

FIVE DAYS OF ENCOUNTER

#5. The Distinction

4.14.19

The word *distinction* implies a mark or division for the purpose of redeeming or delivering.

Exodus 11:6-8 NASB Moreover, there shall be a great cry in all the land of Egypt, such as there has not been before and such as shall never be again. ⁷ But against any of the sons of Israel a dog will not even bark, whether against man or beast, that you may understand how the Lord makes a distinction between Egypt and Israel. ⁸ All these your servants will come down to me and bow themselves before me, saying, 'Go out, you and all the people who follow you,' and after that I will go out." And he went out from Pharaoh in hot anger.

The word also conveys the idea of differentiating between things that may appear to be similar - consider Leviticus 10:10; 11:47; 20:25.

Exodus 9:3-5 NASB behold, the hand of the Lord will come with a very severe pestilence on your livestock which are in the field, on the horses, on the donkeys, on the camels, on the herds, and on the flocks. ⁴ But the Lord will make a *distinction* between the livestock of Israel and the livestock of Egypt, so that nothing will die of all that belongs to the sons of Israel. ⁵ The Lord set a definite time, saying, "Tomorrow the Lord will do this thing in the land."

Ezekiel 22:25-27 NASB There is a conspiracy of her prophets in her midst like a roaring lion tearing the prey. They have devoured lives; they have taken treasure and precious things; they have made many widows in the midst of her. ²⁶ Her priests have done violence to My law and have profaned My holy things; they have made no distinction between the holy and the profane, and they have not taught the difference between the unclean and the clean; and they hide their eyes from My sabbaths, and I am profaned among them. ²⁷ Her princes within her are like wolves tearing the prey, by shedding blood and destroying lives in order to get dishonest gain.

(The New Testament uses a similar word to explain that God does not differentiate between His people, whether Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male or female, etc.)

Acts 12:1-24 NASB Now about that time Herod the king laid hands on some who belonged to the church in order to mistreat them. ² And he had James the brother of John put to death with a sword. ³ When he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also. Now it was during the days of Unleavened Bread. ⁴ When he had seized him, he put him in prison, delivering him to four squads of soldiers to guard him, intending after the Passover to bring him out before the people. ⁵ So Peter was kept in the prison, but prayer for him was being made fervently by the church to God. ⁶ On the very night when Herod was about to bring him forward, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and guards in front of the door were watching over the prison. ⁷ And behold, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared and a light shone in the cell; and he struck Peter's side and woke him up, saying, "Get up quickly." And his chains fell off his hands. ⁸ And the angel said to him, "Gird yourself and put on your sandals." And he did so. And he *said to him, "Wrap your cloak around you and follow me."

⁹ And he went out and continued to follow, and he did not know that what was being done by the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision. ¹⁰ When they had passed the first and second guard, they came to the iron gate that leads into the city, which opened for them by itself; and they went out and went along one street, and immediately the angel departed from him. ¹¹ When Peter came to himself, he said, "Now I know for sure that the Lord has sent forth His angel and rescued me from the hand of Herod and from all that the Jewish people were expecting." ¹² And when he realized this, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John who was also called Mark, where many were gathered together and were praying. ¹³ When he knocked at the door of the gate, a servant-girl named Rhoda came to answer. ¹⁴ When she recognized Peter's voice, because of her joy she did not open the gate, but ran in and announced that Peter was standing in front of the gate. ¹⁵ They said to her, "You are out of your mind!" But she kept insisting that it was so. They kept saying, "It is his angel." ¹⁶ But Peter continued knocking; and when they had opened the door, they saw him and were amazed. ¹⁷ But motioning to them with his hand to be silent, he described to them how the Lord had led him out of the prison. And he said, "Report these things to James and the brethren." Then he left and went to another place. ¹⁸ Now when day came, there was no small disturbance among the soldiers as to what could have become of Peter. ¹⁹ When Herod had searched for him and had not found him, he examined the guards and ordered that they be led away to execution. Then he went down from Judea to Caesarea and was spending time there. ²⁰ Now he was very angry with the people of Tyre and Sidon; and with one accord they came to him, and having won over Blastus the king's chamberlain, they were asking for peace, because their country was fed by the king's country. ²¹ On an appointed day Herod, having put on his royal apparel, took his seat on the rostrum and began delivering an address to them. ²² The people kept crying out, "The voice of a god and not of a man!" ²³ And immediately an angel of the Lord struck him because he did not give God the glory, and he was eaten by worms and died. ²⁴ But the word of the Lord continued to grow and to be multiplied.

