

The Separatist Review

Vol. 1 No. 4

©The Separatist Trust, 1983

November, 1983

THE SIGNPOSTS OF NATIONAL REPROBATION

PART I

by Rev. James W. Stivers

Without question, ours is a heyday for the prophet. People are anxious concerning the future and are ready to part with large quantities of money on books, tapes, conferences, and private counsel that produce any kind of prognostication. (By the way, this Review came to you free of charge). Many are turning to the occult; others look to the state; and some seek various religious groups. There are many conflicting voices out there, causing one to wonder if we live in a day of the Tower of Babel revisited.

I came to the conclusion some years ago that if I wanted to know what was going to happen next I had better find out who makes things happen. Now, some people like to analyze conspiracies and formulate scenarios based upon their activities. Others follow the innuendo and shift in policy among public officials. Still others analyze the results of public surveys. Do you know why? Because many people think that men make history; they study the works and intentions of men. But in my estimation, God is the mover in history. I decided to find out what God was going to do next, because He is the one that makes things happen.

Now, do not misunderstand me. I am not saying that useful information cannot be obtained by reading the newspapers and studying statistics. What I am saying is that such information does not carry any decisive weight in determining my scenario of the future. I believe in Divine Providence and that God has a purpose to accomplish in human history. I believe that He governs in the affairs of men and *that the Bible is the only infallible reference to know how God governs*. Arbitrary prophetic models do not interest me. What is important is knowing God's character. It is important to know the pattern of God's government in the earth. And the Bible is the only place one can find the answer.

The Bible clearly teaches that God is a Judge in history and the end of history. He judges men individually and collectively. In fact, the Bible discusses the judgment of nations more than the judgment of individuals. As each generation goes by, the Lord passes through the earth and inspects the new harvest among the nations. If a people bear bad fruit, He sends them war, pestilence, and famine. If a people bear good fruit, He sends them peace and prosperity. He will uproot and replant, sow and harvest, gather the wheat and burn the tares, until He is satisfied with His work so that "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." (Habakkuk 2:14)

It is my belief that a new time of harvesting has arrived in this generation. This is evidenced by an epistemological self-consciousness on the part of men. Men and nations are reaching an ideological maturity. They know why they have chosen to be sinners. Likewise, the Christians are coming to understand the fundamental issues at stake. The seeds sown by missionaries over the past two centuries are beginning to mature. The harvest of the good grain is about complete. Now come the grapes of wrath. Unlike many, I believe the harvest through evangelism in this generation is nearly complete. God is beginning to separate His remnant from the ungodly. A time of fiery wrath is upon us.

An example of God's judgment in history is presented in His dealings with ancient Israel. In the book of Judges, we find the monotony of the blessing-cursing cycle. Righteousness led to material prosperity, which in turn, led to pride and apostasy, then judgment, repentance, and finally restoration. There was little stability in the spiritual commitment of Israel. Yahweh was forced, on numerous occasions, to discipline His children.

However, it appears that from the time of Moses' death on, God knew that Israel, as an ethnic group, would not fulfill His purpose in the earth. He decided that He would eventually have to drive Israel out of the land He was about to give them (Deuteronomy 31:17, 27). God did not expect much out of Israel. If they were wicked in the presence of Moses, how much more after his death! The mission of the Incarnation and the Atonement began to loom with greater urgency. Yet, God was not through using Israel; for it would be the springboard of His global conquest through Christ's Church.

The purpose of this study is very practical and relevant. America stands in the "valley of decision" and faces divine judgment. America has fallen from the holy calling of our forebears. Her mission work and leaven among the nations may be nearly complete. Observing our apostasy, is God obliged to preserve this empire we call the United States of America? That is the concern of these articles. We seek to know when and upon what conditions God seals a nation for judgment, the point of no return. Our only source for such counsel lies in the Holy Scriptures, and specifically, the experience of ancient Israel. America, like ancient Israel, is a covenant nation. God will not judge this nation like He does the heathen. He will judge us like He judges all covenant nations: with the wrath of the jealous husband.

In Jeremiah 3:8 we find that God has divorced Israel to send them into exile. In Jeremiah 7:14 God rejects the City of Jerusalem as the City of the Great King. He removes His presence, never to return until the Pentecost found in Acts 2 that ushers in the New Covenant. Even then, the temple is rejected. God's new temple has become the bodies of His people (2 Corinthians 6:16). His new Jerusalem had become the Church Triumphant (Galatians 4:21).

