Again this key word, “yet,” yet future. **“Yet behold there shall be left...”**

In other words, “the disaster is coming that I have brought with cause upon Jerusalem, all that I have brought upon it.”

But “behold,” “yet.”

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Maybe we would see it like this or say it like this. I know this is bad, yet God's going to work it out. What's coming looks horrific, yet God will always provide. And you can just fill in the blanks. That's a pretty pivotal word, isn't it? Yet? It's one of those game-changer words. It changes the whole complexion of everything.

When God says “yet,” yet after these four severe judgments —oh, by the way, the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse, as they are often referred to, the fear that's going to come, that which is feared the most is coming upon them, yet...

Yet I'm going to have a remnant. I'm going to bring you back. I'm going to, notice, bring you out. **“A remnant who will be brought out.”** I'm going to take you out.

“They will come out to you.” Hang on to that word, “out.” This is a good word right now. We want out, (Chuckling) right?

Okay, so on Sunday in the Prophecy Update, we were connecting these dots to how God is going to get the Israelites out of Egypt, but He's first got to get the Egypt out of the Israelites.

So how is He going to do it?

Well, plagues will do it. I mean, like I shared on Sunday, I think after that first plague — no, actually not the first one. you know, which one I would — get me out, I want out? The frogs.

That —I — not Farags, frogs. That alone. I'm out. Get me out of here.

Frog — that's only the — I think it was plague number two. We got eight to go. I want out. I'm getting you out. But I got to get Egypt out of you before I get you out of Egypt.

Fast-forward, plague ten, enter communion. Oh, this is — I never saw this before. Now, stay with me.

It's the Passover. The angel of death will pass over your house if you have the blood of the lamb covering in the shape of a cross; you eat, they ate of the body of the lamb; and they had to be ready to go out, those three things.

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And they're all beautifully, magnificently woven into the fabric of the account we affectionately refer to as the Last Supper. And if you'll kindly indulge me, I'd like to point them out, verse 14, Luke 22.

“When the hour had come, He sat down and the 12 apostles with Him. Then He said to them, 'With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I say to you, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the Kingdom of God.’” *[When I take you out of this world]*

If you go back, and I would encourage you to do so, go back into the Exodus account and read about how there was urgency. They had to get out fast. You get ready because I'm taking you out. Plague number ten, I'm taking you out. Get ready. You're getting out.

I'm ready to go. You're getting me out of here?

Yeah. But two things: the blood and the body. The blood on the door posts, and you have to eat the body of that lamb. That's Me.

And the third?

I'll get you out.

Now, think about the fear. I'm an Israelite. I have just witnessed nine unthinkable, horrifying plagues. And now this 10th plague is the ultimate. I mean, that death of the firstborn son. You have to understand, in that culture, to this day, the firstborn son carries the family name. The father's named by way of the firstborn son. It is an honor.

In fact, in my culture in the Middle East, it is more of an honor to call me Abu Elias than it is Pastor. Abu, the father of Elias, my firstborn son, Abu Elias, the firstborn son. And that's the 10th plague? How about the fear and the — just the — you can't even — you can't even imagine. But not for them.

Why?

Because they had the blood of the lamb. They had the body of the lamb, and they were getting out because of the lamb. And Jesus is referring to every single one these here.

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And **“then He took the cup [Verse 17] and gave thanks and said, 'Take this and divide it among yourselves; for I say to you [And here He says it a second time] I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until [I'm going to add this] until [I take you out of this world and] the kingdom of God comes.'”**

So get ready. Just like the Israelites in Egypt when the Passover, when the death of the first born, and is He not the first only begotten Son of God who died so we could live?

Don't you find that connection interesting, prophetic, symbolic, the death of their firstborn, but it's the death of My only begotten Son, My first begotten Son? **“So that whosoever would believe in Him would not perish but have everlasting life.”**

You remember that teaching? It was a hard teaching when Jesus said, **“You have to eat of my flesh,” [The Passover lamb, not literally] you have to drink of the blood.”**

And the people bailed on Him. The multitudes just started leaving.

