

Texas-Louisiana Floods & Trump's Call for a Day of Prayer

Blessings and cursings work both ways, automatically; how to turn back the tide of what's coming!

Fred R. Coulter—September 2, 2017

Greeting's, everyone! Welcome to Sabbath services!

This past week we saw the worst hurricane to hit Texas in its history. It was stuck going back and forth over the coast and dropping nothing up torrential rain. It ended up that there were 57 inches of rain during the duration of Hurricane Harvey over Texas. Then it moved on over to Louisiana and dropped a great deal of rain there. Now it's moved up toward the middle states: Tennessee, Kentucky, Ohio and dropping rain on them. Then down far in the Atlantic Ocean there's another hurricane developing!

Stop and think! Look at the world:

- wars in the Middle East
- wars in Africa
- racial wars
- economic calamity
- threat of war of nuclear missiles from North Korea on:
 - ✓ America
 - ✓ Japan
 - ✓ South Korea
 - ✓ the American territory of Guam

And here at home, look at what has happened. We're truly, truly in difficult and terrible times. The whole world is guilty before God! That's what Paul wrote in Rom. 3: *that every mouth may be stopped and the whole world be guilty before God!*

Jesus gave us a lesson for all of those who are in areas that the weather has not affected. If you haven't had rain, we've had an awful lot of heat in California and Arizona. How about 120 degrees in Phoenix? This week we had 109 degrees right here in Hollister. So, in addition to the rain, the floods, and all of these things going on:

- Montana has forest fires
- California has forest fires
- other areas of the world are inundated with their own problems and difficulties
- there are terrorist attacks

Who can stop them? Everyone is trying to figure out how to stop terror attacks. Well, there is a way that they can be really reduced. But that's going to take a lot of effort by a lot of people.

Look at Europe, the Middle East, South America, and there are probably going to be some

big problems in China and in that area, as well. *The whole world is suffering!*

When calamities come, the natural thing to do, because God does judge for sin—remember, all are sinners—and God says that He 'does not delight in the death of the wicked.' And He doesn't delight in the death of the innocent. They all suffer when calamities like this happen.

Jesus brought a lesson that we need to learn. Were there sinners in the area of Houston in Southern Texas? *Yes!* But there are also sinners in every place in the world! Isn't that true? *Yes!* Who is the worst sinner? People say, 'They deserve it because of thus and such....' Here's what Jesus said:

Luke 13:1: "Now, at the same time, *there* were present some who were telling Him about the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices."

What a terrible and horrible thing right there at the temple, offering their sacrifices and Pilate comes in and he kills them, cuts them up and throws their blood on the altar. You think: Whoa! Those people were really terrible!

Verse 2: "And Jesus answered *and* said to them, 'Do you suppose that these Galileans were sinners above all Galileans, because they suffered such things? **No, I tell you; but if you do not repent, you shall all likewise perish**'" (vs 2-3).

Whenever there are calamities that take place, God is not interested in the death of the wicked, *but that they would repent!* The ones who are not afflicted by it, they need to repent, as well.

Verse 4: "Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell, and killed them, do you suppose that these were debtors above all men who dwelt in Jerusalem? **No, I tell you; but if you do not repent, you shall all likewise perish**" (vs 4-5).

Yes, there are judgments that God carries out. There are difficulties and things that come along because of sin. We know that Jeremiah cried and wept, and he said, 'Oh, my people! They're all adulterers and sinners. The wilderness is drying up!' So, human behavior does affect the weather, the land and human lives; *it affects everything around!*

With this disaster in Texas, don't anyone think that they're greater sinners than anyone else, because they're not! However, certain things happen! Let's look at the leadership:

You've seen how Donald Trump—our current President—has responded, and he called for a day of prayer for the whole nation on September 3rd. When was the last time that happened? *A long time ago!* Also, we'll talk a little bit about our current President a little later. We have had probably ten years of corrupt, evil leadership at every level in government, and many levels in 'religion,' and even problems within the Churches of God.

Psa. 12—this is how the nation has been. Have you been moaning and groaning because of all the things that have been going on?

- the murders
- the rapes
- the terrorist attacks
- the overdosing of drugs
- all the crimes that are there
- all the corruption that is in government

Now we're beginning to see that it's so much more corrupt than we have ever understood. Who has been in charge?

Psalms 12:1: "Help, O LORD, for the Godly man ceases; for the faithful disappear from among the children of men." When the leaders sin!

It is true Barack Obama did not have a lot of *personal* sins, but almost every one of his actions as President *were filled with corruption, sin and lies!* Let's read what was happening:

Verse 2: "They speak falsehood each one with his neighbor; with flattering lips and a double heart they speak." Absolutely true! Everything that the Obama said had a double meaning. *When he said that 'we are going to fundamentally change America,' he meant to drag it down into the pit of hell!*

Verse 3: "The LORD shall cut off all flattering lips, and the tongue that speaks proud things, who have said, 'With our tongue we shall prevail; our lips are our own; who is lord over us?'" (vs 3-4). *Lawlessness!* Boy! Hasn't that lawlessness increased in the past eight years? *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 5: "'For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy... [Isn't that true?] ...I will now arise,' says the LORD. 'I will set him in safety from him who puffs at him.'"

