

GOD PUNISHES IMMORAL NATIONS

ONE OF THE KEY PROBLEMS WITH MODERN CHRISTIANS is that they have lost their fear of God. Now, I realize that no Christian is perfect. All believers struggle with sin, and that is a battle we will continue to fight until the Lord returns. I am not trying to suggest that all true believers are sinless, because that is not the case.

No, what really bothers me is that many modern “Christians” think nothing about living lives of gross sin. It doesn't bother them at all to say that they disagree with the Bible or that the apostles were wrong. They are not the slightest bit concerned that God might be unhappy with them or that there might be consequences for shaking their fist at God and saying “Don't you dare tell me what to do!” They believe they can do whatever they want, because God would never dare to judge them.

The modern Church has forgotten that God judges nations. We have already talked about what happens when a nation attempts to harm the Jews. However, that is not the only sin that brings national judgment.

In order to understand this topic we need to go back to something God told Abraham. We have already covered the fact that God promised to give Abraham and his descendents the land of Canaan as an everlasting possession. However, the Lord went on to tell Abraham that his descendents would be enslaved

for 400 years, and afterward God would deliver them and give them the land of Canaan:

Genesis 15:13: “And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years;
14 And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.”

In other words, although God was going to give the land of Canaan to Abraham's descendents, He wasn't going to do it right away. Later in the chapter God explained to Abraham why He was waiting:

Genesis 15:16: “But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.”

The reason Abraham's descendents had to wait 400 years to get what God had promised them is because God was waiting on the Amorites. Their wickedness was not yet complete – or, as the Bible puts it, their iniquity was “not yet full”. God was going to wait until they became completely depraved, and then He would take their land away from them.

This fact should grab our attention because *God did not have a covenant relationship with the Amorites*. We're used to the idea of God evicting *Israel* from the land if they disobeyed Him, but the idea that God might evict other nations *for the same reason* is foreign to us – but that's exactly what it says in Genesis 15:6. God was going to wait until the Amorites became utterly immoral, and then He was going to destroy them and give their land to someone else. The Amorites did *not* have a

covenant with God and were *not* under the Mosaic Law (in fact, the Mosaic Law didn't even exist in the time of Abraham!), but that didn't matter. Once their iniquity became full God was going to destroy them.

This principle is expounded upon in the book of Leviticus. God strictly warned the Jews to not defile the land, and told them that the reason the Amorites were evicted was because they had broken that commandment:

Leviticus 18:24: "Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things: for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you:

25 And the land is defiled: therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants.

26 Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments, and shall not commit any of these abominations; neither any of your own nation, nor any stranger that sojourneth among you:

27 (For all these abominations have the men of the land done, which were before you, and the land is defiled;)

28 That the land spew not you out also, when ye defile it, as it spewed out the nations that were before you."

There's a lot going on here, but the basic message is pretty simple. God told the nation of Israel that although there were many different sins (and the penalty for all sin is death), there were certain sins that resulted in consequences upon the entire nation. These sins were so terrible that they caused the land itself to be defiled and brought down God's judgment. God destroyed the nations that used to live in Canaan because they committed these sins, and God warned Israel that if they committed the same sins they would also be destroyed.

In other words, God established a principle. If a nation committed certain sins then those sins would defile the land and bring down God's judgment upon that nation. In fact, verse 25 warns that the "land itself" would "vomit out her inhabitants". It is important to note that this threat was not directed specifically at Israel. God made it clear in verse 28 that this principle applies to *all* nations. The Amorites are a great example of this: they did not have the Mosaic Law or a special covenant relationship with God, and yet they were evicted from their land *because of their sin*. This principle applies to all nations, not just Israel.

