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What's Going on in the World Today?

Part 2

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Based on these things pertaining to the forming of our Constitution, for the next 150 years our nation goes on to become the greatest nation on earth, based solely upon the degree of absolute truth residing in those 4 divine institutions established by God for the successful functioning of human society. Understand that the founding fathers probably never verbalized this concept of 4 divine institutions. These 4 institutions just happen to be a convenient way for us to categorize a logical outline of the absolute truths which they recognized as the **laws of Nature** established by God.

Now, does all of this imply that our nation was immune to evil and wrong doing? Obviously not. There has always been a degree of lawlessness and evil in this nation, and in any nation. People still murdered one another. There has always been adultery and homosexuality going on in our society. The injustices of no less than human slavery contributed to the Civil War, and tore the nation apart - injustices (by the way) for which this nation is still seeing the **consequences** even to this day.

I'm going to just touch on something here which I'll elaborate on further when we look at those forces of evil which we see going on on the world stage, and that is the issue of reaping what you sow, or the **consequences** of your choices - the consequences of using your free will to make choices in life which run contrary to the **laws of Nature** established by God.

The principle is found in Galatians 6:7-9 and is based on what every farmer who has ever lived knows to be true - **the laws of the harvest**. And that is, "You reap what you sow." Not only do you reap what you sow, but the laws of the harvest demonstrate that you will reap **more** than you sow **and** that you are not going to reap until some time **after** you do the sowing.

Now, before anyone jumps to any conclusion here, about what I'm implying, I want to make it perfectly clear what I am **not** saying. I am not implying that God is judging anything or anybody today, because He's not. But what I **am** saying, is that what you see going on in the world today, are the natural **consequences** of the failure to function according to sound Bible doctrine - according to those **laws of Nature** - the failure of those absolute truths being demonstrated in any or all of the 4 divine institutions.

Let me repeat what I said previously:

Those four divine institutions are designed for the optimal functioning and perpetuation of human society. **Anything** which negatively influences any of those institutions in any way, can only have a negative effect within that institution or within society as a whole. And within each institution, optimal function and success is dependent upon the amount of absolute truth which is found, and which is operational, within that institution. You are not seeing the judgment of God anywhere in this world today. God will be doing plenty of judging down the road in association with the 2nd coming of Jesus Christ, but that is not what you're seeing today. What you are seeing today at every level of society today are the natural **consequences** associated with the abandoning of God's truth within whatever institution you might be considering.

So our nation, as great as it was, was never a perfect nation by any means, but for 150 years our nation had something that no other nation had ever had. Based on God given principles (those **laws of Nature**) there was, within our nation, an underlying attitude which was very aptly described by **Francis A. Schaeffer** as "**the Christian consensus.**"

What does that mean?

The "Christian consensus" **began** with the understanding that there **is** a Creator God - and that when you understand that God does exist, you will also understand that you are going to be accountable to that God, according to his absolute standards of truth. What that is, is the 1st divine institution established by God for the successful functioning of human society - human volition - the free will every person has to make choices in life based on God's standards of absolute truth. And that underlying consensus prevailed in this country in the majority of it's citizens - even in people with no connection at all to any Christian church or religion. That underlying consensus prevailed in this country for 150 years, but then:

In the early 1900's, there began to emerge certain other insidious philosophies - philosophies which stood in opposition to the absolute truths found in the Bible - those absolute truths which had been so instrumental in establishing that "**Christian consensus**" which had so permeated the culture for 150 years. These opposing philosophies were known as **relativism** or **legal positivism** or sometimes they are called **pragmatism**. These philosophies began to be insidiously introduced into the thinking of leading educators of the day and into the thinking of the judicial branch of our government.

The basic tenet of this philosophy of **relativism** is the idea that there is no such thing as absolute truth, because human society is in a constant state of change, so that truth may not be what is had been in the past - and that truth is really whatever works, for you, in any given situation. Does this sound familiar?

The Encyclopedia of Religion, published by Macmillan in 1987 describes **relativism** in the following manner:

"Views are to be evaluated relative to the societies in which they appear, and are **not** to be judged true or false, good or bad, based on some overall criterion, but are to be assessed in the context in which they occur - Thus, what is right, or good, or true, to one person or group, may not be considered so by others....there [are] no absolute standards....**Man** is the measure of all things, and....each man **could** be his own measure."