Well, we've been delivered through some of it through the things that this current administration has done. But it is so corrupt, they're even astonished at how corrupt it is! Now they're finding out that the man who is supposed to be the least corruptible of all—James Comey—turns out to be one of the most corrupt!

How do we get out bearings? Verse 6: "The

words of the LORD are pure words, like silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. You shall keep them, O LORD; You shall preserve them from this generation forever" (vs 6-7).

- God watches over His own!
- God protects us!
- God is with us!
- His angels are about us!

Remember, God also loves Israel! Even in spite of all of their sins, difficulties and problems. But here is what was happening to America, and there were a lot of people praying that it would get turned around. Those prayers have been answered. But they have to continue to be answered, because here's what you're looking at:

Verse 8: "The wicked walk on every side when vileness is exalted among the sons of men." Hasn't that been so, especially with all of the perverted sex and transgenderism shoved down the throat of the American people? *Yes, indeed!*

It says in Matt. 24 the *lawlessness shall be multiplied, and many shall be led into sin!* Hasn't that happened? *Yes, indeed, that has happened!*

Proverbs 28:2: "Because of the transgression of a land, many *are* its rulers..." *Lawlessness!* Take the law into their hands. Look at the sanctuary cities! Look at the illegal aliens!

Sidebar: Most people do not grasp all of the aliens coming in—all the immigrants, legal or illegal—are *a result of one major absolute sin that must be eliminated if at all possible to turn back the tide of all the correction that is coming! That is abortion! The killing of the most innocent!*

Remember what God told Cain after he killed Abel? *He said that the blood of your brother cries out from the ground to Me!* Stop and think: With 3,000 abortions a day in America—not counting anything in Europe, China, Russia or anywhere else in the world—don't you think that all that innocent blood cries out to God? When the most innocent are killed and ripped out of the womb of their mothers. Now they're even talking about getting rid of children up to two-years-old.

Where will the evil stop?!

"...but with a man of understanding and knowledge the state shall be prolonged" (v 2). That's about where we are right now with our current President. He has knowledge and understanding, plus he is a believer in God, though Protestant, and there is a value to Protestantism. We should look at Protestantism, even though they can't offer true salvation from God. It's like a state religion for the unconverted children of Israel. If they do good, that's fine. If they don't, *God will correct them!*

Verse 4: "Those who forsake the law praise the wicked, but those who keep the law contend against them." That's the current battle that's going on today in America right now. We don't know how it's going to be.

When it was announced about national prayer for Sept. 3 by the President, he had his faith representatives there, and they were praying a prayer for the nation. They also prayed directly for Donald Trump. This happened when his election was turned around, when the incident of the NBC bus and Donald Trump saying—we years ago—terrible and awful things. It's terrible that he said that and did that, but there is evidence of his repentance. From the time that he repented—because when that happened during the election—all the faith representatives and ministers came and they were praying for him. Apparently he repented!

Knowing what he knows, God will accept anyone turning from their evil. ***It doesn't mean salvation for eternal life!*** Did not God call on Israel to repent? Did He offer salvation to them at that time? *No, He did not!* We need to look at things the way they actually are.

Verse 9: "He who turns away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be an abomination." When there's repentance, if you come back, that is great!

Proverbs 29:2: "When the righteous are in authority..." God's judgment for righteousness in the world is different righteousness than what He requires for those who are His begotten children and future sons and daughters of God.

"...the people rejoice; but when the wicked rule, the people mourn" (v 2). How was the country before the election of Donald Trump? Has it turned around to a good deal? *Yes, it has!* Look what has happened with this tragedy and flood—record setting flood—in Houston, Texas. People are helping each other, and there is hardly any crime.

The President has been down there twice, and is tending to it to make sure that everything is there to help them so they can recover. That's tremendous!

Verse 4: "The king establishes the land **by justice**..." Notice the difference. Remember that we're talking about unconverted. We're talking about righteous in the world and sinful in the world.

"...but he who takes bribes tears it down" (v 4).

- Have you ever heard the media?
- Have you ever heard some of these people who are the most corrupt?
- What do they do?

- *They tear it down so they can have more gain!*

Verse 12: "If a ruler hearkens to lies, all his servants *are* wicked." That described the Obama administration from top to bottom all the way through!

Verse 14: "A king **who faithfully judges the poor**, his throne shall be established forever.

Verse 18: "Where *there is* no vision, the people perish; **but happy is he who keeps the Law.**"

If there's any one thing that this current President—Donald Trump—has given, it is a vision to make America great again! What does he say in all of his speeches? *From the time of that incident during the campaign*—I think it was in July that that happened—*and his repentance there with all of the faith leaders that were with him*, has this not happened?

- he has brought vision
- he has brought hope
- he has brought understanding

Now the whole nation has been severely tried because of these calamities that are coming upon us!

- What are we going to do?
- Will we stop our sinning?
- Will we stop our adultery?
- Will we stop our drugs?
- Will we stop the abortions?
- What is it that we're going to do?

If we can't stop it, how many are going to stop individually, thereby bringing the number and incidents of these things way down so that we're not living under a curse.

Let's understand how God works! Let's see if we can answer the question that a lot of people have.

