***Israel / American Culture, and Women and Family

Colossians 1:25-29

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2 Timothy 3:16: "All Scripture is inspired by God, and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work."

1 Corinthians 1:21: "For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe."

Romans 1:18: "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness."

Our subject is "The Mystery of the Church," segment number 41, in Colossians 1:25-29.

**Divine Viewpoint vs. Human Viewpoint**

Originally, at the creation by God of the angels, there was only one will and one wisdom in the universe: one will; and, one mind. There was the will of God, which was always perfect and best. And there was the wisdom of God, which was always truth and blessed. We call that "divine viewpoint." On the day that the chief angel, Lucifer, rebelled against the authority of God, and sought to depose him, a second will entered the universe along with a second wisdom. This was the will of Satan, which was always wrong and disastrous. And there was the wisdom of Satan, which was always a lie and a curse for mankind. We call that "human viewpoint." The wisdom of God in the Bible is spiritual light. While the wisdom of the world from Satan, via the old sin nature, is nothing but spiritual darkness.

**Light vs. Darkness**

In 1 Peter 2:9, the apostle points out to us, "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him Who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light." What God gives us is light. What Satan gives us is darkness. Most of the world moves along in Satan's darkness. It moves along in Satan's lie. Only those who are Christians, and only those who are taught doctrinal principles, are able to move along in God's wisdom and in the truth of the light of the Word of God.

We have seen in Colossians 1:25, the apostle Paul tells the Christians that the church-age doctrines, which he has communicated to them, are divine viewpoint wisdom; truth; and, light. Doctrine is the mind of God, and it is therefore the wisdom of God. The divine viewpoint wisdom of God in Scripture is described in 2 Timothy 3:14-17, where the apostle says, "You, however (speaking to Timothy) continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith, which is in Christ Jesus."

This is one of the great tragedies and disappointments of Christian families. And over the years we have seen children who have grown up here in Berean Church. They move into their older years. They're here in church. And all of a sudden, they evaporate. We don't see them anymore. They have lost their taste for instruction in the Word of God. They have lost their sense for a need of divine wisdom.

Now, Timothy was one of the great favorites of the apostle Paul, because here was a kid that never got knocked over. Here was a kid, as many of our kids have become. They weren't knocked out by the world system. Timothy never became a fool. He was always on target. He was in the hard places, and he understood that he lived in a context of a world system which was a lie. Everything about him was Satan's lie. And when he filtered it through the Word of God, he knew what was the truth, and he knew how to act.

So, there was a great satisfaction to Paul to be able to tell Timothy: "Remember that you used to attend church. You used to attend all those services. Eunice, your mother, and your grandmother – they taught you the Word of God, and they did the right thing. They set you on the right course. Do not become a fool, Timothy. Stay with what you know." And what does he know? He knows sacred writings and doctrinal principles, and that gives you wisdom. It leads you to salvation. And it gets your head screwed on straight, so you know how to live your life as a young person. That's what we're going to try to do on this campout. And I can guarantee you that a few of these kids that are going to be there are going to resist the screwing on, every moment that I tightened it down them. And they're going to go out of there either with guilt; or, with positive volition receptivity, because it's not going to be the way things are in the lives that they live out in the world system. But it is God's way, and therefore, it is the right way; it is the best way; and, it is the wise way.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 indicates that Timothy should pay attention to what he's been taught, and how he's been reared, because: "All Scriptures is inspired (God-breathed), and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work." There's nothing out in the world that Timothy could find that was going to be profitable; to be taught; or, that will be for reproof to correct him for training in righteousness, so that he could be adequate as a Christian man, and be equipped for every good work and good service – nothing out there in the world system.

**Demas**

When Demas forgot that, who was also on the team with Timothy, he went off to Thessalonica to enjoy the good-time world. He was like these teenage kids we have around here that evaporate. We never see them in church anymore. They're out there in another religious system, getting their emotions and their ears tickled. And that's pathetic. And we have to make an understanding of the difference between what is the wisdom of God, and what is the wisdom of our old sin nature. And if we don't make that difference, we will go down. Doctrine is the mind of God. Therefore, it is the wisdom of God. Nothing is more important to the Christian than the regular intake, into the mentality of his soul, of Bible doctrine wisdom: nothing – not your food; not your clothing; not your shelter; not your possessions; and, not your bank account. Nothing is more important. And nothing should stand in the way of your presence, when these doors are open here for the instruction in the Word of God. Nobody has any justifiable reason for not being here unless, they are preoccupied with other circumstances that are their responsibilities and duties that they must perform periodically.

