

# FirstFruits Gathering At Harvest Christian Church

## Violence In the Earth November 7, 2023 Suzi Armstrong

### Genesis 6.11-13 NIV

<sup>11</sup> **Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight and was full of violence.** <sup>12</sup> God saw how corrupt the earth had become, for **all the people on earth had corrupted their ways.** <sup>13</sup> So God said to Noah, "I am going to put an end to all people, for **the earth is filled with violence because of them.** I am surely going to destroy both them and the earth.

- This is the first mention of violence in the Bible. From these scriptures it is clear that the Lord will not tolerate violence forever – He will put an end to it.
- In Hebrew and Greek, violence is defined as unrighteousness, cruelty, injustice, corruption.
  - Violence is rooted in anger and hatred.
  - Hate is rooted in issues of power and control.
  - Satan was the first one to take on a spirit of violence as his goal was to usurp the power of Almighty God. He recruited a third of the angels to make war with God.

### God instructs us how to keep violence from entering our hearts.

#### Proverbs 4.10-19 NIV

<sup>10</sup> Listen, my son, accept what I say, and the years of your life will be many.

<sup>11</sup> **I instruct you in the way of wisdom and lead you along straight paths.**

<sup>12</sup> When you walk, your steps will not be hampered; when you run, you will not stumble.

<sup>13</sup> Hold on to instruction, do not let it go; guard it well, for it is your life.

<sup>14</sup> **Do not set foot on the path of the wicked or walk in the way of evildoers.**

<sup>15</sup> Avoid it, do not travel on it; **turn from it** and go on your way.

<sup>16</sup> For they cannot rest until they do evil; they are robbed of sleep till they make someone stumble.

<sup>17</sup> **They eat the bread of wickedness and drink the wine of violence.**

<sup>18</sup> The path of the righteous is like the morning sun, shining ever brighter till the full light of day.

<sup>19</sup> **But the way of the wicked is like deep darkness; they do not know what makes them stumble.**

We are in a war. The FBI has said that our nation is open to acts of violent terrorism. Riots, demonstrations, and gangs can happen anywhere. It is not unusual for violence to break out as part of that dynamic. How do we deal with this? How do we live in a culture and community that is becoming increasingly more violent? There are some practical things you can do to protect yourself from acts of violence such as assessing your surroundings and planning accordingly. Practical preparation and clear thinking are important.

There is a spiritual side to this, and it is important to understand that violence can be dealt with spiritually as well as naturally. National Christian leaders and our own pastor have warned us that this is a time to put our shields up. Shields up means be alert, be aware, be listening, be wise, be watching, and be ready.

We are gatekeepers and watchmen of our heart and life, also of our property and the community we live in. We can close the gate to the spirit of violence. Jesus is the Prince of Peace; He subdues violence. We have divine weapons to demolish strongholds through Christ. Jesus taught that whatever we bind on earth is bound in Heaven and whatever is loosed on earth is loosed in Heaven. If two or more of us agree, asking in prayer, it will be done for us by our Father in Heaven. We do not have to be victims! We do not have to live in fear.

We can be on the offense through prayer. We can shift the atmosphere, close the gate, and command violence to go in the Name of Jesus. We can apply the blood of Jesus over our property, our street, and community. We can worship and exalt the Lord over our city. It is wise to be listening to the Voice of the Lord and following His voice in our daily lives. It is time to do these things – violence is here.

**A step beyond** – I read a prophetic word from Wanda Alger that she prophesied out of seeing the foot of the Lord come down into where they were gathered. This caught my attention because I, too, have been seeing the foot of the Lord come down, stepping into Michigan. Wanda shared, “He was coming to put His foot down. He had found a place to take a righteous stand and was inviting us to join Him. I felt this was an invitation to create a place where the Lord’s presence can dwell and create a place from which we can stand with Him.”

In the face of the threat of violence overtaking our community, the Lord is saying, “I have a plan that will turn the table on violence and every plan of wickedness. Make your house a place of worship and I will come and dwell in your midst. And from your house the strategies of Heaven will be released as you make a place where we can stand together, a place where My righteousness and holiness can go forth from your house and down your street. The Lord says, it will be a place of Kingdom dominion – a place where the weight of My Kingdom can be released into your neighborhood. A place where righteous decrees can come forth and a place where I can make My stand. The Lord says I want your house to be a house of My presence and power; a hub where violence and wickedness are subdued.”

#### **Psalm 140.1-4** NIV

<sup>1</sup> **Rescue me, LORD, from evildoers; protect me from the violent,**

<sup>2</sup> who devise evil plans in their hearts and stir up war every day.

<sup>3</sup> They make their tongues as sharp as a serpent’s; the poison of vipers is on their lips.

<sup>4</sup> Keep me safe, LORD, from the hands of the wicked; **protect me from the violent,** who devise ways to trip my feet.

Words of **VICTORY** from the Psalms:

The Lord reigns, let the earth be glad...fire goes before Him and consumes His foes on every side...the mountains melt like wax before the Lord...He has done marvelous things...He is our God and we are His people...the Lord is my rock, my fortress, my deliverer...He is my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold...who is this King of Glory...The Lord might in battle...I trust in You, O Lord; I say you are my God...the salvation of the righteous comes from the Lord: He is my stronghold in times of trouble...The Lord helps them and delivers them; He delivers them from the wicked and saves them because they take refuge in Him...the Lord gave victory to David everywhere he went...in God we make our boast all day long...Your throne, O God, will last forever and ever; a scepter of justice will be the scepter of Your Kingdom...God is our refuge and strength, an ever present help in trouble...Therefore we will not fear...great is the Lord and most worthy of praise...the Lord reigns...declare His glory among the nations...ascribe to the Lord the glory due His Name.

#### **PRAYER AND DECLARATION:**

**Psalm 140.6-11** Reworded as a shield and defense over your community:

<sup>6</sup> I say to the LORD, “You are my God, and you are God of this community, of my street and neighborhood.” Hear, LORD, my cry for mercy.

<sup>7</sup> Sovereign LORD, You are my strong deliverer and the deliverer of my community from wickedness and violence, you shield my head and my street on the day of battle.

<sup>8</sup> Do not grant the wicked their desires, LORD; do not let their plans succeed.

<sup>9</sup> Those who come to surround me with wickedness and violence, and surround my community, and proudly rear their heads; may the mischief of their lips engulf them.

<sup>10</sup> May burning coals fall on them; may they be thrown into the fire, into miry pits, never to rise.

<sup>11</sup> May slanderers not be established in the land; may disaster hunt down the violent. You, O God, are our shield. We say Your kingdom come and Your will be done, we stand with You. We enthrone You over our house and over our street and community and declare **our God reigns!** Violence and wickedness exposed and dismantled over this region and this people in the Name of Jesus!