

THE SONS OF ZADOK

By
Jacob Prasch, Moriel Minsitries

PART 1 - http://www.moriel.org/articles/sermons/sons_of_zadok.htm

Ezekiel 44:1 - 6: *"Then he brought me by way of the outer gate of the sanctuary, which faces the East, and it was shut. And the Lord said to me, 'This gate shall be shut; it shall not be opened, and no one shall enter by it, for the Lord God of Israel has entered by it. Therefore it shall be shut. As for the prince, he shall sit in it as a prince to eat bread before the Lord. He shall enter by way of the portico gate and go out by the same way.*

"Then he brought me by way of the north gate to the front of the house, and I looked, and behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord, and I fell on my face. And the Lord said to me, 'Son of man, mark well; see with your eyes, hear with your ears all that I say to you concerning all the statutes of the house of the Lord, and concerning all its laws. And mark well the entrance of the house with all exits of the sanctuary.

"And you shall say to the rebellious ones, the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord: 'Enough of all your abominations!'"

Continuing with verse 8: *"And you have not kept charge of My holy things yourselves, but you have sent foreigners to keep charge of My sanctuary. Thus says the Lord God: 'No foreigner uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, of all the foreigners among the sons of Israel, shall enter My sanctuary. But the Levites, who went far from Me when Israel went astray, who went astray from Me after their idols, shall bear the punishment for their iniquities. Yet they shall be ministers in My sanctuary, having oversight at the gates of the house, and ministering in the house. They shall slaughter the burnt offering and the sacrifice for the people, and they shall stand before them and minister to them. But because they ministered to them before their idols, and became a stumbling block of iniquity to Israel, therefore I have sworn against them,' declares the Lord, 'that they shall bear the punishment for their iniquity. They shall not come near to Me to serve as priests to Me, nor near to any of My holy things, the things that are most holy to Me; but they shall bear the disgrace of the abominations, which they have committed. Yet I will appoint them to keep charge of the house, of all its servants, and of all that shall be done in it.*

"But the Levitical priests, the sons of Zadok, who kept charge of My sanctuary when the sons of Israel went astray from Me, shall come near to Me to minister to Me, and they shall stand before Me to offer Me the fat and the blood,' declares the Lord God. 'They shall also enter My sanctuary, they shall come near to My table to minister to Me, and keep My charge.

"And it shall be that when they enter the gates of the inner courts they shall be clothed with linen garments, and wool shall not be on them while they are ministering in the gates of the inner court of the house. Linen turbans shall be on their heads, and linen undergarments shall be on their loins. They shall not gird themselves in anything which makes them sweat. And when they go out into the outer court, into the outer court to the people, they shall put up their garments in which they have been ministering and they shall lay them in the holy chambers. Then they shall put on garments, that they might not transmit holiness to the people with their garments.

"Also, they shall not shave their heads, yet they shall not let their locks grow long. They shall only trim the hair of their heads. Nor shall any of the priests drink wine when they enter the inner courts. They shall not

marry a widow or a divorced woman, but shall take virgins from the offspring of the house of Israel, or a widow who is the widow of a priest. Moreover, they shall teach My people the difference between the holy and the profane, and cause them to discern between the clean and the unclean.

"If there is a dispute, they shall take their stand to judge. They shall judge it according to My ordinances. They shall also keep My laws and My statutes and all My appointed feasts, and sanctify My Sabbath."

Ezekiel's name in Hebrew means 'in the strength of God'. Like all of Israel's prophets, his name indicates something about his character and the nature of his ministry. Also like all of the Hebrew prophets (he was specifically a prophet to Judah), he prophesied for three time frames: he prophesied for his own time, for the first coming of Jesus, and for the Return of Christ. Thirdly, like all of the Hebrew prophets, Ezekiel is a type -- an Old Testament foreshadowing -- of the Messiah. He is the only person in the Bible other than Jesus who is called 'the son of man'.

In the book of Daniel it says that the king saw 'one walking as the son of man', and I have personally always been convinced that that was a Christophany; an Old Testament manifestation of Jesus Christ. Again, the only person called 'the son of man' with the definite article, other than Jesus, is Ezekiel. He is a picture of Jesus eschatologically, specifically in the Millennium. The second half of Ezekiel's book is largely concerned with the millennial reign of Jesus; that is its ultimate meaning.

This week you have perhaps heard about the riots and the shootings going on at the Temple Mount; we are certainly getting closer and closer to the Return of the Lord. Zechariah chapter 12 tells us that Jerusalem will be a stumbling block to the nations round about it; the ultimate issue in the Middle East will not be the Golan Heights, nor the West Bank or the Gaza Strip -- it will be Jerusalem. Jerusalem is where Satan received his biggest defeat, and it is also where he will receive his final defeat; he knows this. Therefore, Jerusalem is a source of contention; there is a spiritual battle going on over that particular piece of turf.

