



SPIRITUAL DARKNESS IN AMERICA.

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We want to take our scripture text from **1ST Samuel 3:1-3**, "And the child Samuel ministered unto the Lord before Eli. And the word of the Lord was precious in those days; there was no open vision. And it came to pass at that time, when Eli was laid down in his place, and his eyes began to wax dim, that he could not see; and ere the lamp of God went out in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was, and Samuel was laid down to sleep". Needless to say, spiritual darkness is pervading this nation and its leadership as never before. From our scripture text, we know that Israel's leadership had drifted far away from God. Due to Israel's spiritual decline, God used Hannah to birth a new and fresh messenger, the prophet Samuel. We are told that the word of the Lord was very precious in those days. The reason that any nation or church, for the most part, goes into spiritual darkness is because there is a famine of God's Word. Regretfully, it is hard to find a pure word today from most pulpits. Men have watered down the gospel of Christ and because of that the Word of God has become a precious commodity. The reason the Word of God was precious in those days was because there was no open vision. In other words, there was no one preaching the word, there was no fresh revelation, and there was no prophet of God speaking to the people of God. For the most part, we are experiencing the same thing in America today. We read in **Amos 8:11**, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord". Sad to say, but we are experiencing one of the worse famines of God's Word in church

history. Because of this famine, we are beginning to witness spiritual darkness as it covers the land and most churches. Let me say emphatically that God's Word is still a light to all men. Jesus said in **John 8:12**, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth with me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life". If men no longer follow the Word of God, they will walk in darkness. The psalmist declared in **Psalms 119:105**, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path". The word, lamp, literally means a candle. This famine of God's Word has brought to fruition both great depression (**physically and emotionally**) and great darkness upon this nation. Once there is no open vision or revelation from God then men will ultimately suffer spiritual blindness. Because there was no open vision in Israel at that time darkness was sure to come. The Bible says that Eli's eyes began to wax dim so that he could not see. Once the light, the candle of God's Holy Word goes out, men will undoubtedly lose their spiritual sight. Spiritual blindness had completely taken over the priesthood. After spiritual blindness has taken over a nation and its leadership, men will fall into chaos and judgment. When the light of Jesus Christ goes out men will also depart from the faith. We read in **1ST Timothy 4:1**, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of Devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron". It is the Word of God that sustains men and keeps them from spiritual blindness. When men depart from the faith and become spiritually blind they often times become religious and lose their relationship and intimacy with Jesus

Christ. We read here in **2ND Kings 17:9**, "And the children of Israel did secretly those things that were not right against the Lord their God, and they built high places in all their cities, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city". When men become religious they also begin to do in secret those things which God abhors. They have a form of godliness but they deny his power. We read here in **2ND Kings 9:16**, "And they left all the commandments of the Lord their God, and made them molten images, even two calves, and made a grove and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served Baal". Where there is a famine of God's Word men will abandon God. Never before have we witnessed apostasy as we are today. We read in **2ND Kings 17:33**, "They feared the Lord, and serve their own gods, after the manner of the nations whom they carried away from thence". This Bible verse tells us that they feared God, but their fear was not a godly fear. Once men have become spiritually blind their only recourse is to walk in spiritual darkness. The scriptures tell us that Eli had become blind physically. The reason that we know he was given over to spiritual darkness and blindness was because the lamp of God had gone out in the temple and he was not aware of it. True men of God will never allow the light of Jesus Christ to go out! Anyone with true spiritual insight can discern when the light of God's Word has gone out. Once the light of God's Word has been extinguished, then spiritual blindness and darkness will follow. We are warned in **Ephesians 4:18**, "Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness (**hardness**) of their hearts". Once the understanding of the Word of God has become darkened, men can no longer discern the truth.

Paul the apostle warns us again in **Ephesians 5:11**, "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reproof them". Too many so-called professing Christians are fellowshiping with the world and living in darkness. The world lives and operates in utter darkness. Men must walk in Christ Jesus to have light within their lives. Paul the apostle warns us again here in **Ephesians 6:12**, "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places". Even though Eli was both Judge and High Priest of Israel he had become a ruler of darkness in the house of God. He was still ruling, but he was ruling in darkness. The same can be said today in most churches. When men abandon the Word of God darkness will fill the void. Say what you will but, the lamp of God's Word has gone out in most houses of God. Jesus warned the church in **Revelation 2:4-5**, "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent". If this nation, along with its leadership, fails to repent, then God will have no recourse but to remove the candlestick. The very fact that we are witnessing a famine of God's Holy Word is proof to me that God has begun the process of removing the candlestick or the lamp stand from within our nation. Once men become spiritually blind they will embrace darkness. Jesus said in **John 3:19-21**, "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproofed. But he that doeth truth, cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made

manifest, that they are wrought in God". The nature of man is to embrace darkness rather than light because of his sin nature. Jesus said that men who commit acts of evil do not come to the light lest their deeds or evil works should be reproofed or discovered. However, men that love the truth come to the light which is Jesus Christ. Men will either walk in the light or they will walk in darkness. Paul gave us a solemn warning in **2nd Corinthians 6:14**, "By ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness". We are warned that we cannot fellowship, nor can we coexist with darkness. These two entities, light and darkness cannot coexist. We read in **John 1:4-5**, "In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not". Darkness cannot admit or receive the light. That is why men must come out of darkness and embrace the light which is Jesus Christ. Because Eli was now living a life of darkness, God showed Samuel that Eli and his two sons would be judged and that they would be judged harshly. We find this harsh judgment in **1st Samuel 3:11-14**, "And the Lord said to Samuel, Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of everyone that heareth it shall tingle. In that day I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house: when I begin, I will also make an end. For I have told him that I will judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not. And therefore I have sworn unto the house of Eli, that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering forever". This would be one of the greatest judgments that ever fell upon Israel's leadership. Eli's family would be removed from the priesthood and they would never be reinstated by neither sacrifice or offering. This judgment was because Eli tolerated sin

and never called his sons to repentance. This should be a lesson to every one of us that God will not tolerate our continued sin. This judgment was so harsh it made the ears of the people tingle. Not only did God begin this family ministry but the Lord said that he would end the family ministry. Remember that judgment must first begin at the house of God. The first portion of judgment was that the Ark of the Covenant was taken by the Philistines and then we see that Hophni, Phinehas, and Eli were all three killed. The finale and saddest part of judgment was that the Glory of God had now departed Israel. Phinehas' wife, before her death, named their son I-chabod, the glory is departed from Israel. My friend, if we do not repent and turn back to God, great judgment will soon fall upon this nation. May your eyes be opened to the truth and may you no longer walk in darkness. Let me encourage you to rededicate and consecrate your life to Jesus Christ our Lord. Let it be noted, the greater the famine the greater the darkness. We read here in **1st John 1:7**, "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have a fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanseth us from all sin". Until next month, may you keep your lamps trimmed and burning brightly. Jesus said the night will come when no man can work. Let us work while it is day and let us pray for the lost in this closing hour. As always, thank you for your generous love and support to The Voice of Evangelism. We trust that these newsletters are always a blessing to you and your household.

Serving With You All,

Pastor David W. Lankford

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