

*“Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing many come from the presence of the Lord.”*

Acts 3:19



## **The Battle for the Soul of America “The Call to Repentance”**

**2 Kings 17:5-41**

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Over the past few months, America has experienced a series of events, the likes of which we have never witnessed before at the same time.

- The Covid-19 virus that killed over 200,000 people in the United States and over 1-million people worldwide, and according to the Center for Disease Control, it will not be over anytime soon.
- An economic meltdown that resulted in thousands of people losing their employment, and thousands of businesses and companies closing their doors; some forever.
- Social unrest with violence, rioting, looting, wanton destruction of personal and corporate property, and physical warfare in the streets that ended in the death of a few, and in the physical injury of many.
- Schools and churches closed, or their attendance severely limited, and families told to stay home to help mitigate the crisis.

### **Is there a prophetic significance to all of this?**

- YES! They are warning signs of God’s impending judgment upon our nation, and upon other parts of the world, for our lack of fidelity to Him as the One True God.
- While some of the madness has subsided, unless God, by His grace, intervenes, the worst could be yet to come.

***“We do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but  
against principalities and powers,  
against rulers of the darkness of this age,  
against spiritual hosts of wickedness in heavenly places.”***  
Ephesians 6:12

**We are in a battle for the “soul of America!”**

- To achieve victory, there must be a national repentance of all sin.
- Victory begins with repentant pastors calling their churches to true repentance, including making full restitution and achieving full reconciliation with those affected by our sins.
- Then, and only then, will God hear our prayers and heal our land.
- In 1 Timothy 3:15, Paul said, ***“The Church is the pillar and ground of the truth.”***
  - According to recent surveys, many pastors have abandoned the truth, lest it offend their members, and they have removed the offense of the cross, lest it convict people of their sin.
  - Therefore, by not being confronted with their own sin, or their need for God’s forgiveness, they are oblivious to the sinfulness of the world, and their responsibility to share the gospel.
- In 1 Peter 4:17, the Apostle said, ***“The judgment of God will begin at the house of God, and if it begins with us, what will be the outcome for those who obey not the gospel of God?”***
  - Those who receive Jesus Christ as their Savior are called to a higher standard than the rest of the world.
  - When we fail to live up to that standard, God will call us to repentance, and if we fail to respond to that call, He will release the next phase of His judgment, and that is where we are today.

According to Psalm 22:28, God is the Supreme Ruler over all nations. Human leaders rise and fall at His command.

- God used the nation of Israel to overthrow and remove the wicked nations of the Canaanites from the land of Israel, and the Jews paid a high price for not carrying out God’s command to destroy them all.
- God also used evil nations to chastise the nation of Israel. Such was the case when He allowed the nations of Assyria and Babylon to punish the people of Israel for drifting into Apostasy.
- In 70 A.D., God allowed the ruthless nation of Rome to destroy the City of Jerusalem, including the Temple, and the Israelites who were not killed or captured were scattered around the world.
- Not until May 14, 1948, was Israel declared a nation again, and since then, over six-million Jews have returned to their homeland.

## **Has God raised up a nation to bring America to repentance?**

- It is obvious that Christianity in the West is in need of revival.
- The key to real revival is genuine repentance, including restoration and reconciliation.
- However, since the people of God have not heard the voice of God, and cried out unto Him for forgiveness, it may very well be that God is allowing the nation of Communist China to serve as the vehicle of chastisement; to bring us to repentance.

## **Compare the parallel with the fall of Israel in 2 Kings 17:1-6**

### **1. The Fact of Israel's Captivity – 2 Kings 17:1-6**

- For over 200 years, the Northern tribes of Israel were ruled by 19-wicked kings, and while some were worse than others, their whole time in power was filled with violence, cruelty, graft, and greed.
- In the 9<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Hoshea, the King of Assyria took Samaria.
  - The Assyrian armies surrounded the city of Samaria for three years and just waited for the Israelites to surrender.
  - When that day finally came, thousands of Israelites were taken captive, and scattered around Mesopotamia along the Euphrates River.

### **2. The Reasons for Israel's Downfall – 2 Kings 17:7-12**

- According to verse 7, the main reason for the Assyrian captivity of the northern kingdom of Israel was their increasing apostasy.
- God delivered their forefathers from their slavery to the Egyptians, and He brought them into the land He had promised them.
- God said if they would be faithful to Him, He would provide for them and protect them.
- Verse 8 – ***“They walked in the statutes of the heathen.”***
- Verse 9 – ***“They did secretly those things that were against the Lord.”***
- Verses 11 – they participated in divination, prostitution, and child sacrifice as a part of their worship of the false gods.

### **3. The Warning from God's Prophets – 2 Kings 17:13-18**

- Verses 13 – they mocked the prophets God sent to warn them – Hosea, Micha, Isaiah, and others.
- Verse 14 – they hardened their hearts against the truth of God's Word; refusing to believe God would send His judgment.
- Verse 15 – they relaxed their standard of living even further, including causing their children to ***“pass through the fire!”***
- Verse 17 – they turned to the occult for help because God was silent.

## How many of those sins do you see in our culture today?

- **Haughty arrogance** – *I want all the earthly blessings God offers to those who have faith in Him.*
- **Disgraceful idolatry** – *I will bow down to those who can be of benefit to my future; to the accomplishment of my dreams.*
- **Obstinate disobedience** – *it is my life and I will do as I please, for I don't have to answer to anyone for my moral conduct.*
- **Shameful occult practices** – *I don't believe in the devil, much less worship him; I just watch it for entertainment!*

According to verse 18, when God's people exceeded His limit of sin, not only did He remove them from the land He gave to them, He also allowed them to remain in captivity for hundreds of years, and to exist without a homeland for thousands of years – their national identity was totally erased.

## A CALL TO A NATIONAL REPENTANCE

*“Turn to Me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning. So, rend your heart, and not your garments; return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness; and He relents from doing harm. Who knows if He will turn and relent, and leave a blessing behind Him?”*

Joel 2:12-14

- The scriptural evidence of our salvation is our repentance from sin.
- That doesn't mean we are saved by our repentance, but rather our repentance is the evidence of our salvation; that we have reconciled with God, and in so far as it is possible unto us, we are at peace with all men.
- Godly sorrow produces genuine repentance, and it is manifested in five intrinsic changes that will be reflected in a changed life:
  - **A changed mind** – from carnal to a biblical worldview
  - **A changed heart** – from apathy toward sin to a deep and godly sorrow for sin.
  - **A changed spirit** – from casual carnality to walking in confession and repentance.
  - **A change in actions** – an intentional turning away from the world, the flesh, and the devil, and turning toward God.
  - **A change in focus** – from selfishness and self-centeredness, to a full surrender to the Lordship of Christ.