Most of our listeners out there probably would not appreciate how that these are the same philosophies which eventually caused the demise of God's chosen nation Israel, and which resulted in their being taken into Assyrian and Babylonian captivity in 720 and 586 BC. The result of that type of convoluted thinking which resulted in the total demise of Israel is succinctly summarized in Judges 21:25 which states how that "In those days....every man did that which was right in his own eyes...And that was the beginning of the end for the nation Israel.

These insidious and destructive philosophies began to be introduced into the thinking of educators and judges through the efforts of primarily 3 American philosophers. Those three men were **Charles S. Pierce, William James**, and a man whose name you all might be a little more familiar with, **John Dewey**. In **John Dewey's** book, *The Public Law and its Problems* (1927), John Dewey wrote the following:

"The belief in political fixity, of the sanctity of some form of state, consecrated by the efforts of our fathers, and hallowed by tradition, is one of the stumbling blocks in the way of orderly and directed change."

In other words, the Constitution which our founding fathers had put together, has now become a stumbling block to us, and is holding us back from improving as a society.

And by the 1940's, these God rejecting, Bible rejecting philosophies began to be reflected in certain Supreme Court decisions.

By the 1970's, this philosophy of relativism had crept its way into the public school systems in America, under the name of "**situational ethics**" or "**values clarification**" where students were exposed to the idea that there is no such thing as "absolute truth" and that what was right was determined only by circumstances.

Many of our listeners may remember that stuff. I went to elementary school in the late 50's - early 60's. I remember my teachers talking about that kind of stuff. At the time, I couldn't understand the point of it all - Why were they bringing things like this into the classroom?

I also remember that the teachers who introduced these things to us really didn't seem to have their heart in what they were teaching. The whole thing was quite confusing to me at the time, but it's all pretty clear what was going on now. And this is where the problems really started escalating, folks.

The spirit of "the god of this world" was successfully getting into the minds of children and the American people unlike any time before, and that "**Christian consensus**", so aptly described by Francis A. Schaeffer, gradually began to erode away.

Children in the government school systems began to lose all sense of what is right and what is wrong - unless they were fortunate enough to have God fearing parents who were subverting the teaching and

philosophies which they were being exposed to in those schools.

Our young people lost a sense of purpose and became drawn into a world of drugs and all manner of mind altering substances, looking for something they knew they didn't have any more. Juvenile delinquency is now on the rise.

Materialism took hold of families, creating a perceived need to be a two-income family now, in most cases, solely for the sake of materialism. And the incredibly important and irreplaceable role of the mother in the home for the benefit of the children began to be held in less and less esteem. Divorce rates begin to escalate - all of this contributing to the deterioration and destruction of those 2nd and 3rd divine institutions - marriage and family.

This is all taking place as that philosophy of **relativism** makes its way into the judicial courts of the land and comes to be known as **legal positivism** - based of 5 major tenets. Those **5 major tenets** are :

1. There are no objective, God given standards of law, or if there are, they are irrelevant to the modern legal system.
2. Since God is not the author of law, the author of law must be man; it is law simply because the highest human authority, the state, has said it is law, and is able to back it up.
3. Since man and society is evolving, law must evolve as well.
4. Judges, through their decisions, guide the evolution of law.
5. To study law, get to the original sources of law - the decision of judges; hence most law schools today use the "**case law**" method of teaching law.

So now, any error which creeps into the legal system is going to compound and proliferate upon itself into further error, as society moves further and further away from absolute truth -the **laws of Nature** established by God for the **successful** functioning of human society.

There should be problem in seeing how that the foundations of the "**Christian consensus**" so prevalent within the nation since the establishing of the Constitution were being completely dismantled. And thus, it should be no problem seeing why there is so much confusion today over what **is**, and what is **not** constitutional - about what is right and what is wrong, because when you look at everything that's going on today - the abandonment of absolute truth, political correctness, the redefining of tolerance, and of marriage, and the mandating of atheistic philosophies of evolution in the school systems, you have nothing but chaos and confusion. And the young people growing up in America today don't even know that it was ever any other way. All the error just becomes slowly embedded into the warp and woof of their thinking.