- **IF** God is love
- **IF** God is good
- **IF** God is righteous

Why does He say this? Remember when God talks about Jacob, that's all of Israel:

Isaiah 45:4: "For Jacob My servant's sake and Israel My chosen, I have even called you by your name; I have named you, though you have not known Me." Isn't that interesting; they don't know God because they don't keep the laws and commandments of God. But they profess God and they worship Him, and when there's repentance, God says that 'when He slays them,' they turn back to Him and even flatter Him in their repentance. But He still forgives them! You find that in Psa. 78.

Verse 5: "I *am* the LORD, and *there is* none else. *There is* no God besides Me; I clothed you, though you have not known Me."

- Who gave us this land?
- Who brought us here?
- How did it develop?
- Why did they use the Bible?
- Why were they professing Christians—*worldly Christianity*?

That's what it is; it's not *spiritual Christianity as it's supposed to be within the Churches of God!* We are to be loving God 'with all our heart, mind, soul and being, and our neighbor as ourselves. And the brethren as Christ has loved us, and even our enemies. We are to keep the commandments of God in the *spirit*, not in the letter. We are to continually change, grow and overcome.

So, when God talks about Israel, He deals with them at a little different level than He deals with the Church, because that's physical life with Israel, and for us it's spiritual life.

Verse 6: "That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that *there is* none besides Me. I *am* the LORD, and there is none else; I form the light and create darkness; I make peace and create evil. I the LORD do all these *things*" (vs 6-7).

Some say, 'If God is righteous, why would He create evil? How did He do that? How does that work? We need to understand it, because He's says, 'I, the Lord, do all these things!' How does God do that?

God created the heavens and the earth and all there is: all the laws and everything that makes it run. I've used the law of gravity many times, but that's just a good a one to use as any. The law of gravity holds everything onto this earth: all the land, all the water, all the people, everything that there is.

- Are you subject to the law of gravity? *Yes!*
- If you fall, what happens? *If you catch yourself and don't hurt yourself you can recover from it!*
- What if you fall and break an arm or a leg?
- Is that because you were a sinner?

or

- Is that because you fell?
- Nevertheless, the law of gravity was broken!*

Is a broken arm or leg a good thing? You could say that opposed to *normal* it is evil. So, God creates blessings and cursings, laws that work both ways. If you keep them you're blessed. If you break them you suffer the penalty *automatically!* That's the way it is in the world.

Deuteronomy 28: "And it shall come to pass, **if you shall hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD your God...** [remember the three words: *obey My voice*] **...to observe and to do** all His commandments which I command you today... [those were for their good] ...the LORD your God will set you on high above all nations of the earth."

- In the letter of the Law, did Israel do that when they went into the land initially? *Yes! Because they didn't do it they were rejected, and they were sent into exile!*

- When those who came over to colonize America, what did they bring? *The Bible!*

They based everything they did on a lot of the laws contained here in the Book of the Law. They believed in Christ to the extent that they did, and among them were the Sabbath-keepers who came over who were those few who were of the Church of God, to plant the seeds of the Church of God for us down at the end-time. God provided His Word! God provided His Bible!

- Have we been set high above all nations of the earth? *Yes!*

Verse 2: "And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you **if you will obey the voice of the LORD your God.**"

- Did we receive a lot of blessings? *Yes, indeed!*
- Did we receive penalties for sin? *Yes, we did!*
- Did we have to fight a civil war because of great sin? *Yes, we did!*

Even Pres. Lincoln said, 'We are suffering for our sins, and we need to return to God!' Then God says that if you do that: "And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you **if you will obey the voice of the LORD your God.**" He says that three times. You can read all the blessings (vs 3-14):

- everything that you do
- everything that you set your hand to do
- everything will be blessed and prospered because of God

Not saying one word about spiritual salvation and eternal life; just the physical life.

- Do the Protestants today—who keep many of the commandments of God—have certain blessings because they do? *Yes!*
- Do they think they have eternal life in what they do, because they profess Jesus? *Yes!*

But it's just like the scribes and Pharisees who profess Moses and believe that they will have eternal life if they did the things of Moses. But they didn't obey him. Likewise today: Protestants believe they will receive eternal life. I think most of them—

nearly all of them—are going to end up in the second resurrection. Can you imagine their astonishment when they're resurrected? We'll see the mixture that Protestants have today.

Verse 15: “And it shall come to pass, **if...**” All the way through here are the blessings and cursings, which will *come upon you*. Notice that they come upon you, just like falling, they're automatic. You transgress the Laws of God—whether you know them or not—and it's automatic.

“...**you will not** hearken to the voice of the LORD your God to observe and to do all His commandments and His statutes, which I command you today, all these curses shall come upon you and overtake you” (v 15).

When calamity comes and people reform and they stop doing certain things, they're not under that curse. We see part of that going on today. Are there drug addicts who quit? *Yes, indeed!* They may still be suffering from some of the residue, but they're able lead a more normal life, because they quit. You can apply that... Read all of Deut. 28. All of these are automatic and we will see how it takes place.

There are many parallels in Jeremiah that applied back then during the days of Jeremiah, and also apply today. There's a first fulfillment and there's a second fulfillment. Jeremiah had a ministry that was really, really difficult.

