

The Ruinous Consequences of Sin

Nehemiah 1:1-3

INTRODUCTION:

1. The condition of Jerusalem was the natural and inevitable fruit of the sins of the people.
2. This was not from merely unfortunate calamity, but it was the result of punitive and penal discipline.
3. Cf. Leviticus 26:27-33; 2 Kings 25:1-12.

DISCUSSION: From the destruction of Jerusalem we learn...

- I. That sin brings trouble (“...in great trouble....”).**
 - A. Because sin is a violation of law (cf. 1 John 3:4).
 - B. Because sin separates from God (Isa. 59:1, 2).
 - C. Because sin brings discord...
 1. In the individual.
 2. In the church.
 3. In the world.
- II. That sin brings shame (“...and shame.”).**
 - A. It destroys power and paralyzes efforts (cf. Eph. 2:1).
 - B. It causes blasphemy (cf. 1 Tim. 5:13-15).
 - C. It encourages the growth of infidelity.
 1. Cf. 1 Corinthians 5:6.
 2. Christian ignorance and infidelity cause atheists (theoretical and practical).
- III. That sin removes national defenses (“The wall of Jerusalem is broken down....”).**
 - A. Unity is a national defense (cf. Matt. 12:25).
 - B. Domestic purity is a national defense.
 1. What family life is, national life will soon become.
 2. Healthy, moral, godly families are the backbone of a nation’s vigor.
 3. Sin encourages lust and breaks down barriers.
 - C. Character is a national defense.
 1. This made America a great nation.
 2. Character gives weight to our words and actions in foreign courts and countries.
- IV. That sin dishonors justice (“...and its gates are destroyed by fire.”).**
 - A. City gates were not only for resistance, but also for the seat of government.
 - B. There the assembly of chiefs gathered; there criminals were tried; there justice was administered, and important subjects discussed (cf. Esther 2:19; 3:2, 3; Jer. 20:2).
 - C. Without the “gates,” the encroachment of the enemy goes unchecked.

CONCLUSION:

1. Cf. Proverbs 14:34.
2. The wickedness of Sodom was punished by the destruction of the inhabitants and the desolation of the land (Gen. 19:23-28).
3. “(God) turns...a fruitful land into a salty waste, because of the evil of its inhabitants” (Psa. 107:33, 34).
4. Jerusalem was not only destroyed before Nehemiah, but again later by Vespasian whose general, Titus, left not “one stone upon another” (Matt. 24:2; cf. Matt. 23:37-39).