

Messages From the Gates of Jerusalem
#4 - Old Gate - Part I - There is Nothing New Under the Sun

Old Gate - Jeshanah Gate > Stands for Truth

- a. Pivotal 'Corner Gate' located at the northwest corner which is the entry for the old paths (2 Kings 14:13; Jeremiah 31:38)
- b. Near the location of the present-day Holy Sepulchre
- c. It is identified with the "Mishneh Gate," which means "second quarter" or "new quarter" in Hebrew.
- d. In Nehemiah's day, the northwest section of the city was "The Mishneh" or "New Quarter"; the Old Gate led into the New Quarter.

Man, since the Garden of Eden, has searched for and been easily enticed by a new, a better or an easier way other than God's way. "Hath God really said?" Satan, your flesh, false teachers, etc., are continually enticing you by appealing to your flesh, your comfort, your feelings, and your pride. Exalt the Flesh! Reject God's way.

Ecclesiastes 1:9-10 There is nothing new under the sun. Is there anything of which it may be said, "See, this is new"? It has already been in ancient times before us.
Prov. 14:12 There is a way *that seems* right to a man, but its end *is* the way of death.

Warning! Beware: II Tim. 3:1-5 But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come. ² For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, ³ unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, ⁴ traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵ having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!

Matt. 24:11 Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many.

Mark 13:22 For false christs and false prophets will rise and show signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.

I Tim. 4:1-2 Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, ² speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron...

II Peter 3:3 knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts,

Admonition: Paul and Peter regularly use such words as "hold fast" or "stand firm."

Rom. 12:9 *Let love be* without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.

1 Thess. 3: 8 For now we live, if you stand fast in the Lord.

Phil. 4:1 Therefore, my beloved and longed-for brethren, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord,

1 Cor. 16:13 Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong.

I Peter 5:12 I have written to you briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it.

Apostasy - Turn away from God and His way - Return to their own way

Warning of Apostasy in the early Church

2 Tim. 4:10 - for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world > Deluded & deceived

Luke 15:11-32 Prodigal Son: Pleasures of the world; Love of money; It's all about Me. Broke, no friends, no good life, no satisfaction > Deluded & deceived > False Hope

Luke 17:32 Remember Lot's wife - desire for pleasures of the world > Deluded & deceived

1 Tim. 6:10 - Through the love of money many have wandered from the faith.

Eph. 4:17-23 Paul to the Ephesian Church: Lost your first love - Many had returned to their pre-Christian lifestyles. They lost all sensitivity towards sin. He did not teach you to lose your first love and backslide. He teaches purity and righteousness.

Matt. 24:12 Because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.

Is this spirit still at work? Man is continually searching for a new and better way.

Nations are returning to atheism and heathenism. > on the rise

Massive interest in the occult, astrology and New Age are drawing even strong believers away.

This dangerous spirit has infiltrated our churches. As we are more concerned about the culture and the comfort of people, we have created an atmosphere that is a hindrance to the manifestation of the Holy Spirit in our midst. Christians are turning away in mass from the foundational truths of God's Word. (John 14:6; Salvation by grace alone; Jesus is God; Bible is inspired by God and inerrant; The Trinity; Sin must be punished; God is Holy & Just; Hell is not a myth; No chance of salvation after death; Life is eternal). Paul admonished the church at Galatia:

Gal. 1:6-9 I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, ⁷ which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. ⁹ if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed.

This evil spirit is the undercurrent of the "SEEKER-FRIENDLY" movement in our churches.

1. This is culturally driven and NOT Christ-driven. Appeal to the culture

Jeroboam was the 1st king of Israel after Judah and Israel split into 2 separate nations.

a. Capable administrator and Valiant Warrior

b. Stood up for the downtrodden and challenged overbearing authority

c. God chose him for a great work and gave him a promise much like those to the Davidic kings. "I will be with you. I will GIVE Israel to you."

- d. Is not remembered for the legacy of his talents or accomplishments, but for the legacy of his sin - Set a terrible precedent for the kings of Israel.
- e. After Jeroboam, there are 19 kings of Israel > ALL EVIL > "He (the 19) walked in all the ways of Jeroboam and in his sin, which he had caused Israel to commit."
- f. Solomon recognized Jeroboam's abilities and valor and placed him over the forced labor to build the Temple. Popular with the northern tribes = Humane Leader
- g. The prophet Ahijah met Jeroboam outside Jerusalem.
He took his new cloak and tore it into 12 pieces.
- h. Take 10 pieces for yourself. You will be the next king of Israel. (10 northern tribes)
- i. "I will take you, and you shall reign over whatever you desire, and you shall be King over Israel."
- j. God says, "Walk in my ways, observe My statutes and commands."
- k. "I will be with you! I will give Israel to you."
God is the source of Jeroboam's security.
- l. Walk as David my servant: Repented before God; Acknowledged his sin; Sought forgiveness
- m. Solomon wants to kill Jeroboam so he flees to Egypt until Solomon's death.
- n. All Israel gathers at Shechem to make Rehoboam the new king. They ask Jeroboam to plead their case before Rehoboam who is wanting to lay heavier taxes and servitude on the 10 northern tribes. When they asked for "grace" and some relief, Rehoboam just laid the law down to impress them with his power and brutality. He had received BAD counsel from the younger men around him. "My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke; My father disciplined you with whips, I will discipline you with scorpions."
- o. The prophecy of Ahijah from God came to pass and Jeroboam became the 1st king of Israel (10 northern tribes).
- p. Jewish law required sacrifices be offered at the Jerusalem Temple and men must travel there to keep several feasts each year.
- q. "If this people go up to offer sacrifices in the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, then the heart of the people will return to their lord, Rehoboam, King of Judah. They will kill me & return to Rehoboam." Jerusalem is now the capital of a foreign enemy. I am in political danger. Jerusalem will come to hold a special place in their heart again.
- r. How did Jeroboam become king? God's will and grace - Continue by God's will and grace
- s. He leads Israel into the sin of idolatry by presenting a golden calf as their god to worship. He took men from each tribe and made them priests. He created feasts to celebrate. He twisted the worship of God and His Ways.
- t. New Way: Much more convenient for you to worship - Religion of Convenience > only requires infrequent attendance
- u. Problems: False Worship; Direct Rebellion; Polluted Priests
- v. Apostasy: He turned the people from following God and His Ways.
He destroys the kingdom which will be filled with sorrow, pain, rebellion and captivity.

