

BEING THE ADDRESS OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD,
GOD'S KINGDOM SOCIETY (GKS)
– The Church of The Living God,
BROTHER GODWIN O. IFEACHO,

during the Last and Great Day, Holy Convocation of the Christian Feast of Tabernacles in
Salem City, Warri, Delta State, Nigeria, on Sunday, December 21, 2014

Dearly beloved Brothers, Sisters and Friends,

HAIL JEHOVAH AND JESUS CHRIST!

Unto JEHOVAH the Almighty God, the Creator and Possessor of the universe, be adoration and thanks, for His mercies on us in sending Jesus Christ, the “greater and more perfect tabernacle”, who is now with us in spirit by His grace.

Brothers, sisters and friends our appreciation of the Lord's goodness is underlined by the fact that many people could not see today due to the violent activities of terrorists, insurgents, armed robbers, kidnappers, etc; and the effects of old age and of various diseases. However, those of us who are alive should do the will of God the more in appreciation of His goodness. - Psalm 40:5; Isaiah 38:18, 19.

By congregating to show gratitude to God and to proclaim His truth, we are doing honour to Him and to His crowned King Jesus Christ. We should do this with even greater zeal in this age so that those who are in error “may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.” – 2 Timothy 2:26. See also Deuteronomy 31:10-13; Zephaniah 2:1-3; Isaiah 58:1; Daniel 12:10.

It is with this understanding that I have chosen as the address to celebrants in this great Christian festival, the Feast of Tabernacles for the year 2014 the topic, “Unbelievers And Wicked Men Shall Soon Know That There Is God”. The Webster's Dictionary defines “unbeliever” as one who does not believe in a particular religious faith, while the word “wicked” means “morally bad, evil; disposed to or marked by mischief; causing or likely to cause harm, distress, or trouble.” Generally, a wicked person is seen as one who is cruel to others; who derives pleasure from showing aggression with a motive of inflicting harm or killing another individual.

The wicked described

From the Bible point of view, unbelievers and wicked people are those who persist in error or wrong doing in spite of having received the knowledge of God. Ezekiel the prophet was inspired by God to describe a wicked person as, “a robber, a shedder of blood, ...” (one who) “...hath eaten upon the mountains, and defiled his neighbour's wife, Hath oppressed the poor and needy, hath spoiled by violence, hath not restored the pledge, and hath lifted up his eyes to the idols, hath committed abomination.” (Ezekiel 18:10-12) The degenerate state of the wicked is portrayed by St. Paul in this wise, “And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; Being filled with

all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, Backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, Without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them." (Romans 1:28-32) The Bible says further that even "the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel". (Proverbs 12:10) These wicked ones are so proud that they do not believe in the judgment of God. They feel that they can do whatever they like and so do not care about the effects of their actions on their fellow men. - Psalm 10:4-11; Job 22:13, 14.

A wicked man is very crafty and cunning; he "worketh a deceitful work". Such ones lie with confidence and with a straight face - without prick of conscience. As our Lord Jesus Christ says "they come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves". (Matthew 7:15, 16) They are thus able to win many people who are not careful or alert to their side, at least temporarily. King David prayed: "Draw me not away with the wicked, and with the workers of iniquity, which speak peace to their neighbours, but mischief is in their hearts..." - Psalm 28:3-5.

One of the wicked practices going on today is the sin of homosexuality. This is a dangerous trend in which men marry men and women marry women. It is unfortunate that a number of orthodox Churches now accommodate gays and lesbians and even carry out civil marriages. On Monday, October 13, 2014, 200 Catholic bishops meeting at a synod on pastoral approaches to modern family life, issued an interim report which stated that gays and lesbians have "gifts and qualities to offer to the Christian community" and that there are "positive aspects of civil unions and cohabitation." (See the Online Edition - New York Times, October 13, 2014, The Punch Newspaper, issue of October 14, 2014) This statement, following the lead already given earlier by Pope Francis, amounted to tacitly condoning homosexuality, no doubt, in order to please those who are criticizing some Churches for being "too rigid" on these issues. The hallmark of a true Church is to tell people the truth which will lead them to salvation, not to tell people what they want to hear in order to be popular. (Isaiah 30:9, 10; Matthew 7:13, 14; 15:12-14; Luke 16:15; 2 Timothy 4:3, 4) The fact is that homosexuality is a wicked act indulged in by those who have sold themselves to carnality and had thus acquired what St. Paul called a "reprobate mind" when he stated: "For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one towards another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind..." (Romans 1:26-28) Those involved in it should be told the judgment of God in plain terms, admonished to repent thoroughly, and not to encourage them to continue in their evil ways.