Ezekiel prophesies about this, and he sees the East Gate being shut. Now ultimately, this will take place in the Millennium when Jesus reigns from the City of David and the *Shekinah* goes through the East Gate. Ultimately, that is its meaning. However, it has a partial historic fulfillment already: Hebrew prophecy is a pattern. The Jews believed due to Zechariah 9:9 that the Messiah would come on a donkey, and they believed that He would enter the East Gate, or what we call in Hebrew *shaar HaRachamin*, which is literally 'The Gate of Mercy'. It lies on the western slope of the Temple Mount, opposite the Mount of Olives, with the Kidron Valley in the middle. If you have seen the East Gate, it is now cemented up. This happened because there was once a Turkish sultan during the Ottoman Empire, after they had conquered Israel, who knew that the Messiah would have to come through that gate according to Jewish beliefs. So he put an Islamic cemetery in front of the East Gate so that the Messiah could not go through it without being ritually defiled, and he cemented up the gate. He did not know, of course, that he was in part causing the prophecy to be fulfilled concerning the East Gate.

When the second Temple was built, the Hebrew was promised that its glory would exceed that of the first Temple. Its architecture was not as great as that of the first Temple, but even more importantly, it did not have the Ark of the Covenant. Yet they were promised in the days of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Haggai that its glory would exceed that of the first. Indeed it has; its glory exceeded that of the first temple because the Lord God Himself entered the second temple. Yet after the Lord had entered it, the gate would be sealed up. Therefore, Jewish people today who do not believe in Jesus have a problem: if the gate is sealed, the Lord God had to have already entered by it. When did God enter it? Jesus, of course, was the Messiah, and He entered it. But again, the ultimate fulfillment of this will be in the Millennium.

A born-again evangelical Christian archaeologist by the name of Dr. Jim Fleming found Herodian stones beneath the present East Gate; so we know that it is built on the same site as the gate, which Jesus went through.

In Ezekiel's day, something, which had been predicted by Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Joel, was already underway. The northern tribes had already gone into captivity in 720 B.C.; now God's judgment was coming on the south -- on Judah. Isaiah and Joel warned about this, but their message was rejected. Jeremiah warned about it, and was persecuted. People preferred to listen to the false prophets. By Ezekiel's day, it was underway, thus proving that Jeremiah had been right, while the popular false prophets were proven wrong. Yet remarkably, the people still would not repent. The captivity was already underway; Nebuchadnezzar had invaded four times. In fact, Ezekiel himself was prophesying from the captivity. People were saying things like, "It's not so bad", "It's going to get better", "It will be short-lived", when in fact it was going to get worse.

What happens here? It is an amazing thing: false prophets do not repent even when proven wrong, and then people forget that they prophesied falsely, and simply go on listening to the next false prophecy. Meanwhile, the true prophet is proven right, but they still reject him. Now they are rejecting Ezekiel in the same way they rejected Jeremiah before him.

Ezekiel shows a contrast between two kinds of clergy: the sons of Zadok and the ordinary Levites. Not all Levites were Zadokites, but all Zadokites were Levites. Let us begin by understanding about Zadok: the name comes from the Hebrew word *Tsodek* meaning 'to be right', which is also the Hebrew word for 'to be correct', which is also related to the Hebrew word for 'to be righteous'. The Hebrew word for 'a righteous one' is *Tsadek*; one who is righteous. The Hebrew word for 'righteousness' is also the Hebrew word for 'charity'. This word is *Tsdaka*.

As I have previously explained, in Hebrew thought sonship means more than pedigree; it means 'in the character of'. For example, we have two pictures of the Messiah in the Hebrew faith: *ha Moshiach ben Yosef* and *ha Moshiach ben David*; Messiah the Son of Joseph, who is a suffering servant, and Messiah the Son of David, who is a conquering king. Jesus came in the character of Joseph at His first coming, but He will return in the character of David to set up His kingdom. In Matthew 16 Jesus rebukes Peter, but before He rebukes him he calls him 'Simon bar Jonah', in Aramaic 'son of' Jonah. Why? In one sense, one of Peter's father's names may have been Jonah, like the prophet. But in Biblical times Jews would name their children after heroes and characters of Israel's more ancient Biblical history, in the aspiration that the child would grow up to emulate the virtues of these figures. Jonah was somebody who argued with God; his first argument with God was at Joppa. What happens at Joppa with Peter in Acts chapter 10? He begins arguing with God. Jonah did not want to go to the Gentiles; neither did Peter. Simon bar Jonah; he is in the character of Jonah. Jesus Son of David is in the character of David; His biological father was not David, though David was one of His ancestors. In the same way, the Zadokites were in the character of Zadok. Zadok was the Old Testament priest who remained loyal to David through the rebellions of Absalom and Sheba. He was a righteous priest who remained loyal. Now, loyalty to David is an Old Testament foreshadowing of loyalty to Christ, the Son of David, the Good Shepherd.

