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A Strategy for Political, Social and Spiritual Renewal

THREE IMPORTANT PREMISES:

FIRST PREMISE: *The Bible is an accurate historical text. The Bible is absolutely true. It contains no mistakes and it has no contradictions or inconsistencies. God's Truth is not changed or affected by popular opinion, or the rejection or disbelief by man. The writings of the Old Testament and New Testament are the very Word of God, verbally inspired in all of its parts and without error as originally given by God, as our only infallible rule of faith and conduct. The canon of Scripture was closed with the book of Revelation and we possess today an extremely accurate and reliable text.*

2 Timothy 3:16,17: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."

2 Peter 1:20,21: "... knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."

John 17:17: "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth."

Psalm 19:8: "The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the command of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes."

Psalm 119:9: "How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your Word."

Psalm 119:105: "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."

Psalm 119:130: "The entrance of Your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple."

Romans 1:16: "For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek."

Ephesians 6:17: "And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God ..."

Hebrews 4:12: "For the Word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

John 17:17: [Jesus speaking] "Sanctify them by your truth. Your Word is truth."

I Peter 1:22: "Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart ..."

Deuteronomy 17:19-20: [God's law] "And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God and be careful to observe all the words of this law and these statutes so that his heart may not be lifted above his brethren, that he may not turn aside from the commandment to the right hand or to the left, and that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, and he and his children in the midst of Israel."

Romans 15:4: "For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope."

Mark 12:24: "Jesus answered and said to them, 'Are you not therefore mistaken, because you do not know the Scriptures nor the power of God?'"

Revelation 22:18,19: "For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."

SECOND PREMISE: God does not change. His character, thinking and ways are the same today as they were before the foundation of the world.

Hebrews 13:8: "Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever."

Psalms 33:11: "But the plans of the Lord stand forever, the purposes of His heart through all generations."

Psalms 102:27: "But You [God] remain the same, and Your years will never end."

Psalms 110:4a: "The Lord has sworn and will not change His mind."

Malachi 3:6a: "I the Lord do not change."

THIRD PREMISE: *In applying Biblical principles, it is recognized that the United States of America is NOT Biblical Israel; however, we CAN extract God's clear instruction which DOES apply to us here and now.*

The United States of America is not mentioned by name in the Bible, and there is not even any indirect reference to this land which would eventually be the USA. Many of the specific covenants between God and the Hebrew nation were and remain **exclusively** applicable to the nation of Israel, and it would be incorrect or improper to "spiritualize" such covenants and promises by applying them to other peoples.

Having said that, ***HOWEVER***, what God reveals about Himself, His thinking, His ways, His response and reactions, what pleases Him and what He hates, ***ARE APPLICABLE TO ALL PEOPLES AND ALL GENERATIONS***. Therefore, by extracting those principles from the historical record of the Bible, we unlock the answers for political, social and spiritual renewal for America.

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INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS: If the United States is in need for "renewal" from whence has it come and what is its present condition?

Section One

DESPITE THE REVISIONIST HISTORIANS, AND THE INTENTIONAL DISTORTIONS WE CONFRONT TODAY, AMERICA WAS CONCEIVED AND BORN SOVEREIGNLY AS A CHRISTIAN NATION.

- 1.1 "I believe no one can read the history of our country without realizing that **the Good Book and the Spirit of the Saviour** have from the beginning been our guiding geniuses. ... Whether we look for the first charter of Virginia ... or to the Charter of New England ... or to the Charter of Massachusetts Bay ... or to the fundamental orders of Connecticut ... the same objective is present: **a Christian land governed by Christian principles**. ... I believe the entire Bill of Rights came into being because of the knowledge our forefathers had of **the Bible** and their belief in it: freedom of belief, of expression, of assembly, of petition, the dignity of the individual, the sanctity of the home, equal justice under the law, and the reservation of powers to the people. ... I like to believe we are living today in the spirit of **the Christian religion**. I like also to believe that as long as we do so, no great harm can come to our country."

