

PAYBACK FOR NEGLECT OF GOD

Zephaniah 3:7-8

Introduction: In great calamities, we are prone to overlook the hand of God or to attribute such events to God as His actions. We forget that nothing happens without the express permission of God and that all that God allows is for a fixed, divine purpose.

God's people (Judah) were far from improving their relationship with God and God was preparing to visit them in such a way that the enormity of their guilt and the riches of His grace would be displayed. America has become very much like Judah. America doesn't listen to God anymore.

I. WHAT HAS GOD BEEN EXPECTING FROM OUR NATION?

1. God's judgments on America have been dreadful lately:
 - Disease of aids, cancer, viruses, with new ones every year.
 - Earthquakes, hurricanes, floods, tornados, typhoons, landslides, snow storms, etc.
2. God has been trying to speak to our country by these disasterous events.
 - God has been trying to reclaim us from our evil ways.
 - Our nation was founded by God's people and God's Holy Word.
 - Our nation has been protected and blessed by God in miraculous ways.
 - Our nation has been the envy of the world because of God and His blessings.
 - Is it not therefore just for God to have a complaint against America?

II. AMERICA HAS DISAPPOINTED GOD'S EXPECTATIONS

1. God's accusations for America are the same for Judah...("*they rose up early...*")
 - There is NO sin of which our nation is not guilty: murder, adultery, witchcraft, lust, covetousness, falsehoods, every commandment of God has been broken countless times by our nation.
 - It would seem that all the grace and blessings which God has bestowed upon this nation have but lulled us to sleep while in our sins.
2. Who in America is innocent of God's accusations? Are not all ranks and orders among us guilty?
 - Like it or not, WE are a part of a sinful nation. We are Americans and we share in our nation's prosperity as well as it's sinfulness and judgments.
 - What warnings God is bringing to the world is also to our own nation and to us as individual Americans.
 - Just compare our country and it's leaders' morals and relationships to God with those of years gone by. It is indeed a wonder that God has not already removed Himself from us.
 - If God's preachers would preach the Gospel and then live it, if our churches would get their eyes off themselves and on to our lost nation and world, if our government leaders would turn to God, what an immense change would soon happen.
 - But if our nation continues in it's sinfulness, then let no one wonder of the tragedies and disasters that happen because God's judgment has fallen.

III. WHAT CAN AMERICA EXPECT FROM GOD?

1. What can America expect from God in way of judgment?
 - God has often pronounced special vengeance upon those who abused His mercies and indeed America may expect the same to be pronounced upon us.
 - How awful will be our state IF God pours out His anger upon a deserving America.
 - America needs to put aside the false concept that it is exempt from God's judgments for we are no longer the Christian nation we once were.

2. What can America expect from God in way of mercy?
 - God sends warnings long before He sends judgment.
 - If God's warnings are heeded and His people return to Him, forsaking their evil ways, then forgiveness and healing is given.

CONCLUSION:

1. Turn your thoughts to your own personal sins. Of what sins are YOU guilty? What sins have gone unconfessed?
2. What judgments of God do you actually deserve?
3. What is your personal relationship with God like? In His eyes, how do you stand?
4. Are you to be numbered among those of America who have been neglecting God?
5. You and I (we) are a part of this nation, it's greatness as well as it's sinfulness and all of us will be a part of God's judgment when it falls upon this nation.
6. What do you think our nation needs to do? Then be among the first to do just that!