I know exactly what many of our listeners are saying right now:

"You think the Bible and Christianity are the answer for everything."

Many of our listeners are undoubtedly saying,

"I know dozens of Christians, and they're no different than anyone else in the world, in fact, some of them are even worse people than the atheists I know - people who don't even even go to church."

My response to that would be that the overwhelming majority of those who claim to be Christians today are not Christians at all. Someone is not a Christian, a **true** Christian just because they attend a “so-called” Christian church. It’s no different than the way I described Christians **within** a nation as opposed to a **Christian nation**, when we looked at those issues in association with the founding fathers and our Constitution.

Someone is not a Christian just because they might attend a “so-called” Christian church. It might surprise many of you folks out there, that there are “so-called” Christian churches which do not contain a single **true** Christian. And it will certainly surprise many of you out there to learn that you can walk into countless numbers of “so-called” Christian churches in this nation, where it’s leaders - the pastors, priests or whatever title they happen to go by, are not Christians either - church leaders teaching false information and false doctrines and preaching false gospels, which have no power to make anyone a Christian today. In fact, this is the norm today, rather than the exception.

The church leaders I’m talking about are described and warned against in 2 Corinthians 11:3-4 and 13-15, where these church leaders are revealed for who they really **are** - and where their teaching is revealed for what it really **is** - and what **spirit** is actually the driving force behind it all. Some of these church leaders do this by obvious intent and design, motivated by greed and power - no different than the spirit of this world which drives most of our political leaders.

But the fact is, that **most** of them do it simply out of ignorance of what the Bible actually teaches, not even understanding what they’re actually doing, leaving them totally vulnerable to the spirit of “the god of this world” - unable to accurately teach what the Bible really teaches, or about how to become saved and become a **true** Christian - or teaching things that really sound good - teaching things that people really want to hear today, just as the apostle Paul warned of in 2 Timothy 4:3-4 - teaching all kinds of really feel good stuff, but which has no power to enable a person to become saved and to become a **true** Christian.

You probably won’t find one church in a hundred that would be able to explain to you how the things found in the Bible apply to everything going on in our cities, and in our nation, and in the world today, the way you’re hearing presented to you right now. And you haven’t heard anything yet folks; I haven’t even started explaining why we see what we see going on on the world stage.

The average church today either wants to be an entertainment center or someplace that can provide something for everyone, from recycling to fitness programs - completely abandoning the mission of the **true** church - the **true** church which is supposed to exist for one reason, and one reason only - one mission. That mission is described in 1 Timothy 3:15 as being “the pillar and ground of the truth...for human society - **and** for the preparation and perfecting of its members to be able to go out into their own spheres of influence doing the work of the ministry as described in Ephesians 4:11-16.

What is that ministry?

Every **true** Christian has been appointed by God to be a literal “ambassador for Christ” as described in 2 Corinthians 5:17-21. An ambassador is the official representative and spokesperson for someone

else. The role of a **true** Christian is to speak for Christ - in His absence - to maintain a constant proclamation to this world of the veracity of the absolute truths presented in the word of God, and to equip its members to present to the world the message of what Christ has done to save every one of us from our own personal sin problem. And the extent to which I fall short of your expectations, or anyone else's expectations of me as a **true** Christian, is really only the result of the extent to which I allow my own self will, and my own self interests, to take precedence over what I **should** be doing based on the gratitude and love that I **should** have for Jesus Christ, because of what **He** has done for me.

This is the struggle, by the way, that ever **true** Christian faces. What's it going to be? My will? or what Christ would have me do? You see, folks, Christ was our example. The night before He was tortured and crucified, He prayed to His Father three times that if there was any other way to provide the solution which mankind needed for it's sin and evil, that it could be found. But there wasn't, so Christ set His mind and said, nevertheless, **not** My will be done, but thine - as recorded in Matthew 26:36-44. **That** is the mindset which God would have every **true** Christian demonstrate - the mindset which is described in Philippians 2:1-13

Let me repeat once again:

The extent to which I fall short of your expectations, or anyone else's expectations of me as a **true** Christian is not God's fault, or the Bible's fault. it is the result of the extent to which I allow my own self will, and my own self interests to take precedence over what I **should** be doing, based on the gratitude and love that I **should** have for Jesus Christ, because of what **He** has done for me.

