

THE GREAT GIFT OF RESTORATION: RECONCILIATION BETWEEN GOD AND HIS BACKSLIDING PEOPLE JEREMIAH 31:01–30

Introduction

Alienation — whether between individuals, organizations or nations — is a sad state of affairs. When people are alienated, their love or respect for each other has been damaged. Alienation can result from hard feelings, differences of opinion, prejudice, misunderstandings and a host of other reasons. But no matter the cause, cutting ourselves off from other people is wrong in the sight of God. Being estranged damages relationships and undermines peace. It adds to the antagonism and divisive spirit that permeates so much of society. The only answer to alienation is reconciliation. If we have cut people out of our lives, we should be reconciled to them by seeking them out and attempting to make peace.

Reconciliation is the practical lesson of the present Scripture. The people of Judah had committed so much sin that they had alienated themselves from God and were beyond the point of repentance. No matter what God did to reach them, they would never again repent or turn back to Him. Consequently, the LORD had to execute judgment on them.

Remember that God had chosen the Babylonian army to be His agent of judgment. In the present situation, the army had been besieging Jerusalem for about eighteen months, and the city was about to collapse. The people were being wiped out by starvation, disease and the lawless acts of rioters. With the Babylonian army surrounding the city, the people were without hope. But in His mercy, the LORD stepped forth to offer the hope of a great future to any who would listen. Miraculously, the LORD gave His prophet Jeremiah a dream of the glorious future that lay ahead for all Israelites who would place their trust in Him. This is, *The Great Gift of Restoration: A Picture of Reconciliation Between God and His Backsliding People*, Jeremiah 31:1-30.

- I. God's promise to be reconciled with His backsliding people (Israel): "At that time" — in the last days, 30:24 (vv. 1-6).
- II. God's promise to save and abundantly provide for His people (vv. 7-30).

I. *Jeremiah 31:01–06 God's Promise to be Reconciled with His Backsliding People (Israel)*

God gave the Israelites a most wonderful promise: He would one day reconcile His backsliding people to Himself. All the clans and families of Israel will be reconciled with God. The LORD will be the God of all Israel, and all Israelites will be His people. When will this great day of reconciliation take place? At the same time as the events described in the previous chapter. The great day of reconciliation will take place in "days to come"

(30:24); that is, in the last days of human history. As the Scripture and outline point out, God Himself will take the initiative.

1. God will shower His grace on all the exiles who survive the captivity and return to the promised land (v. 2). As they journey back to their homeland, even if they travel through the deserts and wilderness of this world, God will take care of them. He will give them rest. Rest here means peace, security and assurance, as well as a sense of satisfaction, joy and fulfilment. In the latter days of human history, God will bestow the fullness of His grace on all who return to Him. He will give His people both spiritual and physical rest.
2. God will also pour out His unfailing love and kindness on His people (v. 3). Down through history, the LORD had always loved and drawn His people to Him. Now He promised to continue reaching out to His people in His unfailing love. Most likely this expression of love struck a chord in the hearts of the people of Jeremiah's day. During the long Babylonian siege of Jerusalem, Jeremiah was ministering inside the city's walls to a people who were starving, diseased and stricken with terror. Thus, God was giving this message of love and hope for future reconciliation to a people who were destitute, helpless and without hope.
3. God promised that the nation of Israel will be re-established in the future (vv. 3-6). Both Samaria (the Northern Kingdom) and Judah (the Southern Kingdom) will be rebuilt and reunited into one nation. This marvellous event will take place in the latter days of history. Note the reference to "Virgin Israel." When God reconciles His backsliding people to Himself, He will cleanse them from all sin. They will be like pure, undefiled virgins. When the people are cleansed from their sins and dwell in the reunited nation, there will be three wonderful results:
 - => The people will sing and dance for joy (v. 4).
 - => The people will be able to plant and enjoy the fruit of their labour without fear of attack from enemies, even in Samaria, the capital of the Northern Kingdom (v. 5).
 - => The people will make a commitment to true worship, and the watchmen or prophets of God will direct the people of Ephraim to worship the LORD in Zion (Jerusalem) (v. 6).

Thought 1. God gives us the wonderful promise of reconciliation. No matter how far away we may be from Him or how much we have backslidden, God longs for us to be reconciled to Him. He wants to be reunited with us. He wants to shower His grace on us and give us spiritual and physical rest. God wants us to have rest of soul and rest of body. He wants us to experience peace, security, assurance, purpose, satisfaction and fulfilment in life.

Sadly, the world has a very negative and false concept of the true believer's life in Christ. Their notion is that a believer is weighed down with a list of "DO's and DON'T's," unable to truly enjoy life. But nothing could be further from the truth!

A true believer is liberated from the weight of sin, guilt and uncertainty. In fact, the true believer has more cause for joy, comfort and celebration than any unbeliever.

