



Divine Judgment

Introduction

History chronicles the rise and fall of nations and governments. Territory changed hands. Kingdoms arose. Borders shifted. People subjugated. Nation throws up and United. Families and ethnic groups united and grew. Biblical history records many nations who rose out of a single person. Edom, Ammon, Moab, Midian and of course Israel named after the patriarch Jacob.

The relationship between God and nations is indisputable.

Behold, the nations are like a drop from a bucket, and are regarded as a speck of dust on the scales; Behold, He lifts up the islands like fine dust. Isaiah 40:15

It is He who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers, Who stretches out the heavens like a curtain And spreads them out like a tent to dwell in. He it is who reduces rulers to nothing, Who makes the judges of the earth meaningless. Scarcely have they been planted, scarcely have they been sown, scarcely has their stock taken root in the earth, But He merely blows on them, and they wither, And the storm carries them away like stubble. Isaiah 40:22-24

Daniel said, "Let the name of God be blessed forever and ever, For wisdom and power belong to Him. "It is He who changes the times and the epochs; He removes kings and establishes kings; He gives wisdom to wise men and knowledge to men of understanding. Daniel 2:20-21

God directs the course of history through the rulers of the earth.

Thus says the LORD to Cyrus (Persian Ruler) His anointed, whom I have taken by the right hand, to subdue nations before him and to loose the loins of kings; To open doors before him so that gates will not be shut: Isaiah 45:1

Although it is not always clear, God has dealt with both individuals and nations. Oftentimes we do not recognize God's intervention and direction of human history.

Scripture makes it clear however, that God is intricately involved in the lives of individuals and the affairs of kingdoms and nations. That intervention includes temporal judgment for ungodly behaviors. I realize that tomorrow is the day to celebrate the formal organization of a group of people into a nation; the United States of America.

Our pledge declares that we are one nation under God. The move to strike the words "under God" demonstrate that such a notion is now more sentimental than actual. The government has come to a point of not only tolerating but promoting all kinds of biblically abhorrent behaviors. Just this week we have made a national monument out of the place where the LGBT movement began. The government not only tolerates but protects and promotes the slaughtering of babies before they can take their first breath.

Pastor Joe Wright's prayer before the Kansas House sums it up well.

The prayer as delivered on January 23, 1996 by Pastor Joe Wright to the Kansas House of Representatives:
Heavenly Father, we come before You today to ask Your forgiveness and seek Your direction and guidance. Lord, we know Your Word says, "Woe to those who call evil good," but that's exactly what we've done. We have lost our spiritual equilibrium and inverted our values. We confess that we have ridiculed the absolute truth of Your Word and called it moral pluralism. We have worshipped other gods and called it multi-culturalism. We have endorsed perversion and called it an alternative lifestyle. We have exploited the poor and called it the lottery.

*We have neglected the needy and called it self-preservation.
We have rewarded laziness and called it welfare.
We have killed our unborn and called it choice.
We have shot abortionists and called it justifiable.
We have neglected to discipline our children and called it building esteem.
We have abused power and called it political savvy.
We have coveted our neighbors' possessions and called it ambition.
We have polluted the air with profanity and pornography and called it freedom of expression.
We have ridiculed the time-honored values of our fore-fathers and called it enlightenment.*

Search us oh God and know our hearts today; try us and see if there be some wicked way in us; cleanse us from every sin and set us free.

Guide and bless these men and women who have been sent here by the people of Kansas, and who have been ordained by You, to govern this great state. Grant them Your wisdom to rule and may their decisions direct us to the center of Your will. I ask it in the name of Your Son, the Living Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

The list of atrocities condemned by Scripture but sanctioned by our current government grows by the day. I have regularly heard it said that America is due for judgment. I have been a patriot all my life. I love America. I have come to find it necessary however to differentiate between people groups and the rulers who govern them. I have difficulty supporting a government that becomes more and more anti-Christian by the day. Ultimately my citizenship is in a heavenly kingdom and I anxiously wait for a savior who will establish His kingdom of righteous rule here on earth.

And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth." Revelation 5:9-10

Your kingdom come. Your will one day be done on earth as it is now in heaven.

