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Ministry in the Gap - posted by InTheLight (), on: 2012/7/25 21:08

Ministry in the Gap

Israel's God, our Father, was about to judge the nation, but before entering upon the dire assignment He sought for a man who was ready to "stand in the gap before me for the land". But He was not able to find such a person. The prophet Ezekiel records a description of the situation among leading men as well as among common people. His short notice regarding the absence of that which could have turned the whole event in another direction, reveals the missing element in our common church life.

"A nation not rained upon in the day of indignation." Because men, called prophets, men who were set aside to hear from God had chosen to conspire and "like a roaring lion, ravaging the prey" devoured souls – for the sake of gathering the precious things of the people to themselves, a disastrous demand for luxury.

"A nation not rained upon in the day of indignation." Because the priests "made no distinction between the holy and the common, neither have they caused men to discern between the unclean and the clean" and the rulers of the nation "are like wolves ravaging the prey, to shed blood, and to destroy souls, that they may get dishonest gain".

God, on his way delivering the necessary judgment upon the nation, sought for one man to enter the gap between the overwhelming unrighteousness and the planned operation of judgment just before it was finally set in motion. What kind of man was required for the work in the gap, did one man suffice as to bridging the gap? One man had been enough – but one man with certain qualities, one man after God's own heart. One man according to heavenly measure, according to priestly measure.

Which is easier – to run with wrath and judgment or to stand in mercy? Which is easier for you and me – to look for a scape-goat to blame or to enter an operation of reconciliation? Which is easier for us all – to pass by in judgment or to bow in an attitude of mercy, to assist, help and to give of ourselves? The necessary work to enter is one of standing in the gap for the land – enter a corporate asking for forgiveness and to forgive corporately.

What will happen when there is no man, no Church, in the gap? What will happen if there is no intercessor to be found? What will happen if no one cares to ask for mercy, for God's mercy to be poured out like rain on the defenceless, the poor and needy, the widows and the orphans, in the day of indignation? Judgment will come, it will be fierce, it will be comprehensive – if no man enters the gap, if no Church is to be found in the gap.

God, on his way judging the nations seeks for men, seeks for a corporate body, to stand in the gap for the land – for our nations. Men in the gap, able to lay hold of the promises of God know His mercy. Men in the gap are able to stand because of the fact that theirs are hearts after God's own heart. They know how to handle the ancient prayer "In wrath, remember mercy". They know mercy, because it has been written by the Holy Spirit in their own inward parts. They know truth, because it can be found in their own inner beings.

God, on his way judging the nations seeks for men to stand in the gap – men who are able to cry out on behalf of the many who walk in innocence. God, on his way judging the nations seeks for men to stand in the gap – men who are able to cry out on behalf of those who are not so innocent. God, on his way judging the nations seeks for men to stand in the gap – men who are able to cry out, with hearts full of mercy, for the land – for our nations. . .

Will there be men ready to take position in the gap?

Lars Widerberg

Reading: Ez 22:25-30, Hab 3:2, Ps 51:6