

God's Five Historical Warnings

My Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Our Ecclesiastical Music recognizes nine different Odes in the Old Testament, and one in the New Testament. The Fifth Ode belongs to Prophet Isaiah, where the Prophet beseeches God for the retribution of Divine Justice. The Epilogue of this Ode, found in the 26th Chapter of Isaiah, reads:

“Come, My people: enter your chambers, and shut your doors behind you. Hide yourselves, as it were, for a little moment; until the wrath of God passes over. For behold, the Lord comes out of His holy place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity.”

The Lord of Israel here forewarns His people through the Prophet. The One Who speaks is the Enhypostatic Logos – Christ – before His Incarnation. We will repeat this – in season and out of season, for everyone to hear – to the ends of the earth. The One Who speaks in the Old Testament is God the Logos – the Second Person of The Holy Trinity, or Christ before the Incarnation.

The Lord of Israel came so close to His people: He came, and He walked with the sons of men. Here, in the 20th verse of the 26th Chapter of Isaiah, God the Logos provides a historical forewarning to His people, when God is about ready to destroy the impious and the godless. At various times, God intervenes in human history, as any good doctor who needs to excise a section of the human organism to guarantee the well-being of the patient. The Love of God is unconditional, of course; and His Love will outweigh His Justice when people repent of their sins. But in the absence of repentance, and if the iniquity of certain people becomes very great, then God will

intervene surgically to safeguard the integrity of His Believers. Of course, there are those who claim that God never punishes. And I agree somewhat: He never punishes out of anger, as we do at times. But as I said, He will intervene surgically to end the lives of those whose very existence endangers His plan of Divine Economy, or Salvation. If one of your domestic animals, let's say, all of a sudden attacks one of your children; would you not grab any item available to you to hit the dog and to save your child? You're not punishing the dog; you simply are saving your child.

The Energies of God are Uncreated and Infinite; and we cannot fully understand them with our human logic in this life. We have a number of historical warnings, however, that should be of extreme interest to us. Three of them have been fulfilled in the Old Testament; one has been fulfilled in the New Testament; and there is one more to come. The last one refers to the days of the presence of the Antichrist. So we have the proof: four out of five came to pass; so the fifth one will come to pass, as well. As some Christian interpreter has said, "Out of a hundred prophecies, if the ninety-nine came to pass; then the hundredth will be fulfilled, as well."

But doesn't this forewarning in the Ode of Isaiah remind us of a war? "Come, My people: enter your chambers [your homes, your bunkers]. Hide yourselves, as it were, for a little moment; until the wrath of God is passed." Hmm... Now, some of you may think, "Doesn't this remind us of our present world war against this invisible microscopic agent called 'Coronavirus'?" Of course, we are not insinuating that God has anything to do with this evil; but the fact is that we are facing a shutdown, and we are hiding in our chambers – like those who faced strikes from military aircraft in recent years.

The first historical forewarning took place in the times of Noah. Noah's generation became irreparably corrupt. God needed to intervene surgically to save mankind. The chamber that was needed for Noah and his family to hide in was the ark, because everything else would be flooded. The wrath

of God broke out against that generation; but God wanted to save Noah through a boat – the ark. We read in Genesis 6: “My Spirit shall not strive with these men permanently, for they have become flesh.” He is not referring to their body [there is nothing wrong with the human body]; but the pleasing of their body became the center of their lives. They became carnal, or fleshly. And God says, “I will give them another 120 years to live.” And the Lord said, “I will blot out man whom I created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, for I am sorry I made them.” Now, keep in mind that God uses anthropomorphic expressions here, and elsewhere, in the Scriptures. This is God the Logos speaking; and God the Logos does not have **gnomic will**. Christ never had to think, “What do I do next?” God the Logos – the Creator – does not make mistakes: He simply wants to show His disappointment – and the intensity of sin – in that generation. So God the Word decided to wipe out humanity. Now, what “changed His mind”? It was the righteousness, or the virtue, of Noah. He instructed Noah to construct the ark; and there’s something very beautiful at the very end of the construction, after Noah and all the animals enter the ark. It was totally finished, and everybody was inside: **God the Logos Himself closed the door of the ark**. This is such a beautiful image: The Creator – Christ before the Incarnation – uses some tar; or something to seal the door of the ark from the outside, showing His loving care and protection. It’s like the mother who puts the child to bed; gets it ready to sleep; and then kisses it and then tiptoes out of the room and closes the door, so her precious child can sleep. Noah was righteous in his generation; yet he was highly ridiculed by his neighbors. They never believed him, or his powerful sermon – the ark itself. They laughed at him, and said, “Noah lost his mind; he became senile.” For over 100 years, people would ask, “Noah, what are you doing?” “I am building an ark.” “And why?” “Because God will destroy the earth.” The ark is a typology of the Church: if we stay faithful to the Church, if we stay inside the Church, we will be saved. Only if we live the Life of the Church will we be spared and saved from the *tsunami* of immorality, and today’s corruption.