So what are we supposed to do as citizens of an unrighteous kingdom? Like the apostle Paul, we should employ the advantages of that citizenship in every way possible. But also like Paul, we cannot compromise the values of our heavenly citizenship when they clash with our earthly citizenship even to the point of martyrdom. In no way am I implying that every government official is anti-Christian. There are numerous representatives of the kingdom of Christ in positions of authority in American government just as God had representatives even in Caesar's household in New Testament times. When the foundations of government begin to shift to a relative view of truth rather than the Divinely revealed truth we are headed for trouble.

How does God feel about America? Is God's judgment eminent? Today I want to briefly consider the concept of temporal national judgment as observed in the Scriptures. It appears everywhere in the Scripture. God pronounced and carried out judgment on Israel and the surrounding nations. There are also examples of judgment on cities.

Examples of Judgment

God used what we would call natural disasters to exact judgment. Interestingly we have historically called them "Acts of God." Now we call them "Mother Nature".

These included famine, earthquakes, flood of course, plagues, diseases. God warned Israel of certain consequences for rejecting His Law. Here is a sampling from Deuteronomy 28

You won't be able to escape them.

It will affect your food source.

It will affect your reproduction of offspring, crops and flocks.

Confusion, rebuke, pestilence, fever, inflammation, war, blight, mildew, drought, defeat by other kingdoms, incurable boils, tumors, scab, itch.
Mental illness, blindness, depression, inability to get ahead, rape, oppression, robbery, houses taken away, not able to enjoy your possessions.
Your sons and daughter will be captured by others.
Your produce will be eaten by others.
You will be driven mad by what you see.
You will be ruled by pagan rulers.
You will sow much but reap little.
Your crops will be destroyed by pests.
The alien among you will rise above you.
The alien will have money to lend.

These things will happen because you did not serve the LORD your God with joy and a glad heart, for the abundance of all things; therefore you shall serve your enemies whom the LORD will send against you, in hunger, in thirst, in nakedness, and in the lack of all things; and He will put an iron yoke on your neck until He has destroyed you.

The LORD will give you a trembling heart, failing of eyes, and despair of soul. "So your life shall hang in doubt before you; and you will be in dread night and day, and shall have no assurance of your life. In the morning you shall say, 'Would that it were evening!' And at evening you shall say, 'Would that it were morning!' because of the dread of your heart which you dread, and for the sight of your eyes which you will see.

Paul describes a judgment in the form of societal degradation in Romans 1.

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, Romans 1:18

For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures. Romans 1:21-23

Because of this, the rest of the chapter describes God giving them over to the unbridled lusts of their hearts leading to a complete breakdown of relationships, destructive behaviors and denial of God's existence.

And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper... and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them. Romans 1:28,32

Israel's judgment

The Lord sends a message against Jacob, and it falls on Israel. And all the people know it, that is, Ephraim and the inhabitants of Samaria, asserting in pride and in arrogance of heart: "The bricks have fallen down, but we will rebuild with smooth stones; The sycamores have been cut down, but we will replace them with cedars." Isaiah 9:8-10

Woe to those who enact evil statutes and to those who constantly record unjust decisions, so as to deprive the needy of justice And rob the poor of My people of their rights, so that widows may be their spoil And that they may plunder the orphans. Now what will you do in the day of punishment, and in the devastation which will come from afar? To whom will you flee for help? And where will you leave your wealth? Nothing remains but to crouch among the captives or fall among the slain. In spite of all this, His anger does not turn away and His hand is still stretched out. Isaiah 10:1-4

Woe to those who drag iniquity with the cords of falsehood, and sin as if with cart ropes;

*Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; Who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!
Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes and clever in their own sight!
Woe to those who are heroes in drinking wine and valiant men in mixing strong drink, who justify the wicked for a bribe, and take away the rights of the ones who are in the right! Isaiah 5:18-23*

Egypt's judgment

The oracle concerning Egypt. Behold, the LORD is riding on a swift cloud and is about to come to Egypt; The idols of Egypt will tremble at His presence, And the heart of the Egyptians will melt within them. So I will incite Egyptians against Egyptians; And they will each fight against his brother and each against his neighbor, City against city and kingdom against kingdom. Then the spirit of the Egyptians will be demoralized within them; And I will confound their strategy, so that they will resort to idols and ghosts of the dead and to mediums and spiritists. Moreover, I will deliver the Egyptians into the hand of a cruel master, and a mighty king will rule over them," declares the Lord GOD of hosts. Isaiah 19:1-4