- Former Chief Justice Earl Warren, addressing the annual prayer breakfast of the International Council of Christian Leadership, 1954.¹

¹ Quoted in Gary DeMar, *America's Christian History: The Untold Story* (Atlanta, Georgia: American Vision, Inc., 1995), 1.

- 1.2 The United States Supreme Court in *Church of the Holy Trinity v. U.S.*, 143 U.S. 457 (1892), declared that America is "a Christian nation."

The U.S. Supreme Court stated, "This is historically true. From the discovery of this continent to the present hour, there is a single voice making this affirmation. ... These are not individual sayings, declarations of private persons: they are organic utterances; they speak the voice of the entire people ... these and many other matters which might be noticed, add a volume of unofficial declarations to the mass of organic utterance that **this is a Christian nation.**" Id. at 458. ²

- 1.3 Three books which give significant detail and thorough documentation of America's Christian heritage are the following:

- A. John Eidsmoe, *Christianity and the Constitution - The Faith of Our Founding Fathers* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House Company [1987] 1998).
- B. Gary DeMar, *America's Christian History: The Untold Story* (Atlanta, GA: American Vision, Inc. [1993] 1995).
- C. David Barton, *Original Intent - The Courts, the Constitution, & Religion* (Aledo, TX: Wallbuilder Press, 1999).

- 1.4 In *America's Christian History: The Untold Story*, Gary DeMar quotes the following portion of the **Mayflower Compact** (p. 56):

"In the Name of God, Amen.

We, whose names are underwritten, the loyal subjects of our dread Sovereign Lord King James, **by the Grace of God** of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, King, Defendant of the Faith, etc.

Having undertaken *for the Glory of God and advancement of the Christian Faith*, and Honour of our King and Country, a Voyage to plant the First Colony in the Northern Parts of Virginia; do by these presents solemnly and mutually *in the presence of God* and one another, Covenant and Combine ourselves together into a Civil Body Politic, for a better ordering and preservation and furtherance of other ends aforesaid, and by virtue hereof do enact, constitute and frame such just and equal Laws, Ordinances, Acts, Constitutions and Offices, from time to time, as shall be thought most meet [suitable] and convenient for the general good of the Colony, unto which we promise all due submission and obedience."

² Quoted in David Barton, *Original Intent: The Courts, the Constitution, & Religion* (Aledo, TX: Wallbuilder Press, 1999), 69.

1.5 Demar quotes from Anson Phelps Stokes and Leo Pfeffer, *Church and States in the United States* (New York: Harper & Roe, 1964), 102-103, "Throughout its history our governments, national and state, have **cooperated with religion and shown friendliness to it. God is invoked in the Declaration of Independence and in practically every state constitution.** Sunday, the Christian's Sabbath, is universally observed as a day of rest. The sessions of Congress and of state legislatures are invariably opened with prayer, in Congress by chaplains who are employed by the Federal government. We have chaplains in our armed forces and in our penal institutions. Oaths in courts of law are administered through use of the Bible. Public officials take an oath of office ending with 'so help me God.' Religious institutions are tax exempt throughout the nation. Our Pledge of Allegiance declares that we are a nation 'under God.' Our national motto is 'In God We Trust,' and is inscribed on our currency and on some of our postage stamps."³ Gary Demar's conclusion of Chapter 3 reads in part as follows: "A survey of all the colonies will lead any student of the era to conclude that they were **founded on religious precepts of Christianity**" (p.61).

1.6 The United States Congress acknowledged that the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution contain principles from the Bible. Congress passed Public Law 97-280 declaring 1983 to be the "Year of the Bible" and the Bill was signed into law by the President of the United States. The said Public Law opened with these words:

"Whereas Biblical teachings inspired concepts of civil government that are contained in our Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States ..." ⁴

³ Quoted in Gary Demar, *America's Christian History: The Untold Story* (Atlanta, GA: American Vision, Inc., 1995), 78.