Jeremiah 2:1: “And the Word of the LORD came to me, saying”—because he was probably just about 16-18-years-old when he started, and he said to God that he didn't know how to speak and ‘I don't know what to do’ and God said, ‘Don't worry, I'm going to make your mind like flint, and you're going to have fight against the whole land.’ He had some very depressing days, yes, indeed!

Verse 2: “Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, ‘Thus says the LORD, ‘I remember you, the kindness of your youth, the love of your betrothals, when you went after Me in the wilderness, in a land not sown. Israel *was* Holiness to the LORD, and the firstfruits of His increase. All that devour him shall be held guilty; evil shall come on them,’ says the LORD” (vs 2-3)—*automatic!*

Did not God fight their battles for them? What was the one rule from God about going to war? *You only go when God tells you, and He'll fight for you!* If you go out on your own, you're going to have trouble!

Verse 4: “Hear the Word of the LORD, O house of Jacob, and all the families of the house of Israel.... [down to our day] ...Thus says the LORD, ‘What injustice have your fathers found in Me, that they have gone far from Me and have walked after

vanity, and have become vain?’” (vs 4-5).

That's what's happened to us; that's why we're suffering all of these things! Don't look upon it as ‘Look at all the sinners are down there in Houston and Louisiana. **Beware!** You may get a hurricane where you live, or a drought where you live.

Verse 6: “Nor did they say, ‘Where *is* the LORD Who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, Who led us through the wilderness, through a land of deserts and of pits, through a land of dry places, and of deep darkness, through a land that no man passed through, and where no man lived?’ And I brought you into a plentiful country...” (vs 6-7). Apply this to us today: Did God not do that? *Yes, He did!*

“...to eat its fruit and its goodness; but when you entered, you defiled My land and made My inheritance an abomination” (v 7). They defiled it by sin!

It's kind like a curve, a cycle, all of these things. That's what's happened to Israel over and over again.

Verse 8: “‘The priests did not say, ‘Where *is* the LORD?’ And they who handle the Law did not know Me; the rulers also rebelled against Me, and the prophets prophesied by Baal and walked after things that do not profit. Therefore, I will contend with you,’ says the LORD, ‘and against your children's children I will contend’” (vs 8-9). That's us today!

Verse 11: “Has a nation changed *their* gods...?” Well, Israel went wholly after Baal. Today Christianity and Protestantism is half Biblical and half Baal. God says that ‘you made Me to serve with your iniquity’ (Isa. 43). Precisely describing Protestantism!

All the problems, difficulties and sins that have occurred collectively—God looks at the whole nation, looks at the people—but He'll make an exception for even one man, but the truth is that these things happen. If there are righteous people, God will hold back for the sake of the righteous, while internally He punishes the wicked. That's exactly what we see today.

Verse 19: “‘Your own evil shall correct you... [**automatic**] ...and your backslidings shall reprove you; therefore, know and see that *it is* an evil and bitter *thing* that you have forsaken the LORD your God, and that My fear *is* not in you,’ says the Lord GOD of hosts.”

Here's what they have said instead of believing in God, v 27: “Saying to a tree, ‘You *are* my father,’ and to a stone, ‘You gave *me* birth.’....

[evolution, atheism, agnosticism] ...For they have turned *their* back to Me, and not their face; but in the time of their trouble they will say, 'Arise and save us!'" God wants to see what they're going to do.

God answers back, v 28: "'But where *are* your gods that you have made for yourselves? Let them arise, if they can save you in the time of your trouble; for according to the number of your cities are your gods, O Judah. Why will you contend with Me? You all have sinned against Me,' says the LORD. 'In vain I have stricken your children...'" (vs 28-30).

- How many disasters?
- How many hurricanes?
- How many tornados?
- How many droughts?
- How many floods?
- How many murders?
- How many abortions?
- How many thefts?

Whatever it is! How long will it go on? ***There comes an end sooner or later!*** Donald Trump has said how many times? ***We need to save the nation!*** That is true, ***from its own destruction!***

"...Your own sword has devoured your prophets, like a destroying lion. O generation, see the Word of the LORD. Have I been a wilderness to Israel, or a land of thick darkness? Why do My people say, 'We roam *freely*; we will come no more to You'?" (vs 30-31). 'Oh, we're free moral agents, we can do whatever we want to do.'

Verse 33: "How you carefully plan your way to seek love. Therefore, even the wicked women you have taught your ways. Also in your skirts is found the blood of the souls of the poor innocents... [all the abortions] ...though you did not catch them breaking in. Yet, in spite of all these things you say, 'Because I am innocent, surely His anger shall turn from me.' Behold, I will pass judgment on you because you say, 'I have not sinned.'" (vs 33-35). ***Yet, they make God serve with their sins!***

Jeremiah 3:22: "'Return, O backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings.'...." Will they really return to God enough? ***We'll have to see; we don't know!***

"...Behold, we come to You; for You are the LORD our God" (v 22). Then ***if*** they admit their sins and confess their sins...