The second historical warning took place in the *pentapolis* of Sodom and Gomorrah; and some of the Scriptural description is truly shocking. At the time, The Holy Trinity visited Abraham in the form of three angels. And afterwards, the one angel – representing the Father – stayed with Abraham; and the other two – the Son and the Holy Spirit – went to Sodom; which was about 4,500 feet lower, near the sea. Their sin was so flagrant that God “acts surprised”. The outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is so great that God the Logos is in disbelief. “The sin is so grievous that I will go down and see if what they have done is as bad as the outcry that has reached Me.” God the Logos speaks anthropomorphically once again, like a man. So the angels – in the type of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (Who are sent by the Father, in the world) – went to visit Lot, who was as hospitable as his uncle; and he took them inside his home. When the men of Sodom saw these two strangers enter Lot’s door, they ran to Lot’s door; and they were demanding that Lot give them these two men, so that they might have homosexual relations with them. The men of the city – both old and young – surrounded the house; and, while ready to violate Lot’s door, they were struck with blindness by the angels, who told Lot, “Get ready: you have a few hours,” not 120 years, like Noah. When the daughters of Lot, who were engaged to some young men, told them, “Come, let’s go: follow us,” they said, “No, no: your father is being a comedian; Lot is joking.” They did not believe. At dawn, the two angels took the women by the hand; and unfortunately, Lot’s wife did not make it, as you know. And imagine – losing your salvation, while God is holding your hand: this is a classic example of the extreme importance of human free will. God told them, “Do not look back,” and she couldn’t obey; as we will explain in a few minutes. So the angels grabbed the hands of the women; they began to run; and Lot himself was lingering – he was in a state of shock – so the angel said, “That’s it: let’s go.” And after they got out of the city, then the Lord rained brimstone and fire from the Lord. Listen to this: “Then the Lord rained brimstone and fire *from the Lord*.” Here we have the two Persons of The Holy Trinity – perhaps the Father and the Son; and this reminds us of another beautiful verse in 2 Thessalonians with all three Persons of The

Holy Trinity: “May the Lord direct your hearts to the love of God and into the patience of Christ” – “May the Lord [the Holy Spirit] direct your hearts to the love of God [the Father] and into the patience of Christ.” So, getting back to Lot and Sodom: What is the vehicle of salvation for Lot and his family? One alone: flight; running away – getting up and running for their lives. So the vehicle of salvation for Noah was the ark – but for Lot and his family, an exodus to the hills. The angels gave them the conditions necessary for their salvation: #1: Flee, and do not look back; #2: Do not stop anywhere in the suburbs, in the plain; because they also will be destroyed; #3: Run to the hills. Let’s be very careful, my friends: because this is a typology of the End Times, and a key to the fifth historical warning, during the days of the Antichrist. The very same conditions will apply: Flee; run for your lives. Those who stay in the city will not be able to eat or drink without the Mark [or: “Seal”] of the Antichrist. Now some of our Ecclesiastical interpreters, who see much deeper, understand Sodom as the area of sin, or the typology of sin. Obviously there is no salvation in the city of permanent sin. The suburbs are the stimuli to – and causes of – sin. If I keep watching videos of sexual content on YouTube, or television, or the iPhone; I am in the suburbs of sin. If I don’t seek immediate help, if I don’t reach out to my Spiritual Father to help me run to the hills, I will end up in the city of sin. So, it is not enough to avoid sin; but I need to avoid the stimuli to – and causes of – sin. I will be saved when I flee to a high place, to the hills. Spiritually speaking, salvation is not possible in the world of sin. St. John the Evangelist tells us, “Do not love the world or anything in the world”, that may cause you to sin. We love all people, but not their sinful lifestyle. We live in the world, but we are not of the world. We must develop a spiritual buffer zone by fleeing onto a higher plane, by elevating ourselves spiritually. We are safe from the city called Sodom when we are continually climbing Mount Tabor, when we strive to be transfigured without taking, so to speak, spiritual vacations. The moment we stop and think, “Well, I now am in good shape spiritually; I will go on a worldly cruise for six months, to enjoy myself”; well, there is no guarantee that we will ever come back spiritually. So this was one of the conditions of the angels: Do not look