⁴ Quoted in John Eidsmoe, *Christianity and the Constitution - The Faith of Our Founding Fathers* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House Company 1998), 355.

1.7 **OUR DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE:** Note the use of distinctly religious words throughout the document, including:

"Nature's God" ... "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are **endowed by their Creator** with certain inalienable rights " ... "the Supreme Judge of the World" ... "**a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence.**"

1.8 Declarations of significant historical leaders ⁵

(a) **George Washington:** "... *Let me live according to those Holy Rules which Thou hast this day prescribed in Thy Holy Word ... Direct me to the true object, **Jesus Christ the Way, the Truth and the Life.** Bless, O Lord, all the people of this land.*" - 1752

(b) **John Adams:** "*Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.*" - 1798

(c) **Thomas Jefferson:** "*Can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are the gift of God ?*" - 1781

(d) **John Quincy Adams:** "*No book in the world deserves to be so unceasingly studied, and so profoundly meditated upon as **the Bible.***" - 1812

*"Is it not that the Declaration of Independence first organized the social compact on the Foundation of the Redeemer's mission upon earth? That it laid the cornerstone of human government upon **the first precepts of Christianity.**"* - 1837

(e) **Andrew Jackson:** "*Sir, I am in the hands of a merciful God. I have full confidence in His goodness and mercy ... **The Bible is true** ... I have tried to conform to its spirit as near as possible. Upon that sacred volume I rest my hope for eternal salvation, through the merits and blood of our blessed Lord and Savior, **Jesus Christ.***" - 1845

(f) **Abraham Lincoln:** "*Unless the great God who assisted President Washington, shall be with me and aid me, I must fail. But if the same omniscient mind, and Almighty arm, that directed and protected him, shall guide and support me, I shall not fail ... Let us pray that the God of our fathers may not forsake us now.*" - 1861

(g) **Theodore Roosevelt:** "*In this actual world, a churchless community, a community where men have abandoned and scoffed at, or ignored their religious needs, is a community of rapid down-grade.*" - 1917

⁵ All of these quotes are found on pages 4-6 of the June, 1996 letter of Dr. James Dobson, Focus on the Family, with documentation found in the endnotes on pages 11 and 12 thereof.

- (h) **Woodrow Wilson:** "*America was born a **Christian nation**. America was born to exemplify that devotion to the elements of righteousness which are derived from the Revelations of the Holy Scripture.*" - 1911
- (i) **Calvin Coolidge:** "*They were intent upon establishing a **Christian commonwealth** in accordance with the principle of self-government. They were an inspired body of men. It has been said that God said to the nations that He might send choice grain into the wilderness ... Who can fail to see it in the hand of Destiny? Who can doubt that it has been guide by a Divine Providence ?*" - 1923
- (j) **Dwight D. Eisenhower:** "*Without God there can be no American form of government, nor an American way of life. Recognition of the Supreme Being is the first - the most basic - expression of Americanism. Thus, the founding fathers of America saw it, and thus with God's help, it will continue to be.*" - 1974
- (k) **Ronald Reagan:** "*A frustrating thing is that those who are attacking religion claim they are doing it in the name of tolerance, freedom and open-mindedness. Question: Isn't the real truth that they are intolerant of religion? They refuse to tolerate its importance in our lives.*" - 1984

[In the same letter, Dr. Dobson identified the specific mechanisms that secularists have devised in their goal to immobilize and silence Christians:

- [1] Deny our Judeo-Christian roots and rewrite America's historical record.
- [2] Convince the American people that Christians, specifically conservatives, are in violation of the Constitution whenever they advocate their view beyond the front doors of their churches.
- [3] Christian-bashing, employing every effort to embarrass, insult, shout down and mischaracterize Christians, hoping to intimidate them and to silence and to marginalize or demoralize traditional views. (pp.7)

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THE PRACTICAL CALL TO ACTION

Fact: The United States was founded upon Christian principles.