2. Started trying to market God in to OUR IMAGE - please men and their flesh.

Ex. 16 Children of Israel > Quail; Gave them what they craved > Sent a plague

Wiersbe: "The greatest judgment God can send to disobedient people is to let them have their way and reap the sad, painful consequences of their sins."

Gen. 13:1-18 Lot > live by sight; material prosperity > Destroyed his family; lost all

Num. 32 Reuben, Gad and $\frac{1}{2}$ Manasseh > "let this land be given to your servants as a possession. Do not take us over the Jordan." Desired the pasture land for the cattle

Consequences of NOT crossing and being complacent: Deprived their wives and children

of Divine miracles > Parting of the Jordan River; Destruction of Jericho; 1st to go into captivity; Led into paganism and idolatry much sooner due to distance from Temple

Gen. 32 Instead of seeking God for forgiveness after his part in selling Joseph, Judah sought a Canaanite (flesh) woman to marry. Rejected God's law and way > satisfy his

flesh - Marriage was in shambles; Family is known for bold, unblushing wickedness

John 13:36 Peter declared to Christ that he would follow him to the death. Jesus told him that he was not ready because Peter had not yet come to the end of himself.

He was still operating in the strength of his flesh > exaltation of the flesh.

?? How could a man of great wisdom and discernment end his life so far from God?

Solomon was the wisest man that ever lived; wrote some of the Bible.

God had given him wisdom and understanding beyond measure.

He excelled all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom.

I Kings relates his downfall. He loved many foreign women. God's command > You shall not enter into marriage with them. They will surely turn your heart away to their gods.

Direct rebellion & rejection of God's Word: He clung to those he loved > 700 wives, princess and 300 concubines. Solomon's heart was at first divided between women and God, but it soon turned away altogether.

Warning: He had great wisdom and God had appeared to him twice. He had heard the Lord command him not to turn after other gods, but he still turned away.

Prov. 19:27 "Cease to hear instruction, my son, and you will stray from the words of knowledge." Where there was once humble dependence on God, there was now dependence on himself.

Beware of the "new" ways and their philosophies.

Experience over reason; Spirituality over doctrine.

Images over words; Feelings over truth

Earthly justice over salvation; Social actions trump eternity

3. People's feelings are more important than Faith. Don't offend anyone.

4. Why is "Your Best Life Now" such a popular message?

It focuses on the TEMPORAL blessings of the culture rather than on eternal hope in Christ; it's all about ME, ME, ME.

Jesus has a wonderful plan for you. He has come to give you a "better life."

Emergent Leader: "I want a Christianity I can believe in - you know - one without the exclusivity of Christ - the kind where my feelings can rule my faith - you know - universalism."

What deception! This is NOT BIBLICAL.

Bill Bright: "If we exalt one of God's qualities over another, we get a distorted view of God's character. In fact, overemphasizing any one of God's attributes to the exclusion of others can lead to heresy. For example teaching only about God's mercy and neglecting His role as a judge will prevent people from understanding God's hatred of sin and the future punishment for wrongdoing."

John 10:10 I have come that they may have life, and that they may have *it* more abundantly.

Abundantly = Life in its fullness

The Apostle Paul's life was full: Trials, tribulations, temptations, persecutions, hated, beaten, mocked, whipped, stoned, imprisoned, and martyred

II Tim. 3:12 all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.

We are not called to be comfortable.

II Cor. 2:17 For we are not, as so many, peddling the word of God; but as of sincerity, but as from God, we speak in the sight of God in Christ.

Oops: Seeker-sensitive church model produces numbers but NOT DISCIPLES.

Hybels states: "*We made a mistake. What we should have done when people crossed the line of faith and become Christians, we should have started telling people and teaching people that they have to take responsibility to become 'self feeders.'* We should have gotten people, taught people, how to read their Bible between services, how to do the spiritual practices much more aggressively on their own."

Who can calculate the damage done by leaders *who persuaded leaders* to change the Church to suit the fancy of the world? Don't entice people with the promise that God wants them to be happy and prosperous...it is a perversion of the Gospel.

Church: Wake Up! Lukewarm teaching will produce lukewarm people. Countless false converts and lukewarm Christians sit in the pews. Satan has men fast asleep focused on themselves and the temporal. It is time to wake up, commit to be a disciple of Christ and focus on things of eternal value.

The rapture is IMMINENT.

The Judgment Seat of Christ awaits.

Seek Him with all of your heart.