Zadok's sons remained in his character; they were not only biologically descended from him, but they also remained faithful when the rest of the Levitical clergy became corrupt. They stayed faithful for generations, even for centuries. All the way to the time of the Maccabees there were Zadokites, all the way through the Hasmonian period. Finally, then they became corrupt. In Hebrew, Zadokites were called *tzadukim*. What Ezekiel is doing is comparing the righteous clergy -- who were by far the minority, only descending from one lineage -- with the other Levites, the popular clergy, who were unrighteous. He begins highlighting the differences between the ordinary Levites and the Zadokites. They were all sons of Levi.

In Biblical thought, in the Hebrew language -- which Paul tries to communicate to Greeks in Philippi, as I will show you momentarily -- one cannot be righteous unless one is right. If one is not *tzodek*, one cannot be a *tsadek*. In other words, if what you believe is wrong, you have no chance of being righteous. The fact that what you believe is right, however, does not guarantee that you are righteous. One can believe what is right and still be unrighteous; Paul tells us this in I Corinthians 13. It cannot be assumed that because someone's doctrine is right, they are also right. It may be an indication of righteousness, and in fact it is;

however, it does not prove righteousness. However, if what someone believes is wrong, that person cannot be righteous.

Philippians 1:9: *"And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment."* Notice that real love, agape love, is dependent on Biblical knowledge and discernment. If there is no discernment and no knowledge of the Scripture, real love cannot abound. The political correctness of the world has found its way into the church, and it makes love and truth mutually exclusive. In actual fact, however, God says that they are mutually dependent. One cannot really love if one has unbelief. (This is dealt with also in the teaching on Leviticus 2, The Typology of the Grain Offering, with the honey and the leaven.)

Ephesians 6:13: *"Therefore take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to resist the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness."* Notice that truth comes before righteousness. I once saw actual Roman armor at the ruins of the Coliseum in Rome. People were smaller then, but even by modern standards it is fairly heavy. The armor had to be put on in a certain way and in a certain order; Paul goes through that order in which the armor had to be put on. The gird was pulled up above the waist, and held the heavier pieces of armor in place. Unless you put on the gird first, you could not keep the breastplate on. In the same way, unless you have truth, you cannot be righteous; truth comes first, righteousness second. If what you believe is false, you cannot be righteous.

Today we find people talking a lot of garbage, which goes something like this: "Well, I know this man is wrong about his belief in faith-prosperity, but he is still a good brother"; "I know that Pensacola is really not a revival, but the leader is such a loving man". But if he lacks knowledge of God's Word and is undiscerning, he is not a loving man. Love can only abound where there is knowledge and discernment. I once met Bill Hybels briefly. Is he a nice man? Oh, a very nice man. But is he a righteous man? No, he is not, because what he believes is false. Truth comes before righteousness, because unless you know the truth, you won't know what righteousness is. One cannot know the difference between right and wrong unless one first has the truth.

Yet people protest: "Oh, but he's such a good brother", "Oh, but they are such nice people", "Oh, they're so charitable, so caring, so loving, they do so much for the poor". No. Mother Teresa was very charitable; yet several months before she died, she made it clear that she only converted Hindus and Moslems to be better Hindus and Moslems; she sent those people to hell without Christ in the name of being charitable. Love can only abound where there is discernment and knowledge. The Bible tells us that other gods are demons; the gods of Hinduism are demonic. Mother Teresa had no discernment, nor did she have any knowledge of God's Word; therefore true love could not abound. What real good is it to pick people up, clean them off, give them a place to die with dignity -- and there is a lot more to that than most people have heard; we've mainly heard the embellished public relations stories, but when you talk to those in the medical profession who worked with her, you find there was much to be desired in what she did -- and then send them to hell for a Christless eternity? Charity depends upon truth and discernment.

Notice that the first difference Ezekiel points out between the sons of Zadok and the ordinary Levites is this, in chapter 44:8: ". . . they set foreigners to keep charge of My sanctuary." Whenever there was a true move of God, the foreigner was kicked out. The Levite gave place to the secretly hostile alien; the Zadokites would kick the aliens out.

To see how this works out in a true move of God, let's look at Nehemiah 13. This is after the captivity is over; they had learned their lessons the hard way, and had longed to come back. Then, when Satan tried to seduce them, it did not work. Nehemiah 13:1: *"And that day they read aloud from the book of Moses in the hearing of the people."* Notice that there was a real move of God, with the rededication of the Temple and the city, the walls being rebuilt the emphasis on Scripture; there was revival here. In Nehemiah 8 there were all-day Bible studies; notice that everything was based on Scripture. When there is a real move of God, the Word of God will be central and paramount; everything else will be derived from what is

in the Bible. The minute you see people going to experience or subjective revelation and prophecy, you know it is not a real move of God -- or, if it is a real move of God, it has been corrupted. A real move of God will be based 110% on Scripture. True prophecy is always based on the Bible; it is never a replacement for it, though that is what we see happening today. People are replacing what is in Scripture with personal 'words', following people who are obviously false prophets, such as Kim Clement and Rick Joyner.