Revelation 22:11

KJV He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.

ESV Let the evildoer still do evil, and the filthy still be filthy, and the righteous still do right, and the holy still be holy."

NASB Let the one who does wrong, still do wrong; and the one who is filthy, still be filthy; and let the one who is righteous, still practice righteousness; and the one who is holy, still keep himself holy."

Understanding the Fifth Encounter

The Story...God was not only moving in supernatural power and sending Angels on assignment, He was about to judge a man called Herod with severe and grotesque judgment for his sin. God's mercy is often mistaken as His acceptance of sin. His goodness is often seen as weakness. But God will move against sin swiftly and thoroughly.

The Meaning of the Word... Sin will be seen by God's people as it really is. Personal struggles with iniquity will be won as we see the true nature of evil. Without reservation, entire households will discover and embrace a new standard of holiness, "As for me and my house, we will serve The Lord!" The nations will tremble as God shows there is a distinction between those who serve Him and those who are servants of evil. Love will no longer be a synonym for tolerance, but true love will boldly declare the requirements of The Lord God.

The Burden of The Lord... "Come out of Babylon, My People, and do not be partakers of her sins or her judgment. I have brought you out of Egypt, and my heart is now set on bringing Egypt out of you!"

Revelation 18:1-10 ESV "After this I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was made bright with his glory. ² And he called out with a mighty voice, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a dwelling place for demons, a haunt for every unclean spirit, a haunt for every unclean bird, a haunt for every unclean and detestable beast. ³ For all nations have drunk the wine of the passion of her sexual immorality, and the kings of the earth have committed immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth have grown rich from the power of her luxurious living." ⁴ Then I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, lest you take part in her sins, lest you share in her plagues; ⁵ for her sins are heaped high as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities. ⁶ Pay her back as she herself has paid back others, and repay her double for her deeds; mix a double portion for her in the cup she mixed. ⁷ As she glorified herself and lived in luxury, so give her a like measure of torment and mourning, since in her heart she says, 'I sit as a queen, I am no widow, and mourning I shall never see.' ⁸ For this reason her plagues will come in a single day, death and mourning and famine, and she will be burned up with fire; for mighty is the Lord God who has judged her." ⁹ And the kings of the earth, who committed sexual immorality and lived in luxury with her, will weep and wail over her when they see the smoke of her burning. ¹⁰ They will stand far off, in fear of her torment, and say, "Alas! Alas! You great city, you mighty city, Babylon! For in a single hour your judgment has come."

I. The Issue

A. As the Harvest matures, we must become flexible enough to embrace a new paradigm.

B. As the Harvest matures, there is a clearer differentiation between wheat and tares.

1. There is an irrefutable, immutable principle of the harvest: a man will reap what he sows.

2. And man will reap more than he sows.

C. As the Harvest matures, there is a clear revelation that God's perspective will prevail.

1. God has declared that He will not be mocked (disregarded; lightly esteemed). He will superintend the process of judgment.

2. The Holy Spirit will definitively explain the truth about sin, righteousness and judgment.
 3. His decision will stand.
 4. He laughs at those who cry “foul!”
- D. As the Harvest matures, things will progressively be set right.
1. Haman the Evil will perish. Esther will win.
 2. The sins against Naboth will be exposed; his good name will be recovered.
 3. “It’s Friday, but Sunday’s coming!”
- E. As the Harvest matures, the action of judgment will somehow become more revealing.
1. There was judgment upon the rebuilders of Jericho even when the vital prophecy had been long forgotten.
 2. We cannot accurately judge every situation, but I believe the nature of events will somehow become clearer.
 - a) The Book of Revelation
 - b) “and they repented not” (2 Thessalonians 2)
 - c) Caution: do not take up the mantle of harshness or judgmentalism — the prohibition has not been lifted.
 - d) Notice that neither Israelites in Goshen nor the Church in Acts 12 jumped on the bandwagon of arrogance.
 - e) “or you shall all likewise perish.”
- F. As the Harvest matures, it will require a balance of fear and love to hold us steady as God begins to dismantle the fabric of Babylon.

II. Christian Life Lessons

- A. Give up about 90% of your opinions.

- B. Fall in love with the Return of Christ.

- C. Ask God to work — while we remain quiet, humble, and still.