



Day 2 (Sound the Alarm - Chapter 3.4) Progressive Waves of God's Judgment

Israel had a unique covenant with God, which no other nation had. How God dealt with Israel, however, was based upon their obedience to Him. This can help us understand how God deals with all nations based upon His unchangeable character.

God's pattern with Israel was clear. He first sent His messengers to teach the Word and call His people to righteousness and to turn from their national sins. If Israel failed to respond to the Word, then God sent calamity to correct them and have them respond to God's Word. If they were not corrected by the first wave of calamity or judgments, then God sent another wave of judgment to turn their hearts back to God before even greater and more severe judgments came upon them.

What is the principle?

Because God is longsuffering and desires that a nation turns from its sins, His corrections and judgments are progressive and increase in intensity only if there is no repentance.

If America turns a deaf ear to those who teach the righteousness of God's Word as our moral standard, then we may be corrected by calamity. It will be far better that we as a nation be corrected by our current calamities before we face the ever-increasing blows of God's progressive judgments.

There are several parallel passages that clearly teach God's progressive judgments of Israel. The first that we want to take a closer look at is Leviticus 26.

Leviticus 26:14-45 presents a series of five progressive judgments, each with an offer of mercy upon repentance. Without repentance the judgment's severity was promised to increase in intensity "*seven times more.*"

First, God pronounces judgment because the nation broke His covenant. The judgment included terror, disease, and defeat by their enemies (Lev. 26:14-17).

Second, God pronounces judgment because Israel refused to be humbled. To break their pride, they would experience major crop failure (Lev. 26:19-20).

Third, God pronounces judgment because Israel was not willing to obey God. Wild beasts were sent to destroy children and livestock (Lev. 26:25).

Fourth, God pronounced judgment because there had been no repentance. War and siege would lead to pestilence and famine (Lev. 26:25-26).

Fifth, God pronounced judgment because there was still no repentance. In the sieges parents would eat their own children, their cities and sanctuaries would be destroyed, the land was desolated and occupied by enemies, and Israel was scattered among the nations (Lev. 26:29-39).

This became an accurate outline of the history of judgments upon the divided kingdom of Israel. It started with Jeroboam and his idolatrous altar at Bethel and did not end until the great judgment in 722 B.C. by the Assyrians when Samaria was destroyed and Israel was slaughtered and scattered among many nations.

This same pattern was seen in the history of Judah who saw many periods of revival and reform that delayed God's judgments. But after a series of many judgments, the Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple and led a remnant of surviving Jews into a seventy-year captivity.

Even after what seemed to be a final judgment, God still offered forgiveness to Israel if they confessed their sins, humbled their hearts, and accepted the guilt of their sins. The prayers of Daniel confessing the sins of his people Israel are an example of God remembering His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and restoring them to the Promised Land even after severe judgments (Daniel 9).

Knowing that God has dealt with nations in progressive judgments to reform a nation, we should recognize that God is now dealing with America though in a similar progressive way.

America was established by God's providence. No other nation has had a greater Christian impact. The church flourished and its influence upon national morality made America the greatest nation on earth. From America the church sent out missionaries to the nations and churches have been planted all over the world. However, in the past generation the church has been spiritually weakened from

within. It is losing its moral influence upon our society and the moral foundation of our nation is crumbling.

If we do not have revival in the church, we should expect to see progressive judgments to humble us and turn us back to God. If those do not cause America to repent, then we should expect a reaping of a harvest according to our national sins. Remember the greater the blessings the greater the responsibility and judgment.

What can conservative Christians do when we have become an ignored minority to our national leaders? What can we do when Hollywood and the liberal media have more influence with our national leaders than conservative Christians? We can remember that while the liberals have the ear of our national leaders, we have the ear of God. A nation can be spared greater judgments by the prayers of a righteous minority. Through intercession and confession of our sins and the sins of our nation, we can turn our nation back to God.

One of the purposes of this book is to call Christians to revival and intercession for our nation. I believe hundreds of thousands of Christians have become burdened by God over the sins of our nation and are being called by Him to pray daily.