I want to get into something that is extremely important here, because **now** we're getting into the **solutions** for some of these battlegrounds and problems we see in our society today. The degree to which **true** Christians understand everything that the future has in store for them as result of becoming a Christian - understanding their literal ambassadorship for the Lord - understanding the message we have been entrusted with by the Lord - and understanding the manner in which the Lord equips us to be able to do this - The degree to which a true Christian understands and appreciates these things is the degree to which that Christian is able to transform his or her former self from whatever they were, or **thought** they were, or thought they **wanted to be**, into what God would **have** them be.

Are you understanding what I'm getting at here? In 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, the apostle Paul is reminding his Corinthian converts of many of the things that **they** had been involved in before they got saved and became **true** Christians. The list contains all manner of activities which are an abomination in the eyes of God - activities that always have been, and always will be an abomination in the eyes of God. Homosexuality and other alternate lifestyles are in that list.

And you know what God through Paul says about all that? He says, "And such **were** some of you." You see, some of those Corinthians **did** get saved through the gospel of salvation which had been entrusted to Paul, and to us today, and these people who got saved came to understand the reality of the **new** identity which they now had - a fully **satisfying** identity and purpose - an identity which was capable over riding any previous identity they **thought** they had, or **wanted** to have, but which was clearly contrary to the will of God for their lives.

Are you understanding what I'm saying here?

Unlike those gang members in Chicago who feel like their life isn't worth anything, the life of those Corinthians could now have a **purpose!** Now, those whose former life was controlled by sexual behaviors contrary to the will of God had a new **capacity**, motivated by gratitude and love for what Jesus Christ had done for them - a new **capacity** to abandon their former willful desires and to replace those desires with the desire to demonstrate a lifestyle consistent with what **God** would have them be.

So the solution for these types of social abnormalities is never going to be through the frantic political efforts of those on the religious right. True change just doesn't work that way.

And the abandoning of those first three God-given divine institutions for the successful functioning of human society has now progressed way too far in the wrong direction among the general populace, to be able to anticipate a swing back towards truth and sanity.

Momentum is all in the direction of continual deterioration of our nation.

The efforts of Christian based organizations like Jay Sekulo's ACLJ (American Center for Law and Justice) and similar legal organizations may continue to hold back, to some degree, the tide of some of these social evils like abortion and the continuing attempts to suppress free Bible based speech, but the reality is that those efforts are now like a bucket brigade on the Titanic.

The only realistic goal at this point is for Bible believing Christians to be able to reach as many people as possible, within their own personal spheres of influence, in an attempt to influence as many people **as** possible with **real** truth, so as to protect their families, and to prepare their children, and their grandchildren, for the further decline which is inevitable. And of course, hopefully there may be some others out there who might be listening to messages like this message and decide to climb on board as well. However, make no mistake about it, the price for embracing and preaching truth will soon be very, very high.

So, where will all this end up? And is there an answer for all this evil?

If you've been picking up on the things which I've been trying to say here, you should understand at this point that there is certainly an answer for the individual. Any individual has the potential to comprehend real truth, change their thinking, and respond in a way which will ensure that their own personal future can be as successful and wonderful as any individual's eternal future could possibly be - and the eternal future of their spouse and family, if they should happen to have one - despite whatever persecutions may come down the road, and in spite of however deplorable the state of our nation may become.

Unfortunately, that future will undoubtedly be lived out in the context of a nation which will be experiencing a continual decline and increasing animosity towards truth. All you need to understand is what Christ told His disciples in John 15:18-19 - "If the world hates Me, they're sure going to hate you as well..." And those individuals will undoubtedly have to be willing to stand against the

inevitable persecution which is sure to come as a result of standing **for** truth - unless they chose to simply remain “closet Christians.” That is a choice which any Christian **can** make, but then don’t forget that that was the attitude taken by Christians in Nazi Germany prior to WW II.

With that said, it’s now time to move on to the evils which abound on the world stage.