Now it may seem strange to say that some sins bring God's judgment upon a nation while others do not, but it makes sense if you take a step back and think about it. The Bible says that *people* are judged for their sins *after* they die. If they are in Christ then they will be forgiven and receive mercy; if they have rejected Christ then they will face God's everlasting wrath. That principle, however, applies to individuals, not nations. Although individuals are judged after death, *nations* (like the Amorites) are judged in *this* life. National sin is a little different from personal sin, and there are some sins that defile a nation as a whole. One of these sins is murder:

Numbers 35:31: "Moreover ye shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer, which is guilty of death: but he shall be surely put to death.

32 And ye shall take no satisfaction for him that is fled to the city of his refuge, that he should come again to dwell in the land, until the death of the priest.

33 So ye shall not pollute the land wherein ye are: **for blood it defileth the land**: and the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it."

What God is saying is that when someone murders a person, that act causes the land itself to become defiled. This principle was first demonstrated in the story of Cain and Abel, where God said that Abel's innocent blood cried out to Him:

Genesis 4:10: “And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.”

The blood of murdered people still cries out to God, just as Abel's blood did. As Numbers 35:33 points out, the **only** way that the land can be cleansed of this innocent blood is by executing the murderer. (Note that this is talking about cleansing the land, not obtaining forgiveness. The sinner can obtain forgiveness by repentance, but the only way the land can be cleansed is by executing the murderer.) God strictly warned Israel to “take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer” and said that “he shall be surely put to death”. Why? Because *the innocent blood defiles the land*, and if the land is defiled it will “vomit out” its inhabitants (Leviticus 18:28). The Amorites – who were *not* under the Mosaic Law – were destroyed by God for defiling their land. This is a hard-and-fast rule that applies to all nations: if a nation defiles the land then God will destroy them.

Israel learned this lesson the hard way. The evil king Manasseh shed a great deal of innocent blood, so – decades later – God sent armies against Judah to destroy them:

2 Kings 24:2: “And the Lord sent against him bands of the Chaldees, and bands of the Syrians, and bands of the Moabites, and bands of the children of Ammon, and sent them against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by his servants the

prophets.

3 Surely at the commandment of the Lord came this upon Judah, to remove them out of his sight, for the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he did;

4 And also for the innocent blood that he shed: for he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood; **which the Lord would not pardon.**"

We need to keep in mind the fact that Manasseh had *actually repented* of the terrible things he had done. He was very sorry about it:

2 Chronicles 33:12: "And when he was in affliction, he besought the Lord his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers,

13 And prayed unto him: and he was intreated of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the Lord he was God. ..

15 And he took away the strange gods, and the idol out of the house of the Lord, and all the altars that he had built in the mount of the house of the Lord, and in Jerusalem, and cast them out of the city.

16 And he repaired the altar of the Lord, and sacrificed thereon peace offerings and thank offerings, and commanded Judah to serve the Lord God of Israel."

Manasseh's repentance was sincere: he put away the idols, repaired God's altar, and served the Lord. God accepted his cry and took him out of Babylon (where he had been held captive). The Lord then returned him to Jerusalem and gave him

back his kingdom. However, despite all this, 2 Kings 24:4 tells us that the Lord *would not pardon* the innocent blood that had been shed. Even though Manasseh had repented and turned from his sins, the innocent blood still defiled the land, and that required God's judgment upon the nation.

Manasseh was not king when the Lord sent His judgments against Judah; when judgment finally came he had been dead for more than 30 years. The passage of time, however, had done nothing to cleanse the land. God sent armies against the nation and destroyed it so that the innocent blood might be avenged. In the end the blood was paid for by the deaths of countless Israelites and the destruction of their entire country. This happened *despite the fact that Manasseh had repented*. The innocent blood had to be paid for, and God avenged it by destroying Israel.