Fact: The Founders never intended the U.S. Constitution to be used as a club *against Christianity or the Bible.*

Fact: There is a concerted effort today to distort the truth by dishonest revisionists in the fields of history and education ... **BUT...**

Even though these things are true, there is not enough time and there are not enough resources to force anyone to accept or believe that the above facts are true. Instead we need to press on to achieve political, social and spiritual renewal as a goal, and the

correction of those distortions will then result as a by-product. Furthermore (and I say this respectfully), the following principles pre-date the founding of America and are established as true regardless of any public opinion poll of any description. [Romans 3:3-4, "For what if some did not believe? Will their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect? Certainly not! Indeed, let God be true and every man a liar."]

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SECTION TWO

WHAT IS THE "STATE OF THE UNION" IN THE YEAR 2001?

2.1 This is NOT positive "evolution" :

- a. Declining morality
- b. Declining integrity
- c. Declining responsibility
- d. Declining respect for authority
- e. Declining commitment in marriage
- f. Declining quality of parenting
- g. Declining family stability
- h. Declining quality of education
- i. Declining patriotism
- j. Declining work ethic
- k. Declining character, strength and vision of leaders
- l. Declining willingness of self-sacrifice
- m. Declining value of human life
- n. Declining influence of churches, ministers and pastors
- o. The terrorism of "political correctness"
- p. The militant intolerance of special interests which demand and permit tolerance of only their opinions and positions.

2.2 See Robert H. Bork, *Slouching Toward Gomorrah: Modern Liberalism and American Decline* (New York, NY: Harper Collins Publishers, Inc., 1996; and Erwin W. Lutzer, *Exploding the Myths that Could Destroy America*.

2.3 Within the legal profession, there are now continuing legal education seminars entitled, "How to Deal with the S.O.B. Lawyer." Also, there are regular admonitions from judges and bar associations for lawyers to start being "civil" to one another. The American Bar Association conducted a seminar on using Tort Law Against Religions, including workshops on "Liability of Clergy as Spiritual Counselors," "Liability of Religious Bodies and Affiliated Entities," and "Tort Law as an Ideological Weapon." ⁶

⁶ [NOTE: For a national bar association that does NOT have a political and ideological agenda as the ABA does, check out the NATIONAL LAWYERS

2.4 Courts are becoming increasingly hostile to religion.

2.5 Charles Krauthammer, "Today's Moral Deregulation," *The American Legion* (March, 1995), 32-33, 55-56. Note these comments by a secular author:

"Traditional notions of behavior have been turned upside down so that deviancy is now normal ... and normalcy is deviant. On a memorable 1993 essay for *American Scholar* entitled "Defining Deviancy Down," Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan offered a compelling view of the epidemic of criminality, family breakdown and mental illness that has come to characterize latter-day American society. Deviancy has reached such incomprehensible proportions, argued Moynihan, that we have had to adopt a singular form of denial: we deal with the epidemic simply by defining a way most of the disease. For example, single parenthood has more than tripled since 1960. Yet as the problem has grown, it has been recast as just another lifestyle choice." Dan Quayle may have been right, but Murphy Brown won the ratings war). We have also become accustomed to levels of crime that were considered intolerable thirty years ago. Homicide these days is viewed as an ineradicable part of the social landscape, much like car accidents. Or consider mental illness. In 1955, New York State asylums had 93,000 patients. Last year they had 11,000. In one generation, a flood of pathetically ill people has washed onto the streets of America's cities, also becoming accepted as part of the natural landscape. We have managed to redefine them as people who simply lack affordable housing. Moynihan's powerful point was that the 'moral deregulation' of the 1960s cause an explosion of deviancy in almost all areas of public and private life. And we have dealt with it in the only way possible: by making 'normal' what a more civilized and healthy society would long ago have labeled - and long ago *did* label - deviant. Moynihan was right. But that is only half the story. There is a complimentary social phenomenon that goes with defining deviancy down. In the vast project of social leveling now being undertaken with such zeal by social workers, intellectuals and the mass media, it is not enough for the deviant to be normalized. The normal must also be found to be deviant. By doing so, the image-shapers noted above can strip the life of the bourgeois West of its respectability and normal shame. Therefore, why the bar defining normality has been lowered for the criminal and the crazies, the bar defining normality has been *raised* for the ordinary citizen."