Assyria's judgment

So it will be that when the Lord has completed all His work on Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, He will say, "I will punish the fruit of the arrogant heart of the king of Assyria and the pomp of his haughtiness." For he has said, "By the power of my hand and by my wisdom I did this, For I have understanding; And I removed the boundaries of the peoples and plundered their treasures, and like a mighty man I brought down their inhabitants, and my hand reached to the riches of the peoples like a nest, and as one gathers abandoned eggs, I gathered all the earth; And there was not one that flapped its wing or opened its beak or chirped." Isaiah 10:12-14

The LORD of hosts has sworn saying, "Surely, just as I have intended so it has happened, and just as I have planned so it will stand, to break Assyria in My land, and I will trample him on My mountains. Then his yoke will be removed from them and his burden removed from their shoulder. "This is the plan devised against the whole earth; and this is the hand that is stretched out against all the nations. "For the LORD of hosts has planned, and who can frustrate it? And as for His stretched-out hand, who can turn it back?" Isa 14:24-27

Daniel predicted the rise and fall of the subsequent world powers.

Babylon's Judgment

Behold, I am going to stir up the Medes against them, Who will not value silver or take pleasure in gold. And their bows will mow down the young men, They will not even have compassion on the fruit of the womb, Nor will their eye pity children. And Babylon, the beauty of kingdoms, the glory of the Chaldeans' pride, Will be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It will never be inhabited or lived in from generation to generation; Nor will the Arab pitch his tent there, Nor will shepherds make their flocks lie down there. But desert creatures will lie down there, And their houses will be full of owls; Ostriches also will live there, and shaggy goats will frolic there. Hyenas will howl in their fortified towers And jackals in their luxurious palaces. Her fateful time also will soon come And her days will not be prolonged. Isaiah 13:17-22

Now this is the inscription that was written out: 'MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN.' "This is the interpretation of the message: 'MENE'—God has numbered your kingdom and put an end to it. " 'TEKEL'—you have been weighed on the scales and found deficient. " 'PERES'—your kingdom has been divided and given over to the Medes and Persians." Then Belshazzar gave orders, and they clothed Daniel with purple and put a necklace of gold around his neck, and issued a proclamation concerning him that he now had authority as the third ruler in the kingdom. That same night Belshazzar the Chaldean king was slain. So Darius the Mede received the kingdom at about the age of sixty-two. Daniel 5:25-31

Persia's Judgment
Greece's Judgment
Rome's Judgment

National Judgment for Leader's sin
Saul

Now there was a famine in the days of David for three years, year after year; and David sought the presence of the LORD. And the LORD said, "It is for Saul and his bloody house, because he put the Gibeonites to death." 2 Samuel 21:1

David 2 Samuel 24; 1 Chron 21

David instructed Joab to number the people against the explicit instructions from the Lord not to. As a result, the Lord sent a pestilence that took the life of 70,000 people.

Delayed Judgment

God delayed judgment on the Canaanites for 40 years until they reached a certain level of rebellion deemed necessary by God before executing judgment while the Israelites wandered around in the wilderness as a judgment of their own.

*"Then in the fourth generation they will return here, for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet complete."
Genesis 15:16*

God delayed the flood until every man's heart was evil continually.

He waited till the last minute. He delayed judgment on the Assyrians in response to repentance. Eventually they returned to their evil ways and suffered God's judgment.

Judgment on America

First, I want to bring some perspective. I have heard it said many times that if God doesn't bring judgment on America He will have to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah.

The Bible actually delineates the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah.

"Behold, this was the guilt of your sister Sodom: she and her daughters had arrogance, abundant food and careless ease, but she did not help the poor and needy. Thus they were haughty and committed abominations before Me. Therefore I removed them when I saw it. Ezekiel 16:49-50

Yet, God was willing to spare the city if only 10 righteous could be found. There are more than 10 righteous in any city in America. Consider the atrocities of other nations in the world. I do believe that as a nation we deserve God's judgment. The same sins of Sodom and Gomorrah along with a host of other atrocities could be charged to us as a nation. These are things not only practiced by the people but protected and promoted by our government. We deserve judgement for the slaughter of millions of defenseless babies alone.