"In the hearing of the people, it was found written that no Ammonite or Moabite should ever enter the assembly of God, because they did not meet the sons of Israel with bread and water, but hired Balaam against them to curse them. However, our God turned the curse into a blessing. So it came about that when they heard the law, they excluded all foreigners from Israel." Notice that these foreigners who tried to join with Israel had an agenda to take over. Here with Sanballat and his people, they were enemies pretending to be friends, claiming, "our god is your God, and we're one with you". There was a false basis for unity; they had a hidden agenda.

"Now, prior to this, Eliakim the priest, who was appointed over the chamber of the house of our God, being related to Tobiah" -- now, the word 'related' there is ambiguous. It could mean physically related, but it could also simply mean 'close to' -- *"had prepared a large room, where formerly they put the grain offering, the frankincense, the utensils, the tithes of grain, wine and oil prescribed for the Levites, the singers, the gatekeepers; the contributions for the priests."* Notice that when they brought this alien in, who had a secret agenda, the grain, the wine, and the oil stopped. The grain -- the Word of God. Real anointing -- the oil. Real worship -- the wine. Where the singers used to be, real worship stopped. Real teaching, the feeding of the grain to the people, stopped. The real anointing stopped. It all stops when you bring the alien in.

The alien's name was Tobiah, which in Hebrew means 'the goodness of Yahweh'. He is a bad man with a good name; many of the most sinister people in the Bible had good names. Absalom, for example, was a very bad man with a good name, as was Abimelech. This alludes to something about the Antichrist, though we will not go into that at this time. So here we have a bad man with a good name who is close to the high priest. He was an alien with a secret agenda, he was really bad, he meant them no good, yet he had a good name; and he got in bed with the clergy. The pope has a good name with Billy Graham; but he is an alien. What did the pope say two weeks ago? The Roman church is the one true church, same old story. Last year in Mexico, what did he say? He told the Catholics to rise up against the Protestants. As a result, there were churches burned and Christians killed in Mexico. The pope is an evil man, "All to You, Mary," is written on his sleeve and is his personal belief. The man is an idolater and a necromancer. Yet he has a good name; Chuck Colson thinks he's wonderful. "He's the holy Father," says Robert Schuller. The Levite will always give place to the secretly hostile alien, but the righteous clergy will kick him out.

Ecumenism is the first step toward the interfaith movement. They say that the pope is a great Christian leader, and the pope says that the Dalai Lama -- a man, who says that there is no God, yet allows himself to be worshiped -- is a great spiritual leader. This is what Revelation warned about; yet he has a good name. He is allowed into God's house.

Today we have many people like Eliakim; Chuck Colson is one of them. Chuck Colson is a very dangerous man; he is more of a danger to the cause of Christ than any homosexual, any pornographer, or any freemason -- he is much more dangerous. An external enemy can be dealt with, but if a cancer is spreading in the body, look out. Colson's wife is a practicing Catholic who says that Catholics should not be witnessed to. If you are an ex-Catholic, the Catholic Church says that you're on your way to hell for leaving the one true church. And Chuck Colson has sold you out.

What was the second contrasting characteristic in Ezekiel 44? Look at verse 10: ". . . *the Levites who went astray from Me when Israel went astray*". Isaiah begins by castigating the clergy for leading the people astray. Jeremiah begins in the same way. Earlier in his ministry, Ezekiel begins also by following

the examples of his predecessors, Isaiah and Jeremiah. However, in the second half of his book, Ezekiel reverses it. He no longer says that it is the leaders leading the people away; the problem becomes the people leading the leaders astray. In other words, the blame of the leaders here is not that they are misleading the people, but that they are failing to be leaders. Instead, they are letting the people dictate what should be done. A Levite will always give the people what they say they want; the Zadokites, on the other hand, will give the people what God says they need.

PART 2 - http://www.moriel.org/articles/sermons/sons_of_zadok2.htm

Today the big philosophy in church growth is, 'find out what the people want and give it to them.' It is derived from the model of Bill Hybels church in Willow Creek. Do your market research, find out what the people want, and give it to them. There are a lot of very unscriptural ideas and influences coming from people like Peter Wagner and others, on how to grow a church. Whenever you use a human discipline or management philosophy, it must always be subordinate to Scripture. It has been said that the bait you use to catch someone is the food you must feed him in order to keep him. The church will therefore become more and more like the world. 'Oh, they want Christian rock music and smoke machines, so we'll give it to them'. So instead of having worship services, you basically have rock concerts in church, based not on the worship of God but on the worship of worship. That's one example; there are others. There are churches that have food courts in them. There are pastors attending seminars at Willow Creek in Chicago to learn church growth.

One month ago, hundreds and perhaps even thousands of evangelical pastors met at Willow Creek Church with Bill Hybels, who interviewed President Clinton. In the Old Testament history of Israel, God's judgment was looming because of the genocidal atrocity of sacrificing children to demons. God put up with a lot of things; He put up with immorality, social injustice, and even idolatry. But once they began taking babies and sacrificing them to other gods in a cruel manner, God drew the line. Judgment must come; even if there were a revival, it would only delay the judgment, not stop it altogether. We see this in the days of Josiah. The revival only delayed the inevitable because of the blood of the babies under Manasseh.