2.6 "The New School Prayer" (author unknown)

"Now I sit me down in school
Where praying is against the rule.
For this great nation under God

Finds mention of Him very odd.
 If Scripture now the class recites,
 It violates the Bill of Rights.
 And anytime my head I bow
 Becomes a federal matter now.
 Our hair can be purple or orange or green,
 That's no offense, it's the freedom scene.
 The law is specific, the law is precise,
 Prayers spoken aloud are a serious vice.
 For praying in a public hall
 Might offend someone with no faith at all.
 In silence alone we must meditate,
 God's name is prohibited by the State.
 We're allowed to cuss & dress like freaks,
 And pierce our noses, tongues & cheeks.
 They've outlawed guns; but FIRST the Bible.
 To quote the Good Book makes me liable.
 We can elect a pregnant Senior Queen,
 And the unwed daddy, our Senior King.
 It's 'inappropriate' to teach right from wrong,
 We're taught that such 'judgments' do not belong.
 We can get our condoms, & birth controls,
 Study witchcraft, vampires & totem poles.
 But the Ten Commandments are not allowed,
 No Word of God must reach this crowd.
 It's scary here I must confess,
 When chaos reigns, the school's a mess.
 So, Lord, this silent plea I make:
 Should I be shot,
 My soul please take."

- 2.7 **Erosion of the Family.** The November, 1999 "Family News from Dr. James Dobson, Focus on the Family, included the following quote from David Popenoe and Barbara Dafoe Whitehead, "The State of Our Union: the Social Health of Marriage in America," The National Marriage Project, Rutgers University, 1999, p.2. (to access the report via the Internet, please see <http://marriage.rutgers.edu>): "Key social indicators suggest a substantial weakening in the institution of marriage. Americans have become less likely to marry. When they do marry, their marriages are less happy. And married couples face a high likelihood of divorce. Over the past four decades marriage has declined as the first living together experience for couples and as a status of parenthood. Unmarried cohabitation and unwed births have grown enormously, and so has the percentage of children who grow up in fragile families."
- 2.8 **Education.** (a) The slide in academic achievement in America was summarized in the April, 1998 "Family News from Dr. James Dobson," it showed how the United States spends more on public education, but has fewer school days per

year, and is near the bottom of advanced countries in mathematics literacy, science literacy, advanced mathematics and advanced physics. Rather than improve education, we throw more money at it. Dr. Dobson cites two conclusions about our schools:

[1] traditional curricula (English, math, science, reading and writing) has been replaced by politically correct ideology and untested revolutionary ideas, and

[2] a powerful educational monopoly has gained control of today's public schools and is shaping them to fit its liberal, self-serving agenda. (The U.S. Department of Education along with the National Education Association and the American Federation of Teachers).

The paper quoted columnist John Leo: "Schools are flooded with progressive experiments and social agendas that either go down in flames or crowd out actual learning - cooperative learning, the politics of identity, outcome-based education, history as group therapy. An emphasis on egalitarianism in the classroom often has strange effects, making some teachers suspicious of achievement in any knowledge that 'contributes to inequality.' Some teachers now refer to themselves as 'facilitators' because they believe 'teaching' is an expression of dominance," and he summarizes that Charles Sykes, author of *Dumbing Down Our Kids: Why American Children Feel Good About Themselves But Can't Read, Write Or Add*, "charges that schools are obsessed with students' self-esteem, which in turn makes teachers afraid to demand high performance. It leads them to ignore spelling errors or grammatical mistakes for fear of damaging students. Academic content is watered down to avoid creating stress in the classroom." ... "Traditional subject matter has been invaded by the radical environmental movement."