back. Lot's wife looked back; and why, do you think? It is because she was very attached to her home, to her furnishings. Her soul was enslaved to her material goods – unlike her uncle Abraham, who never owned a home; he never owned any land, precisely for this reason: to keep his heart free and empty of all earthly cares and attachments. Now, if we don't fight against this attachment [and many of us may suffer from this (I know I do)]: we may have repented; but at some point [during times of listlessness, and temptations, and pain], the demons offer us consolation by bringing to our minds our old sinful lifestyle; like the Israelites in the desert. They became bored with the heavenly manna, and they desired the leeks and onions and fish of their years of slavery in Egypt. And that's why the Lord warns us: "Remember Lot's wife"; don't look back. And if you noticed, Lot's wife remained nameless in the Scriptures, because her name was not written in the Book of Life.

The third historical warning took place in the Old Testament as well, in the form of another physical exodus. The second grandson of Abraham, Jacob, went into Egypt with 75 of his family members; and 430 years later, they became nearly 2 million. They lived in the suburb of Goshen, an area given to the family of Joseph by Pharaoh. Joseph did not want his family to be integrated with the Egyptian idolaters. This buffer zone was essential, for reasons of faith. 430 years later, Moses told the Pharaoh that God wants His people to leave Egypt. And please remember this: during the time of the ten plagues that crippled the Egyptians, not a single animal of the Israelites was harmed. On the day of exodus, not a single person out of 2 million fell ill. The grace of God protected them – without any Rite Aid, CVS, or Walgreens [pharmacies, and all that]; without any state-of-the-art hospitals. The last plague, that killed all the firstborn of Egypt, spared the firstborn of Israel; because they followed this one condition: Every family of the Israelites found a one-year-old male lamb, without blemish, and kept it until the 14th day of the month, which was Nisan. Then, the whole assembled congregation of Israel slaughtered their lambs at twilight. Then they took some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the

lintel of their houses. Now listen to this amazing action: they would move their hands horizontally on the lintel, and then vertically; making the Sign of the Precious Cross. This was their sign of salvation from the Angel of Death: the blood of the lamb. Listen to this beautiful verse in Exodus 12:13: “The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live. When I see the blood,” – Who is speaking here again? The Lamb of God: Christ before His Incarnation – “When I see the blood, I will pass over you; and no plague shall destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.” So, God never punishes. Well, I hear this everywhere nowadays; from monks, theologians, priests: “God never punishes.” Well; I don’t know how to explain this, then: In one night, every Egyptian home had a dead body, by the hand of God – incredible pain and lament. In one hour, the entire city of Sodom was cremated. And, in a few days, all the bodies of the generation of Noah were floating on top of the water, feeding the crows and the vultures. So God never punishes? Well, call it what you will; but God does pass judgment, and surgically removes any human factor that will impede the plan of His Salvation for His people. God’s intervention in human history is quite a mystery, and it’s very difficult for us to fully understand it right now. All this wisdom of God will be delighting us in His Kingdom. So the iniquity of nations, especially those who make it their purpose to destroy the people of God or the Church of God – all these nations, symbolized by the term “Babylon”, will be judged throughout history; and many of them will disappear: The Chaldeans, the Philistines, the Canaanites, the Moabites, the Babylonians, the Scythians – they have been removed from the maps of geography. But let’s get back to God the Logos, Who told the Israelites that the blood of the lamb would save them from Death. What is this? It is a prophetic typology of the Body and Blood of God the Logos, Who would become Incarnate, in the fullness of time: “Unless you eat My Body and drink My Blood, you have no Life in you.” Now, the Blood of the Lamb – The Body *and* Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ – is much more salvific than the blood of the lamb of the Jews. The Body and Blood of Christ saves us from sin, death, and corruption: He forgives our sins through Holy Confession and Holy Communion; He saves us from death, because He

