

A WARNING TO A NATION

by Elder Bob Allgood

And it came to pass in the fourth year of Jehoiakim (about 526 BC - ba) the son of Josiah king of Judah, that this word came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, “Take thee a roll of a book, and write therein all the words that I have spoken unto thee against Israel, and against Judah, and against all the nations, from the day I spake unto thee, from the days of Josiah, even unto this day. It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the evil (Hebrew word Ra which means judgment - ba) which I purpose to do unto them; that they may return every man from his evil way; that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin” (Jeremiah 36:1-3).

Among the famous quotes there is this one. “**THOSE WHO WILL NOT LEARN FROM HISTORY ARE BOUND TO REPEAT IT**”. It makes little difference who said it. The most important thing is that it is TRUE and supported by Scripture. Jesus Christ often reminded his hearers of past judgments and compared them with the present times. In Matthew 12:41 he said, “The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here”. Stephen used the history of the fathers of Israel to condemn those who crucified Christ. He said to them, “Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers: Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it.”

Paul told the Corinthians about Israel’s past blessings from God and their rebellions, and then said, “Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted” and “These things – are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he also fall” (I Cor. 10:1-12). With all due respect for those who died at the Pentagon and

World Trade Center, and with all due respect for the children of God who are following after the ways of righteousness, it seems to me that we must ask, **WAS THE TERRORIST ATTACK OF SEPTEMBER 11th THE BEGINNING OF JUDGMENT?** Is there a legitimate comparison to the warning of judgment against the Nation of Israel because of her iniquity and sins and the current events taking place in the United States today? Let us see. But first let me lay a foundation to build on.

Jeremiah was the son of Hilkiah. His father was of the priests who lived in the land of Benjamin. The tribes of Judah and Benjamin made up what is called the “house of Judah” or simply “Judah” after the Nation of Israel was divided following the death of Solomon about 903 BC. The other ten tribes of Jacob became known as “the house of Israel” or simply “Israel” (see I Kings 12). God told Jeremiah, “For the house of Israel and the house of Judah have dealt very treacherously against me, saith the LORD” (5:11). Some have called Jeremiah “the weeping prophet” because much of his writings deal with the prophetic judgment of God against the whole nation of Israel because of their backsliding and idolatry.

The word of the Lord began to come to Jeremiah at a very early age. We are told, “Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations. Then said I, Ah, Lord GOD! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child. But the LORD said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the LORD” (1:4-8). Jeremiah was in this sense a type of Christ as seen by these words, “Then the LORD put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the LORD said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth. See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant” (1:10-11). In this sense we see Christ who not only rules over his kingdom, but all the kingdoms of the earth.

Jeremiah began to prophesy in the 13th year of Josiah, king of Judah, about 547 BC. The essence of his prophecy was that the nation of Israel would be judged by God and taken captive by the Babylonians for a period of 70 years. The northern ten tribes or the “house of Israel” (also known as Samaria in the Scriptures because they lived in Samaria) went into captivity first, about 640 BC, under Assyrian rule. We are told, “And the king of Assyria did carry away Israel unto Assyria, and put them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes: Because they obeyed not the voice of the LORD their God, but transgressed his covenant, and all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded, and would not hear them, nor do them” (II Kings 18:9-12). Beyond a doubt this proves that God will use the enemies of God’s people to bring about judgment.

Assyria was overthrown by the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar, about 527 BC, and the house of Judah, as well as the house of Israel, began the seventy (70) year period of captivity, according to God’s word to Jeremiah, “And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these

nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations. And I will bring upon that land all my words which I have pronounced against it, even all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the nations" (25:11-13).

The Judgments foretold in Jeremiah are not only judgments against the whole nation of Israel, but they are prophetic judgments against ALL Nations that rebel against the laws of God. Jeremiah was told to write of the judgments against Egypt, (46:1-28); against Philistia or the Philistines, (47:1-7); against Moab or the Moabites, (48:1-48); against Ammon or the Ammonites, (49:1-6); against Edom or the Edomites, which was the lineage of Esau -- Genesis 36:8 "Thus dwelt Esau in mount Seir: Esau is Edom" (49:7-22); against Damascus (49:23-27); against Arabia (49:28-33); and against Babylon (50:1-51). Do we not think that such judgments can not be applied to ALL nations that rebel against God? "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God" (Psalms 9:17).