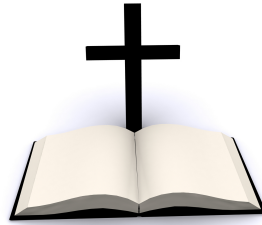
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Before God judged Jerusalem in great severity through Babylon, He marked those who were grieved over the sins of their nation (Ezekiel 9:4). Before God's severest judgment fell upon Jerusalem they were always preceded

by God raising up “*watchmen*” to call Israel back to God (Ezekiel 3:17).

Since Judah did not recognize the progressive wave of judgments and the daily voice of the prophets like Jeremiah and Ezekiel warning and pleading for repentance, a point of no return was reached. Finally, God said repeatedly, “*Do not pray for this people*” (Jeremiah 7:16; 11:14; 14:1). Isn’t that strange? But from God’s point of view, they had reached a point of no return. At that point the most severe judgment was unstoppable and God’s focus would not be mercy for the nation but mercy only for the righteous remnant in captivity.

Some feel that America’s sins are too great, that we have gone too far and judgment is unstoppable. Certainly the law of the harvest is true and we will reap what we have sown. However, God’s patience and mercy is great. I do not feel that God is saying, “*Do not pray for this people.*” I believe He is still marking those that grieve over our national sins and is still raising up spiritual watchman to plead for our country.



Prayer

O God, You are holy, but You delight in showing mercy and pardon to Your people. We as a nation have gone far from Your moral standards. We have turned from Your holiness and light to embrace iniquity and darkness. Lord, it seems that we are left alone to see our country pushing You out of our government, universities and schools. We have given birth to a young generation that does not know the former moral foundation of America. It seems that every month our nation now suffers some new calamity. Father, humble us that we might return to You and call upon the name of the Lord Jesus for our salvation.

What has God laid on your heart to pray for today?



Day 3 (Sound the Alarm - Chapter 3.7) Moral Relativism: *Are There Moral Absolutes Given by God?*

Is there such a thing as right and wrong? Are certain actions always wrong, no matter what the culture? Is there a basis for universal values?

Historical Christianity says yes to each of those questions. God Himself is the basis for universal truth and morality. This is sometimes called “*moral absolutism*” and is direct opposition to “*moral relativism*.” Here is the first principle:

Historic Christianity says that God is the basis for universal truth and morality. This is sometimes called “Moral Absolutism” and is conflict with “Moral Relativism.”

Absolutism claims that morality relies on universal principles (natural law, conscience). Christian absolutists believe that God is the ultimate source of our common morality, and that those truths are as unchanging as He is. Moral relativism asserts that morality is not based on any absolute standard. Rather, ethical “truths” depend on variables such as the situation, culture, one's feelings, etc.⁵ Here in America we are in a cultural war for the moral values of our nation. It seems that we are following the degenerating pattern of Europe by embracing relativism.

⁵ Got Questions?.org

Christianity is on the decline in Europe and now that has spread here to America.

This brings us to our second principle:

When a society, culture, or nation, rejects God as the basis for morality then it is only a matter of time before that nation is given over to sexual perversion and eventually judgment.

The Scriptures are clear that Adam's entire race has inherited his sin nature (Romans 5:6-21). If we were born without sin, our nation would not need law, courts, jails, policemen, and punishment to restrain evil.

Sin is like a contagious disease that, if left unchecked, grows worse and multiplies its infection to a nation. God gave to all both an inner witness of God and His outer witness of creation. Yet people still reject light for darkness. God's moral law and our conscience should aid in restraining evil. Sadly, once a society rejects the knowledge of God then evil grows rapidly. Government is granted the right to restrain sinful behavior by punishing evil and rewarding good. (Romans 13:1-6)

In the history of nations some moral sins can become so common that they can become culturally acceptable and defy God's universal moral law. Some sins associated with idolatry and sexual perversions seem to open the demonic floodgates of moral corruption upon a nation.

In this section we will deal with what I call "National sins." These national sins, if they become habitual and

predominate in a nation, will bring God's judgment on the government that has allowed them to defile a society.