God's judgment is looming over the Protestant democracies, including the United States, because of abortion. 35 million babies murdered, with less than one percent of them aborted for any clinical reason. Now we have partial-birth abortion; this procedure involves a suboccipital puncture -- puncturing the baby's skull -- and suboccipital insertion of a catheter into the baby's cranium, followed by suction of the baby's brain from his or her skull while he or she is still alive. This is partial-birth abortion, supported vehemently by the present administration.

What did Amos, Isaiah, and Jeremiah say to the national leaders about the immorality that was going to bring God's judgment? They openly confronted the king, knowing that they would be persecuted for doing so. But what did Bill Hybels say about partial-birth abortion -- or any abortion, for that matter? What did Bill Hybels say about militant and radical homosexuality, with lesbianism being promoted by Clinton and his wife? Not one word. He was 'politically correct,' and people are looking to him. What did Biblical leaders say to the national leaders when they were bringing God's judgment? We are talking here about little babies having their brains sucked out; yet not one word is said. "Give the people what they want."

But the righteous clergy give the people what they need. They were the minority. Let us look further, to understand how this works.

Ezekiel 44:11; God leaves them in place. Don't worry; God says in verse ten that they will bear the consequences of their iniquity -- they will not get away with anything. Yet God leaves them in place for a season, to be ministers in the sanctuary. In verse 11 it says that they shall stand before the people and minister to the people; but in verse 15, the Zadokites kept charge of the sanctuary when the Lord's people went astray. "*They shall stand before Me.*" A Levite will always minister to the people; a Zadokite will minister to the Lord.

When the Levites give the people what they want, you don't see a real move of God. There are places in the United States which are having real moves of God; there is something of a genuine revival taking place in my native New York City, with the radical decrease in crime and so on. There is an incredible move of God in David Wilkerson's Times Square Church in Manhattan and in Jim Simbola's church, Brooklyn Tabernacle. I remember when that was a small group of people meeting in a YWCA; now it's a congregation of ten or twelve thousand. This has spread to other areas of the Northeast. Their growth is not based on people leaving one church for another; it is based on people being saved. I once taught a Bible study in David Wilkerson's church's rescue mission, called the Upper Room; every day we saw drug addicts, prostitutes, and homosexuals get saved. People are saved during every meeting in Wilkerson's church. I'm not saying he's perfect, but he is honest. The crime rate has plummeted in New York; the current murder rate is lower than that of 1964. This is opposed to places in which there has been no change and no growth, such as Pensacola, Toronto, and London, where instead things have gotten worse.

If I take money from my right pocket and move it into my left pocket, am I any better off financially? What kind of businessman, or any person, would do such a thing and think themselves richer? Much of this seeker-friendly stuff, 'give the people what they want', is transfer growth. People leaving one church for another to have their ears tickled, as Paul tells us. They find somebody who tells them what they want to hear. This is not people being saved; it's not the forces of darkness being challenged; it's not immorality being thrown back. It's people taking money from one pocket and transferring it to another. No businessman could run a business on transfer growth, taking money from one column and putting it into another. Only a Pentecostal preacher can get away with that. Believe me, I should know; I am a Pentecostal preacher. I am embarrassed to admit that the Pentecostal ministry has become a dumping ground for people who simply cannot do anything else. Do you really think that these guys could be electricians or plumbers and build up a good business? Could they be dentists or mathematicians? No, they're not intelligent enough. The Pentecostal ministry becomes for these people a ticket to the success they couldn't achieve in the world. I am not saying that they're all this way, but most of what we see today is like that. It's all hype artistry, psychological manipulation, and pop psychology, not the Bible. It's 'give the people what they want'; they're pandering to a market.

A lot of people knew Pensacola was not a revival. A lot of Assemblies of God ministers knew it was wrong, just as a lot of them knew that the PTL club was not of God. They went along with it anyway, why? Because the people liked it! 'If we don't have it,' they said, 'we'll lose members to the church up the street that does have it.' You see, they are no longer running a church; instead, they are running a business, an enterprise. Just as you have to give the customers what they want if you run a haberdashery shop, you have to give the customers what they want if you're running a church. They are ministering to the people and not to the Lord.

A Zadokite, however, a righteous clergyman, would rather teach the truth to 50 people than teach error to 50,000. He is ministering to the Lord, you see. The other guy, verse 11, he's ministering to the people.

There was no revival in Pensacola, and none in Toronto. No real revival like we see in New York City, with people really getting saved. That didn't happen in London at Holy Trinity Brompton with the Alpha Courses; the city has actually only gotten worse. All they do is get people leaving one church for another, and then say that the Lord is blessing them, for look how they've grown. But that's silly; it is sheer idiocy. We have men standing in pulpits today behaving like idiots. Not a nice word; but Paul uses the word idiotae in Corinthians.