Jeremiah 4:1: "'**If** you will return, O Israel,' says the LORD, 'Return to Me. And if you will put away your abominations out of My sight, then you shall not be removed'"

This is a warning! If we do not heed the warnings of the things that are coming, the whole

nation—not just those in Houston—every state of the union, every nation in Europe, including the Brits, are all affected! **"If you will return, O Israel,' says the LORD, 'Return to Me. And if you will put away your abominations..."**

Verse 2: "'And will swear... [not by Baal, but acknowledge God] ...'As the LORD lives,' in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness; then the nations shall bless themselves in Him, and in Him they shall glory.'" So, God will turn back His hand for a while. Remember, ***God always respects repentance!***

Verse 22: "For My people *are* foolish; they have not known Me; **they are stupid children...**" Isn't that true today; all the young ones growing up totally mis-educated?

Sidebar: The mind of a human being must be educated, to be taught right from wrong and good from evil. If it's all confused and all mixed up, you create a permanent mental disability within those people, unless you can take them aside and give them special education to re-educate their mind! That's what we have here through the school system that we have. ***The greatest sin that we have, outside of the sins of Protestantism is within the school systems of getting rid of God, and all of the satanic perversions that have come into the educational system in America!***

"...and **they have no understanding**. They are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge.' I looked on the earth, and, lo, *it was* without form and void; and the heavens, they *had* no light" (vs 22-23).

That's what's going to happen. Total war is coming! Let's look at what we can see is perhaps a fulfillment of this with our current President. No President has been like him. Completely contrary, but that's turning out for better. He's not a savior to lead us to the Kingdom of God, but if he can help institute the right practices, and cause people to keep the laws—and cause the lawlessness to subside way down and the abortions to be brought way down—God will bless what Trump is doing and will bless the nation.

Jeremiah 5:1: "Run to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in her open places, if you can find a man, if there is one who does justice, who seeks the Truth; and I will pardon her." God will give a space of respite, and maybe that's what it's all about.

For the Church, what does that mean? ***That there is an opportunity to really preach the Gospel!*** Really reach out to people and preach the Truth, the coming of Christ, the rising up of things in the world the way that the book of Revelation tells us. There

are a lot of things that have to take place. That means that there's probably more time than we have ever anticipated. Let's look at this and say that perhaps this is true.

Eventually it's going to get down to this, Jeremiah 6:13: "For everyone from the least of them even to the greatest of them is greedy for gain; and **from the prophet even unto the priest everyone deals falsely.**" So, there's got to be a good deal of truth return to government at all levels.

Verse 14: "'They have also healed the hurt of the daughter of My people slightly, saying, 'Peace, peace,' when *there is* no peace. Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? No, they were not at all ashamed, nor could they blush; therefore, they shall fall among those who fall. At the time *that* I punish them, they shall be cast down,' says the LORD" (vs 14-15). So, the time is coming! ***Inexorable!***

Verse 16: "Thus says the LORD, 'Stand in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths where the good way *is* and walk in it, and you shall find rest for your souls. But they said, "We will not walk in it."*"* There may be some who will.

Verse 17: "Also, I set watchmen over you, *saying*, 'Hearken to the sound of the ram's horn.'..." All kinds of problems! Crime, war! Look, we're facing terrible war out of North Korea! I've heard one man say, 'I'm glad Hillary-Billary is not President!'

"...But they said, 'We will not hearken.' Therefore, hear, you nations, and know, O congregation..." (vs 17-18)—that's us! So, we're dealing with two things:

1. Israel in general
2. the Church in particular

"...what *will happen* to them. Hear, O earth; behold... [What's going to happen? *God is swearing by the earth!*] ...I will bring evil on this people, even the fruit of their thoughts..." (v 18)—***automatic!*** I create evil! If you have good, then there is the opposite.

- Blessings will come upon you ***if you obey!***
- Curses shall come upon you ***if you disobey!***
- ***Automatic!***

Verse 19: "Hear, O earth; behold, I will bring evil on this people, even the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not hearkened to My words, nor to My Law, but have rejected it."

Now let's look at the world and see how it happens *automatically* everywhere to all people because they reject God.

(go to the next track)

Let's see *how the blessings and the cursings come automatically*, and how it shows that it's not just Israel, but all nations. You go back in time and look at the rise and fall of nations. We see in Rom. 3 that that is how God judges the nations according to the degree of those within who are basically law abiding.

When it gets completely out of hand then all chaos breaks loose, and all you have to do is look to the Middle East, look to Venezuela today, and look to WWII and see that is exactly true.

Romans 1:18: "Indeed, *the* wrath of God is revealed from heaven upon all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the Truth in unrighteousness." That's in degree, but that's what's happening.

- Hasn't that happened in science?
- Hasn't that happened in education?
- Hasn't that happened in Christianity?
- Hasn't that happened in religion?
- Hasn't that happened in every aspect of life?
- Hasn't that happened in finance?
- ***You name it!***

Verse 19: "Because that which may be known of God is manifest among them, for God has manifested *it* to them." In addition to that, today we have the complete Bible.

Sidebar: Recently Michael Heiss reminded me that it wasn't until the time of Martin Luther beginning to translate from the Hebrew, and then later William Tyndale, that we had the whole Bible in a language that we could understand with the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament was virtually unknown, because the Catholic Church locked it up in Latin and no one understood Latin.