A few examples will suffice:

- God warned Israel that both Egypt and the nations of Canaan were being judged because of moral sins that defiled their nations (Deut. 12:31). These nations were defiled by their abominations and the land was vomiting out the sickness of their moral disease (Lev. 18:27-28).
- Nations cast out because of their sins.⁶ Numbers 35:33 states, *"So you shall not pollute the land where you are; for blood defiles the land, and no atonement can be made for the land, for the blood that is shed on it, except by the blood of him who shed it."*
- Nations were described as wicked and came under the judgment of God. God warned Israel that He was judging the nations of Canaan for their wickedness (Deut. 9:4). Israel was warned that if they committed these same sins, they also would be judged. Sadly, this would become the history of Israel and many more nations and empires in the future. Israel would be judged by the Assyrians and later the Babylonians for their national sins.

Some of these moral sins are especially grievous to God and to society and are called *"abominations, wickedness, perversions, confusion, and defilement."* That doesn't

⁶ Leviticus 18:3, 27-28; 20:22-23; Deut. 12:29-31

sound very politically correct, does it? But that was God's evaluation of the nations.

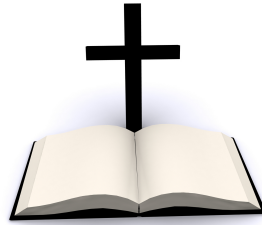
There was a time in America that we accepted moral absolutes as part of the universal law of our Creator. The Bible influenced for good our society and enlightened our conscience to restrain sin.

We have a new generation that seeks to throw off absolutes and moral restraints. It could be said of this generation what was said of Israel, "*Everyone did what was right in his own eyes*" (Judges 17:6). The majority of this younger generation would label God's view of some of these sins as intolerant, bigoted, homophobic, hateful, and politically incorrect.

Some protestor might ask, "Well, just who does He think he is to judge me?" The answer is authoritative and final: *He is God and He is the Sovereign Creator and Lord of the Universe.* We as individuals or as a nation cannot change God's moral law. As we consider the national sins that have destroyed nations throughout human history, may God give us a burden for our beloved America to turn back to God.

Remember this:

A lie doesn't become truth, a wrong doesn't become right, and evil doesn't become good just because it's accepted by a majority of the population.



Prayer

Dear Lord, as I read that You judged and cast out the nations of Canaan for their moral perversions, I am burdened for my country. We too are guilty of many of these same sins. Our nation and government is now guilty of justifying what You called wickedness. God please forgive us. Turn our hearts back to Your Word as the basis for our moral conscience. Only You can turn back the spiritual darkness that is engulfing our nation. In Jesus name I pray. Amen.

What has God laid on your heart to pray for today?



Day 4 (Sound the Alarm - Chapter 4.4) Abortion

The next national sin that brought God's judgment was the sacrifice of children to pagan gods. Although America has not been guilty of child-sacrifice, I hope to show from God's perspective that the slaughter of millions of innocent babies on the altars of abortion is equally repulsive in God's eyes. We should tremble before God when we realize that God will one day hold America accountable for the millions of babies lost to abortion.

Child Sacrifice

God called child sacrifice "*detestable*." He hates it.⁷ America has been on a downward spiral morally. It has chosen darkness over the light that God has given through moral absolutes. It has chosen to take steps to descend into a dungeon of bondage to its sinful passions by not retaining God in its knowledge. Therefore, God is withdrawing His blessing and giving our country up to its own sinful choices (Romans 1). This was the experience of the nations of Canaan and in that darkness and with their conscience defiled, they were willing to choose the influence of demons over God.

Dr. J. Vernon McGee commented on Leviticus 18:21,

"Thy seed" means their children. This verse may seem to be out of place in this chapter, but the pagan

⁷ Deut. 12:29-32

worship of Molech was closely related with sex. The image of old Molech was heated red-hot, and the bodies of children were placed in its arms. It is hard to imagine the horror of this. There are those who believe that such a thing could never have happened. However, the Scriptures make other references to this same practice. "... and the Sepharvites burnt their children in fire to Adrammelech and Anammelech, the gods of Sepharvaim" (2 Kings 17:31). "And they have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; which I commanded them not, neither came it into my heart" (Jer. 7:31).