[The American Association of Educators is a Christian alternative to the NEA and other unions: 26012 Marguerite Parkway, Suite 333, Mission Viejo, CA 92692].

(b) In his May 3, 2000 article, "Education Excellence Is Possible," Walter Williams (Creator's Syndicate, Inc.) stated, "According to a March 17 [2000 *Los Angeles Times*] story written by education reporter Richard Lee Colvin, sixty percent of Los Angeles' eighth-graders do not know their multiplication tables. Education rot like this is common in large cities across America, but it doesn't have to be that way."

2.9 Declining impact of churches.

(a) In his September, 2000 letter, D. James Kennedy, Ph.D., made the following observations and conclusions: "When were you last *entertained* in church - but not *fed*? When was the last time you attended a church service as a visitor, expecting to discover new personal meaning from God's Word - only to leave with a fuzzy, confused feeling, with no new wisdom you could apply to your life? I must now report the same dismal news ... the evangelical pulpits of

America are experiencing a disheartening trend of delivering *too little solid preaching and teaching* to their congregations. I have a term for this malady affecting Christians in America: 'Church-light.' ... A number of congregations where the messages 'tickle ears' instead of inspiring conviction, faith, and obedience ... the hard truth is that without mature Christians leading the way and discipling all of these new believers, we may be just one generation away from apostasy and darkness - How will we provide the means of spiritual growth for the newly converted if we do not *preach* the whole Bible with all its fundamental truths and applications? ... It is imperative that we train and encourage all Christians toward spiritual maturity - we must not sustain *perpetual infancy* ! ... Just look at the spiritual and moral decay of our country. *There is a critical need for strong churches and for believers across the country who are spiritually mature.*"

(b) In the May, 2000 special issue of "Prophecy Today," Mike Wingfield, in his article entitled "The Death of America," includes the following quote from a recent article in *World*, "Doing Without Marriage," April 29, 2000, p.25 (at pp.6-7): "Across Europe, in both Protestant and Catholic countries, Christianity has become reduced to a historical curiosity and a tourist attraction. Certainly there are many vital Christians in these nations and their religious heritage still makes itself present, but on the whole the Christian influence on the present-day culture has all but disappeared ... The Netherlands was once staunchly Calvinistic, a nation that only a century ago elected the conservative theologian and social reformer Abraham Kuyper to be its head of state. Today amidst the tulips and historic churches, legal prostitutes sell themselves in public, drugs are sold out of boutiques, and the sick and elderly are actively and legally euthanized ... In the Scandinavian countries of Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Iceland, it became socially acceptable decades ago for couples to live together without being married. When they started having children, then and only then would they get married. But now, they are not even bothering to do that ... Traditional family values have become like fossils."

(c) As a part of "dumbing down" church congregations and seeking to "tickle the ears" of the congregation, rather than provide solid teaching, exhortation and preaching, the worldly tactic of **changing the terms and re-defining words**. Be careful of the use of terms **against** the person trying to resist compromise and heresy and who disagrees with a "slide" away from solid positions.

SECTION THREE

CAUSES FOR DECAY AND DECLINE OF SOCIETIES AND GOVERNMENTS: THE HISTORICAL RECORD FROM THE BIBLE

[The individual causes for the downfall of a society are numbered in brackets ("[]"). When you see "[*]" that means that it is a cause, but it has been previously noted in this Section Three.]

The Bible warns that if a nation falls into immorality, judgment and destruction will follow.