How else does God manifest Himself to people? Verse 20: "For the invisible things of Him..." Most of what God has is invisible—gravity, how the universe operates—you can't see how God does that.

- How do plants grow? ***They don't know!***
 - How do people grow? ***They don't know!***
- They just know they do, and they know causes when they don't grow!***
- What is that God has done?

All of these invisible things and everything that there is. Look at the single cell. Now that they have quantum physics, they can look at the single cell. A biophysicist looked at that and he came very, very close to saying that there is a God. But because of his peers, he didn't want to admit it. He just said, 'We all need more love.' But a single cell is a reflection of how the universe is structured, and we

have trillions of cells in our bodies. *Think of that!*

“...are perceived from *the* creation of the world [everything that is created in the world] ...being understood by the things **that were made...**” (v 20). It tells you that there is a God Who:

- made them
- created them
- designed them
- gave them life
- gave them power
- gave them properties

“...—both His eternal power and Godhead—so that they are without excuse; because when they knew God, they glorified *Him* not as God, neither were thankful; but they became vain in their own reasonings, and their foolish hearts were darkened. While professing themselves to be **the wise ones...** [the elite in everything] **...they became fools** and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into *the* likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds, and four-footed creatures, and creeping things. For this cause, God also abandoned them...” (vs 20-24).

God leaves them. If you don't want God around, He won't be there. It's very simple; you're left to your own devices and Satan the devil. How has that worked out? *Not very well!*

“...God also abandoned them to uncleanness through the lusts of their hearts, to disgrace their own bodies between themselves, who exchanged the Truth of God for the lie; and they worshiped and served the created thing more than the One Who is Creator, Who is blessed into the ages. Amen. For this cause, God abandoned them...” (vs 24-26).

Verse 28: “...God abandoned them to a reprobate mind...” *Automatic penalties!*

What happens when they repent? We have a classic example of that, of a completely pagan nation, unconverted, not knowing anything about the true God, except that there is a God, and that is the book of Jonah. The book of Jonah is here for an important thing.

We've covered many times the prophecy in Jeremiah where God told Jeremiah to go down to the potter and watch him make something. If the potter doesn't like it, he presses it down and remakes it. He said, ‘O house of Israel, I'm the Potter and you're the clay. Why can't I do with you as this potter. You either become what I want you to be, or I'm going to crush it down and make it into something new. Shall the clay say to the potter, ‘What are you making?’ Then God says that **He** judges the nations.

If they do well, He will bless them. If they

sin, He will correct them. *It's automatic!* Not converted, has nothing to do with salvation.

Jonah really didn't want to go to Nineveh; you know the story of what happened. He finally got there in a giant whale and he was vomited out on the land (Jonah 2:10). Now, here's what God told Jonah to do to Nineveh, the Assyrians:

Jonah 3:2: “Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out to it the proclamation that I am declaring to you.” So, God told Jonah what to do.

Verse 3: “And Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the Word of the LORD. And Nineveh was a very great city of three days' journey across. And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried and said, ‘Yet, forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown!’” (vs 3-4).

Notice that v 5 has nothing to do with Israel, nothing to do with salvation, but the existence of a physical nation and their people. Stop and think about how many people have been warning this nation about all of the disaster to come. Please remember that when it comes, it's going to come in one day: KABOOM! Then what will we do? Let's see what the people of Nineveh did:

Verse 5: “And **the people of Nineveh believed God. And they proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth,** from the greatest of them even to the least of them.”

Who declared a day prayer for this nation? *The President of the United States—Donald Trump!* His faith ministers were with him and they were praying for him. Donald Trump has said that ‘every day he prays for wisdom.’ Generally it comes out exactly right. All of the detractors who go against him have found out that when he says something it is true! That's a real ‘breath of fresh air’ wouldn't you say?

What is Trump telling the nation? *Love each other, help each other, work together.* Get rid of your drugs, get rid of your abortions, get rid of these things! Since when was there a President who did that? Is he the ‘single man’ of Jer. 5:1 that has been sent to help us temporarily? Listen!

- God is fair!
- God is righteous!

Look at these uncircumcised Gentiles, not having the Law of God, but still knowing that there is a God and Creator. Even the king; they all fasted and prayed:

Verse 6: “For word came to the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne. And he laid aside his robe from him... [act of humility] ...and covered himself *with* sackcloth, and sat in ashes.

And he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his great ones, saying... [he made all his princes do it, too] ... 'Do not let man or beast, herd or flock taste anything; do not let them feed, nor drink water. But let man and animal be covered *with* sackcloth, and cry mightily to God. And let them each one turn from his evil way, and from the violence that *is* in their hands. Who knows? **God may repent, and He may have pity and turn away from His fierce anger, so that we do not perish**' (vs 6-9).

- Did God see that?
- Did God acknowledge that?
- Will He acknowledge even the feeble things, the attempts to turn away from sin that people are doing?
- Though they don't have the whole Truth or know the whole Truth to the degree that they try to turn away?
- *Yes, He will!*

Verse 10: "And God saw their works that they turned from their evil way. And God repented of the evil that He had said He would do to them... [just like Jer. 18] ...and He did not do *it*."