The Last Days

The Bible shows clearly that wickedness will multiply in this age known as the "last days", or "the time of the end". St. Paul described it as "perilous times". He wrote, "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away." (2 Timothy 3:1-5) He also stated that in this age "some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron." -1 Timothy 4:1, 2.

The perversions and evils prevalent in the world today are proofs that the consciences of those who do such things are dead. Consequently, some people now despair of life while others defame the name of God. King Solomon stated, "So I returned, and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun: and behold the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there was power; but they had no comforter. Wherefore I praised the dead which are already dead more than the living which are yet alive. Yea, better is he than both they, which hath not yet been, who hath not seen the evil work that is done under the sun." - Ecclesiastes 4:1-3.

One who reflects on the miseries people are going through because of the greed and selfishness of others will certainly appreciate the words of King Solomon. There are those who collect money from hundreds, if not thousands of people with the promise of paying them high returns on their deposits or giving them jobs, but soon vanish into thin air. Some have become rich through their habit of not paying those who have worked for them, and when they pay at all, they pay in bits or only just part of the money, knowing that their victims do not have the power to get them to pay their debts. There are those who make fake drugs which cause deformities and even the deaths of so many people. There are some children, house helps and employees who connive in the kidnapping and even killing of their parents and masters so as to inherit their property. Some men kill their wives so that they could marry other women and some wives also kill their husbands to marry other men, all because of money or some other carnal reasons. There are teachers who harass their students sexually and girls who blackmail men to extort money or other benefits from them. There are syndicates whose business is to lure young women to foreign countries, with the promise of finding jobs for them but only end up forcing them into prostitution. There have been reports of men who kept women as sex slaves for months or even years until their victims were rescued. Others just go to a school and open fire on pupils and teachers, resulting in several fatalities.

These acts of wickedness are multiplying today in every part of the world in fulfillment of the Scriptures that in this age "the wicked shall do wickedly". (Daniel 12:10) The fact is that the devil, "...the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience", (Ephesians 2:2), having been driven down from heaven (Revelation 12:7-12) is inducing many men and women to acts of violence

and mischief, so that as many people as possible would be destroyed along with him. The devil also moves those in control of the levers of power in the society to make laws and to set up institutions that support, facilitate and dignify ungodly practices. Isaiah the prophet was inspired by God to pronounce woe on such people thus, "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!" - Isaiah 5:20.

Examples

God Almighty punishes the wicked for their ungodly deeds and He has caused examples of what He did in the time of old to be written down as a warning to those who would give themselves to evil in later years - 1 Corinthians 10:6, 11; Romans 15:4

Pharaoh: In the time of the Pharaoh "who knew not Joseph" he subjected the Jews to all manner of humiliation and oppression. He made them to serve him as slaves and did not count their lives as anything of value. He even directed the Hebrew Midwives to kill every male child delivered by the Hebrew women. The midwives however, did not carry out the command because they had the fear of God for which they were blessed. (Exodus 1:15-20) Pharaoh went on to charge that every son that is born of the Jewish women should be cast into the river and every daughter saved alive. (Exodus 1:22) This however could not stop the exponential growth in the population of the Jews, thus making the Pharaoh to feel more insecure.

It will be recalled that three months after Moses was born, his mother (Jochebed) put him in an ark of bulrushes and laid him at the river bank in that she saw that "he was a goodly child" and could not bear to have him killed. (Exodus 2:1-4) Miraculously, the daughter of Pharaoh saw the child and adopted him as her own; and without knowing it, invited the real mother to be his wet nurse. When Moses grew up, he came into conflict with the Pharaoh and fled to Midian. It was from there that he was sent by God to tell the King of Egypt that he should allow the Jews to go and serve Him in the wilderness. The Bible account says, "And afterward Moses and Aaron went in, and told Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness. And Pharaoh said, Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go." (Exodus 5:1, 2) Instead of obeying the voice of God, he increased their burdens. Thus God Almighty declared in Exodus 7:5 "And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I stretch forth mine hand upon Egypt, and bring out the children of Israel from among them."

