

THE VENGEANCE OF GOD (Part 4)

Bertie Brits

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In this teaching Bertie explains the vengeance of God in the return of Christ.

This message is about the vengeance of God and what God has done for us in Jesus Christ. I preached on this on the previous three sessions and the reason why I teach about this is simple: If you are afraid of God, then you will not have boldness towards Him.

In any relationship, the moment you are afraid of somebody then you will not make contact with him, you will not talk to him, you will avoid him. If you owe money to a shop, all of a sudden you will not go to that shop any more, because you are afraid of the vengeance of the shop owner to whom you owe money. It's the same truth between God and us. If we come and we say that we are indebted to God or God has this vengeance and this outpouring where He is going to destroy us in the last days in the return of Christ, we will not have boldness toward God. We will be afraid of God and especially if we find twenty preachers come preaching scriptures from the bible talking about this outpouring of the fire of God in the last days when He is just going to destroy everybody who does not want to do His will.

I want to tell you this: God is not in the destruction of people business! In the last teaching I talked about how the people didn't want to allow Jesus to walk through a certain town and the sons of thunder said to Jesus, "Jesus, shall we call fire from heaven, like Elijah, and consume all these people?" Jesus said, "No, we shall not do that! You don't know what spirit you are of. I have not come to destroy people's lives but to save them." Here is a case where people didn't want to allow Jesus to walk through their city. Imagine what a bad thing that is! If I think of my town, and Jesus was outside of our town and He calls and asks if He can walk through your town, and I tell Him, "No." Imagine that! How rude would that be! The disciples found it so rude that they felt that was enough reason to call down fire from heaven to destroy all the people in town. Jesus said, "You don't know the spirit of God! You don't know what spirit you are of. You don't know the attitude of God inside the throne room. You don't know that. You are not mindful of that. You are still under the spirit of judgment and condemnation. That's why you want to destroy people's lives if they refuse to allow Jesus to walk through their town."

I think we have had the very same thing in church. We would say, "Jesus is saying, 'I want to walk through your finances. I want to walk through your marriage. I want to walk through here and there.'" If people say, "No," maybe they are not sure or whatever the reason might be, then we would, all of a sudden, want to announce condemnation and all those kind of things over these people. But that is not the way God functions. That is not the heart of God.

If we live with fear in our hearts it will destroy our relationship with God. Any relationship, be it a marital relationship, be it a father and son relationship, be it a relationship between you and workers, or whatever, if the relationship is fear based, if they are scared of you, that relationship will never be able to reach its maximum potential. That is just the way it is. You might have some form of relationship but it will not be what it can be.

When we think of the vengeance of God we think of fire coming from heaven destroying people and all those kind of things. We will have to go and look at some scriptures in the New Testament and in the Old Testament as pertaining to the vengeance of God so that we can find peace in our hearts. We have to look at it from the perspective of grace so that we can find peace in our hearts so that we can come boldly to God.

Any scripture that you read in the bible, be it Old Testament or New Testament, must line up with Jesus and what He has done and what He has shown. Jesus is called the Word of God. Jesus is the perfect and the correct interpretation of every Old Testament verse and every New Testament verse. Everything God wants to say He is saying it inside Jesus. If Jesus wouldn't do it, it is not the Word of God!

So if you are saying that God is going to come and call down fire from heaven and just destroy people's lives, in the return of Christ, and you have your five verses for it, then I want to tell you that you are not understanding those verses. The way in which you interpret those verses is simply wrong and it will leave you in a place where you have fear as the motivator in your relationship with God, where you cannot just really relax.

If I think of my marriage or I think of my finances or business or any of those things kind of things or ministry, the peace that is inside me does not derive from who are my financial supporters. It does not come from what is the next check that is in the mail or what has some business man promised me, or any of that. It wasn't just my decision. It comes from a place where God, over time, bringing my heart to a place where I feel safe with Him, where I know that He will never treat me according to my works. He will always want to deliver me. He will always want to save me. He will always want to bring me to a safe place and from there I find peace. I find joy. It doesn't matter what happens. You find peace in your heart and that peace is born from God.