Needless to say, the United States has a great deal of blood on its hands. More than 50 million children have been murdered since the Roe vs Wade decision 40 years ago, and there is no sign that abortion will ever become illegal again. In fact, things are going in the opposite direction. When President Obama was an Illinois state senator he supported killing babies *after* they were born. What used to be called murder is now called a “post-birth abortion”, and it is becoming increasingly accepted by society. It may soon be legal for mothers to execute their children before *and* after they are born. It's worth noting that the number of American soldiers who have died in all the wars that this country has ever fought, *combined*, is less than *the number of abortions that take place in this country every year*. The United States has executed innocent lives by the tens of millions and has defiled the land on a *massive* scale. Worst of all, as a nation, we are not sorry. We have not stopped our behavior and repented, as Manasseh did.

As if that were not enough, the idea of executing murderers has fallen completely out of favor, even among

Christians. It is seen as barbaric and cruel. Things have become so bad that people aren't ashamed to say that they approve of executing unborn children who have committed *no* crimes, but are against executing rapists and murderers. It is somehow *wrong* to execute a murderer but *right* to execute a child. All of this is an abomination to God, but as a nation we simply don't care. Even though God demands that murderers be executed in order to cleanse the land of its innocent blood, we just laugh at God and tell Him “no”. We're not concerned.

We somehow think that God will never hold this nation accountable for what it has done – but that is a very great error. After Manasseh defiled the land by shedding much innocent blood, God waited decades before He sent armies against Judah to destroy it. It has been 40 years since Roe vs Wade legalized abortion nationwide, and America has not repented or turned from her sins. God is simply waiting, as He did in the case of Manasseh – but you can be sure that judgment *will* come. The innocent blood *must* be paid for. It is only a matter of time.

Murder, however, is not the only thing that causes the land to be defiled. Sexual immorality does as well. Leviticus 18 contains a list of immoral acts that cause the land to be defiled. The list of immoral acts includes **incest** (Leviticus 18:6-18), **adultery** (Leviticus 18:20), **child sacrifice** (Leviticus 18:21), **having sex with animals** (Leviticus 18:23), and **homosexuality**. Interestingly, homosexuality is the *only thing on the list that is singled out as an abomination*:

Leviticus 18:22: “Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination.”

In other words, as bad as all of these other sins are – incest, child sacrifice, and so forth – the one thing that is worse than everything else and that rises to the level of an abomination

is homosexuality. While all of the things on this list cause the land to be defiled, homosexuality is *especially* bad. God hates it with a passion and promises to judge nations for it.

This is very bad news for us because our country has embraced these sins. Adultery and fornication have become widespread (even in our churches!), and homosexuality is celebrated and encouraged. Our culture condemns those who are against homosexual marriage and calls them bigots and hate-mongers. Homosexuality has even been embraced by many churches, to the point of appointing openly homosexual pastors. One church even had a special service to repent of the sin of *thinking poorly about homosexuality*. They wanted to make it clear to God that they loved homosexuality and were embarrassed about having ever opposed it!

Many people are not the least bit concerned about the rampant epidemic of adultery, homosexuality, and abortion that plagues our country. This nation is massively immoral and is proud of it. Many churches across the country have embraced this nation's sins and do nothing to fight them. We have defiled the land on a massive scale and are not the least bit sorry about it. In fact, the United States even has Gay Pride days to celebrate our immorality!

Some people might claim that these provisions are from the Mosaic Law and do not apply to us today. They claim that we live in a new age and are not under the law, but are under grace. While that theory may sound wise, there are actually several problems with it.

First of all, notice that the nations that were evicted from Canaan for committing these sins *did not have the Mosaic Law!* Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed long before Moses was even born, and the Bible is quite clear about why God destroyed those cities:

Jude 1:7: “Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and

the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.”

As you can see, the reason God destroyed those cities is because they gave themselves over to fornication and homosexuality. Since they defiled their land, God utterly wiped them out and burned their cities to the ground. The fact that they were not a part of the Mosaic Covenant did not make the least bit of difference.