Others confirm that this was not child dedication to a god but children being burnt alive by this demon-inspired ritual. The worst of these "*detestable things*" was child sacrifice. This practice of burning their sons and daughters in the fire as sacrifices was frequently associated with the worship of the Ammonite god Molech.⁸ God's penalty for child sacrifice was death.⁹

Abortion

Life begins at conception. Prior to the 1973 U.S. Supreme Court decision that allowed abortion on demand, developing embryos were considered unborn persons. Now? Things have certainly changed. There are certain medical circumstances that would allow for a fetus that could survive outside its mother's womb to be aborted.

⁸ Lev. 18:21; 20:2–5; 2 Kings 23:10; Jer. 32:35

⁹ Lev. 20:2–5

*Science tells us that human life begins at the time of conception. From the moment fertilization takes place, the child's genetic makeup is already complete. Its gender has already been determined, along with its height and hair, eye and skin color. The only thing the embryo needs to become a fully-functioning being is the time to grow and develop.*¹⁰

God reveals to us in His Word that not only does life begin at conception, but He knows who we are even before we are born:

The word of the LORD came to me, saying, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations" (Jeremiah 1:4-5).

For You created my inmost being; You knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise You because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from You when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, Your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in Your book before one of them came to be (Psalm 139:13-16).

Yet You brought me out of the womb; You made me trust in You even at my mother's breast. From birth I was cast upon You; from my mother's womb You have been my God (Psalm 22:9-10).

¹⁰ <http://www.gotquestions.org/life-begin-conception.html>

And yet society continually seeks to devalue the lives of the unborn. Liberal theologians and cultural elites have created their own definitions of humanity based on distorted views of morality. But the undeniable fact is that life begins at creation, and a human life is created as soon as he or she is conceived. God is present at our creation; He is, in fact, our Creator. Our value as human beings created in His image is conceived even before we are. ¹¹

I am fearful regarding the “Law of the Harvest” for America. Millions of innocent babies have had their blood shed by a mother who put her interest ahead of theirs. Words like “*a woman’s choice*,” “*freedom over her own body*,” and “*personal preference*” pale when considering the worth of an innocent child’s life.

Does this go unnoticed by God? No!

Abortion is one of America’s great national sins against God. Some would protest and say that our government has made it legal. That is true, but it is not legal with God. When God said, “*You shall not murder*,” He was also addressing abortion. Remember we have already defined the meaning and purpose of government from Romans 13: to reward good and punish evil. If our government does not reverse the unjust and evil laws of abortion, there will be a day that God will execute His judgment upon us. We have seen throughout the pages of the Bible where He overthrew an unjust government and gave their land to another nation. Because of our practice of abortion on demand, He could do that to America as well.

¹¹ Ibid.

We have justified the practice of abortion by calling an unborn child only a fetus to lessen the guilt of taking an innocent life. While even the haters of Bible-believing Christians would condemn the abomination of placing a baby in the burning hot arms of an idol like Molech, yet somehow they can justify a partial birth abortion in which the baby is sacrificed and some of its body parts are sold for profit.

I have no doubt in my mind that the same God who condemned and judged the nations of Canaan for such abominations has condemned America for the sin of abortion. Judgment waits for America unless we have a reprieve by repentance and revival.

Life begins at conception. Abortion is murder. Such practices will not go unpunished by a holy and just God.

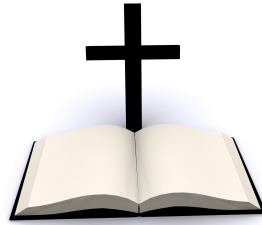
Our nation's very survival depends upon the repealing of abortion. If we could see into the future and view blood running in the streets of our cities, we would understand that it was the law of the harvest, reaping what we had sown through allowing the practice of abortion.

The prophets of Israel saw into the future and told them that very warning – but their hearts were hardened and the message went unheeded. Will we repeat their mistakes?

To support abortion is to support the eventual judgment of God upon America. What a paradox it is for those in our country who will go to great lengths to save a polar bear, but turn their heads in silence as millions of babies are aborted. They have tremendous zeal to protect the

environment from pollution and save a tree, but not an innocent life. May God have mercy upon us and spare us from what is coming because of our nation's sins and the violation of His universal laws.

May we remember the multitude of nations that practiced human sacrifice and were judged by God. May we learn from history.