Instead of saying, 'Thank You, Lord, I'm glad I was able to help,' Jonah was displeased and got angry at God, because they repented. Jonah said, 'If I go and talk to them, they'll repent.' That doesn't make any difference to God. You still go and tell Him.

Let's read about another occasion of real repentance in a time when there was great calamity coming upon Judah. This was the grandson of Manasseh, the worst king in Judah, and all the evil that he did.

This is important to understand: As a nation, even though we've committed all of these horrible things, that if the people in general, or the majority number of them, do change and cease their evil.

- How many will really turn to God? *We don't know!*
and out of that:
- How many people is God preparing to answer the call that comes out from the Churches of God to repent? *We don't know!*

God knows what He is doing, so therefore, we don't need to judge God, and we don't need to judge the people. We need to judge our own lives and make sure that we're right with God. So, I encourage you to participate in the day of prayer. I hope that all those who called for a day of prayer will honor that. Just like the Ninevites did when the king took off his robe, put it aside and called for a

fast.

Here's Josiah, he had to put away a lot of evil. He broke down the high places, destroyed the idols, get rid of the homosexuals and all of that. Josiah had to start cleaning out the temple, because the temple was overrun with all the paganism that Manasseh had put in there.

2-Chronicles 34:14: "And when they were bringing out the money that was brought into the house of the LORD, Hilkiah the priest found the Book of the Law of the LORD *written* by the hand of Moses."

Whoa! He found the Book of the Law! How far had they left God? Read 2-Chron. 33 and how evil Manasseh was, and yet, he even repented. **God always honors repentance!** Now let's see what Josiah does; Hilkiah brought the Book of the Law to Shaphan, and he brought to the king.

Verse 19: "And it came to pass when the king heard the words of the Law, he tore his clothes." Sound a little bit like the king of Nineveh who took off his robe? He tore his clothes in sorrow, in anguish, that the people had sinned so greatly.

Verse 20: "And the king commanded Hilkiah... [v 21]: 'Go inquire of the LORD for me and for those who are left in Israel and in Judah, concerning the words of the book that has been found, for great *is* the wrath of the LORD that is poured out upon us because our fathers have not kept the Word of the LORD to do according to all that is written in this book.'"

There was no prophet in Israel. There was Jeremiah, but he was not right there at hand at that time. So, he said to Huldah the prophetess who is a keeper of the wardrobe at the temple, for all the robes of the priests and the Levites. So they went. How far removed from God were they? *A lot farther than we are today!*

Verse 23: "And she answered them, 'Thus says the LORD God of Israel, "Tell the man who sent you to me, 'Thus says the LORD: "Behold, I will bring evil upon this place and upon its people, *even* all the curses... [the automatic curses] ...that are written in the book which they have read before the king of Judah, because they have forsaken Me and have burned incense to other gods, so that they might provoke Me to anger...'"'" (vs 23-25).

Think of all the anger that God has with all the sins that we have from the head to the toe, and the corruption as it talks about in Isa. 1.

"...with all the works of their hands. And My wrath shall be poured out upon this place and shall not be quenched. And as for the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the LORD, so shall you

say to him, 'Thus says the LORD God of Israel concerning the words you have heard, "**Because your heart was tender and you humbled yourself...**"' (vs 25-27).

Stop and think about Jer. 5:1, and think about our current President and how self-absorbed he was with everything until that point during the campaign where he was exposed as 'the worst thing in the world.' They thought for sure that he would be blown out of the water. His faith group came in and they all prayed, he repented and that's the key that turned the election around. *Because of one man!*

- This is not unto salvation!
- This is for the nation!
- This is for the people of the land!

Just like it is here!

"...you humbled yourself before your God when you heard His words against this place and against its people, and humbled yourself before Me, and tore your clothes and wept before Me, I have even heard *you* also,' says the LORD. 'Behold, I will gather you to your fathers, and you shall be gathered to your grave in peace, nor shall your eyes see all the evil that I will bring upon this place and upon its people.' And they brought the king word again. And the king sent and gathered together all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem" (vs 27-29)—all the people, all the princes, all the authorities and come to the temple:

Verse 31: "And the king stood in his place and **made a covenant before the LORD...** [to stop our sins] ...to walk after the LORD..."—return to Him and yield ourselves to Him, and he made them all stand to the oath!

Then they kept the Passover and it was some Passover indeed! It wasn't exactly like it should have been, but God honored it, because of the repentance of the king and the repentance of the people. Yes, things can turn around.

How can they be changed? That's quite a thing if you understand that. Now let's see what God says when Israel does that. In spite of all that God did in slaying those sinners when they were out there in the wilderness, because they sinned against God:

Psalm 78:31: "The wrath of God came upon them... [v 32]: For all this they still sinned and did not believe in His wonderful works. Therefore, He ended their days in vanity and their years in terror. **When He slew them...**" (vs 31-34).

There are going to be a good number of people dead because of what happened in Houston. How many died in 9/11? Was there a quick return to God? *Yes, there was a quick return to God, about two months worth!* Will this last a little longer?

Perhaps with this President and his leadership, it may! We'll have to see; we don't know how it's going to work out.