Israel's 70 year period of captivity ended about 457 BC when Daniel's vision and prophecy of the final 490 years of Israel's history as God's chosen nation began. A careful study of Daniel's vision of the "seventy weeks determined upon thy people" (which are 70 weeks of 7 years) or 490 years, as recorded in Daniel 9:24-27 will take one from the commandment by king Cyrus to the Jews to rebuild Jerusalem and the Temple (Ezra 1:1-2, Isa. 44:28) to the water baptism, or anointing, or "unto (Christ) the Messiah" about 27 AD (Matthew 3:13-17) and then to the time when He was cut off (crucified) in the midst of the 70th week in 30 AD. Following a 40 year probationary period, the Romans under Titus destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple for the final time, and desolation and calamity has been upon the Nation of Israel ever since.

Jeremiah made it clear WHY this calamity and judgment was to come. One of the first questions God put forth to Jeremiah was, "Hath a nation changed their gods, which are yet no gods? but my people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit. Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the LORD. For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water" (2:11-13). The Lord reminded the nation of Israel of their beginning, their blessing and their backsliding. "Thus saith the LORD, What iniquity have your fathers found in me, that they are gone far from me, and have walked after vanity, and are become vain? Neither said they, Where is the LORD that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, that led us through the wilderness, through a land of deserts and of pits, through a land of drought, and of the shadow of death, through a land that no man passed through, and where no man dwelt? And I brought you into a plentiful country, to eat the fruit thereof and the goodness thereof; but when ye entered, ye defiled my land, and made mine heritage an abomination. The priests said not, Where is the LORD? and they that handle the law knew me not: the pastors also

transgressed against me, and the prophets prophesied by Baal, and walked after things that do not profit” (2:5-8).

God told Jeremiah, “Declare this in the house of Jacob, and publish it in Judah, saying, Hear now this, O foolish people, and without understanding; which have eyes, and see not; which have ears, and hear not: Fear ye not me? saith the LORD: will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it: and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it? But this people hath a revolting and a rebellious heart; they are revolted and gone. Neither say they in their heart, Let us now fear the LORD our God, ---“ and – “A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land; The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?” (5:20-24, 30-31).

Throughout the years of backsliding and rebellion by Israel, the Lord was longsuffering, pleading with his chosen nation to repent and return unto the ways of righteousness. He told Jeremiah, “Go and proclaim these words toward the north, and say, Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the LORD; and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you: for I am merciful, saith the LORD, and I will not keep anger for ever. Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the LORD thy God, and hast scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith the LORD. Turn, O backsliding children, saith the LORD; for I am married unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion: And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding” (3:12-15).

In spite of the Lord’s longsuffering and warnings, the Nation of Israel refused to walk in the old paths of righteousness wherein is the good way. God told them through Jeremiah, “Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein. Also I set watchmen over you, saying, Hearken to the sound of the trumpet. But they said, We will not hearken” (6:16-17). We are told in Psalms 33:12, “Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance.” But when a Nation refuses to heed the words of God, there remains no other alternative but judgment. Thus the Lord said to Israel, “Therefore hear, ye nations, and know, O congregation, what is among them. Hear, O earth: behold, I will bring evil (Hebrew word RA which means judgment – ba) upon this people, even the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not hearkened unto my words, nor to my law, but rejected it” (6:18-19).

IS THERE ANY SIMILARITY BETWEEN THE BACKSLIDING WAYS OF ISRAEL OF OLD AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TODAY?

If the United States of America is still standing as one nation UNDER GOD when this paper is published, it is my prayer that this little effort will help some of God’s people to see the need to “humble themselves, and pray, and

seek God's face, and turn from their wicked ways". In my feeble opinion the events of September 11, 2001 was at least a "wake up call" from God concerning the pending Judgment on a Nation that has turned her back on the principles of godliness on which she was founded.

The United States of America was founded by those who sought religious liberty to worship God according to the dictates of their heart. Our founding fathers made it clear to the world that they believed in God with these words, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their CREATOR with certain unalienable rights –". Our founding fathers often prayed to God during the writing of the Constitution, The Declaration of Independence and the War for Independence. In 1864 the motto "In God We Trust" was placed on U.S. coins and later a law was passed that this motto was to appear on all U.S. currency. The Congress on this nation opens each session with prayer and the pledge of allegiance that says "one nation, under God". For many years, even up through the 50's the Bible was a main source of reading and literature in our schools. In the early days of America the McGuffey Readers, which contained many scripture references, were commonly used in all schools.

