

“2 Cities, 2 Harlots, Too Late!”**1. Intro:**

1.1.

2. 2 CITIES, 2 HARLOTS, TOO LATE! (23:1-49)2.1. **TWO SISTERS!** (1-4)2.2. **Idolatry** was the same as **infidelity**.2.3. **OHOLAH - SAMARIA!** (5-10) {Representing *Northern* Kingdom}2.4. **Oholah** - Her tent. (she set up an illegitimate worship center)2.4.1. Jeroboam's *golden calves* in Dan & Bethel. 1 Kings 12:25-332.5. **OHOLIBAH - JERUSALEM!** (11-49) {Representing *Southern* Kingdom}2.6. **Oholibah** – My tent is in her. (revealing that the authentic tabernacle of God existed in the southern kingdom)

2.7. Oholibah saw the sin & tragedy of her sister, she did not learn!

2.8. God waits for us to repent, & we must not try His patience.2.8.1. **Why don't we learn from others mistakes?** Eccl.8:11 **Because the sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.**2.8.2. **So we end up sinning with “eyes wide open!”**2.9. She allied herself **politically** with Assyria, & sure enough later **religiously**, worshipping Assyria's idols.2.9.1. **Assyrian's worshiped a plurality of gods, about 4000.**2.9.2. **They dominated the lives of their people. [Their gods were related to wind, rain, sun, grain, fish, farming, dogs, fertility & war]**2.9.3. **The people were subservient to the arbitrary will of the gods.**2.9.4. **Can you imagine serving a god who changes his mind with his moods? [Mal.3:6 **For I am the LORD, I do not change**]****3. THE DEATH OF A CITY! (24:1-14)**3.1. **A WATCHED POT DOES BOIL!**3.2. As the fire **grew hotter**, only the rust appeared. Then everything within it was destroyed.3.2.1. Like **coffee grounds** in coffee. **Rust** floating in stew...no thanks.3.2.1.1. **Toss it!** (i.e. Judah scattered)3.3. **Intensity** of the flame is the deal here.

4. DEATH OF MRS. E! (24:15-27)

- 4.1. **GRIEF BEYOND MOURNING!**
- 4.2. **Mourning** at the death of a Hebrew loved one normally involved: noisy lamentation, uncovered or shaved head on which he would scatter dust & ashes, remove his turban & shoes, tore his clothing, covered his face. And as an act of sympathy friends would bring over food. (17b)
- 4.3. His wife is called **the desire of your eyes**.
- 4.3.1. What genuine love & bliss in Ezekiel's marriage.
- 4.4. During his life of ministry, Ezekiel paid a price to "**act out**" some of his sermons...**but none as costly as this one!**
- 4.4.1. **The life you live is the greatest sermon you can ever preach!**
- 4.5. The **city of Jerusalem** was the delight of the Jews, but she would be buried.
- 4.6. If the people wanted to **mourn** at all they should have mourned over their **sins** & not over the loss of their **city & temple**. But it was **too late**.
- 4.6.1. They should have heeded "**seek the Lord while He may be found.**"
- 4.7. Here God makes a **painful experience** also a **means of ministry**.
- 4.7.1. **Marcela** – 28 yr. old son(Alfredo) died 2 weeks ago. Saw her Sunday. Some that were in attendance at the memorial are starting to attend church. 😊
- 4.7.2. What was God's **ultimate purpose** – see vss.24,27.
- 4.8. "To be a follower of the Crucified Christ means, sooner or later, a personal encounter with the cross. And the cross always entails loss." - Elisabeth Elliot
- 4.9. Can you think of **other instances** where the **sufferings of a servant of God** have been made to **serve God's design**, no matter at **what cost** to the sufferer? (Ask)
- 4.9.1. **David** with Saul; **John** the Bap; **Steven**; **Paul**...
- 4.9.1.1. Col.1:24 **I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church.**
- 4.9.2. Oh, & wouldn't **Jesus** fit into this category?
- 4.9.2.1. **Wasn't Jesus the desire of His Fathers eyes?**
- 4.10. "Ministry that **costs** nothing, **accomplishes** nothing." *John Henry Jowett*
- 4.11. Its **mom's & dads** I saw up stairs giving up their Tuesday nights to come out & praying for their kids.
- 4.12. It's a **single dad** I talked to yesterday that has put part of his life on hold, to care for his kids.
- 4.13. It's **sacrificing** by **not** purchasing that *whatever gadget* so you can be faithful to give financially to the church or missions.

