**Cross And Crown Christian Outreach**

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**The End Matters**

**Woe to you, destroyer, you who have not been destroyed! Woe to you, betrayer, you who have not been betrayed! When you stop destroying, you will be destroyed; when you stop betraying, you will be betrayed. -** Isa. 33:1 NIV

The Prophet Isaiah was the prophet of God majorly to Judah although his prophecies sometimes had implication for the Israelites of the Northern Kingdom. He spent considerable time warning the people of the implication of not heeding to the warnings and instructions of the Almighty God. Although the first thirty-one verses dwelt mostly on the highlighting of the sins of the Israelites in Judah, the call for them to repent, the promise to send them a Messiah and the raising up of oppressors for them by the Lord due to their dis-obedience to the instructions of God, the last twenty seven chapters more or less brought the promise of restoration, succor and their confirmation in a good news format to the same people, with the proviso that they repent from their transgressions. In between both activities lies the deliverance moves of the Almighty God. Commencing from Chapter 32 through to chapter 39, the Almighty God turned on the same people who he had enabled to destroy and plunder His people. He announced to Israelites in Judah, through the Prophet Isaiah, His plans to install a king who will establish righteousness (Is. 32:1) and within a period less than one year of his reign, His people will begin to experience deliverance from the hand of these oppressors whom the Lord Himself had imposed on the people – Isa. 32:10. It was in the light of this decision by the Almighty God, that the scripture for today’s devotion was revealed.

In that scripture, destroyers and betrayers were told to prepare for the reward of their activities as when their acts of destruction and betrayal was complete, they should expect similar treatments. By that revelation, the Lord had divided the oppressors of the Israelites into two groups; destroyers and betrayers. Whereas a destroyer ends the existence of usefulness of something by violently attacking it, a betrayer is usually someone close who provides the enemy with the information used to defeat one. Today’s scripture reveals that God delays his judgement in such people until they have completed both acts and then inflicts them with the same tool, this time using other people. What a retribution of some sorts.

The error of the former group was that they were supposed to be tools of rebuke that will bring the people of God to repentance but they instead they took delighted in destroying God’s people in an opportunistic manner. The activities of the latter group was probably more grave. These were people who due to the closeness they had with the Israelites when they were in the good books of the Lord, had privileged information about them which they now supplied to the enemy and with which the enemy was able to defeat God’s people. They did not have to be treacherous to aid what God was going to do but they had the opportunity to show their true personality and did not waste time revealing it in a Judas-like manner – Lk. 22:1-6; 47-48.

You are probably a victim of one or both today and it seems all is lost. You are better off fighting back in the proper manner which will be to seek to re-trace your way back to the Almighty God. Mend your relationship with him so that He can cease from inflicting punishment on you, using these group of people who probably, have always harbored evil thoughts towards you but were not positioned to activate their evil thoughts, until this God-provided opportunity. The only way to repel their negative acts is to repair the damaged relationship between the Almighty God and yourself if there is any situation like that or get closer to Him in prayers and leave the rest to His decision. King David thought he had a supporter in Shimei, son of Gera until his temporary deposition by Absalom. That was when he realised that Shimei had been a hypocrite (2Sam. 16:5-12) just as you may just be discovering same about that your supposed confidant.

If however you belong to any of these groups, destroyers or betrayers, your only choice will be to repent and hope that the Almighty God will forgive you, even though that seems far-fetched because the scripture seems very definite about the repercussion of such acts. It states clearly that you can only avoid the backlash effect if you do not stop, because your stopping activates the commencement of the backlash actions, but how can you not stop when God is done with the punishment He wants to put His people through. So you are better off weighing carefully that action that you are about to take as the beginning of a matter is not as important as the end – Eccl. 7:8. What will the end of that action bring for you because the end indeed matters?

May God help you to avoid actions that will have destructive ends in Jesus name. Amen.