It's like people getting up, — don't do this now. Even if you have to go to the bathroom, just hold it; we're almost done. But it'd be like people just — here, I'm up here teaching, and they just get up and they walk out.

And that's what they did on Jesus when He started talking about this. You have to symbolically eat of My body as the Passover lamb. You have to have the blood symbolically of the Passover lamb, or you're not going to be saved. I'm not going to save you and get you out.

You have to have the lamb, the blood of the lamb, the body of the lamb. Nothing happened to them. What faith.

You're hearing — I want you to please use your God-given imagination to put yourself there. Could you imagine those blood, no pun intended, curdling screams from the Egyptians whose firstborn son just died that night? Could you imagine just the horror of it all?

The sounds — I would be plugging my ears. I can't take it. I can't hear that. I know what that tone and moan sounds like. When our daughter Noelle died, I mean, my wife — it was a cry I never heard before, nor would I ever want to hear again, nor did I. It comes from the depth of the soul. And they heard that.

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But it did not come upon them because it passed over them. What fear did you bring with you to this Bible study tonight? What fear?

Because see, the only thing Satan can do is give you a spirit of fear and make you afraid. He wants you to fear — and by the way, this is interesting.

When we were going through Job verse-by-verse, something really interesting came out of that study. And it was that Satan did not warn Job of that which he had been given approval by God to do to him. He just did it.

Now, now think this through with me. If Satan is threatening you and trying to fill you with fear: I'm going to take your kids from you, your wife's going to leave you, your husband's going to leave you, you're going to lose your job, you're going to lose everything, fear, fear, fear.

No, he wouldn't tell you that. He would just do it if he had approval. Did you catch that?

So they had God's word that if you'll have the blood of the lamb, the body of the lamb, I'm going to get you out because of the lamb. I'm good, I'm safe, and I'm saved out of this. I'm protected from this. And this will pass over me because of the blood of the lamb and the body of the lamb.

And this is what we're going to celebrate tonight. **“He took bread, gave thanks, and broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is My body, [The body of the Passover lamb] which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of Me.’”**

What are we to remember? What is this a celebration and a commemoration of?

I'm getting you out. Get ready. The Israelites had to be ready to go. I'm getting you out. Now, we're going to have lamb dinner first. And I'm sorry. That was kind of crass, but it's true.

I love lamb, by the way. Don't start making me lamb; I'm good on lamb. I have a dear sister that takes very good care of me when it comes to lamb.

I can just see it now. The truck's going to pull up in front of the church, you know, delivery of all these legs of the lamb. I love lamb; I was raised on lamb. Lamb to the Middle Eastern

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people is like beef to the Americans. So you guys say, “Where’s the beef?” We say, “Where’s the lamb?”

Anyway, I digress. But here’s the point.

So we need the blood of the Lamb, the body of the Lamb, and then I’m getting you out. Jesus, the Passover Lamb, celebrating the Passover, the fulfillment of the Passover, says, okay, we’re going to do this, and then I’m getting you out, and I can’t wait, by the way.

Do not fear. Do not be afraid.

Yeah, but...

No, but you have the blood of the Lamb. You have the body of the lamb, and I’m going to get you out. You have nothing to fear. You’re safe, you’re safe, you’re protected. It’s going to — it’s going to skip your address. It’s going to skip you. It’s going to pass over you. It will not come upon you.

Why?

Because you have Jesus. You have the blood of the Lamb. You’re covered by the blood. You have the body of the Lamb. I want you to remember that because it seems that you keep forgetting that you have the blood of the Lamb, the body of the Lamb, that I’m getting you out.

Don’t get too comfortable. Don’t get too settled down there. I want you to remember this is what I’m going to do. And the next time we do this will be when it finds its fulfillment at the wedding feast of the Lamb, lamb.