On the world scene:

As I said, I began putting this message together on Dec.6, 2015 - 4 days after (what was then) the most recent terrorist attack on a group Americans in San Bernardino, California - killing 14 people and wounding 17. That attack, in San Bernardino, took place just 19 days following the ISIS attack at several sites in Paris, France, on Nov.13 - killing 130 people and wounding hundreds of others. And that attack in Paris France, was just a little less than 5 weeks after the bombing of a Russian passenger plane en route from the Egyptian resort city of Sharm el-Sheikh to St. Petersburg, Russia - killing all 224 people on board on October 31 - later to be determined that the bomb which took down that Russian airliner was also the work of terrorists - probably ISIS related. And the most recent terrorist attack occurred just a couple of weeks ago in Brussels, Belgium on March 22 killing 34 and wounding 212.

Those events raised the fear of air travel to new levels for many people, and heightened the efforts of government surveillance, internet monitoring, and intelligence gathering in virtually every country on the globe as it became increasingly obvious that the forces of evil against civilized members of the human community could strike anyone, anywhere, and at any time.

Unrest in the Middle East has reached unprecedented levels as most of the countries surrounding the nation Israel remain intent on wiping Israel off the face of the earth.

And the question on everyone’s mind these days is:
What is going on in the world today? And where will all this end up? And is there an answer for all this evil?

And I’m sorry to say that the evil which we see going on on the world stage today has a no less dismal picture than that which I’ve proposed for America. And once again, although there will be no solution for these problems by the political leaders of our day, there is certainly an explanation for these problems, and if for no other reason than the mere existence of the nation Israel, and the problems associated in the Middle East centering **around** the nation Israel - If for no other reason than that, **that alone** should be enough to get people’s attention and to make anyone reason that - “Maybe we just ought to take a look at what the Bible has to say about all this.”

And just as it was necessary to look at the history of our country in order to understand why we are steadily deteriorating as a nation, so is it necessary to look at the history of the nation Israel in order to

understand the evils we see on the world stage today. And that history begins in Genesis 12:

In Genesis 12:1-7 God calls a man by the name of Abraham out of his pagan, idolatrous homeland and gives to him a number of tremendous promises. Two of those promises are what we want to specifically take note of today.

The **1st promise** is given in v.2 and has to do with Abraham and his descendants. God promised Abraham that he and his descendants would become a great nation. That nation of course, was to be the nation Israel. Israel will be God's special and chosen nation. But, if you've been paying any attention at all to world events these days, you might recognize that there is **another** group of people who claim Abraham as their father. And those are the people of Islam. Just keep that in the back of your mind for now.

The **2nd promise** given to Abraham that we need to understand is found in v.7 where God promises Abraham and his descendants that He will give them a particular area of land which will be their's forever. In Genesis 15:18, God reveals the precise location of that land. It will extend from the Nile river in Egypt to the Euphrates river in the east. It is huge area of land in the Middle East, which is commonly referred to as the fertile crescent, or the land of Palestine.

Abraham's descendants, the nation Israel, **and the land** - these are the two issues which are the driving forces having to do with the evil we see going on on the world stage today.

So God calls out this man Abraham to be the father of the nation Israel, and God begins dealing with Abraham to make all that happen. But something very interesting, and very unfortunate happens in the life of Abraham during his relationship with God. By the time you get to Gen.15, Abraham begins to wonder how any of this can come to be since he has no descendants. Abraham and his wife, Sarah are childless, and they are aging rapidly. Nevertheless, God assures Abraham at that time that he and his wife Sarah will most certainly produce descendants, exactly in accordance with the promises of God. And it becomes a matter of faith on the part of Abraham.

As time goes on, Abraham and Sarah continue to remain childless, and Sarah has already progressed well beyond the normal range of childbearing years. But Sarah has this personal servant - a maid. Her name is Hagar. And Sarah convinces Abraham that perhaps they might be able to help God along if by chance Abraham could possibly produce a son by way of Hagar.

This was actually a common practice of the day - where if the man of the family had the misfortune of remaining childless with his natural wife, it was commonplace to take a concubine in order to carry on the lineage. And although it may have been commonplace in that day to have children by more than one woman for this purpose, it was **not** something that God approved of, especially in Abraham's situation. Abraham was supposed to have faith that God would do exactly what He said He would do.

And this decision between Abraham and Sarah, to do what Sarah had proposed, becomes a huge, huge

mistake in the life of Abraham, because Abraham's childless situation was merely a test of faith. God didn't need anyone's help to accomplish what He said He was going to accomplish.