4.14. George MacDonald, **Christ died to save us, not from suffering, but from ourselves; not from injustice, far less from justice, but from being unjust. He died that we might live—but live as he lives, by dying as he died who died to himself that he might live unto God. If we do not die to ourselves, we cannot live to God, and he that does not live to God, is dead.**¹

4.15. **The Moravians** were banished from their homeland, Bohemia, and exiled to various countries in 1620. Some came to Germany and found refuge on the estate of Count Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf (1700–1756). It was here on his estate that they became known as the Moravian Brethren, the forerunners of the Protestant Missionary Movement.

In 1730, Count Zinzendorf told the Moravians about the urgent need for missionaries to evangelize the **slaves on the Virgin Islands**. **Leonard Dober** listened to Zinzendorf's appeal. As he pondered God's calling, Dober felt excited about this opportunity to serve, but he also envisioned the severe persecution he would endure by selling himself into slavery to evangelize these people. He anticipated the horrible working conditions, but above all the degradation of slavery. No price was too high, he thought, when Jesus Christ endured persecution and died for him. So, Leonard Dober, at the age of eighteen, became the first Moravian missionary to the Virgin Island sugar plantation slaves. However, the source of his persecution did not come from the slave master's whip, but from fellow Christians.

Dober found himself ridiculed, mocked, and chastened for his decision to go to the Virgin Islands. The Christians asked him incredulous questions about how he planned to live in the Virgin Islands or how he intended to minister to the slaves. The persecution climaxed when the Christians discovered that Dober planned to sell himself into slavery. As Dober endured this opposition, he thought that if he had proposed to travel as an ambassador of state, he would have been treated differently; but since he was a servant of Jesus Christ commissioned to preach the gospel, he was looked upon as a fool. Dober arrived in the Virgin Islands in the late 1730s, but he did not have to become a plantation slave. Instead he became a servant in the governor's house. Soon he resigned his position, as he was concerned that this position was so superior to that of the slaves that it was detrimental to reaching them for Christ. He chose instead to live in a small mud hut where he could work one-on-one with the slaves. In three years his ministry grew to include **13,000 new converts**.

Even though Leonard Dober **did not have to pay the supreme sacrifice** of his life to evangelize the Virgin Island slaves, it is important to note that **he was ready to** accept persecution and even martyrdom for these people. Through the pioneering efforts of the Moravians, millions have followed in their footsteps, reaching nations around the world with the message of the gospel!

¹ George MacDonald in Unspoken Sermons (Series 3), quoted in Reflections, Christianity Today, June 16, 1997, p. 45

- 4.16. James Dobson asked, **Would you be willing to give up your career, your aspirations, and a \$600,000 annual salary if your family was in need?** I know a man who did. In 1985 Tim Burke saw his boyhood dream come true the day he was signed to pitch for the Montreal Expos. After four years in the minors, he was finally given a chance to play in the big leagues. And he quickly proved to be worth his salt—setting a record for the most relief appearances by a rookie player. Along the way, however, Tim and his wife, Christine, adopted four children with very special needs—two daughters from South Korea, a handicapped son from Guatemala, and another son from Vietnam. All of the children were born with very serious illnesses or defects. Neither Tim nor Christine was prepared for the tremendous demands such a family would bring. And with the grueling schedule of major-league baseball, Tim was seldom around to help. So in 1993, only three months after signing a \$600,000 contract with the Cincinnati Reds, he decided to retire. When pressed by reporters to explain this unbelievable decision, he simply said, **“Baseball is going to do just fine without me. But I’m the only father my children have.”** Heroes are in short supply these days. Tim and Christine Burke are two of them.²
- 4.17. **Pray** for Brad Hilton & Belize Team. Israel Team.

² Dr. James Dobson, *Coming Home, Timeless Wisdom for Families*, (Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Wheaton; 1998), pp. 16-17