trampled upon death via His Resurrection, and the Resurrection of the Dead – after which we will be granted eternal incorruption: a flawless spiritualized body, united with our soul, at the age of 33; once again, after the Second Coming of Christ, the Dread Judgment, and the Universal Resurrection of the Dead.

The fourth historical forewarning took place in the New Testament by the lips of the Incarnate God the Logos – once again, the Son of Man: the same Person of the Holy Trinity Who warned Noah, Lot, and Moses. We read in Luke: “But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies; then know that its desolation is near. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.” The Lord is warning the Church of Jerusalem and its Bishop – James, the Brother of God – about the imminent destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD. There were over 50,000 Christians in the Church of Jerusalem at the time, and they needed to be saved; so Christ gives them a sign, or the means of salvation: When you see Jerusalem surrounded by the armies; if you are on your rooftops or on your farms, and you see Jerusalem surrounded by the Roman armies, then know that its desolation is near. Then let the Christians of Judea flee to the mountains; let those who are inside the walls of the city run for their lives. Don’t take any time to look for camping gear: you will not have any time left. Why? Because once the danger is acknowledged, the gates of the city will be locked; and no one would be able to escape or exit beyond that point in time. The siege took place around August of 70 AD, and the hunger and the thirst decimated the citizens of the city; and when the Romans entered, then they killed almost everyone, mercilessly. The Christians were saved, because they believed in the message of the Lord – given 37 years before. For the unbelievers, and the children of those who orchestrated His murder, the Lord says, “And they will fall by the edge of the sword and be led away captive to all nations.” So many of them were sold to the slave markets, and the Jews were scattered all over the earth; and Jerusalem fell into the hands of the Gentiles – until 1948. This great prophecy of the Lord was fulfilled in our days – last century, in 1948, when Israel became a nation again.

And now we come to the fifth historical warning, which will take place during the presence of the final Antichrist – because, as we know, we have many antichrists through history, according to St. John. So this is the final Antichrist; and we read in Revelation 12:6: “And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God; that they should feed her [*they should feed her*] there one thousand two hundred and sixty days.” So the woman is the Church – and the faithful members of the Church, of course. And God has prepared a way for the faithful to be fed; while God will give terrible plagues to the Antichrist and his followers, much like those in Egypt – and we see a lot of these plagues in Revelation: the three heptads of these plagues of Revelation are a modified model of the plagues that took place in Egypt against the Pharaoh.

And this is why it is extremely important to pay attention to these historical typologies and precedents; because here we will find a lot of consolation, and a lot of answers: How would God feed us during the time of the Antichrist? He will find a way; we don’t know how yet. Did He not find a way for the Israelites in the desert for 40 years? He sent them manna from heaven for 40 years; and during those 40 years, their clothing never deteriorated, their shoes never deteriorated – and all that for 40 years. The time of the Antichrist is much shorter: only 3 ½ years. So, let’s not question, “How would God be able to feed the faithful?” He has done it many times before. We have all these historical precedents where we see the wonderful Providence of God for His people – all those who repent, and fear and love His Name.

So let us stand well, my brothers and sisters; and let’s spend a lot more time in the study of the Word of God, especially nowadays; and pray a lot more. And let’s not waste our valuable time on today’s questionable social media, where we can be easily deceived by all these mixed messages that are circulating on a daily basis.

Constantine Zalalas, Spring of 2020