Nevertheless, we must always remember this: God gives rest only to people who are willing to be reconciled to Him. In love, God reaches out to draw us to Himself. But we must understand one essential fact: reconciliation comes only through God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Our sins must be removed before God will accept us, and only the blood of Christ — His death — can cleanse us from all sin. When Christ went to the cross, He took the guilt of our sins upon Himself and died in our place. He paid the penalty for our sins. Therefore, people who want to be reconciled to God must approach God through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Those who trust Christ to remove their sins will be reconciled to God. Listen to what God's Holy Word says:

Rom 5:9-11 *Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! Not only is this so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.*

2 Cor 5:17-21 *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

Eph 1:7 *In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace.*

Eph 2:13-16 *But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, By abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, And in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility.*

Col 1:20-22 *And through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross. Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behaviour. But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation.*

Heb 2:17-18 *For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.*

Heb 9:14 *How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!*

1 Pet 1:18-19 *For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.*

1 John 1:7 *But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.*

II. *Jeremiah 31:07–30 God’s Promise to Save and Abundantly Provide for His People*

God gave a wonderful promise to save and abundantly provide for His people. Because of this wonderful salvation and provision, the people were encouraged to sing and shout praises to the LORD.

Note the reference to Israel’s being the foremost nation on earth. In the latter days of human history, Jesus Christ will return to establish God’s kingdom on earth. When that day comes, He will place the seat of His government in Jerusalem. Christ’s presence and His government will make Jerusalem the major nation on earth. Although this particular fact is not mentioned in the present Scripture, it is in many others (see notes, Isa 2:1-5).

Scripture gives a detailed description of God’s salvation and provision for His people:

1. God promised to save a remnant of true believers from the nation of Israel and perform six wonderful works for them (vv. 7-11).
 - a. The LORD will gather His people from the ends of the earth (v. 8). Note that they will be set free from “the land of the north.” This is a reference to Assyria and Babylon, the lands of their captivity. But this sequence also has a double meaning, pointing to a future day when brutal, oppressive nations will no longer enslave the Jews. In the last days of human history, God will set His people free from their enemies.
 - b. The LORD will gather a vast multitude and lead them back to the promised land. No true believer will be excluded — the blind, the lame, the women who are expecting, and even those who are in the process of giving birth — all will join the great multitude who are returning to the promised land.
 - c. The LORD will accept the people’s weeping (repentance) and prayers as they return to their homeland (v. 9). As He has always done, God will accept every person who truly repents. He will allow them to join all those marching to the promised land (a symbol of heaven).

- d. The LORD will guide His people as He brings them back home (v. 9b). As He leads them on their journey, He will quench their thirst and make sure they walk on a level road so they will not stumble. Note why God cares for the people so deeply: because He is the Father of Israel, and Israel (Ephraim) is His first-born, His pre-eminent son (Deut 32:9).
- e. The LORD will watch over His people like a shepherd (v. 10). Down through history, the LORD had been forced to discipline and scatter the Israelites throughout the nations of the world because of their sins. But in the last days, He will gather them back in the promised land and watch over them as a shepherd watches over his flock. He will protect, guide and provide for His people.
- f. The LORD will redeem His people from their enemies (v. 11). As the New Testament clearly reveals, God Himself paid the *ransom price* to set His people free from their bondage. The ransom paid by God was the gift of His Son, Jesus Christ. Christ came to earth and died on the cross to set both Jew and Gentile free from the bondage of sin and death. Both Jew and Gentile are all saved because of the great ransom paid by God, the gift of His own dear Son.

Rom 3:24 *And are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.*

Gal 1:4 *Who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father.*

Col 1:14 *In whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.*

1 Pet 1:18-19 *For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.*

- 2. God promised to bless the remnant abundantly by providing for their every need (vv. 12-14). When they return to the LORD, He will shower them with gift after gift. He will meet all the necessities of life and withhold no material blessing from them.
 - => The LORD will supply an abundance of crops and food, including grain, new wine, oil and meat from the flocks and herds (v. 12a).
 - => The LORD will erase all sorrow due to poverty and hunger (v. 12b).
 - => The LORD will give cause for celebration, comfort and joy (v. 13). Men and women, young and old, will dance and be filled with a spirit of joy. No longer will people be gripped with a spirit of sorrow due to sin, suffering and the trials of life.
 - => The LORD will meet the needs of the priests, who are sometimes neglected by the people, and fill the people with the bounty of His goodness (v. 14).

Thought 1. True believers should always remember that the LORD promises to abundantly provide for them. God loves His people — all of them. Therefore, this

promise applies not only to believers in the latter days of history but also to our generation and all generations in between. God promises to take care of us and to richly meet the needs of all who truly seek Him first.