"...then they sought Him; and they turned back and sought after God earnestly. And they remembered that God was their Rock, and the Most High God was their Redeemer. Nevertheless, they flattered Him with their mouths, and they lied to Him with their tongues, for their heart was not steadfast with Him; neither were they faithful in His covenant. But He, *being* full of compassion, forgave their iniquity and did not destroy them; yea, many times He turned His anger away and did not stir up all His wrath, for He remembered that they were but flesh, a wind that passes away and does not come again" (vs 34-39). How many times did they do this?

Psa. 103 is important for us to understand, especially when we're looking at the situation with the nation. There are so many different things going on, so many different pulls and tugs and cross-currents, and politics and finance, and all of that. But for those who do repent, even if it's not repentance unto salvation, but just repentance of stopping the evil in their lives:

- helping their neighbor, *instead of stealing from them*
- assisting those who are in trouble, *instead of killing them*

If there's a turning away from sin, God will forgive! Those of us, because we were mentioned there in Jer. 6—the congregation among them you will know.

- What about the Churches of God?
- What about our sins?
- What about the sins of the ministers?
- What about the sins of the people?

We all need to repent!

- Is any one of us perfect and righteous?
- Is any one of us ready for the Kingdom of God in absolute perfection?

Of course not!

Let's apply Psa. 103 to both categories: Israel in the land and the Churches of God.

Psalm 103:1: "Bless the LORD, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His Holy name." How are we to love God? *With all our heart, mind, soul and being!*

Verse 2: "Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits." Don't just look at the physical things. The benefits, whatever they may be in your life, ***all come from God!***

Verse 3: "Who forgives all your iniquities..." That's not in the future; that's your behavior in the past.

"...Who heals all your diseases" (v 3). Yes, He will! {Note sermon series: *God's Healing*--If you have questions about healing, doctors, and things like that at truthofGod.org}

Verse 4: "Who redeems your life from destruction..." What about those who are hooked on opioids? What if they have programs where they can quit? *That's a good thing for society! A good thing for the people and their lives!* Whether they're going to be called to salvation or not, that's another thing. But how should it be in our lives when we see all of these things going on? Not to judge, condemn and think that they're greater sinners because this happened to them, and here we are in the Church of God and we're lovely, great and righteous people. ***NO! We've got to repent as well!***

"Who redeems your life from destruction..." Think about how many were saved from destruction because of being evacuated?

"...Who crowns you with loving kindness and tender mercies, Who satisfies your desires with good things; your youth is renewed like the eagle's. The LORD executes righteousness and judgment for all who are oppressed" (vs 4-6).

That's really something! God does this for us! He's interested in us! He wants us to yield to Him and confess our sins!

Verse 10: "He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities, for as the heavens are high above the earth, so is His mercy toward those who fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us. As a father has compassion upon his children, so the LORD has compassion upon those who fear Him, for He knows our frame... [yes, He made and created us] ...He remembers that we are dust. As for man, his days are as grass; as a flower of the field, so he flourishes, for the wind passes over it, and it is gone; and its place shall know it no more" (vs 10-16).

Verse 17: "But **the steadfast love of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting...** [but people have to return to God to love Him] ...upon those who fear Him, and His righteousness is unto children's children, to those who keep His covenant, and to those who remember His precepts to do them. The LORD has established His throne in the heavens; and His kingdom rules over all" (vs 17-19).

Remember that God created good and created evil, that is blessings and cursings, and *they work automatically*. He honors repentance. For those of us in the church it needs to be deep within our heart, mind, soul and being. For the world, it will be in varying degrees, and God will judge that for what that is.

Verse 20: "Bless the LORD, O you His angels, mighty in strength, who do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His Word. Bless the LORD, all you His hosts, ministers of His who do His pleasure. Bless the LORD, all His works in all places of His dominion. Bless the LORD, O my soul!" (vs 20-22).

Let's hope that we keep the promise that God has said: ***All things work together for good for those who love God and are called according to His purpose!*** Let's see out of the terrible, horrible tragedy, and other tragedies like it, the good that will come. Let's not say, as Jesus said that because things happen to others that we're more righteous. ***No! As Jesus said, 'Unless you repent, it may happen to you!'***

Scriptural References:

- 1) Luke 13:1-5
- 2) Psalm 12:1-8
- 3) Proverbs 28:2, 4, 9
- 4) Proverbs 29:2, 4, 12, 14, 18
- 5) Isaiah 45:4-7
- 6) Deuteronomy 28:1-2, 15
- 7) Jeremiah 2:1-9, 11, 19, 27-31, 33-35
- 8) Jeremiah 3:22
- 9) Jeremiah 4:1-2, 22-23
- 10) Jeremiah 5:1
- 11) Jeremiah 6:13-19
- 12) Romans 1:18-26, 28
- 13) Jonah 3:2-10
- 14) 2 Chronicles 34:14, 19-21, 23-29, 31
- 15) Psalm 78:31-39
- 16) Psalm 103:1-6, 10-22

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Romans 3
- Matthew 24
- Deuteronomy 28:3-14
- Isaiah 43
- Jonah 2:10
- Jeremiah 18
- 2 Chronicles 33
- Isaiah 1

Also referenced: Sermon Series: *God's Healing*

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