If I had a belief that said that when God sees something wrong, He keeps score of it and on the last day He is going to pour out fire and burn those who didn't want to listen, something is wrong with it! There are scriptures in the bible that say that we need to fear God. When you look at those verses, and we are going to study them out for what they truly are, it doesn't say that we need to fear God or be afraid of God. It means we need to have reverence or respect for God. It was never God's intention for any of us to ever live in one moment of fear towards Him, where we are afraid of Him!

Imagine Helena and I sit at home and I say, "You know, there aren't a lot of people in town who fear me. Let us have three or four kids so that we can really make them afraid of us. The more they are afraid of us, the more we will bless them. When they hear my name then they will shiver in fear when I get home. If I come home after having worked somewhere for a week, then they will be really scared."

Imagine that. That is not a father/son relationship. That is not what God has intended for us! But when we think of end times, when we think of the return of Christ, people are shaking! They are fearing and they are scared! That was never God's intention! When we think of the return of Christ, it's supposed to bring joy into your heart.

We will now go to Matthew 3 and I will talk about the day of vengeance of God. I already spoke on this in the last three sessions but just bear with me because there may be some who haven't heard this.

John the Baptist comes and he was baptizing in the Jordan River and a lot of the Pharisees came and wanted to know what this guy was doing. Then John said, "Who warned you against the wrath to come, against the vengeance of God? Don't think that you will escape the vengeance of God because you are Jews." That's what he said to them. He said to them, "You think you have Abraham as your father. I want to tell you that you are a brood of vipers. The devil is your father. The snake is your father because the belief system of Satan, which is works, which is "I am what I do," is inside them and they are born from it. So he said to them, "Oh generation of vipers, who has warned you to flee from the coming wrath?"

In other words, what he was saying to them was, "You are a generation of snakes. Nobody has warned you and now you have come to see what I am busy with. As you are watching this, I want to tell you something: 'You are about to be judged by God. You are about to be burned by the fire of God!'"

And then he explains what it is all about. He even says, "The ax is at the root." When he says that he is talking about certain systems and all of that. Let's read it and then I will explain what is exactly going on.

I will first recap: The most important thing I want you to remember is this: We don't have to be afraid of God nor of the End Time judgment! We don't have to be afraid! It's not the plan of God. God is good and His goodness shall be revealed in the End Time judgment! Amen!

The second thing I want you to remember is that any scripture you read in the bible must line up with what Jesus has demonstrated in His life towards sinners and towards people. He loved people! He wept for the Pharisees. He wept for the people who didn't want to accept Him. He said, "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, like a hen wants to gather her chicks, I wanted to gather you but you don't want to." He was crying.

How did Jesus deal with the prostitute and the tax collectors and the outcasts of society? How did He deal with those who nailed Him to the cross? While they were nailing Him, He prayed and said, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."

Now if our message of End Time judgment contradicts the character portrayed in Jesus, IT IS WRONG!

Thirdly, I am going to explain a physical manifestation of the judgment of God when Jesus walked on the earth.

Matthew 3 talks about the day of vengeance of God.

:5 They went out to him, all of Jerusalem and all of Judea, and all the region around the Jordan,

:6 And were baptized by him in the Jordan confessing their sins.

:7 But when he (John the Baptist) saw many Pharisees and Sadducees came to his baptism, he said to them, Oh, generation of vipers, who has warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

:8 Bring forth therefore fruit that is meet for repentance:

In other words what he was saying to these Pharisees was, "Listen, you have all the laws but you don't have good fruit in your life. You think that you are a child of God just because you are a son of Abraham? I want to tell you something: You cannot even do the law you follow.)

:9 And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham as our father: for say to you, that God is able, with these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

:10 And now the ax is laid at the root of the trees: therefore every tree that brings not forth good fruit is cut down, and cast into the fire.