I think that people should leave bad churches in order to come to good ones; yet the Gospel should be our focus. One danger that can happen in good churches is this: Because they will stand up for truth against the error, they wind up becoming hospitals for Christians who have been ripped off and abused in bad churches, and lose their own evangelistic focus. This shouldn't be allowed to happen; a balance

should be kept. It can easily happen that a good church becomes a hospital for abused Christians rather than focusing on evangelistic outreach to the community.

What comes next? *"It shall be that when they enter, they shall be clothed with linen garments; wool shall not be on them while they are ministering in the gates to the inner court of the house. Linen turbans shall be on their heads, and linen undergarments shall be on their loins. They shall not gird themselves with anything which makes them sweat."* This refers to an elaborate Hebrew ritual for the Day of Atonement called the Mustafa. We read about this ritual in an ancient rabbinic tractate called yoma, which describes what the Day of Atonement was like in the day of Jesus. When you read the book of Hebrews in light of its background, you understand Hebrews a lot better. In this ritual, the high priest is of course a picture of Christ, as we are told in Hebrews. But when he went to the Holy of Holies once a year, he put on different clothes that the people could not see; all-white linen garments. He looked different from the way he normally looked when he went into the Holy of Holies; this is a picture of Christ as well, when Jesus went before the Father to make atonement for our sin. It was a mystery what happened behind the curtain while the high priest was behind it; when he went before the Father, he was different than when he was before the people. The apostles only had glimpses of this; the transfiguration, or later on when John saw Jesus in His manifest glory. And although John knew Jesus humanly, when he saw Him in His divinity, he was shocked in Revelation chapter 1. They saw one Jesus; but when He went in back of that curtain, as it were, to make atonement, they didn't see Him. Likewise the high priest had to change his clothes and put on these linen vestments once a year, that he would not transmit holiness to the people. After the final sacrifice on the Day of Atonement, he would again put on his ordinary clothes and come down the Temple Mount stairs on the south, to the City of David, and then he would make a right, turning west, and go up the stairs to the upper city where the high priest lived. As he attempted to come down the stairs and go up again to the upper city, the people would grab onto him and pull him, saying 'don't leave, don't leave,' and surrounding him. He would have to battle his way through the crowds in order to leave. After Jesus made the atonement for our sins, he said "I ascend now to My Father," and they did not want him to go; yet He said that it was to their (and our) advantage that He goes.

Notice that the high priest could not have a mixture. The Levites had a mixture, but the Zadokites had none. The Zadokites could also not wear anything that would make them sweat. Why? Let's begin by looking at the mixture: they were forbidden to make a garment of flax and wool. God hates the mixture; He despises the mixture. Two passages we will touch on briefly: 2 Peter 2:1: *"False prophets arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you,"* Peter uses false prophets and false teachers synonymously and interchangeably, why? Because if someone's doctrines are wrong, their prophecies will also be wrong! The reason that Kim Clement, Paul Cain, Rick Joyner, and Gerald Coates get it wrong -- the reason their prophecies don't happen -- is that their doctrines are false. ". . . *who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them.*" Joyce Meyer did this; she said in her book that if you do not believe that Jesus went to hell, you cannot go to heaven. Kenneth Hagin and Kenneth Copeland got their beliefs from E.W. Kenyan; they too deny the Master who bought them.

". . . secretly introducing damnable heresies . . ." We translate it 'destructive', but a better word is 'damnable'. That phrase is man's best effort to translate this Greek word, *parasaxousin*. Para is the Greek prefix meaning 'next to'. It means that they put truth adjacent or next to error. In other words, they use truth to camouflage error. 'There is always real cheese in the rat trap.' What did Satan do when he tempted Adam and Eve? When the serpent beguiled the woman -- a figure of Israel and the church being seduced -- he took something the Lord said out of context. What did Satan do in Matthew chapter 4 when he tempted Jesus? The whole argument was from the book of Deuteronomy. Satan would quote from Deuteronomy, and Jesus would answer from Deuteronomy. Satan put truth next to error; he took verses out of context. Jesus answered in context.

When you see people taking verses out of context and making it a pretext -- Rodney Howard-Browne is a master at it, and Mike Bickle is another -- that is the signature of Satan; Lucifer manifesting himself as an angel of light. What does he do? He puts truth next to error. And Peter calls them 'damnable' heresies;

some Bibles translate the word as "destructive"; the King James is more accurate in this case, and calls them 'damnable'. "Oh, there's some truth in Pensacola!" "Someone once was actually healed at a Benny Hinn crusade!" For one thing, we know of people who were pronounced healed by Hinn who are now dead, and we know that there is no medical documentation of true healings. But even if there was, Matthew 7:22 -- "Lord, we did miracles in your name --" "I never knew you." A true healing would not prove anything about Benny Hinn.