Mat 6:33 *“But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”*

John 10:10 *“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.”*

2 Cor 9:8 *And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.*

Eph 3:20 *Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us.*

Phil 4:19 *And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.*

Psa 36:8 *They feast on the abundance of your house; you give them drink from your river of delights.*

Psa 68:19 *Praise be to the LORD, to God our Saviour, who daily bears our burdens.*

Mal 3:10 *“Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the LORD Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it.”*

3. In the last days, God will put an end to all the mourning and grief of the human heart (vv. 15-25). Note what causes the deepest mourning and grief: the experience of death. Using descriptive language, Jeremiah pictures Rachel, the wife of Jacob, weeping for her children. Remember that Rachel and Jacob were the parents of twelve sons from whom the twelve tribes of Israel came. The city of *Rama* was the place where the exiles had been gathered before they were deported to Babylon (40:1). Thus the picture is that of Rachel weeping for the descendants of Jacob who had been slaughtered in the war, died during the siege or were about to be carried into captivity by Babylon (v. 15). Of course, this is also a picture of Rachel weeping for God’s people who will be severely persecuted and slaughtered in the last days before the return of Christ.

Yet, the LORD instructed Rachel to restrain her weeping. Her work in giving birth would not be in vain; it would be greatly rewarded. Ten reasons are given why Rachel must not cry:

- => Because the LORD will return her children (the Israelites or Jews) from their exile in the land of their enemy (v. 16b).
- => Because there is hope for a bright future: her children will return to the promised land (v. 17).

- => Because the LORD's discipline of His people will stir them to pray for forgiveness and restoration (v. 18). Although God is disciplining them like an unruly calf, they will turn back to Him in the future. They will seek the LORD, and He will forgive them and restore them to the promised land. Even those of Ephraim, the Northern Kingdom, will be forgiven and restored.
- => Because the people will repent of their sins (v. 19). In the last days, the Israelites will confess that they have strayed far away from the LORD. At long last they will understand their awful sin and beat their breasts in utter shame and humiliation. Stricken with deep conviction, they will confess the disgrace of the sins they have committed down through the centuries. A spirit of true repentance will grip their hearts, and they will return to the LORD.
- => Because the LORD will remember His people and yearn to be reconciled to them (v. 20). Like a father who loves his children dearly, the LORD will have compassion on those who, like Ephraim, had strayed so far from Him.
- => Because the Israelites will heed God's call to return to Him (v. 21). Note that they will follow the signs set up by former generations, the signs that point them back to the promised land. These signs are the commandments and teachings of God's Word and the messages of His prophets. It is God's Word and His prophets that have always told people how to return to the LORD.
- => Because the LORD will cause something new to happen on earth (v. 22). Unfaithful Israel will draw close to the LORD like a woman who embraces a man. It should be noted that there are many different interpretations of the last line of verse 22. However, this interpretation seems to be the clearest.
- => Because the people will once again call upon the LORD to bless the holy city of Jerusalem. It will be the capital of the world, the city where Christ establishes His seat of government on earth (v. 23). From Jerusalem, the LORD will rule in righteousness and execute justice among the nations and peoples of the world (Heb 12:22-24).
- => Because the people will live and work together in peace (v. 24). In the latter days of history, when Christ returns to establish God's kingdom, He will bring peace to the entire earth. All people will live together in peace and unity. They will carry on their business affairs and daily activities without fear of being oppressed because there will be no more injustice or lawlessness.
- => Because the LORD will meet the needs of the weary and sorrowful (v. 25). The LORD will refresh and give rest to anyone crushed under the weight of trial or suffering. This is His wonderful promise.

Thought 1. When Jesus Christ returns in the final days, He will set up the kingdom of God on earth. All sin, evil and wickedness — all immoral, lawless and violent behaviour — will be erased from the face of the earth. Consequently, those who are

weary and sorrowful will experience the *rest* of God. All sorrow and grief will be vanquished from the earth.

Mat 11:28-30 *“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”*

Rev 7:17 *“For the Lamb at the centre of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”*

Rev 14:13 *Then I heard a voice from heaven say, “Write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.” “Yes,” says the Spirit, “they will rest from their labour; for their deeds will follow them.”*

Rev 21:4 *He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.*

Exo 33:14 *The LORD replied, “My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.”*

Psa 116:7 *Be at rest once more, O my soul, for the LORD has been good to you.*

Isa 25:8 *He will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove the disgrace of his people from all the earth. The LORD has spoken.*

Isa 28:12 *To whom he said, “This [the LORD] is the resting place, let the weary rest”; and, “This is the place of repose” — but they would not listen.*

Isa 35:10 *And the ransomed of the LORD will return. They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.*

Isa 51:11 *Those the LORD has rescued will return. They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.*