And this whole situation brings up an issue which is demonstrated repeatedly in the Bible: When the lives of the great men of the Bible, the heroes of the Bible, God's people - when their lives are written about in the Bible, there is no attempt to pass over, sugar coat or rationalize the shortcomings and sins of those individuals. And sin always has its consequences.

So, Abraham and Sarah go through with this plan in an attempt to help God out, and Hagar does become pregnant. And Hagar does produce a son for Abraham. His name is Ishmael. The problem with this is that this was **not** according to God's plan, and it isn't very long until the whole situation blows up and begins to reap a harvest according to that which had been sown. Great animosity and hostility develops between Hagar and Sarah, **after** Hagar successfully bears a son for Abraham. Hagar now perceives **herself** and **her** son as the eventual recipients of those promises made to Abraham. And **this** is the beginning of the problems we see on the world stage today.

According to the promise of God, Sarah **will** go on to **miraculously** produce a son for Abraham. His name is going to be Isaac. And God had made it absolutely clear to Abraham in Genesis 17:19-21, even before Isaac was born, that it was to be through **Isaac**, the son which God had **promised** to Abraham - that it would be through Isaac, through whom all the promises of God for the nation Israel would come to be, and **not** through Ishmael.

This is why you will find the God of the Bible repeatedly (at least 17 times) referring to Himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob - Jacob who would be the son of Isaac - not the God of Abraham and Ishmael - but the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

In Genesis 21:1-3, Isaac, that son of promise is finally born to Abraham and Sarah, and Genesis 21:8 quickly fast forwards to that point in Isaac's life where Isaac is now a young lad, and Ishmael is now 13 years old. And what we see in the next verse (v.9), is a continuation of that same animosity and hostility which first developed between Hagar and Sarah now taking place between Ishmael and Isaac. That hostility and animosity escalated to the point where God instructed Abraham to cast out both Hagar and Ishmael - to cast them out from Abraham's household. They had no place in God's promises given to Abraham regarding his descendants or the land - the land which Abraham descendants are destined to inherit - because **Isaac** was to be the son of promise - not Ishmael.

But that is not the end of the story folks, because God had made some very interesting predictions to Hagar regarding Ishmael and **his** future. Abraham's mistake in fathering Ishmael was not going to be without its consequences. Abraham was going to reap problems from what he had sown. And just as the law of the harvest demonstrates without exception, Abraham and his descendants were going to reap a lot more than was sown, and that reaping was going to be manifest much later than when those seeds had been sown.

Back in Genesis 16:7-12, God had told Hagar that this son of her's (Ishmael), even though he was **not** the son of promise - that Ishmael was **also** going to be the progenitor of a multitude of people. And God went on to describe the nature of those people - how the world was going to view these descendants of Ishmael.

I want to quote word for word, exactly what God had predicted about the descendants of Ishmael in Genesis 16:12..."And he [i.e., the descendants of Ishmael] will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand will be against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren...Ishmael's brethren are the descendants of Isaac. Ishmael's brethren are the nation Israel. Is any of this beginning to sound a little contemporary?

Those descendants of Ishmael became the Bedouin tribes of the deserts all around the Middle East down through the centuries. They are the Arab Muslim people of the Middle East - people who **also** call themselves the sons of A. And they are, but the problem they have is that they are **not** the sons of promise through Isaac. They are the sons of Ishmael who had been cast out. But just as God predicted, they are dwelling in the presence of the sons of Isaac - in the presence of the nation Israel.

Now, as anyone who is familiar with the history of the nation Israel knows, because Israel abandoned their God, resulting in the failure to be the nation which God had intended them to be, part of the nation was taken into captivity by the Assyrians in 720 BC, and the remainder of the nation was taken into Babylonian captivity in 586 BC. And for all intents and purposes, the history of the nation Israel, as a nation, was over.

Interestingly, God had predicted that this is exactly what would happen to the nation. It was predicted that this would be the fate of the nation through the warnings and prophecies of Moses in Deuteronomy 32.

Now, Jewish people, for the most part, have been dispersed, and have remained dispersed among all the nations of the world. Interestingly, God had also warned Israel that **this** would happen to them through the prophet Moses, even back in Leviticus 26.