There is no doubt that this nation, historically, was founded with respect to God as its creator. But in the last forty years this nation, as a nation, has forgotten God and "a nation that forgets God, shall be turned into hell" – and that has nothing to do with one's individual eternal destiny. (Psalms 9:17). It was not "unconstitutional" in this nation to mention God, read scripture or have prayer in our schools UNTIL about forty years ago. For many years now we, as a nation, have allowed a few individuals, including a liberal Supreme Court, to reshape the moral character of this nation. In 1962 the Supreme Court, in the case of Engel v. Vitale made a ruling prohibiting prayer in public schools. IMHO, this nation has been on a fast downhill slide toward degradation ever since. Let's consider a few reasons for my making such a comment.

MARRIAGE, DIVORCE and REMARRIAGE:

My purpose is not to deal with all the details of this complex subject, but to illustrate how this Nation has been caught up in an ungodly trend that teaches Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage is acceptable to God. Currently, more than 50 percent of all marriages in the USA wind up in divorce – and many of these go on to remarry. The percentage would be higher, but the "live-ins" (i.e. those shacking up) are not reported in the statistics. If this trend continues it could mean that more than 50 percent of all husbands and wives, along with those "living together" in this country would be living in a state of adultery according to Scripture. Let me explain why I say this.

At the end of World War II the divorce rates in the United States began to climb. Many of the divorces could be attributed to "unfaithfulness" by the military overseas and the wives who stayed at home during the long periods of "being apart". Temptation and impatience took its toll. Sadly, most church leaders began to "make exceptions" to the clear teaching of Scripture concerning God's law of Marriage in order to receive or keep the "divorcees"

as church members. God's word is clear. "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Gen. 2:24). Jesus reminded the Jews that it was "due to the hardness of their hearts" that Moses allowed a man to put away his wife – BUT "from the beginning it was not so" (Matt. 19:3-9). As I understand the Scriptures, Moses allowed the putting away of a bride if it was found that she had been guilty of fornication (pre-marital sex) and she was found not to be a virgin on the wedding night or "some uncleanness" was found in her (Deut. 24:1-4). The virginity of a bride was guaranteed according to Jewish custom. BUT even this allowance "to put away a wife" was due to the "hardness of the hearts" of the Jews. I can not find a single example of "divorce and remarriage" in the Bible sanctioned by God.

Jesus made it clear that the putting away of a wife and REMARRIAGE for any other reason than what Moses allowed, would result in the sin of adultery. Some have been so bold as to try and make "fornication" the same as "adultery" but IF you insert the word adultery in Matthew 19:9 in the place of fornication, it will not even make good nonsense. A man is to "cleave" unto his wife, and as I understand Scripture, the "death" of a spouse is the only legitimate grounds for remarriage. Paul wrote, "For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man". Notice that I did not say that "death" was the only legitimate reason for separation between husbands and wives. Again Paul wrote, "Let not the wife depart from her husband: But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife". God's word is clear, "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge" (Hebrews 13:4). Is God sending a warning of judgment to this Nation because of her loose morals concerning Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage?

ABORTION – THE MURDER OF HUMAN BEINGS.

In 1973, in the landmark case of Roe v. Wade, the Supreme Court of the United States ruled that state laws could not forbid a woman to have an abortion during the first three months of pregnancy. The court also ruled that during the second three months, a state could regulate abortions only to protect women's health. Before Roe v. Wade, many U.S. states prohibited abortions in almost all circumstances. Since 1973, not counting those abortions required for health reasons, there has been more than twenty five (25) million babies murdered in the name of "women's rights". God told Jeremiah, "For the children of Judah have done evil in my sight, saith the LORD: they have set their abominations in the house which is called by my name, to pollute it. 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" (17:30-31). "Children are the heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward" (Psalms 127). Surely God will not condone or tolerate forever the

murder of babies. Is God now sending a warning of judgment against this Nation because of this horrible sin?

THE GAY RIGHTS MOVEMENT – HOMOSEXUALS and LESBIANS:

Throughout history, homosexuality has existed in most nations and societies. The first Biblical record of this form of sexual perversion is recorded in Genesis 6:5 WHEN “God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” If I am right in my understanding, and I think I am, Paul refers to this time in history in Romans 1:22-32, “Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. 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 toward 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, 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, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, Without understanding, covenantbreakers, 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.”

Historically, some ancient heathen nations and societies, such as the Greeks, accepted homosexuality and considered it to be a preferred relationship. One such society was that of Sodom and Gomorrah, which God destroyed with fire and brimstone. It is commonly recognized that many past nations have fallen because of their “moral decay”. Some cultures have permitted homosexuality but have not encouraged it. Still others have forbidden it, and some have punished homosexuals. Today, many people in most Western countries consider homosexuality immoral or unnatural. Many states of the United States prohibit homosexual acts. In the United States the homosexual and lesbian movement has mushroomed in the past 25 years and is fast becoming an “acceptable lifestyle”. Our children are being taught in school to “accept” this perversion, which God rejects.