The removal of God's presence from Jerusalem in Ezekiel 10 (contemporary of Jeremiah) seals it for judgment. Yahweh's protective covering is removed. He will no longer treat them as sons but destroy them as enemies. "To whom much is given, much shall be required." The end was imminent.

Upon what circumstances will God seal a nation for judgment? At that point where it is incapable of responding to grace. When the people have developed such a propensity to sin that they have virtually destroyed their moral agency, it is then that they have become irredeemable -- reprobate.

There is a period of time during a nation's apostasy when the prayers of the righteous are efficacious for the nation in saving it from wrath collectively (Ezekiel 22:30). Restoration to God's favor begins only as the nation follows-up its prayers by turning from its wickedness (2 Chronicles 7:14). However, if the righteous are too few and too weak, such that they cannot take possession of the nation's governing institutions, it is too late. Their prayers for the nation will be futile. They will only be able to save themselves (Ezekiel 14:12-23).

The prophet Ezekiel prophesied in captivity during the time Jeremiah was prophesying in Jerusalem. In Ezekiel 22 we find the following indictment announced against Jerusalem, which seals it for judgment:

First, a catalogue of iniquities condoned by public policy:

- 1) Bloodshed (murder) -- public policy does not punish the guilty (in our day this would include the practice of abortion), vs. 3,4
- 2) Idolatry -- the making of persons or things objects of worship or veneration (includes cultism and witchcraft), vs.3,4
- 3) Corruption among public officials to secure and maintain their powers without regard to human oppression-- tyranny and conspiracy, vs. 6,25
- 4) Contempt for parental authority by children and the state-- dissolution of family government, vs. 7
- 5) Oppression of foreigners, orphans, widows, and the poor -- oppressive tax and inheritance laws, etc., vs. 7
- 6) Criminal abuse and distortion of the money-credit system (inflation), vs. 12
- 7) Slander -- envy in the form of gossip: abusing the reputation of others, vs. 9
- 8) Ignoring the sanctity of God's Name, vs. 8 and Hosea 4:2
- 9) Ignoring the purpose and sanctity of the Sabbath, vs. 8
- 10) Incest and other sexual perversions left unpunished, vs. 9-11
- 11) Bribery for murder -- organized crime, vs. 12
- 12) Adultery (including unlawful divorce), vs. 11 and Hosea 4:2
- 13) No fear of God but of man and nature; the sovereignty of God forgotten, see also Hosea 4:1-3.

A nation becomes guilty of the above crimes in the collective sense when it no longer effectively punishes them through its criminal-justice system or fails to at least restrain them through social custom (read carefully Deuteronomy 13:12-16; 21:1-9; 27:26).

America has become guilty of all the above crimes in the collective sense. It no longer punishes sin but often condones it.

Second, the institutional church is no longer controlled by the godly but by antinomian pastors who reject the covenant and Biblical law, vs. 26.

Third, the institutional church no longer raises its voice to cry against wickedness. A rise in pluralistic neutrality among prominent clergymen blinds them to national crimes, vs. 28.

Fourth, the knowledge of redeeming the nation and restoring it back to righteousness is either unknown or too difficult to find--caused by the ignorance of God's law through false theologies. Church education ignores Biblical law, Jeremiah 5:4,5 and Hosea 4:6.

Fifth, the godly are poorly taught in God's word and are ignorant in the means of saving the nation, see Amos 8:10-12.

Sixth, ignorance and prejudice bring the ostracization of the wise and the rejection of their counsel by the church and society, Hosea 9:7 and Matthew 23:29-31; 2 Timothy 4:3,4.

And seventh, the church and society credit their suffering to a cause other than their moral failure and rejection of God's law, Jeremiah 44:15-19.

When such conditions as cited here occur in a nation, its end is near. Such was the experience of ancient Israel; and such is the experience of all nations that forget God.

In America, we see these conditions recurring. Wickedness fills the land. America's justice system has broken down, permitting anarchy and misrule. The murdering of unborn children has climbed to many millions. Divorce and sexual perversion (as evidenced by epidemic levels of venereal disease) far exceed in popular appeal than marriage and family living. Even idolatry fills the land as multitudes worship the stars (astrology), witchcraft, cults, and various media created fads.

All of these evils would not be fatal if the institutional church had some redeeming value. But it is the church which often crusades for these perversions. Our churches are full of wickedness and antinomian ministers who refuse to expel their offending members.