Now some of the questions which anyone should naturally be asking at this point are these:

How could it be, that the author of this book which we call the Bible - how could the author of this book have written through Moses 4,000 years ago, these things pertaining to the history of Israel centuries before they actually occurred?

How could the author of this book have known that this nation Israel, which God had chosen to be His special people, would forsake the Lord their God exactly as Moses predicted they would?

How could the author of this book have know that the nation Israel would be taken into captivity by Assyria and Babylonia, as a result of their forsaking the Lord, just as God had predicted through His prophets would happen - those prophets who warned the nation and its leaders for years that these impending judgments were imminent if they continued to do the things which they were doing ?

And you have to ask yourself, how could it be that the author of this book could know that the people of this nation Israel would then be dispersed among all the nations on the earth, just as they are today, and just as God had predicted would be the case, as a result of those judgments? - and that there would not even **be** a nation of Israel from the time of that dispersion until 1948 (over 4,000 years) where you had Jews scattered all over the earth, yet with **no** country - **no** nation until 1948! - yet would once again become a nation? - a nation of people, who for all intents and purposes should not even exist today because of the world's continual attempts to persecute and exterminate them over the course of human history.

And yet, there is the nation Israel. That defies all reason and logic.

And not only that, but that Israel would not only become a nation once again, but that Israel would become a nation which would then become the center, the reason, the focal point of world turmoil and hostility - just as it is predicted in the Bible, and just as see it is today?

If you're not familiar with those predictions, you need to be:

In chapter 12:2, the prophet Zechariah writes how that the day will come when Israel will literally become "a cup of trembling unto all the people round about." That seems to be a pretty good metaphor to describe what is going on with Israel today, doesn't it? Then in v.3, Israel is described as "a burdensome stone for all people." This expression "cup of trembling" in v.2 becomes even more interesting when you look into the Hebrew language in which this verse was originally written. That word "trembling" carries with it sort of a sense of a one-track minded obsession with the annihilation of the nation Israel.

Folks, if you think things are tense over there in the Middle East now, you haven't seen anything yet. Tensions in the Middle East are going to continue to rise to a level that you or our political leaders can't even imagine.

Psalm 83 describes a confederacy of 10 nations who, even though they may have tremendous differences between one another, will nevertheless come together with **one** common goal, and that common goal is to wipe Israel off the face of the earth. I'll quote v.4 for you, from Ps.83, which says of these 10 nations, "They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may no more be in remembrance...Does that sound like any of the things you hear being said over there these days?

I'd like to take a few minutes here, to remind you of a few of the statements that have appeared in the media in recent years from various groups of people over in the Middle East.

Let's start with the late Osama bin Laden:

You might recall that bin Laden sent a videotape to our political leaders following the attack of 9-1-1, in which he explained that the future security of the United States was in our own hands - that the United States could avoid another 9-1-1 **if** it stopped threatening the security of Muslims. What was

the sense in which the United States was threatening the security of Muslims? It was the fact that we are an ally of Israel.

Speaking in reference to the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon, in which towers and buildings in Beirut were destroyed, here is a quote from bin Laden off that tape which he sent to us:

“While I was looking at these destroyed towers in Lebanon, it sparked in my mind that the tyrant should be punished with the same, and that we should destroy towers in America, so that it [the tyrant, America] tastes what we taste, and would be deterred from killing our children and women.”

You see folks, it all boils down to that one-track minded obsession to wipe Israel off the face of the earth - that same animosity and hostility that began all the way back with Hagar and Sarah, and then with Ishmael and Isaac, and which has continued on from then, until now.

Former Iraq president Saddam Hussein made the following statement pertaining to the United States, shortly after US cruise missiles hit targets in and around Bagdad, after the war in Iraq began. He said: “We promise you that Iraq, it’s leadership and it’s people will stand up to the evil invaders, and will take them to such limits that they will lose their patience in achieving their plans, which are pushed by criminal Zionism.”

Criminal Zionism! You see folks, it’s all about Israel, and anyone who stands with Israel is just as much hated by these people, as Israel itself.

And then how about Iran’s leader Ahmadinejad? He doesn’t even try to hide the fact that he wants to develop nuclear weapons for the purpose of blowing Israel off the face of the earth.

And tensions in the Middle East continue to rise, don’t they?