It should also be noted that the sins that are listed in Leviticus 18 are *still sins*. The New Testament is quite clear that adultery is still a sin and warns Christians repeatedly to abstain from fornication. It also warns against homosexuality and goes so far as to say that no unrepentant homosexual will enter Heaven. Finally, taking children and burning them alive as a sacrifice to pagan gods is still a terrible sin. You simply cannot argue that God is no longer against the behaviors that are listed in Leviticus 18. The awful things that the chapter lists are still sins today.

There are some other things that can cause the land to be defiled. We find them listed in Hosea:

Hosea 4:1: “Hear the word of the Lord, ye children of Israel: for the Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land.

2 By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood.

3 Therefore shall the land mourn, and every one that dwelleth therein shall languish, with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven; yea, the fishes of the sea also shall be taken

away.”

Hosea tells us that because of swearing (yes, swearing!), lying, murdering, stealing, and sexual immorality, the land mourns and those who live in it languish. When these verses were written the Lord was angry with the Jews because they lacked truth, mercy, and the knowledge of God. We are even told that the fish of the sea would be taken away, implying that these sins would trigger mass animal deaths.

Incidentally, there has been a *staggering* number of mass animal deaths recently. Although the news media has stopped reporting them, they have not stopped happening. Huge groups of animals are suddenly dropping dead and no one seems to know why. Has this nation been swearing, lying, stealing, and committing adultery? Isn't it interesting that all these strange natural disasters have started happening at a time when lying is so common that we just *expect* other people to lie to us?

As Christians it's easy to point at Israel and say “They sinned against God, so God evicted them from the land” – and that is absolutely true. But we miss the fact that *this principle applies to all nations!* Israel is not the only nation that God threatened to judge for committing abominations in His sight. After all, the Amorites were evicted from the land for their sin (as Leviticus 18:28 said), even though they were *not* God's chosen people and did *not* have a covenant with Him. The same thing can be said about Sodom and Gomorrah.

These days many churches are reluctant to criticize homosexuality, and many pastors defend it. Some time ago I saw this headline in the news: “Prominent UK Pastor Steve Chalke Defends Pro-Gay Position”. Chalke argues that homosexuality is not a sin. Articles like this seem to appear on a weekly basis; there is always some pastor or Christian leader speaking up in favor of homosexuality and denying that the Bible condemns it. *But God's position has not changed:* homosexuality is an

abomination in His sight and is exactly why He destroyed Sodom. Homosexuality is one of many things that defile the land and brings God's judgment.

God told Israel that He destroyed the Amorites because they defiled the land, and He warned Israel to not live the way the Amorites lived:

Leviticus 18:3: “After the doings of the land of Egypt, wherein ye dwelt, shall ye not do: and after the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, shall ye not do: neither shall ye walk in their ordinances.”

He warns Israel not to obey the “ordinances” of the land of Canaan. I looked up the word “ordinances” in Strong's (it's number #2708), and it means what you would expect – ordinance, statute, custom. What God is saying is that the sins listed in Leviticus 18 (incest, homosexuality, murdering children) had become *the law* in Canaan. They were not just isolated sins by isolated people; they had become a national custom. At that point – *when sin becomes an ordinance* – it's all over. The iniquity of the Amorites was full and they were evicted from the land.

The reason I bring this up is because we are now in the same situation as the Amorites. Our nation legalized the murder of children in 1973, and since then it has been an “ordinance” that parents can have their unborn children executed. The Canaanites murdered their children to serve pagan gods; our nation does it largely for the sake of convenience.

Since 1973 the situation has not improved. Homosexuality – the one sin specifically listed in Leviticus 18 as being an abomination in the sight of God – is both legal and mainstream. Not only is it culturally accepted, but disagreeing with homosexuality is seen as a hate crime. Anyone who is against it is criticized, condemned, and hated. Businesses whose

owners are opposed to it are no longer welcome in some cities. If you run a business and don't want to make a wedding cake for a homosexual wedding, you will be taken to court and found guilty. In other words, *the government is now requiring people to participate in homosexuality!* You are simply *not allowed* to say "No, as a photographer I'm not going to photograph that homosexual wedding. I refuse to participate in that." The law itself is against you.