:11 I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance but He that comes after me (talking about Jesus) is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: He shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire:

Now let me explain that. What two trees can you think of if you think of the Garden of Eden, for instance? You can think of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and you can think of the tree of life. The bible says that the ax is against the root of the trees. There are two trees: the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and the ax of God is against the root of those trees. Any one of these trees that cannot produce fruit, any of these trees that cannot produce eternal life inside people, God is going to cut that tree out.

The Jews thought that the law system was the tree of life. They thought that they would have life by the works of the Law. So the tree that they were eating from, Jesus called the fig tree. Remember just before Jesus went to Jerusalem, He cursed the fig tree. When He cursed the tree, the tree just died and then He said, "Never shall any man eat of you again for that tree didn't have fruit. Remember Jesus came to the fig tree and couldn't find any fruit there and then He cursed the tree and the tree withered and died, never to bear fruit. Why did Jesus curse the fig tree? It's very simple. In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve went and they took fig leaves and they wanted to clothe themselves. As they tried to clothe themselves with fig leaves, the fig tree symbolizes man trying to cover himself or clothe himself, by eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil which is a works mentality where you try to find life by your good works.

So Jesus cursed that tree. The ax was at the root of the fig tree. He said, "The ax is at the root of the tree and He will cut the tree down and burn it with an unquenchable fire. He will destroy it. How did Jesus do that? How did Jesus cut away the whole Law System where, "If you are wrong, you cannot be blessed." How did He cut away all of that? At that place where John said that, Jesus came and went into the Jordan River and took the sin of the whole world upon Him. When He took the sin of the whole world and death upon Him, and that death manifested in His body upon the cross, what that means is that the tree by which we have been cursed has nothing to say anymore for its fruit was manifested in the death of Christ and we have been set free from that.

Yet, the Pharisees, and I'm going to use a little bit of typology here, they were selling figs in the market. So by their teaching, they were saying, "Listen, this is what you need to do to have eternal life." They were preachers of that fig tree and here Jesus comes and says, "I'm ending the Law System. I'm ending all of this!" Where does that leave the Pharisees? What Jesus is doing is He is coming and He is burning up their whole theology! He's burning up their way of thinking. They were thinking, "Oh, you know the Jews are special people. It's only about the Jews. They are the people of God and the Messiah would only come for the Jews and not for all people. That God and Jesus would lift the Jews up so high that all the nations will be drawn to them through the financial prosperity that they have and all that rubbish.

In the meantime, what God had in mind, was to end the whole system where one nation is God's special people and where He would declare: "All people are sinners and I take the sin of all people on Me." When Jesus did that, He put the ax to the root of the tree whereby we are justified by our works, and He ended it all!

That is Matthew chapter 3 and it was prophesied from Malachi 4 where it talks about the day of the vengeance of God, the terrible day, where the sun of vengeance will rise. When this sun of vengeance arises it will burn away the enemies of God. It says that just before that terrible day, (the bible calls it the terrible day), there will come John the Baptist.

So here is the terrible day of God which will come one day but just before that day, there will come a guy on the scene, and his name is John the Baptist and he will prepare the way when the day of the Lord will manifest. **This day of vengeance, this day of absolute burning all the chaff, burning all the tree, was when Jesus walked on the earth** when He burned away the mentality that all religions had about who God was, by loving sinners, by raising the dead, multiplying food, feeding the hungry and being a friend of sinners. When He would hang out with tax collectors, took the sin of the whole world upon Himself and declared innocence for mankind! When Jesus did that, He completely destroyed and burned up every concept of God, as an angry God, by manifesting who God is.

That fire is an unquenchable fire. That means you can preach law as long as you want but this fire will destroy your message! You can preach tithing, sowing and reaping, "You must do this," "You must do that," you must bind the devil over your town, your children can have demons if your forefathers had demons, you can preach all of that until you are blue in the face and at the end of the day your doctrine will not stand! It will be found out to not be truth by the love that God manifests towards sinners.

You will find that those people you think shouldn't be blessed are blessed. You will find that the one person who doesn't pray as much as what you think, he has the peace in his heart and things work for him because God showed His love towards man and the love of God burns up the wrong concepts and mentality that we have.