Isa 60:20 *Your sun will never set again, and your moon will wane no more; the LORD will be your everlasting light, and your days of sorrow will end.*

Isa 65:19-20 *I will rejoice over Jerusalem and take delight in my people; the sound of weeping and of crying will be heard in it no more. “Never again will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not live out his years; the one who dies at a hundred will be thought a mere child; the one who fails to reach a hundred will be considered accursed.”*

4. God will always give the hope of future glory to His people (v. 26). Keep in mind that Jerusalem was surrounded by the Babylonian army and that the people were in a desperate situation. A spirit of hopelessness and despair had gripped their hearts. If they ever needed help, it was now. In this dire situation, the LORD gave His people the wonderful hope of future glory. A day was coming when the nation would be

reconciled to God and restored. The promise of future glory is applicable to every generation of believers. The LORD promises an eternity of glory to all who truly believe and obey Him.

Mat 13:49 *“This is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous.”*

Luke 10:20 *“Rejoice that your names are written in heaven.”*

John 14:2-3 *“In my Father’s house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.”*

Rom 8:16-18 *The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit, that we are God’s children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs — heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory. I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.*

2 Cor 4:17 *For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.*

Phil 3:20-21 *But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Saviour from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.*

Col 3:4 *When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.*

2 Tim 2:10 *Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they too may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory.*

1 Pet 1:3-4 *Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. And into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade kept in heaven for you.*

1 Pet 5:1-4 *To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ’s sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed. Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, serving as overseers — not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.*

Rev 7:9-10 *After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding*

palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb."

Rev 21:23-27 *The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp. The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendour into it. On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there. The glory and honour of the nations will be brought into it. Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.*

Rev 22:5 *There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.*

Psa 73:24 *You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will take me into glory.*

5. God will restore both Israel and Judah and reunite them into one great nation (vv. 27-28). Down through the centuries, nation after nation had invaded and destroyed the land of Israel. The people and livestock were scattered throughout the nations of the world. But God made a wonderful promise to Jeremiah and His people: the day would come when He would rebuild the nation and increase both the population and the livestock. In that day, the people will no longer be afflicted nor the land devastated. In other words instead of allowing them to be destroyed and ruined, God will establish and develop the nation. Watching over His people and their welfare, He will build them up and establish them as a permanent nation.

Rom 16:25 *Now to him who is able to establish you in accordance with my gospel, the message I proclaim about Jesus Christ, in keeping with the revelation of the mystery hidden for long ages past.*

1 Cor 3:10-15 *By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an expert builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should be careful how he builds. For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames.*

Col 2:6-7 *So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.*

2 Th 2:16-17 *May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word.*

2 Tim 2:19 *Nevertheless, God's solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription: "The Lord knows those who are his," and, "Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness."*

2 Chr 20:20 *Early in the morning they left for the Desert of Tekoa. As they set out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, "Listen to me, Judah and people of Jerusalem! Have faith in the LORD your God and you will be upheld; have faith in his prophets and you will be successful."*

Psa 40:1-2 *I waited patiently for the LORD; he turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand.*

Isa 28:16 *So this is what the Sovereign LORD says: "See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation; the one who relies on it will never be dismayed."*

Isa 54:14 *In righteousness you will be established: Tyranny will be far from you; you will have nothing to fear. Terror will be far removed; it will not come near you.*

6. God will stop the people from blaming others for the sour grapes they were forced to eat (vv. 29-30). *Sour grapes* refers to the affliction (judgment) the people had suffered due to their sins. Obviously the people were blaming their forefathers for their suffering. Note the hardness of their hearts, their stubborn refusal to accept personal responsibility for their own sins. They refused to acknowledge the fact that God would judge them. Most, if not all, felt they were righteous enough to be acceptable to God. Few, if any, considered themselves sinful enough for God to reject or punish. In seeking the cause for their present sufferings, they zeroed in on the failures of their parents and other ancestors. Apparently they began to quote the proverb given in this verse (v. 29), but the proverb would prove false. The people would be held responsible for their own sin. People would die because they had personally eaten sour grapes. They themselves had sinned; therefore, their own sins would set their teeth on edge.

Rom 6:23 *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Gal 5:19, 21 *The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.*

Gal 6:7-8 *Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.*

Heb 2:2-3 *For if the message spoken by angels was binding, and every violation and disobedience received its just punishment, how shall we escape if we ignore such a great salvation? This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him.*

2 Pet 2:13 *They will be paid back with harm for the harm they have done. Their idea of pleasure is to carouse in broad daylight. They are blots and blemishes, revealing in their pleasures while they feast with you. With eyes full of adultery, they never stop sinning; they seduce the unstable; they are experts in greed — an accursed brood!*

Job 15:31 *Let him not deceive himself by trusting what is worthless, for he will get nothing in return. ■*