

“REMOVE NOT THE ANCIENT LANDMARKS”

Jer. 6:16-21: Thus says the Lord: ‘Stand in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where the good way is, and walk in it; then you will find rest for your souls.’ But they said, ‘We will not walk in it.’ Also, I set watchmen over you, saying, ‘Listen to the sound of the trumpet!’ But they said, ‘We will not listen.’ Therefore hear, you nations, and know, O congregation, what is among them. Hear, O earth! Behold, I will certainly bring calamity on this people, even the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not heeded My words, nor My law, but rejected it. For what purpose to Me comes frankincense from Sheba, and sweet cane from a far country? Your burnt offerings are not acceptable, nor your sacrifices sweet to Me. Therefore thus says the Lord: ‘Behold, I will lay stumbling blocks before this people, and the fathers and the sons together shall fall on them. The neighbor and his friend shall perish.’”

INTRODUCTION:

1. God Gave Implicit and Explicit Warnings to the Jews Concerning Physical Landmarks.
 - A. These commands applied not only to the tribal allotments in the land but also to the individual family properties.
 - B. Prov. 22:28: “Do not remove the ancient landmark which your fathers have set.”
 - C. Deut. 19:14: “You shall not remove your neighbor’s landmark, which the men of old have set, in your inheritance which you will inherit in the land that the Lord your God is giving you to possess.”
 - D. Deut. 27:17: ““Cursed is the one who moves his neighbor’s landmark.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen!’””

Note: In a time when there were few fences, it was easy to remove the landmarks which frequently were loose stones layed upon the ground.

I. IN THE OLD TESTAMENT, GOD LAID DOWN CERTAIN SPIRITUAL-MORAL LANDMARKS.

1. Deut. 4:2: “You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take anything from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you.”

2. Prov. 30:6: “Do not add to His words, lest He reprove you, and you be found a liar.”

A. These Scriptures show that God would not allow, in Old Testament times, anyone to change, modify, or mutilate His word. His word laid down certain landmarks that must be respected.

(1) In Lev. 10:1-2, Nadab and Abihu removed the landmarks.

“Then Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it, put incense on it, and offered profane fire before the Lord, which He had not commanded them. So fire went out from the Lord and devoured them, and they died before the Lord.”

a. In Lev. 16:12, God had specified where they were to get their fire: Listen,

“And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from the altar before the Lord, with his hands full of sweet incense beaten fine, and bring it inside the veil.”

Note: These men had the proper censers, the proper incense, they came to the proper place - but they removed the landmark when they got the fire from somewhere beside the altar.

II. GOD HAS LAID DOWN THE SAME SPIRITUAL LANDMARKS OR BOUNDARIES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

1. 1 Pet 4:11: “If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. ...”

2. Gal. 1:6-9: “I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed.”

3. Rev. 22:18-19: “For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.”
 - A. These Scriptures, and many more could be cited, show that God has never tolerated men playing fast and loose with His holy Word. These are severe warnings to any and all who will “remove the landmarks” which God has set.

III. MANKIND HAS BEEN REMOVING GOD’S ANCIENT LANDMARKS SINCE THE BEGINNING OF TIME.

1. The Pope of Rome has become the head of the Visible Church.
2. Church traditions have added a thousand things to God’s Word.
 - A. Praying to God through the Virgin Mary; that Mary was sinless, that Mary had no other children, that Mary’s body ascended to heaven, that images are helps in the worship service, that sprinkling is to be accepted as a mode or form of baptism, that purgatory is an intermediate state from which prayers can deliver a person, that beads are to be counted in prayer, etc.
3. All kinds of forms of Church Government has arisen.

Pope Synod General Church Conference National Councils
4. In the area of worship, the Landmarks have been removed.
 - A. Lord’s Supper changed to a Sacrament.
 - B. Instrumental music: Organs, piano, brass bands, orchestra.
 - C. Elaborate rituals - recited mostly by the priests - in fact a whole priesthood separate from the membership has arisen as a go-between between God and man.
5. God’s Plan of Salvation has degenerated into a Form.
 - A. Salvation at the point of faith.
 - B. Merely signing a card of membership.
 - C. Universal salvation.

- D. Removal of Hell as a Deterrent.
- 6. Wrestling and twisting the Scriptures to blur the Landmarks.
 - A. The Doctrine of Premillennialism.
 - B. That a Child of God Cannot Sin.
 - C. That once a person is Saved, he Cannot be Lost.
- 7. Man is now removing the Genesis Record of Creation.
 - A. This strikes a blow at the veracity of God's word - its inspiration - its truthfulness.

IV. OURS IS A GENERATION WHICH NEEDS TO CALL THE WORLD BACK TO "WALK IN THE OLD PATHS."

- 1. We must be dead certain that we ourselves are staying within the boundary of God's word. We must respect the Bible as God speaking to us.
- 2. We must impress upon the world that we do respect what God has said on any subject and that we are trying to conform our lives to it.