Even among the faithful, false theologies have led them away from the truth--the source of our redemption as a people. Because of such ignorance, the multitudes vainly wander about, seeking the remedy to their wounds. They look to economic models; they look to political parties. They follow this leader and that one. They are tossed about, to and fro, and never finding the truth. They seem never to understand that the source of their trouble has been their rejection of God's Royal Precepts. Such a people is doomed to perish.

The calamity which fell upon Israel was famine and disease, torture and death, brutality, madness and exile-- a dear price to pay for departing from the way of righteousness. Their military defenses were futile; their captors were unmerciful. America faces such a calamity today.

One final sin committed by Israel was its final hedonistic plunge while the city was under siege:

The Lord, the Lord Almighty, called you on that day to weep and to wail, to tear out your hair and put on sackcloth. But see, there is joy and revelry, slaughtering of cattle and killing of sheep, eating of meat and drinking of wine! "Let us eat and drink," you say, "for tomorrow we

die!" The Lord Almighty has revealed this in my hearing: "Till your dying day this sin will not be atoned for," says the Lord, the Lord Almighty.
(Isaiah 22:12-14 NIV)

God promised that there would be no forgiveness because of this sin.

America stands very close to this danger point. As her enemies continue to isolate and surround her, America prefers to party and play instead of fast and pray. What can be done now to secure the aid of Heaven? It appears to be too late to save the nation.

To the Christian Patriot, such a statement cuts to the heart. Those of us who are familiar with America's heritage are deeply grieved at the thought that this nation may indeed perish. Perhaps, the greatest opportunity yet to establish God's Kingdom in the earth was just a century and a half ago when revivals and reformations filled the land. America's burgeoning leadership role and her Christian heritage provided her with a unique opportunity to be a Kingdom builder. Her gigantic missionary accomplishments evidenced that potential. Her failure and subsequent apostasy has led some to wonder if the Kingdom message should be taken to another country, perhaps in Asia or South America. It may be that God has abandoned America and, like the abandonment of Israel, will give the Kingdom to another nation that will bear the fruits thereof.

That is a perplexing proposition and one that cannot easily be answered. However, God has been raising up Christian reconstructionists throughout the world, especially America. Such Christians are becoming actively involved in social and political issues within the United States, which should offer a sincere hope for a reconstruction of our society. But it is still too early to tell for certain if this is just a gathering of a remnant or the beginning of a great, religious awakening.

The other bright star arising is the Christian school movement within the fundamentalist churches that may soon provide a new breed of Americans and intellectual elite. Presently, the movement lacks a sense of direction except as an "escape hatch" out of the public school system. This disorientation may be in part due to the suddenness of its appearance and also in part to the lack of leadership from Christian theologians. I believe the Church's lack of a kingdom and dominion message has left it largely impotent to contribute a meaningful leadership role.

Christian schools face severe opposition from bureaucratic agencies dominated by humanists. They understand the significance of the movement-- that it will destroy any hopes for an atheistic and socialistic, global community. If the present Administration in Washington fails to establish Christian schools on equal but separate footing with the state schools, we may be in deep trouble. Already, parents in some cases have lost custody of their children for refusing to send their children to be indoctrinated in statist schools. Ministers have been incarcerated for refusing state licenses. If the humanists ever regain control of our federal bureaucracy, we will face the unfortunate alternative of capitulation, resistance, or emigration to a more favorable country. I do not think we have past the 1984 elections to settle this issue.

In our quest for the triumph of God's Kingdom on Earth, a matured idealism must be sought. We live in a period of cultural retrogression. Christian civilization has lost its hold on humanity. The immediate future does not look bright. We cannot indulge the hope of a soon triumph of God's Kingdom. What we need are Christian reconstructionists who have their "sights" set on the long-range goal. We need those who are willing to roll up their sleeves and work toward a goal they may not live to see accomplished. In short, we need a generation of Christians willing to die so that a future generation of Christians might live.

The Separatist Review is published monthly, as funds permit, under the auspices of the Separatist Trust. Each issue is mailed free of charge to those who ask to be put on the mailing list. Address: P.O. Box 615, Riverton, Wyoming 82501. Donations are tax deductible; checks should be made out to the Separatist Trust.