Proverbs 14:34, *"Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people."*

Proverbs 11:11, *"By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted, but it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked."*

Proverbs 10:27-30, *"The fear of the Lord prolongs days, but the years of the wicked shall be shortened. The hope of the righteous shall be gladness, but the expectation of the wicked shall perish. The way of the Lord is strength to the upright, but destruction shall be to the workers of iniquity. The righteous shall never be removed, but the wicked shall not inhabit the earth."*

Jeremiah 5:7-9, *"[Israel] then committed adultery, and assembled themselves by troops in the harlots' houses. They were like fed horses in the morning. Everyone neighed after his neighbor's wife. Shall I not punish for these things? says the Lord. And shall not My soul be avenged on such a nation as this?"*

LEARNING FROM BIBLE HISTORY

THE LIST OF ITEMS NOTED WHICH LED TO DECLINE, DOWNFALL, DESTRUCTION AND JUDGMENT

- [1] Great wickedness
- [2] Evil thoughts
- [3] Corruption of the earth
- [4] Violence
- [5] Corruption of the flesh
- [6] Failing to listen to judges
- [7] Worship of other gods (idols)
- [8] Turning from their fathers' way
- [9] Disobeying God's commandments
- [10] Continuing in their own ways
- [11] Continuing to be stubborn
- [12] Evil acts
- [13] Turning to other gods
- [14] Unkind to benefactors
- [15] Doing what is right in your own eyes
- [16] Being foolish
- [17] Seeking luxury and success
- [18] Immorality
- [19] Lazy, seeking comfort for self
- [20] Lust, adultery in the heart, disloyalty, full-blown adultery, deceit, crime, hard-hearted
- [21] Compromise and disobedience
- [22] Condoning sin
- [23] Self-centeredness
- [24] Lack of gratitude
- [25] Rejection of wise counsel
- [26] Self-preservation
- [27] Rejection of God's Word and God's Ways
- [28] Sinning against God
- [29] Following other religions
- [30] Secretly doing wrong
- [31] Stiff-necked
- [32] Not trusting the Lord
- [33] Rejecting the decrees of the Lord
- [34] Rejecting the covenant of the Lord
- [35] Rejecting the warnings of the Lord
- [36] Worthless
- [37] Forsaking the commands of the Lord
- [38] Sacrificing sons and daughters
- [39] Practicing divination and sorcery
- [40] Enticing others away from the Lord
- [41] Continuing to serve other gods

- [42] Failure to worship the Lord
- [43] Arrogance
- [44] Indulging in abundant food
- [45] Careless ease
- [46] Offering no help to the poor and needy
- [47] Haughty
- [48] Committing abominations before the Lord
- [49] Stupid
- [50] Failure to seek the Lord
- [51] Trusting in man
- [52] Trusting in own strength
- [53] Turning heart from the Lord
- [54] Arrogance
- [55] Pride
- [56] Self-exaltation
- [57] Ease
- [58] Security
- [59] Repudiating God's love
- [60] Refusing to honor God
- [61] Rejecting God's faithfulness
- [62] Redefining God's righteousness
- [63] Robbing God's riches
- [64] Reviling God's grace

3.1 THE PEOPLE AT THE TIME OF NOAH

- A. **Background.** After the human race multiplied, society became very wicked as shown in Genesis 5:5-7, 11-12, "Then the Lord saw the [1] wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that [2] every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. So the Lord said, 'I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them.' ... The earth [3] also was corrupt before God, and the earth was [4] filled with violence. So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for [5] all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth."
- B. Note in contrast what was pleasing to the Lord and led to the Lord's specific intervention to save Noah and his family, Genesis 6:8,9b, "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord ... Noah was a just man, perfect in his generation."

3.2 THE CYCLES OF DOWNFALL AT THE TIME OF THE JUDGES (1398 to 1043 B.C.)

The causes of the downfall of their society, as summarized in Judges 2:17-19:

[6] "Yet they would not listen to their judges (2:17)."

[7] "But they played the harlot with other gods and bowed down to them (2:17)."

[8] "They turned quickly from the way in which their fathers walked (2:17)."