This means that *homosexuality has become an ordinance*. We have embraced the ordinances of the Canaanites – the very ordinances that brought God's judgment upon them and got them evicted from their land. President Obama signed a proclamation on June 1, 2012, celebrating homosexuality and declaring that month to be Gay Pride Month. (Interestingly, June 2012 was not a good month for the United States. There was a terrible drought that lingered for months and caused tremendous damage and economic loss. June 2012 was also a time of intense heat; in fact, 2012 became the hottest year on record (up to that time) for the northeast.)

It's amazing how many times natural disasters can be connected to homosexuality. Six days after New York State ruled in favor of gay marriage, Hurricane Sandy hit that very state and caused \$71 billion in damage. (The ruling was on October 23, 2012; the hurricane hit on October 29. Interestingly, the hurricane was already on its way when the ruling came down! People are now saying that this extremely rare superstorm has caused far more damage and economic loss than Hurricane Katrina.) Hurricane Isaac, which hit New Orleans seven years to the day after Hurricane Katrina, struck as New Orleans was celebrating a festival called Southern Decadence – a time dedicated to immorality, adultery, and homosexuality. Something else to think about: the October 1987 stock market crash, which was the greatest one-day crash in history, happened just 8 days after a massive homosexual march (200,000 to 500,000 people)

on Washington DC. The economic loss resulting from that crash amounted to the hundreds of billions of dollars.

None of this should come as a surprise. After all, the book of Psalms says this:

Psalm 107:33: “He turneth rivers into a wilderness, and the watersprings into dry ground;
34 A fruitful land into barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein.”

It is a grave error to think that Israel is the only nation that has to worry about facing God's judgment. We have this idea that we can do as we please and there will be no consequences. Few people are concerned that God might judge us for what our nation has done – even though God has judged nations for sin time and time again. What concerns me the most is that even Christians are not concerned about God's judgment. Many pastors openly laugh at the idea that a natural disaster might be some kind of judgment from God. The very idea that God would keep His promise to punish nations is somehow seen as laughable and ridiculous.

But consider this: have we seen record-breaking natural disasters? Earthquakes? Storms? Droughts? Animals dying off in large numbers for no apparent reason? Have the timing of these disasters coincided with national sin? These are questions that we need to be asking. Why do we think that God no longer takes sin seriously? Why do we believe that the God who destroyed the Amorites for their immorality and wiped out Sodom and Gomorrah for their sins would spare us when we have sinned on an *immensely greater scale*?

I do not believe that *every* storm and natural disaster is divine judgment. We do live in a fallen world and disasters do happen. But when a particularly devastating disaster happens at

the same time that a nation commits a sin that is an abomination in God's sight, then I think that may be more than a coincidence.

After all, God did warn us. He told us that if a nation commits the sins listed in Leviticus 18, the land itself would vomit us out. He told us what would happen if we adopted the ordinances of the Canaanites, but we have not listened. Our nation has taken the one sin that was singled out by God as being an abomination – the sin of homosexuality – and has worn it as a badge of pride. Churches have celebrated homosexuality and appointed homosexuals as ministers. Our culture has even taken the rainbow – a sign given to mankind by God Himself as a reminder that He would never again flood the entire world – and turned it into a symbol promoting homosexuality! (If that's not trying to spit in God's eye then I don't know what is.) Is it any wonder that the land is turning against us?

Sadly, I think that things are only going to get worse. Both political parties have embraced homosexuality and support it. Very few churches are fighting this, and those that do have had very little impact on the culture.

God has made it clear that He will destroy the nations that do these things, and He always keeps His word. I am very much afraid that America is going to continue to defile the land and that God is going to destroy her for it. I do not know how much time we have left, but I fear that our time is running out.