Prayer

O God, our hearts are so grieved to think that innocent babies were once placed in the burning hands of idols to die amidst cries of pain. We are also grieved that in our country we have stooped so low as to sacrifice our nation's innocent babies by the millions on the altar of women's rights while defying Your law and the rights of the unborn. Forgive us of this sin. Forgive us for hardening our hearts – and for not getting involved and doing more to fight this battle. O God, do what is necessary to humble America before we reap the harvest of blood of these innocent ones. In Jesus' name.

What has God laid on your heart to pray for today?



Day 5 (Sound the Alarm - Chapter 4.5) Homosexuality

The issue of homosexuality has become a battleground in our country. The gay agenda is pervasive in our culture. In 2003 Alan Sears and Craig Osten, president and vice-president of the *Alliance Defense Fund*, an American conservative Christian organization, offer this characterization:

*It is an agenda that they basically set in the late 1980s, in a book called *After the Ball*, where they laid out a six-point plan for how they could transform the beliefs of ordinary Americans with regard to homosexual behavior — in a decade-long time frame.... They admit it privately, but they will not say that publicly. In their private publications, homosexual activists make it very clear that there is an agenda. The six-point agenda that they laid out in 1989 was explicit:*

- *Talk about gays and gayness as loudly and as often as possible*
- *Portray gays as victims, not as aggressive challengers*
- *Give homosexual protectors a just cause*
- *Make gays look good*
- *Make the victimizers look bad*
- *Get funds from corporate America*¹²

¹² Osten, Craig (2003). "Q&A: *The Homosexual Agenda*," Focus on the Family Action, archived copy at the Internet Archive

What does God say about homosexuality? The Bible is clear and unequivocal. It is a sin that defiles individuals and can defile an entire culture. God warned Israel that they were not to commit such immoral acts.

God's sexual standards are formed from His creation purpose and pattern for male and female.¹³ Sexual intimacy was purposed by God as a gift to be expressed between a husband and wife in the marriage relationship. Sexual revolution from God's natural order of morality is evidence that a culture is rejecting God's rule over them.¹⁴

This was the case with all the nations of Canaan as outlined in Leviticus 18, where homosexuality is the next sin listed. What we saw in Abraham's day in Canaan with the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah was the beginning of the immoral cancer that would later spread to all the nations of Canaan. Even after God demonstrated His judgment on Sodom, the warning against such sexual sins went unheeded until all the defiled nations of Canaan also suffered the judgment of God and the land vomited them out of its midst.¹⁵

It is the next national sin listed in Leviticus 18:22. The nations of Canaan accepted homosexuality as a way of life. *"Homosexuality and bestiality were apparently common in Canaanite culture. Homosexuality is mentioned with reference to the Canaanites and also in Mesopotamia."*¹⁶

¹³ Genesis 1:27-28; 2:18-25

¹⁴ Romans 1

¹⁵ Genesis 13:10; 2 Peter 2:6-9; Jude 7

¹⁶ Cabal, T., C.O., Clendenen, E.R., Copan, P., Moreland, J., & Powell, D. (2007). *The Apologetics Study Bible: Real Questions, Straight Answers, Stronger Faith* (178-179). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers

God says in His law,

*You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an **abomination**. Nor shall you mate with any animal, to defile yourself with it. Nor shall any woman stand before an animal to mate with it. It is **perversion**. Do not defile yourselves with any of these things; **for by all these the nations are defiled**, which I am casting out before you. For the land is defiled; **therefore I visit the punishment of its iniquity upon it**, and the land vomits out its inhabitants (Leviticus 18:22-25, emphasis mine).*

Here in Leviticus we have a clear listing of these iniquities that reached a point that God visited the punishment of its iniquity upon it.¹⁷

The nations of Canaan had decayed morally for over four hundred years by exchanging the truth of God for a lie. They are an illustration of Paul's argument of why God removes the restraints and allows a nation to have its own way.

*Therefore God also gave them up to **uncleanness**, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. For this reason God gave them up to **vile passions**. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful,*

¹⁷ Lev. 18:25

*and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a **debased mind**, to do those things which are not fitting (Romans 1:24-28, emphasis mine).*

Those who depart from the Creator's purpose for sexuality are not a sign of cultural enlightenment. Throwing off the guilt of "*religious bigots*" does not make them free. According to God's Word, it enslaves them to their own sexual desires. And it ultimately brings a nation closer to God giving them over to a debased mind where judgment follows.