Given the examples of the kinds of things God uses to judge nations I am inclined to think that we have already experienced some temporal judgments. An interesting connection to some of our national disaster and some detrimental decision regarding Israel can be observed.

Madrid Peace Conference where we promoted the division of Israeli land Oct 31, 1991
October 31 the "Perfect Storm" slams the Eastern Seaboard.

Madrid Peace Conference II August 23, 1992 "Land for Peace" deal.

August 23, 1992 Hurricane Andrew hits Florida costing \$30 Billion 180,000 homes.

Oslo Peace Accord August 20, 1993 more land relinquished for “peace”,
Hurricane Emily hit the east coast September 6 \$35 Million

Talks to give up Golan Heights Jan 16, 1994
California 6.9 earthquake hit Jan 17 costing \$13-40 Billion

October 1998 relinquishing 13 percent of Yesha
Tornados and rain cost billion in Southern Texas same period.

November 30 98 Clinton helped raise money for Arafat and Palestinian state from the us and 42 other nation totaling \$3 Billion.

November 30 Dow Jones drops 216 points. European market third worst day Dec 1.

Settlers evacuated from the Gaza Strip due to American pressure. August 2005
Katrina hits New Orleans August 29th.

Absolute proof or coincidence? I don't know. How many natural disasters, famines, draughts, are directly related to national sin? It is hard to say. All we know is that Scripture links the same kinds of things to demonstrations of God's judgment. We call it man-caused global warming. Perhaps it is God caused judgment.

Humility and repentance seems to be the key to avoiding God's judgment. God delayed judgment on Ahab when he repented. God promised Israel a reprieve in judgment due to repentance.

"If I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or if I command the locust to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among My people, and My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and will heal their land. 2 Chronicles 7:13-14

This is not a promise made directly to other nations, but if God would respond favorably to an evil Nineveh or a reprehensible Ahab who humbles themselves, perhaps He would respond to a humbled America whose representative leaders lead the nation in repentance.

There have been times in our countries history where leaders lead the way in repentance.
Continental Congress March 16,1776 day of humiliation, fasting and prayer.

John Adams 1798

James Madison 1812

Abraham Lincoln 1861, 1863, 1864

We continue to practice a yearly day of prayer but have neglected the humiliation part.

I would delight in a president with the courage of Uganda's president who stood before the nation on their 50 anniversary of independence from England and prayed this prayer...

"I stand here today to close the evil past, and especially in the last 50 years of our national leadership history and at the threshold of a new dispensation in the life of this nation. I stand here on my own behalf and on behalf of my predecessors to repent. We ask for your forgiveness. We confess these sins, which have greatly hampered our national cohesion and delayed our political, social and economic transformation. We confess sins of idolatry and witchcraft which are rampant in our land. We confess sins of shedding innocent blood, sins of political hypocrisy, dishonesty, intrigue and betrayal, forgive us of sins of pride, tribalism and sectarianism; sins of laziness, indifference and irresponsibility; sins of corruption and bribery that have eroded our national resources; sins of sexual immorality, drunkenness and debauchery; sins of unforgiveness, bitterness, hatred and revenge; sins of injustice, oppression and exploitation; sins of rebellion, insubordination, strife and conflict.

We want to dedicate this nation to you so that you will be our God and guide. We want Uganda to be known as a nation that fears God and as a nation whose foundations are firmly rooted in righteousness and justice to fulfill what the Bible says in Psalm 33:12: Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord. A people you have chosen as your own," Museveni prayed.

Final judgment on the nations.

God will bring severe judgment on all the nations such as the world has never seen. God will send world-wide natural disasters. Jesus will return. God will execute everlasting horrendous judgment on all whose names do not appear in the book of life.

Our Responsibility

- Participate in the process

Inasmuch as possible and according to the dictates of our Constitution, we should be involved wherever possible in the political process that enacts the laws that govern our nation. Be salt and light in a dark place.

Do all things without grumbling or disputing; so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I will have reason to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain. Philippians 2:14-16

- Pray for authorities – rulers = peace

First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. 1 Timothy 2:1-4

- Pray for national repentance

There may come a time when judgment becomes inevitable and God tells us to stop praying but for now, keep on praying for a movement of God in our nation. Repentance and reconciliation with God is America or any nations only hope.