The Separatist Review

Vol 1 No. 5

©The Separatist Trust, 1983

May, 1984

THE SIGNPOSTS OF NATIONAL REPROBATION PART II

by Rev. James W. Stivers

Because the United States is a Covenant nation before God, not only in its origins, but also in the ethnic constitution of its people (the European peoples were at one time known as "Christendom"). I believe that God will judge us differently than other nations. He has already judged Europe with two World Wars and various economic disasters; Europe has not repented. Will America follow Europe's lead toward apostasy, or will she repent? The Old Testament accounts of Israel and Judah provide striking similarities to the present crisis. A careful student of prophecy will not overlook their applicability. God will judge America as He does all Covenant nations, with the wrath of a jealous husband.

It is my belief that God's judgment of America will result in a godly remnant that will be able to take effective control of a part of this continent, at least. But that will only be made possible after large numbers of pagan Americans are physically removed or made culturally impotent. This will require a separation of the righteous from the wicked, permitting the unmingled execution of God's wrath upon them. God's people, the righteous, are promised protection from God's wrath (1 Thessalonians 5:9).

Some theologians have supposed that the only possible and safe method for separation of the godly from the wicked is their physical removal from the earth; hence, the pre-tribulation rapture theory has arisen. The faultiness of this theory (as it pertains to this subject, anyway) is plainly this: it sees God as a bumbler, indiscriminately punishing the righteous for the sins of the wicked. It perceives Him as incompetent or indifferent to the appropriate enforcement of moral law. The Scriptures contradict the viewpoint that God cannot protect the righteous in history and on Earth. As 2 Peter 2:9 reads:

(If this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment, while continuing their punishment. (NIV))

— Examples cited by Peter in this chapter of God's protection of His people from His wrath were those of Noah and Lot. God has shielded His people before; He can do it again. (See John 17:15).

The examples of God's deliverance of Noah and Lot lead us to this point: there is no cataclysmic sign to warn (in time enough to prepare) of God's impending judgment. As Jesus said to His disciples in Luke 17:26-30:

Just as it was in the days of Noah, so also will it be in the days of the Son of Man. People were eating, drinking, marrying and being given in marriage up to the day Noah entered the ark. Then the flood came and destroyed them all.

It will be just like this on the day the Son of Man is revealed. (NIV-emphasis added)

There is no sign for the wicked, except the ethical and physical separation of the righteous from the wicked. According to Church History, because the Early Church heeded Christ's command in Matthew 24 (in Mark and Luke, also) to flee the regions of Jerusalem when the "Abomination of Desolation" appeared, their lives were preserved from the horrors of its siege and destruction by the Romans in 70 A.D. In fact, this is what Paul was saying when he predicted the fall of Jerusalem (2 Thessalonians 2:1-12). Antichrist, the Roman Caesar (Titus), would not be known as such until he entered the temple of Jerusalem and profaned it. But he was restrained (by God) until the Christians left the city. The day the Christians left Jerusalem was the day its doom was sealed. Morat if a godly man grows angry because of sin and leaves an institution because of it. If you are smart, you will go with him.

An appropriate question arises: how do the righteous know when it is time to go? Does it have something to do with this "Abomination of Desolation"? If so, what is it?

As R.J. Rushdoony has pointed out, the temple was profaned by the Jews themselves before the Romans ever did. (*Thy Kingdom Come*, Thoburn Press, Fairfax, Virginia, 1978, pg. 238, 239). In his commentary on Matthew 24, he says:

The desecration and destruction of the temple is immediately brought to the Jewish mind by verse 15. The reference to Daniel does not mean that Daniel's prophecy was fulfilled before the time of Christ, and is described in 1 Ma. 1:20-68. This desolation is analogous to the earlier one. In this instance, however, the desecration took place during the Jewish War, under the instance of the Zealots themselves, as Josephus makes clear. Thus, the desolation which preceded the fall of the temple (v.2), was in this instance Jewish. The Jews, having crucified the Lord of Glory, thought nothing, finally, of defiling the temple in their self-defense. The desolation of the temple, made possible by the Zealots who admitted the Idumeans into the sanctuary, as a result of which 8,500 men were slain, took place BEFORE the siege of Jerusalem by Titus. Thus, Jesus gave this event as a sign to the Christians that the nation was finished, and they must flee. The advice of these verses, therefore, is for believers, who, trusting their Lord, will flee when His Prophecy comes to pass.

This was how the Christians knew it was time to leave. The Jews had been worthy of destruction up to this time; but to profane their own sacred temple, without a qualm of conscience, proved that they were reprobate indeed. This was the "Abomination of Desolation", when the people of God profaned their own temple.