The Bible is clear that homosexuality is a debasing sin that moves individuals and nations away from God.

When nations move from God's moral absolutes for marriage and family, they are moving into deeper spiritual darkness that will lead to spiritual decay and destruction. Even though Israel was plainly warned of these consequences, they too would defile the land by idolatry and sexual immorality.

In this process of moral decay those who throw off the Creator's moral absolutes seem to despise and persecute those who still hold to Biblical Christian values. Those who preach tolerance become tolerant of almost any sexual deviation, but intolerant of those who call homosexual acts sin. In some circles today the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender crowd would embrace one of their own who can boast of hundreds of sex partners as a champion of freedom of expression. At the same time they would condemn in their intolerance and seek to silence a dear

old grandmother who reads her Bible and calls homosexual acts sin.

I am concerned that in America the Bill of Rights granting religious freedom and freedom of speech will be stripped from those who hold to God's definition of marriage as between a man and a woman. Freedom of speech at many of our universities has been redefined to mean we are free to say anything we want against Christian moral absolutes, but Christians are not free to express their moral values.

Dr. Kent Spann, writing on *The Christian and Same-Sex "Marriage,"* warns that hate speech legislation may one day be used against Christians who continue to embrace and teach Biblical values:

*To legalize same-sex "marriage" is to legitimize homosexuality. It also strengthens the hate crime legislature passed in America. Tony Perkins, president of Family Research Council, following the passage of Federal hate crimes legislation in 2009 said, "This hate crimes provision is part of a radical social agenda that could ultimately silence Christians and use the force of government to marginalize anyone whose faith is at odds with homosexuality," One has to only look north to Canada, where Bill C-250 was signed into law in April of 2004, making it a criminal offense to criticize homosexuality. Focus on the Family had to edit programs in order to comply with Canadian hate crime laws.*¹⁸

¹⁸ www.ccv.org/wp.../The-Christian-and-Same-Sex-Marriage-By-Dr.-Kent-Spann.doc

Our message is not one of hate but love. We preach that God loves all people, but all have sinned. God has made a way for all to be forgiven through the death of our Lord Jesus Christ. This means that all sinners can not only be forgiven but also become new creations in Christ.¹⁹ The church at Corinth had experienced this radical power of God's love. They saw fornicators, adulterers, homosexuals, and all manner of sinners forgiven and transformed into new people living in the power of the Gospel. Yet, today there are political forces at work to outlaw the transformation of homosexuals through the love of Christ and the power of the Gospel. Already three states have passed laws forbidding "Conversion therapy" among medical professionals. Next you can expect that the ban may also extend to pastors and Christians who believe that all sinners can be changed by the power of Christ. In the following passage notice the long list of sinful lifestyles that were changed through Christ including that of homosexuality.

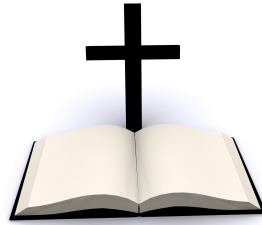
*Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. **And such were some of you.** But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God (1 Corinthians 6:9-11 emphasis mine).*

¹⁹ 2 Corinthians 5:17

Moral relativism is the basis for the sexual revolution that is now changing America's view on fornication, adultery, incest, and homosexuality. Those who still hold to the Biblical view of morality are labeled by some as being hatemongers, homophobic, intolerant, and far right extremists.

True Christians love God and they love people. They also love the truth of the Bible. One of the marks that our beloved nation is facing the judgment of God will be the persecution of Christians because they call deviation from God's sexual moral standard a sin.

Christians must maintain the balance between loving the sinner and hating the sin. In the midst of persecution and alienation, we must stand firm and confident in our convictions.



Prayer

Dear God, forgive us as a nation that we are exchanging the truth about marriage and human sexuality for a politically correct lie. Forgive us as Your church for our own sins of fornication, adultery, homosexuality and pornography. Forgive us as a church that we have compromised Your moral standard as *“salt and light”* to our nation. Forgive us of our fear of being persecuted if we continue to hold to Your Biblical standards of morality. Dear Lord, You are the only one who can reverse our nation’s moral decay. Help us as we cry out to You to preserve our nation. In Jesus’ name.