When we look at this vengeance and we think of the end time vengeance, you might say that it is going to be different in the End Time vengeance. You may say, "There is one thing that God struggles with. and that is to change. He struggles to be good one day and bad the next day." No, He is the same, yesterday, today and forever! He can never change! There is no shadow of turning with Him. Let no man say that any evil that comes over his path comes from God.

In the End Time vengeance, the bible says that God will recompense or He will come and He will pour out vengeance upon those who don't love Him.

We can read that in **Hebrews:10**

:25 *Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together,*

This basically means to go to church, fellowship with one another. Let me say this: I am not saying to just go to church. People, if Grace is not preached, unless you have a mandate from God to go and help these people, don't go there! Simple! Because you are going to be indoctrinated again with fear and unbelief in your heart and you will not know why you cannot trust God. One day you will be happy and the next day you will be depressed.

If we must invest money somewhere, we always want to make sure that it is the best investment but when it comes to spirituality, you just want to invest and it doesn't matter what they preach. What they preach is very important!

:25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, and as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as you see the day approaching.

:26 For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more sacrifice for sins,

:27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

:28 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:

:29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose you, shall he be thought worthy, who has trodden under foot the Son of God, and has counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and has done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

Let me explain that. That sounds bad but it is really very good news! He is talking to the Jews, because it is written to the Hebrews, the Jewish people, the Israelites, and he is saying to them, "You want to go back to the Law and have sacrifices. There is no sacrifice that can cleanse you! There is only One who has cleansed you and that is Jesus. So if you willfully go back to the Law system, under that Law system what does the Law produce in your life... death! It's called the ministration of death.

If the Law was there, the Ten Commandments, and if we could not keep that, death was the consequence. In other words, if what we thought could save us, which was the Law, if we could not keep that and the consequence was death, what do you think would be the effect of not taking the life line when Jesus throws it to you? It would not be Jesus, after throwing the life line, waiting fifteen minutes to see if you take the life line and then if you don't take the life line, He commands his skipper to go closer and take the bat and kill you in the ocean because you didn't want to take the life line. No, the ocean is what will kill you!

Under the law you could suffer a physical death but under the rejection of Christ, because what Christ comes to save us from is not just death. He's come to save us from eternal death. He's come to save us from our sin. The Law never had the power to save you from sin! But Jesus comes with the power to save you from sin and if you reject Jesus, what happens? The thing you are under that He wants to save you from will destroy your life. It's not God! My goodness, He has come to save you! He is not called the Savior for no reason. He's not called the Savior because the Holy Spirit didn't have something to tell somebody to write in the bible and then He just said, "Just for now, just write "Savior." No! He is called the Savior for He IS the Savior that will save His people from their sins.

The judgment of God and the wrath of God is this: I have come to bring life to you! This is the life that I have brought to you: I will never allow the System of Death to amalgamate, to be joined, to My System. If you want to dwell under that System, I will love you, I will be there for you, but if you want to walk in that, I want to just say to you, "That will utterly destroy you!" That is it!

So the vengeance of God is God takes vengeance on what destroys man's life. This is what God says:, this is what is God's vengeance: "The Law cannot give you life and therefore I will save you from what kills you! I will save you from the Law. I will break the enslavement power of the Law, off your back!" That is what He did when He was on the earth. In His return He will manifest what He has redeemed us from. He will manifest the freedom that we've gained in our life. That will mean that when Jesus returns, you will be in manifestation as holy and as full of life as He is because of His doing! That is why you don't have to be afraid of the return of Christ for what the grace of God will do is in the day Christ returns, you will find your body being made immortal by the grace of God for God said, "I'll burn up all death in you!" That's what will happen in the final judgment of Christ. He will burn up all death. He will burn up all destruction! That's what He will do!

I want to end with this: this is just my thought. If you would ask the people in the Old Testament, "What do you think the Day of Vengeance of God, according to Malachi 3 and 4, would be?"