Also, in Exodus 9:16 God warned Pharaoh, "And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth." Even after suffering unprecedented devastation by virtue of the ten plagues which God visited on the Egyptians to compel Pharaoh to allow the Jews to go, he still pursued them to the Red Sea, in an apparent bid to compel them to return. The Jews were terrified by the approach of the Egyptian army but Moses was inspired by God to exhort them as it is written : "...Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will shew to you today: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen today, ye shall see them again no more forever. The LORD shall fight for you, and

ye shall hold your peace.” (Exodus 14:13, 14) Eventually, Pharaoh and his host perished in the Red Sea. – Psalm 136:15

Following the act of God in vindicating His name, the Jews sang songs of praises to God, as it is written “Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the LORD, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. The LORD is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him. The LORD is a man of war: the LORD is his name.... Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders? (Exodus 15:1-3, 11) It would be recalled that Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, on hearing what God had done for the Jews, declared, “Now I know that the LORD is greater than all gods: for in the thing wherein they dealt proudly he was above them.” (Exodus 18:11) Certainly, unbelievers and wicked men at some point in time will be made to know that there is God.

Jezebel: Jezebel was the daughter of Ethbaal king of Tyre and Sidon, and wife of Ahab king of Israel. (1 Kings 16:31) She did all she could to establish idolatry and uproot true worship among the people of Israel. She even maintained 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of the groves whom she fed from her table. (1 Kings 18:19) When the 450 prophets of Baal perished at Mount Carmel following that famous contest with Elijah she sought to avenge their death by seeking the life of Elijah. - 1 Kings 18:20-40; 19:1-3.

Jezebel added to her notoriety by killing Naboth because of his vineyard. The Bible account says that King Ahab had requested Naboth to give him his vineyard in exchange for another vineyard or for money, as it was close to the King's house. But Naboth refused on the ground that it was an inheritance from his fathers. Seeing that Ahab was in anguish because of this, Jezebel took up the matter and assured him that she would see to it that the vineyard became his. (1 Kings 21:1-7) She then proceeded to do a strange thing - which even Ahab would not have dared to do. She wrote letters in his name and got the elders of Israel to bring two men, “sons of belial” to bear false witness against Naboth, that he blasphemed God and the king. By reason of that false charge, Naboth was killed. “And it came to pass, when Jezebel heard that Naboth was stoned, and was dead, that Jezebel said to Ahab, Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give thee for money: for Naboth is not alive, but dead. And it came to pass, when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, that Ahab rose up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it.” - 1 Kings 21:15, 16.

Consequently, Elijah, at the command of God Almighty, met Ahab in the vineyard of Naboth and told him, “Thus saith the LORD, Hast thou killed, and also taken possession? ... In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine.” (1 Kings 21:17-19) “And of Jezebel also spake the LORD, saying, The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel.” (1 Kings 21:23) God Almighty further promised to kill every son of Ahab. (2 Kings 9:8-10) The prophecies fulfilled to the letter. Ahab was killed in battle and the dogs licked up his blood. (1 Kings 22:35, 38) Jezebel died when she was thrown down from her storey building by her eunuchs at the command of Jehu, and, before the order for her to be buried was given, dogs had eaten

up her body. (2 Kings 9:30-37) Ahab's sons, Ahaziah and Jehoram (or Joram) also died violent deaths. - 2 Kings 1; 9:22-26.

The three faithful Jews: Another glaring example in the Scriptures where God Almighty demonstrated His Almightyness and great power was when he used the three faithful Jews, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, to defy the ungodly and arrogant decree of King Nebuchadnezzar that everybody must bow before his golden image or face death. (Daniel 3:12) He told the Jews, "Now if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made; well: but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?" (Verse 15) Incensed by what he thought were the impetuous and arrogant words of the three Jews, the king directed that the intensity of the fire be increased seven times. The furnace was so hot that the heat even killed the mighty men who carried the three Jews and threw them into it. However, by the miracle of JEHOVAH, the Almighty God, the furnace did no hurt on the three men "nor was an hair of their hair singed neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them". Nebuchadnezzar then was compelled to declare: "Therefore I make a decree, That every people, nation, and language, which speak any thing amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill: because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort." - Daniel 3:27-29.