Did you know that that 10 nation confederacy which will one day join together and rise up against Israel are all named in Ps.83? Obviously, the names which are given in Psalm 83 are not identical to the names those countries have today, but the national heritage of the people who are named in that Psalm are the same. Who are they?

Verse 6 speaks of the Ishmaelites. They’re the descendants of Ishmael. Ishmael’s descendants settled in the area just east of Egypt, south of Israel, in that region which today is predominantly Saudi Arabia.

Verse 6 also speaks of the Hagarenes. Who are they? Remember Hagar, Ishmael’s mother, through whom Abraham bore Ishmael? Hagar went on to bear additional sons who settled in a different location than did the descendants of Ishmael. They settled in that area which today would be the northwestern part of present day Jordan.

Verse 6 also speaks of Edom and Moab. Edom today would be the southernmost part of present day

Jordan up to about the southern extent of the Dead Sea. Moab today is roughly the central 1/3 of present day Jordan.

In verse 7, you have Ammon, which is the heart of the area around present day Amman, Jordan. Verse 7 also speaks of Gebal, an area located about 25 miles north of Beirut, Lebanon, where those towers which bin Laden referred to were located.

Verse 7 also speaks of Amelak, the Philistines and the inhabitants of Tyre. These are all regions along the Mediterranean coast and southwest of the Dead Sea towards Egypt.

And finally, verse 8 speaks of Assur. Assur is Syria, or Assyria, an area which today would include present day Syria, Iraq, Turkey and Iran. I hope you can see what kind of a picture this is painting folks. All these nations completely surround present day Israel and are located in that land which God had promised to Abraham and his descendants through Isaac - not Ishmael.

And tensions in the Middle East will continue to rise.

Well, as I said before, if for no other reason than the mere existence of the nation Israel and the problems associated in the Middle East centering around the nation Israel - if for no other reason than that, **that alone** should be enough to get people's attention, and to make anyone reason that, "Maybe we just ought to take a look at what the Bible has to say about all this."

So, all that seems to paint a pretty dismal picture for the future, as far as all the evil we see going on on the world stage is concerned, doesn't it? But those who understand God's plans and purpose for the nation Israel understand that this is by no means the end of the story.

Things **are** going to get worse over there - a whole lot worse, but God has every intention of making the nation Israel everything that He had designed the nation to be. And God is going to fulfill **all** those promises that he had made to Abraham when he called out Abraham to be the father of that great nation. All those things **will** come to be.

But they **won't** come to be through the fruitless efforts of various political leaders on this earth. They won't come to be through the efforts of the United Nations or any other organization like the United Nations. And they won't come to be through the efforts of the people who call themselves Israel today, because something that needs to be understood to make sense of all this, is that the Israel which you see **today** is not really God's Israel of prophecy and promise. They **are** a nation. They're even in the right place. They're in the heart of that area which God had promised to Abraham and his descendants through Isaac. But they are **not yet** the Israel of God's promises. They won't be **God's** nation Israel until they recognize the mistakes they've made in the past.

They rejected their Messiah at his 1st coming. They could have realized all those promises if they had only accepted Him at His 1st coming. But they didn't. Instead, they rejected Him, and they murdered

Him. That won't happen at his 2nd coming.

The Bible teaches all about the 2nd coming of Israel's Messiah - the 2nd coming of Christ. The Bible has been absolutely spot on with every prophecy and prediction pertaining to the nation Israel that we've looked at. And I've brought up only a handful of the hundreds and hundreds of other prophecies which have all come to pass regarding the nation Israel, exactly as they were prophesied. With a track record like that, it would be pretty stupid to presume that those predictions which are still to come, won't come. Fulfilled prophecy, by the way, is **one** of the main reasons why we can have complete faith and confidence in what this book says. There has to be a reason to have faith in what the Bible says.

And it will only be with the 2nd coming of Christ that all this evil will be put down - that God's Israel will be saved from annihilation by her enemies and all those promises made to Abraham will come to be.

And I'll end this message by saying to our listeners, for the 3rd time now, that if for no other reason than the existence of the nation Israel, and the problems associated in the Middle East centering around the nation Israel - if for no other reason than that, **that alone** should be enough to get people's attention, and to make anyone reason that maybe we just ought to take a look at what the Bible has to say about all this, because only then, will you be able to understand what is going on in the world today.