People so often defend these things by pointing out that there is some good in it, some truth in it. Yes, and by virtue of the fact that it is a mixture of truth and error, it is clearly not of God. "Oh, there's some good in it!" -- God has damned it. There is a false wisdom of man, which goes something like this: "Eat the meat and spit out the bones." Again, think of a three-egg omelet, in which two of the eggs are good but one is rotten. If you want botulism, bon appetit. God hates the mixture; His priests were forbidden to have a mixture.

Paul compares his own ministry and those of Timothy and Silvanus with the Benny Hinns and Kenneth Copelands of the day, saying this in I Thessalonians 2:3: *"Our exhortation does not come from error or impurity or by way of deceit, but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the Gospel, so we speak not as pleasing men, but God, who examines our hearts. We never came with flattering speech, as you know, nor with a pretext of greed -- God is witness. Nor did we seek glory from men -- either from you or from others, even though as apostles of Christ we might have exerted our authority."*

The true apostles were being compared to the false ones. What the false apostles did were flatter people with a motivation of greed -- in other words, to get money out of them. They went around flattering people, telling them what they wanted to hear, in order to get money from them. Today they're going around prophesying over people, telling them "You're going to do this and have that and the other thing", and then they take up a really big offering. The fact that none of it happens doesn't matter; the people go back for still more false prophecies.

Jeremiah 5 says that the prophets prophesy falsely and God's people love it so, but look at what God says through Paul: *"Our exhortation does not come from error or impurity or by way of deceit . . ."* Error, impurity, or by way of deceit. It begins with error; doctrinal error becomes mixed. That word for 'mix' is *akatharis*, mix or mixture of pure and impure. The whole thing is impure because some of it is; it's a mixture. Get a nice big glass of orange juice, and then pour in a few drops of arsenic; it becomes a homogeneous solution, doesn't it? Can you decide to swallow the juice and spit out the arsenic? When you hear people saying that we have to 'eat the meat and spit out the bones', they don't know the Greek language for one thing, but they don't know basic doctrine either. Those are the babbling words of foolish men. It is impossible to swallow the juice and spit out the arsenic; it's *akatharis*. That is how deception works. Error gets mixed with truth, leaving you with this mixture, which is an impurity; the result of which is spiritual deception. Deception works by mixing truth and error. It is ridiculous to try to spit out the arsenic and swallow the juice, yet that is what people will tell you to do: "We shouldn't reject all of it; there's some good in Toronto." At best a person who would say that is an ignoramus with no Biblical right to be behind a pulpit. If someone is unable to teach, unable to rightly divide the Word of God, that person has no right to be in the ministry. James says, "Let few of you be teachers," for teachers will be judged more strictly than the rest. When we stand before Jesus, your pastor and I are going to be held more accountable than most of you. And yet there are people who will teach you that you can swallow the juice and spit out the arsenic. But that's absurd; it's homogeneous! I don't mind that these people don't know Greek, but some of them don't even know English.

There is a mixture; now, the mixture will make them sweat. But the Zadokites were different; they would not perspire, because there was no mixture. Their garments were pure linen. Revelation 19:8: *"It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints."* A Zadokite wore pure linen; his deeds were no mixture, so there would be no sweat. The Levite had a mixture, so there would be perspiration. In other words, a Zadokite would rest in the Lord, whereas the Levite would strive in the flesh. Again, if I only have 100 people in my church and they are the 100

that God has given me, I am going to teach them the truth and I will rest in the Lord. I will be content with what I have, and ask that the Lord may add to my numbers. I will do my evangelism, I will preach the Gospel, I will pray, I'll seek the Lord, I'll do all that I can do; but it is the Lord who gives the increase. I'm not going to sweat about it.

Today's Levites, by contrast, get one program after another. They are program-oriented, and become event-oriented. They have to put on one big event after another to bring in numbers in order to bring in money to pay for the program that has never been ordained of God. They are striving in the flesh; they sweat. They have to worry. There is some good in what they say and what they teach, of course, because it is a mixture. A Zadokite will strive to be in the Lord, for that is where his rest is. Remember Jesus as our Sabbath rest? A Zadokite will strive to be in the Lord. Anything he does will be a result of his abiding in the Lord. A Levite, however, will strive in the flesh. He'll have to get the latest gimmick, the latest program, the latest church-growth plan; and if those don't work, he'll have to get others. He'll always be a mixture. There's a mixture in what he preaches, a mixture in what he believes, and a mixture in what he does. It is impure; it is akatharis, because he is trying to please man instead of pleasing God.

Verse 23 of Ezekiel 44: *"They shall teach My people the difference between holy and profane, and cause them to discern."* A Levite and a Zadokite; a Zadokite will teach discernment. A Levite will be politically correct; he will not teach discernment. If your pastor is not teaching discernment, if he is not teaching the people to discern, he is not a faithful leader. Only a righteous leader will teach discernment. When you see churches that will not deal with error, will not teach the people what is wrong with what's being shown and espoused on popular 'Christian' television -- when you see people who will not take a stand and warn people when they go to a Christian book shop what kinds of books to keep away from -- when you find that discernment is not being taught in a church -- that is a Levite, not a Zadokite. He will always compromise. A Levite will always compromise truth. Once people begin compromising truth, it won't be long before they are compromising morality. Give them enough time, and the same guys will begin to compromise morality.