Herod: In the days of the early Church, Herod delivered an oration to the people and they declared that it was the voice of God. He thus took the glory that belonged to God for himself as it is written, "And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost." (that is breath of life - Acts 12:21 -23) All leaders should be careful of flatterers and sycophants so as to avoid falling into the temptation that will put them in danger of God's judgment as it happened to Herod. - Job 32:22; Proverbs 26:28; 29:5.

Recent history has also shown the end of wicked men, including wicked rulers who defied God and worked in opposition to His will. Among such wicked rulers was Adolph Hitler, who ruled Germany from January 30, 1933, to April 30, 1945. His actions led to the death of over 50 million people who died through forced labour, starvation, poisoning, lethal injections, disease, execution and medical experiments. Another evil personality was Himmler the head of the German SS and the architect of the "Final Solution", who was responsible for the death of five to six million Jews. Both Hitler and Himmler committed suicide.

The memory of Joseph Stalin, the former leader of the then Soviet Union (USSR), is today accursed and desecrated because of his thirty-year reign of terror, violence, destruction and murder, resulting in the death of millions of people.

Indeed the Bible declares, "Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him: for the reward of his hands shall be given him." (Isaiah 3:11) Let the example of the horrific end of wicked people on earth and the evil reputation they now have serve as warning to those living today that the judgment of God is sure and that "though hand join in hand the wicked shall not be unpunished". (Proverbs 11:21) David the Psalmist also stated in

Psalm 9:17-20, "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God. For the needy shall not alway be forgotten: the expectation of the poor shall not perish forever. Arise, O LORD; let not man prevail: let the heathen be judged in thy sight. Put them in fear, O LORD: that the nations may know themselves to be but men." See also Psalm 83:16-18.

It is for the purpose of warning the wicked so that they may turn to God that the gospel is now being preached round the world. Today, the God's Kingdom Society (GKS), the Church of the Living God, which was established by God Almighty through Jesus Christ using St. Gideon Meriodere Urhobo as the founding instrument in October 1934, like any other true Church, is propagating the good news of the everlasting Kingdom in this part of the world and also warning the wicked to repent thoroughly and turn to righteousness for their own good. (Ezekiel 3:17-19) Scripture says, "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." - Matthew 24:14. See also Revelation 14:6, 7.

The Battle of Armageddon

The Bible shows that the wicked who are still alive at the time of the great tribulation will pay dearly for their wicked deeds before they will be destroyed along with satan the devil at the battle of the great day of God Almighty. Jesus Christ said, "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be." (Matthew 24:21. See also Zephaniah 1:14-18) The punishment they will receive will be such that they will seek for death but the knowledge of how to end their lives will be taken away from them. The Bible says, "And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:" "And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them." - Revelation 6:15, 16; 9:6; Amos 9:1-5; Revelation 19:17-21; 20:1-3.

Moreover, God declared through Isaiah the Prophet that when He will arise "to shake terribly the earth" "The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day... And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty". God added, "... Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth. And the slain of the LORD shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth: they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried; they shall be dung upon the ground." (Isaiah 2:10-22; Jeremiah 25:32,33). It cannot therefore be gainsaid that surely, unbelievers and wicked men shall soon know that there is God.

Even if one is punished by civil authorities or the government of the day for his wicked acts, and dies without repenting of his evil deeds, he will still be punished by God during the general resurrection. St. Paul stated, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body,

according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.” (2 Corinthians 5:10) Therefore I exhort and charge each and every one to run away from sin and all acts of wickedness and to do righteousness by obeying the voice of God Almighty. In the words of Solomon the prophet, “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.” - Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14; Romans 14:12; Isaiah 26:20, 21; Malachi 3:17, 18; Roman 2:6-11.

May our heavenly Father, JEHOVAH, help His children to know His judgment, and to do His righteousness, so that, when He will vent His anger on the wicked, they may, by His grace be hid through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

HAPPY FEAST OF TABERNACLES!

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