

ONE SINNER DESTROYS MUCH GOOD

TEXT: *Ecclesiastes 9:18: Wisdom is better than weapons of war: but one sinner destroyeth much good.*

This is a truth attested to by universal experience. The importance is apparent, even when applied to him who is a sinner only in his heart. He is destroying his own soul, and he negatively influences the counsel and care he should be giving to others which has been bestowed upon him by Jehovah God.

However, this truth assumes an even higher importance when applied to the open transgressor. The transgressor not only destroys himself, but also becomes the corruptor of those around him as he spreads a vile waste of moral pestilence and death. Applied to such a person, the impact he has on others corresponds with:

- the station he occupies in life, and
- the means, resources, and platform available to him by which he can negatively influence others.



Witness this person in a family.

It is here that one can strongly affect the lives of those who live in close to him.



Witness him in his interactions with friends.

It is here that he comes — as a friend of perdition — to destroy the lives of those who confide in him.

Witness him in the hall of legislation or on the bench of judgment.

It is here — in respected political and judicial positions — that he perverts and poisons the foundations of justice which flow down into the community, affecting countless others.



Follow him into every station of life. He appears in all situations as the same friend of ruin, destroying others who are exposed to his polluting touch.

Elijah's faith was so strong that he went out of his way to create obstacles that would ultimately show the glory of God.

1 Kings 18:21-39:

21 And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word.

22 Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, remain a Prophet of the LORD; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men.

23 Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: and I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under:

24 And call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the Name of the LORD: and the God Who answereth by fire, let Him be God. And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken.

25 And Elijah said unto the prophets of Baal, Choose you one bullock for yourselves, and dress it first; for ye are many; and call on the name of your gods, but put no fire under.

26 And they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon,

saying, O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered. And they leaped upon the altar which was made.

27 And it came to pass at noon, that Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry aloud: for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked.

28 And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them.

29 And it came to pass, when midday was past, and they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded.

30 And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. And all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the Altar of the LORD that



was broken down.

31 And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the Word of the LORD came, saying, Israel shall be thy name:

32 And with the stones he built an Altar in the Name of the LORD: and he made a trench about the Altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed.

33 And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid him on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the Burnt Sacrifice, and on the wood.

34 And he said, Do it the second time. And they did it the second time. And he said, Do it the third time. And they did it the third time.

35 And the water ran round about the Altar; and he filled the trench also with water.

36 And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening Sacrifice, that Elijah the Prophet came near, and said, LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that Thou art God in Israel, and that I am Thy servant, and that I have done all these things at Thy Word.

37 Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that Thou art the LORD God, and that Thou hast turned their heart back again.



38 Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the Burnt Sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.

39 And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, He is the God; the LORD, He is the God.

Notice that he directed that twelve barrels of water be poured to soak the sacrifice. Then, the fire that consumed this could not be called some magic or trick. It will have to be God, and nothing is too hard for God. This is far from the world's maxim that says God helps those who help themselves. Very often God only helps those who cannot help themselves. "When I am weak then am I strong," declared Paul the apostle.

2 Corinthians 12:10: Therefore I [Paul] take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

Then Elijah demanded a thorough dealing with sin — the prophets of Baal must die and be exterminated completely, for they led Israel away from the Lord.

1 Kings 18:40: And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there.

False teachers and prophets were plentiful in that day, and their lives were not even worth a dime a dozen. Oh, that day . . .

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