



A MAN'S pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit. (Proverbs 29:23)

SON of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. ¹³ Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. ¹⁴ Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. ¹⁵ Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. ¹⁶ By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. ¹⁷ Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee. ¹⁸ Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee. ¹⁹ All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee: thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more. (Ezekiel 28:12-19)

The greatest and most profound contrast in Holy Scripture is that existing between the most humble Savior and the most prideful Satan.

In the Bible we find two contrasting kinds of pride – one sinful and the other legitimate. It is good for a man to take pride in his work which he has performed well and with a Godly spirit. But the sinful kind of pride is that which takes pride in self alone and not in the God who gave you the talent to perform. Self-righteousness is the evidence of pride.

When we declare the life-style of others sinful, it must be based upon God's own word that judges sin and not our own opinion only. If we declare a person unrighteous owing to homosexuality, adultery, lying, treason to church or country, etc., that would not be our judgment we are pronouncing, but that of the Word of God. As Jesus commanded, *Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.* John 7:24

When we condemn another for judging, we are, in fact, judging ourselves out of pride unless our judgment is supported by humility and Scriptural truth. Please look at the complete comment Jesus made on judging in this 7th chapter of Matthew: *1. Judge not, that ye be not judged.* (Matt 7:1) All of my life I have sadly heard this proclaimed by well-meaning ministers and laity without the full explanation of meaning. If we take that verse out of context with the full statement of our Lord, we render the Church sterile and incapable of judging sin and executing church discipline. Let us look at the full statement:

1. Judge not, that ye be not judged. 2 For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. 3 And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? 4 Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? 5 Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye. (Matthew 7:1-5)

If we have passed beyond the fifth grade English class in reading, we will be able to discern that Christ is not prohibiting judgment, but He is qualifying it to mean 'righteous' judgment. If we are blatant sinners of the same kind as those we judge, we are hypocrites and judging ourselves. But what, again, is righteous judgment? There is only One righteous, and that is God. His Word is true, righteous and immutable. When our judgment is based upon what God terms 'sin,' the judgment we judge is not ours, but that of God. How long will the church allow itself to be deceived on this point!

False pride is based upon our own judgments – Holy pride is centered on God and His Word. A father can legitimately be proud of his children who grow up in the nurture of the word and continue on that course as adults.

The King of Tyrus mentioned in our introductory text from Ezekiel 28 is no less than Satan himself (termed Lucifer in the pre-fall). Though there was truly a King of Tyrus, his character personified that of Satan. The text is primarily about Satan because no earthly man or king could serve as *the covering cherub*. Lucifer fell from the grace and presence of God due to false pride. Instead of acknowledging his Maker as God, Lucifer was lifted up in his personal self-acclaim to believe he could rise above God. *The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground?* (Obadiah 1:3)

If a Christian is censored from speaking his belief in the reality of sin in another, who shall ever open the eyes of the sinner to his plight! It is the spirit in which judgments are made that are attributed to false pride. *Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.* Proverbs 16:18 When God says: *The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate.* (Prov 8:13), does this mean that the believer cannot voice that fear and indictment of evil to others?

Conceit is nothing more than false pride – pride in self! *Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him.* (Prov 26:12) *Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.* (Luke 18:10-14) Herein is the greatest example of hypocritical pride in the Gospels. But did not our Lord judge the Scribes and Pharisees to be *a generation of vipers* and *children of their father the devil*? Yes, He did; yet, our Lord said He judged no man! How is this consistent with the text? It is consistent because Jesus did only the will of the

Father and not His own. He judged with the righteous judgment of the Word of God, and we must do the same. It is a sin of commission to judge falsely out of pride; but it is also a sin of omission to fail to judge sin by the Word of God.

There are two basic types of pride in the Bible, legitimate and sinful. The first swells from appreciation of God's character and faithful action in our lives. Many of the Psalms praise God for His protection, provision, answer to prayer (Psalm 34:1-7), and unfailing love. When all else falters and fades away, He remains.

For those who persist in denying the authority to judge by the Word of God claiming it to be prideful, please expound upon the following verses: *2 Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? 3 Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life? 4 If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church. 5 I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?* (1 Cor 6:2-5)

Concluding Note

Judgment must be made in humility, knowing that we all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. Jesus was the epitome of humility, yet He pronounced the judgment of God with forceful impact. Even in judging things sinful from the Word of God, to do so proudly and with self-righteous manner is sin itself. We judge in love and truth. Pride in the things of God is pure praise and worship. Boasting of one's own accomplishments – even in doing the labor of the church – is sin. If we build the church, it is not God's Church. If God builds the Church, we have no place to boast.

Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain. (Psalm 127:1)