We have a great lamb dinner coming up, really big lamb dinner that’s going to be like no lamb you’ve ever eaten before in your life.

So the bread is the representation of the body. If you’ll just take the packaging, peel back the top, just take the bread and just hold on to it for a moment.

The symbolism — please — I can’t stress enough the importance of the symbol of that which we hold in our hands. This is the body of the Passover Lamb, Jesus, the Christ, that was broken for us, and that’s what we’re celebrating tonight.

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And that's what we're remembering tonight like the Israelites. You're safe. You're safe because of Me. I'm going to get you out. You remember that.

So I'm going to give you this to do so that you will remember. And as often as you do, do so in remembrance.

He didn't say the first Thursday of each month. That's not actually what He said. Just you could do it every day if you want. Just when you do, do so in remembrance of Me.

Do so to remember as a memorial, a remembrance of what I did for you as the Lamb of God, the sacrificial lamb of God, the Passover lamb of God. Eat of My body, like the Israelites ate of that body of that lamb.

Would you partake with me?

Thank You, Lord. Lord, thank You for Your body as the Passover lamb, the fulfillment of the Passover prophecy for us to eat, to partake of together, to remember. Lord, thank You for giving us this to do. We need to do this, and as often as we do, we do want to remember what You did for us, and what You're yet going to do when You take us out of this world in the Rapture. Thank You, Lord.

Luke goes on and says, **“Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.’”**

Everything was a foreshadow, a type, a scripture picture, if you prefer. If you'll peel back the rest of the packaging, you'll have the cup. But just hold on to it again for a moment.

So this blood of this lamb for the Israelites in Egypt had to be inspected for four days and be found without spot or blemish, just as Jesus was on trial for four days and found to be without sin, without spots, without blemish, in order to qualify as the Passover Lamb of God who died for the sins of the world. And there's no remission of sins without the shedding of blood.

And this is the blood of the Lamb of God, not literally, a symbol of it that we partake of. And in so doing we have the blood of the lamb over the doorpost of the heart of our lives where He belongs.

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We say we gave our heart to the Lord. **“Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, body strength.”**

So as we partake, let's do so in remembrance of Him, that this is the blood of the Lamb of God that we're symbolically partaking of tonight. Let's partake together. Thank You, Jesus.

Kapono, come on up. If you want to, stand, and we'll close in prayer and song. Lord, just what we have celebrated here tonight is in some ways too high for our understanding that You would love us so much. **“Greater love has no man that he would lay down his life for another.”**

And that's what You did. And what we just did tonight was a celebration of what You did for us. The cup we've just partaken of, the bread we've just partaken of, and the readiness because You're coming to get us out of this Egypt of the world, Lord, thank You. Thank You. Thank You.

Lord, I pray that if anyone has just been gripped by fear, that first of all, they would not let the enemy condemn them. I mean, how many men and women mightily used by You, recorded in the pages of Holy Writ were terrified and full of fear? Replete throughout Scripture, mighty men, even the Apostle Paul despaired of life and was afraid, and You told Paul, **“Do not be afraid.”**

Lord, we focus on what Paul wrote to Timothy about, **“You've not given us a Spirit of fear.”** but we almost do so at the expense of what You have given us instead, which is **“power and love and a disciplined mind”** to discipline and catch and take captive all of those thoughts that try to enter in unchecked, those thoughts of doubt, those thoughts of fear.

And that's just the enemy trying to fill us with fear. If he was able to do that, he would have already done it. But he hasn't, so he's not.

You've already given us the power, the victory. We're not just conquerors! we're more than conquerors because of You, Jesus, and what You did for us.

So Lord, I pray that as we go our separate ways tonight, make our way home, that this truth of Your love would just be instilled within us by the power of the Holy Spirit, that we would be mindful of it, and that our hearts would be filled and full to overflowing, full of faith, not

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fear, that we're safe, and that we're saved because of You, the Lamb of God. Jesus, Thank You. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.