What has God laid on your heart to pray for today?



Day 6 (Sound the Alarm - Chapter 5.1) The Cycle of Decline

You've probably heard the phrase, "*History repeats itself.*" That actually is a biblical principle. In this chapter we will see a repeating cycle of spiritual decline and recovery. It should serve as a warning to all nations.

The history of nations repeats itself because the sin nature of man has not changed.

God gave the nation of Israel a great mission and purpose. He entrusted the writing, preservation and dissemination of the Bible to them. Through them would come the Messiah, the Christ from the seed of Abraham. God intended for Israel to be a light in the world – but it failed. The nation turned inward and rejected the mission of serving the world. Finally, Jesus came in the flesh – as the true light of the world ... but they rejected Him also. Now Jesus has commissioned the Church to share His light and love to the world.²⁰

God's purpose is that the Church would share the Gospel to the world. God has a greater eternal purpose for His Church than He does for any nation. God is in the process through the Great Commission of calling His chosen out of every nation.

The nation that encourages the Church to be free to fulfill its mission and purpose from God will be blessed of God.

²⁰ John 1:9, Matthew 28:19-20

In God's providence, America's foundation and beginnings were related to and influenced by the Church. The Church grew and flourished in America, and America grew and flourished because of the Church in America. The blessings were mutual.

God did not bless America without purpose. That blessing was not to spread a message of atheism, communism, or immorality to the world, but to give freedom to the Church to worship freely and to spread the message of Christ to the nations.

God did not bless America without purpose.

God has blessed America because of its missional efforts. For generations a good percentage of our population drew their values from the Bible. The Church was salt and light to the world – and that made our nation better. However, a new generation has grown up without the same biblical values of former generations. They do not know the God of our fathers.

As we depart from *"In God we trust,"* we lose the blessings of God and will experience the reaping of the national sins that this new generation has sown. As the church declines in spiritual vitality, the nation also declines.

This dynamic was true of Israel and it will be true of America as well.

This cycle of blessing, departure from God, decline, and then judgment with Israel is historically illustrated to us in the Book of Judges through twelve judges or deliverers.

In the book of Joshua, an obedient people conquered the Promised Land by trusting in God's power, direction and leadership. By contrast, in Judges a disobedient and idolatrous people are often defeated because of their rebellion against God. In seven cycles of sin, the book of Judges shows how the nation sets aside God's laws and replaces them with *"that which was right in their own eyes."*²¹

Time after time God disciplines the nation by bringing in foreign nations to oppress them. Each time, they *"seem"* to learn their lesson, repenting from their sin and turning to God for deliverance. This repentance is not merely an *individual repentance*; it is a *national repentance*. As a result, God raises up Deborah, Gideon, Samson and others to overthrow their oppressors.

The repeated cycle of blessing, departure from God, decline and then judgment in Judges looks like this:

- God raised up Israel as a nation.
- God blessed them and delivered them from their enemies.
- God gave them national leaders that followed God's principles.
- The people served God for a season and prospered.
- The people grew spiritually cold in prosperity and turned from God.

²¹ Judges 21:25

- The people conformed to the pagan world around them and diluted the true worship of God.
- God reminded them of His Word, but they refused to hear.
- God stirred up an enemy to oppress them with the intent that if they would not turn to God through preaching, they would turn to God through suffering.
- In their suffering and misery they again called on God to deliver them.
- God in His mercy raised up a Judge to deliver them.
- The people would return to the God of their fathers and God again blessed them.
- They would have relief from their suffering and again worship God for a season, but then repeat the cycle of spiritual decline followed by judgment.

I find three “take-aways” from Israel’s experience that are very relevant to America today:

First, God was always merciful, always ready to forgive, and always ready to bless. He has not changed. He is the same today and He waits for our response.

Second, Israel’s repentance was never “*perfect*.” But their heart-felt cry was always heard by God. “*The sacrifices of*

God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise” (Psalm 51:17).

Finally, God used imperfect people to accomplish His tasks. Samson was a womanizer. Gideon was frightened and insecure. But God used them. And He can use people today as well. Our greatest ability is our availability.