Today in the U.S. many social scientists oppose laws that prohibit homosexuality and provide punishment for it. These scientists believe that homosexuals are treated unfairly for ways of life that do not directly affect others. Many nations, including Canada, France, the Netherlands, Sweden,

and England, have no laws against homosexual actions between consenting adults. In 1961, Illinois became the first U.S. state to abolish its laws against homosexual acts. Since the 1960's, homosexual or "gay activists" groups have urged our U.S. society to adopt more tolerant attitudes. As a result of the movement, since 1970, several U.S. states and a number of U.S. states and cities have passed laws banning discrimination against homosexuals in employment, housing, and in other ways. In 1996, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that states may not ban laws that protect homosexuals against discrimination. The ruling in the case of Romer v. Evans, struck down a 1992 amendment to the Colorado Constitution that forbade laws prohibiting bias against homosexuals. Gay activists hailed the ruling as a victory for gay rights.

Homosexuality and Lesbianism is a sexual perversion clearly condemned by God. In the Old Testament we read "Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination. Neither shalt thou lie with any beast to defile thyself therewith: neither shall any woman stand before a beast to lie down thereto: it is confusion. Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things: for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you: And the land is defiled: therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants" (Lev. 18:22-27). Is not "the land of the free" being defiled by the sexual perversions of the homosexuals and lesbians. Is it not being taught in our public schools that our children and grandchildren are to accept and respect the lifestyle of others, regardless of what lifestyle it is? Since "God gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: -" why should we respect such a lifestyle? Since "God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; --" why should we grant them "rights" to recruit our children into their lifestyle? IS God now sending a warning of judgment to this Nation for her immoral and ungodly acceptance of this sexual perversion?

THE ANTI-GOD MOVEMENT

The ACLU, which was founded in 1920, has defended what they consider, the constitutional rights of a wide range of individuals and groups in "anti-God" matters. The ACLU stands in the forefront to prevent Bible Reading and Prayer in Schools and the mention of God or God's moral laws in public places. In 1978, the organization defended the right of a group of American Nazis to march in Skokie, Illinois. One of the current goals of the ACLU is to abolish all capital punishment. The ACLU also calls for further restrictions on government investigative agencies and for stricter separation of church and state, including the abolition of the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. In addition, it seeks greater protection for the rights of immigrants who enter the United States without the required papers, and for the rights of homosexuals. The ACLU also supports the rights of women to have abortions. There are other groups that oppose God and godly activities in public places, but this should put us on notice.

While there has been some outcry and protest on the part of SOME of God's people against ungodly Supreme Court Rulings and efforts to deny God and the teachings of his Word, I wonder IF we have not, as a nation,

turned from the God of our fathers. I have not mentioned many other immoral and ungodly ways in which this Nation is quickly sloshing toward Sodom and Gomorrah. Did God suffer the event of September 11 to happen as a prelude of more judgment to come because America, as “one Nation under God” has forsaken the God she is under?

The Scriptures are clear, “God shall judge his people”. We read in Hebrews 10:26-31, “For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses’ law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”

While it may be justly argued that this passage deals with turning away from sound doctrine and practice by those who “depart from the faith”, I suggest that the principle of “sinning willfully” can apply to a Nation as well as an Individual. One does not have to be “doctrinally sound” and a member of a Primitive Baptist Church in order to be a child of God. One does not have to have a good understanding of the doctrine of election and predestination in order to know the difference between RIGHT and WRONG. God’s judgment, in this time world, has nothing to do with one’s eternal destiny. God judged the World by the flood, saving only eight souls in the ark. God judged the world at the tower of Babel and scattered the human race across the continents. God judged the CITIES of Sodom and Gomorrah, and delivered only four righteous souls to safety.

Eternally, God will judge the non-elect according to their works at the Great White Throne judgment (Rev. 20:11-12). Eternally, God judged ALL of his elect IN Christ on the Cross, reconciling them unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, but rather “he made him (Christ) to be sin for us (the elect), who (Christ) knew no sin; that we (the elect) might be made the righteousness of God in him (Christ). Because WE were judged IN Christ on the cross, “There is therefore NOW no condemnation to them which are in Christ --.” Eternally every child of God will be glorified, but in time every child of God will be chastened for his disobedience. “If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then ye are bastards, and not sons”. Eternally, God will present to himself all the elect as a “glorious church”, but in time God may judge an individual church for “leaving their first love” – see Rev. 2:1-5. In time, God will judge every nation that forgets Him and His laws. It may be that God has given the United States a warning.