Malachi 3

:2 But who may abide in the day of the coming? (of the Lord) and who shall stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' (strong) soap:

:3 And He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and He shall purify the sons of Levi,

He says, "Listen, who shall stand before God and say, 'I'm as holy as God.'" There will be no man for He is coming to cleanse us. **The fire is to clean us and we have made this fire to be hard times!**

No! The fire is not hard times! **The fire is the knowledge of who God REALLY is!** That is the fire! That is what has come! Now, if you would ask the people, "You know, Malachi wrote and said that there will be a fire that will come and purify the people. How do you think that day will look?" They will say, "No, no, no! Remember, Sodom and Gomorrah? A fire came and devoured the people!"

And here, all of a sudden, when Jesus came, we saw no fire. And even when one of His disciples asked for a physical fire, Jesus refused and rebuked them!

So how will the End Time judgment look because these people thought a physical fire of hell is going to fall from heaven and destroy people! What actually happened was a loving Jesus came and saved people from what destroyed them. What do you think will happen in the time of Christ when He comes again? One will say, "It is going to be a hell fire that will fall." Another will say, "It's going to be smoke. You know all the BMWs and the Audis are going to be melted by the fire of God. (I was in a church where that was taught!) God has no issue with an Audi or a BMW! He doesn't have issues with those things.

What He has an issue with is what destroys your life. He wants to burn that away! That's what He wants to do. Other people will say, "The fire of God is just the anger of God and God is just going to kill people." For me to say exactly how it is going to be would be as foolish as it would be for the prophets of the Old Testament or the people of the Old Testament, to read what the prophet said and try and predict how it is going to be.

What I can tell you is this, and I can tell it with great surety: we will not but be able to say, "God is good in the End Time judgment!" When the fire of God falls in the End Time judgment when Jesus returns, we will say, "What a good and loving God we behold!" That's what we will see! That is the truth about us. That's who God is. He has always been the Savior. He wants to save. He wants to save us from unrighteousness. He wants to save us from what kills us.

That sun that comes up, the bible says that there is healing in the wings of that sun. When the sun rises, it is a day that is dawning. The sun of righteousness means the day wherein what is right towards you will manifest on account of the power of God has dawned in Jesus! This is not the day of anger! It is the day wherein God refines our belief in everything that is wrong.

My heart and the wish that I have is that all of you who listen, you pastors who listen to this, I want to encourage you. Don't just listen to this message to try to nitpick and try and find fault with this message. This is the truth and let it just touch your heart. Go and say to God, "God, I want to just know Your truth. I want to know Your love." Maybe you feel as you hear this truth about His goodness, it is burning you. "Oh, yes, what about this verse, what about...."

You're going on like... Here is a good example.. I am going to use this example but I don't know what my wife will say about it. If you watch the movie, Dumb and Dumber, a guy wants a girl's number but in the meantime he was filling his car up with gas. He was smoking and his pants caught on fire. She was taking a long time to give him her number. After awhile he was trying to keep his composure but his pants are on fire and he starts shouting, "Just give me the number!"

Many times when we preach this goodness, I see some people squealing, as if their pants are on fire, "I don't want to hear this!" But this is the Good News! This is what sets people free and this is what you actually need! It's what I need and what all of us need! God has come and He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the holy atmosphere of the Trinity wherein God dwells in a spirit of kindness and goodness and forgiveness and mercy and fire. That's what it is. In other words, God will come with a loving atmosphere of the Holy Spirit and He will baptize us inside the new revelation and inside His love and it will burn up all that is not true about Him that we have believed and we will have a brand new life! Glory to God! Isn't that good news! Well, I've preached myself happy!

Father, thank You so much for Your unquenchable fire. Lord, we do not know how the End Time judgment will physically look and manifest but what we do know is that it will not be different from what You done in Jesus when You walked the earth. It will be a place where You comfort those who mourn, You comfort those who have death in their bodies by making them immortal, by taking away all sickness, by taking away all the ability to sin, by taking away all of those things by making the planet new, making everything new! Thank You so much Lord! You are such a good God! In Jesus' mighty name! Amen and amen