God does not let His people passively enjoy His protection. They demonstrate their worthiness by their grief and hatred toward sin. There is no room for luke-warmness. You must be either hot or cold. If you want to be God's chosen, His Elect, then you must obey His

commands concerning separation from sin and sinners (2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1). As Revelation 18:4,5 warns:

Then I heard another voice from Heaven say "Come of her my people, so that you will not share in her sins, so that you will not receive any of her plagues, for her sins are piled up to heaven, and God has remembered her crimes." (NIV)

This passage is a warning to flee Babylon, the Biblical symbol of antichrist powers. The true signs of imminent judgment have to do with the ethical separation of the righteous, and then, because of persecution, their physical separation. This is the pattern established Biblically.

The scenario of God's judgment upon America. I expect to be something like this although the United States are past redemption as a nation, because we are also a covenant of nations (states via U.S. Constitution) and in some cases, a covenant of provinces (counties via state constitutions). God will judge us by governmental unit (civil, church, family, etc.). This form of judgment does not necessarily preclude a nationwide judgment simultaneously (such as nuclear war), but it does offer the hope that isolated townships, counties, and even states (perhaps) will escape God's wrath. What this means is that God will separate His people from the wicked before He pours out His wrath.

This separation first requires an ethical separation. God will first give those who profess to be His people an opportunity to repent. He will "mark" those who are grieved over the sins of the nation (Ezekiel 9:4,5). God's judgment begins at His house (1 Peter 4:17). The chastisement that leads to repentance brings healing; the chastisement that leads to reprobation brings utter destruction.

In America, this ethical separation is occurring as a result of the sounding of the alarm on atheistic humanism. True Christians are beginning to realize what it means to be righteous while surrounded by a militant paganism. We are witnessing a growing epistemological self-consciousness that is gradually bringing an institutional separation of the godly from the wicked. It is also bringing their persecution.

The most notable example of this institutional separation is the Christian school movement. And it will be the conflict over Christian schools that will precipitate the coming migration — the last sign before judgment.

The reason I believe this is because education has been so important to America from its beginning. The Pilgrims and Puritans established common schools for the purpose of teaching the Bible, to perpetuate the Christian religion. In a very real sense, they have been our temples; except that today, they are the temples of a new religion—secular humanism.

I do not ignore the various ugly crimes we commit as a nation, such as abortion. But the issue of Christian schools far exceeds in importance, for if we lose our liberty to educate our children, we will lose the only source of redemption left. Silence the Christian schools, and the state schools will be rid of their last formidable opponent resisting the new paganism. All will be blackness following.

If the effort is successful to establish independent, Christian schools, it will be a turning point in American history. Regardless of what the government may do on any other moral issue (including abortion), the Christian world view and ethic will prevail against a corrupt opposition. If we fail on the freedom of Christian schools, it matters little if we have abolished abortion. The movement for moral reform will quickly lose its consensus and the scourge of abortion, with worse moral crimes, will prevail.

This will be America's Abomination of Desolation: its elimination of independent, Christian schools. With only state schools remaining, in a Biblical sense, this will be offering America's children to Moloch (the state)* and as the Scriptures say in Ezekiel 23:39:

On the very day they sacrificed their children to their idols, they entered my sanctuary and desecrated it. (NIV)

America, in a sense, has already committed its "Abomination of Desolation"; it has sacrificed its future (children) to the state schools (the temples of Moloch). It has desecrated God's temple; the nation is finished.

Ethical separation has been occurring over the past twenty years. The second separation, the great migration, is about to begin.

Those states or counties which outlaw or repress (through licensing regulations) Christian schools will experience an emigration of the godly to those states which permit this freedom. (We are assuming that the lukewarm in the churches will be too busy sleeping in their affluence to care. They will be the five foolish virgins). States with permissive policies on Christian schools will have a much higher percentage of the godly. Those states or counties will be exempt from wrath, but not chastisement. A time in history has arrived requiring the cleansing of the land. The repressive states will experience God's wrath bringing utter destruction.

*see Rushdoony's INSTITUTES OF BIBLICAL LAW, pg. 32, 33: "Moloch is the 'king' or 'kingship'.... Moloch worship was thus state worship. The state was the true and ultimate order, and religion was a department of state. The state claimed total jurisdiction over man, it was therefore entitled to total sacrifice."