Finally, we're told, ". . . they will take their stand in a dispute, and judge according to My statutes." A Zadokite, a righteous minister, will take a stand in a dispute and judge Biblically. Again, a Levite will be politically correct. He will come down on the fence. In England we have a Baptist preacher whom I once respected, though I no longer can, by the name of David Pawson. He watched the videos of the laughing revival, and he was appalled; but when his followers began writing to him to ask whether it was of God or not, instead of telling them the truth, he called Toronto a 'yellow light'. It wasn't red, nor was it green; in other words, he said, proceed with caution; go into it cautiously. It's a mixture, he said; and he's a man who knows Greek as well as I do. By virtue of the fact that it is a mixture, it should not be gone into. He was told that by me and by another pastor, yet it did not change his mind. It was not politically correct to take a stand. Why would he not take a stand? Because he no longer ministers to the Lord, he ministers to the people. It is a tragedy, because he is a man who did take a stand in the past. He took a stand on a lot of issues; he stood against annihilationism, he said that leadership is male -- he took a stand in the past, but now he no longer takes a stand. Now he bails out. He will not take a stand in a dispute.

"It's a mixture," he says. Of course it's a mixture! That very fact tells you it is not God, that it is damnable. How can you try to defend something, which, according to Peter, God has damned? If God has damned something, it is indefensible. There's nothing more to be said.

Remember that Ezekiel prophesies not only for his own day or even for the first coming of Jesus, he also prophesied for now.

In whatever church you go to, does your minister give place to the secretly hostile alien? Will he fool around with the liberal Protestants or the Roman church, people with a stated agenda? Will he go down the road to Babylon? When that happens, true worship ends, the grain is no longer being shoveled out for the people, and the wine and oil are gone. Does your leader give place to the alien, or does he kick the alien out?

Does your pastor give the people what they say they want, or does he give the people what God says they need? In other words, does he minister to the people, or does he minister to the Lord?

Does your minister strive in the flesh? Does he allow a mixture of what is right and wrong, true and false, Biblical and unbiblical, spiritual and carnal? Does he allow for *akatharis*? Does he tell you to eat the meat and spit out the bones? And if there is a mixture, in the process of it is your minister always striving in the flesh for another gimmick, another program, and another 'celebration/praise' event? Or is he someone who has no mixture; what he teaches and what he does is purely Scriptural? Does he rest in the Lord? Would he rather have 100 people that he can teach the truth to than 5,000 to whom he can only give a mixture?

Does your pastor teach God's people discernment? Does he teach you to discern? Does he protect the sheep from the wolves? Or is he a hireling as described by Jesus in John 10, who is not a shepherd, who is out for his hire -- his job, his housing allowance, his credentials, his standing in the community? Is he a hireling or a pastor? Does he teach discernment, or does he compromise truth?

Finally, on a disputed issue such as seeker-friendliness, the Alpha courses, Promise Keepers, or the laughing 'revival', will he take his stand and judge Biblically? Or will he rather come down on the fence, refusing to take a stand and refusing to judge Biblically, even though he knows better, as so many of these guys do?

These are not questions for me to answer; these are only questions for me to ask. I don't know all of you, and I don't know what churches you go to. I am only asking the question: your leader -- is he a Levite or a Zadokite?

If your minister is a Zadokite -- if he is somebody who will kick the alien out, who will give the people what God says they need, who ministers to the Lord rather than to men, in whom there is no mixture in what he teaches, believes and does, who will rather rest in the Lord than strive in the flesh, who will teach people to discern, and who will take a stand in a dispute -- if that is your pastor, you stand by him. You pray for him, you support him financially, and you help him in any way you can. He may not be a perfect man, but he is a good man, and he is God's man. You stand by him, you pray for him, you support him, you be loyal to him so long as he is loyal to the Word of God. He needs your prayers, he deserves your support, and he is entitled to your help.

On the other hand, if your minister is a Levite -- if he will give place to the alien and walk down the ecumenical path to Babylon, if he'll give the people what they want, if there is a mixture in what he teaches, believes and does, if he will not teach discernment but rather is politically correct, will not take his stand in a dispute and does not want any controversy -- do not sit under that man's ministry, do not bring your family under his ministry. He is not a shepherd; he is at best a hireling or an incompetent. He is somebody who does not deserve your support. You can pray for him, but get away from him and get your family away from him, and take anybody else away from him that you can. He is leading the sheep to destruction. At best, he is an ignoramus who should not be behind a pulpit. Don't support his ministry, don't support him financially, don't stand by him, and don't be loyal to him, because if you are you are being loyal to something not of God. God has damned what he does. If he is not right, he is not and cannot possibly be righteous.

Again, I am not the one to answer this question, only the one to ask it. Is your minister a Levite or a Zadokite?