[9] [They turned from] "obeying the commandments of the Lord; they did not do so." (2:17)

[10] "They did not cease from *their own doings* ..." (2:19)

[11] [They did not cease] "from their stubborn way" (2:19).

NOTE, With each cycle there was a downfall in society in the span of only one generation, e.g.:

(a) Othniel (2:7), [12] "So the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord. [13] They forgot the Lord their God and served (other gods)."

(b) Ehud (3:12), "And the children of Israel again [*] did evil in the sight of the Lord."

(c) Deborah (4:1), "The children of Israel again [*] did evil in the sight of the Lord."

(d) Gideon (8:33), "So it was, as soon as Gideon was dead, the children of Israel again [*] played the harlot with the Baals and made Baal-Berith their god. Thus the children of Israel [*] did not remember the Lord their God who had delivered them from the hands of all their enemies on every side; [14] nor did they show kindness to the house of Gideon in accordance with the good he had done for Israel."

And the Book of Judges is summarized in 21:25, [15] "... everyone did what was right in his own eyes."

3.3 KING SAUL (1052-1022 B.C.)

A. **God's clear statements of His requirements.** Samuel addressing the people at Saul's coronation (1 Samuel 12:13-16), "Now therefore, here is the king whom you have chosen and whom you have desired. And take note, the Lord has set a king over you. ***IF*** you fear the Lord and serve Him and obey His voice, and do not rebel against the commandment of the Lord, then both you and the king who reigns

over you will continue following the Lord your God. *However, IF you do not* obey the voice of the Lord, but rebel against the commandment of the Lord, THEN the hand of the Lord will be against you, as it was against your fathers."

B. Saul's decline. King Saul openly and directly defied God by offering a sacrifice himself in disobedience of the commandment of God (1 Samuel 13:12). [Saul did not have the faith to wait, wrongly exercised the priest's role, and he totally excluded God's rule].

(1 Samuel 13:13) "And Samuel said to Saul, [16] 'You have done foolishly. [*] You have not kept the commandment of the Lord your God, which He commanded you. For now the Lord would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. But now your kingdom shall not continue. The Lord has sought for Himself a man after His own heart, and the Lord has commanded him to be commander over His people because you have not kept what the Lord commanded you.'"

3.4 KING DAVID (1011-971 B.C.)

A. Background. After David became King over all of Israel, and after he had conquered Jerusalem (2 Samuel 5:10f), "So David went on and became great and the Lord God of Hosts was with him." Everything seemed fine politically and spiritually, and David even had specific knowledge of his destiny before God and in God's purposes through him: "So David knew that the Lord had established him as king over Israel and that He had exalted his kingdom for the sake of His people." (2 Samuel 5:12).

B. Causes of Decline. [17] the awful effects of luxury and success (2 Samuel 5:11b, "They built David a house ..."). [18] David's beginning slide into immorality (2 Samuel 5:13, "And David took more concubines and wives from Jerusalem." [those effects are then seen in the egregious sins recorded in Chapter 11, including the adultery with Bathsheba and the murder of Uriah].

[19] King David became lazy and sought comfort for himself rather than sacrificial leadership (2 Samuel 11:1, "At the time when kings go out to battle ... that David sent Joab ... but David remained in Jerusalem.") The compromise in morality and the self-indulgence provided fertile soil for the full expression of David's rejection of God's ways and the progression of his sins.

[20] Immorality. Bathsheba was married to one of David's "mighty men" (23:39), and Bathsheba was a daughter of one of David's other mighty men (11:3 and 23:33), and she was the granddaughter of one of David's counselors, Ahithophel. First, David sinned with his eyes (lust) as he watched beautiful Bathsheba bathe (11:2). Second, knowing that it would constitute adultery, he intentionally pursued Bathsheba (11:3). Third, David was disloyal. It no longer mattered to him what the effect would be on others. Fourth, the active, full blown sin of adultery was committed (11:4). Fifth, was a plot to cover up the sin (11:6