I want to lead you through a number of verses, starting right at the beginning of what Jesus said. Nobody lives without the Word of God. And with that starting point, the Scriptures then proceed to tell you how God has made it possible for you to have that met. There is no reason why you should not be able to fulfill the principle of Matthew 4:4. There, Jesus says, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but in every Word that proceeds out of the mouth of God." This is the top daily priority of every believer – spending that time with the Word of Go; and, certainly on the Lord's Day, a day devoted to the study, and the learning, and the expansion of the mind of God within you, through the church services, if you're fortunate enough to have an expository preaching church.

So, if everybody needs to have the Word of God, the apostle Paul then goes on to Ephesians 4:11-13. Has God made a provision? You betcha He has. It's called the local church: "And He gave some as apostles; some as prophets; some as evangelists; and, some as pastor-teachers." These are all groups of communicators. We no longer have apostles; and, we no longer have prophets. We do have evangelists; and, we do have pastor-teachers in the local church. Why? "For the equipping of the saints." That's a military term for "preparation." For what? "For the work of service" (for Christian activity service). For what? "For the building up of the body of Christ" – for their own spiritual maturity, until we reach this objective: "We all attain to the unity of the faith (the unity of biblical doctrine), and of the knowledge of the Son of God to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ."

Now, the rest of Colossians 1:28, that we are now studying (the last part of it) explains why Paul is giving this wisdom. He says, "So, you can all be mature. That is the same thing that Paul is saying here in Ephesians 4:13: "To the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ." We're trying to bring you, as individuals, to where you are Christlike.

Now how in the world can we do that to adults or kids who can't attend the church service, and who filter in at the end of the service, and maybe catch a few smatterings at the end, but their lives are elsewhere. A lot of them are in bed right now, sashaying around, from having a big wild time last night, or out in the religious system someplace, doing their own thing.

Hebrews 4:12, "For the Word of God is living and active, and sharper than a two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of the soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart." The Bible is just not words on a page. It is the sacred Word of God. It is the mind of God. Therefore, when you read the Scripture, you're bringing into your mind the very mind of the Almighty Himself. And the result is a transformation that enables you to be discerning; and that enables to separate between that which is real, and that which is the delusions of Satan, the big liar. The Word of God, in John 17:17, in the true Lord's prayer of the Bible, Jesus says, "Sanctify them (meaning us) in the truth. Your Word is truth." The word "sanctify" means "set apart." Set apart to what? Set apart to the will of God, and the blessing of God, through the wisdom of God. How are we going to do that? Through the Word of Truth that Hebrews tells us is so discerning, and enables us to become what we should be as mature people in Christ.

Then there is the gospel of John 8:31-32: "Jesus, therefore, was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, 'If you abide in My Word (positive volition response to doctrinal instruction) then you are truly disciples of Mine. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Isn't it a riot how the world gets more and more into sin, and justifies sin because they say that that's freedom? The only rule of our society today, and the only rule of the people who are living lives outside of the principles of the Scripture, is that the only thing that is forbidden is to forbid anything. That's the principle. The only thing which is forbidden, that you cannot do, is to forbid somebody to do something.

You notice the big conglomeration of religious leaders in Dallas, from the Roman Catholic Church on down – all the hoodoos, and voodoos, and whatever, marching together with all their paraphernalia and idiocy together, to have a unity. And they're all telling us that all religious systems have a basic unity. What a lie! And now it's so open. They are putting it on public television. They're not going to propagate on public television the sort of thing you're hearing here this morning. But they give big coverage to these false prophets gathering together. And because people don't know that the harvest is ripe, there is nobody to bring the harvest in. There are no expository preachers, virtually, out there. The harvesters are few.

So, people will listen to these people. And they'll think, "Yeah, everybody is a good old Joe, going to the same place, worshiping the same God, trying to go to the same heaven. And what do you have there? You have preparation for the antichrist's world: one-world religion. You cannot have a world government without a world religious orientation. The two have to go together, because of the way man is made. And the world leaders have realized that now, so they are now trying to bring together religions based on Hinduism. And you'll see how that is tonight, in order to bring the world together for the antichrist.

Then we have 1 Corinthians 1:21: "For since, in the wisdom of God, the world, through its wisdom, did not come to know God, God was well-pleased, through the foolishness of the message preached, to save those who believe." Man, by his own thinking, can never come to God. And when they were given instruction in the Word of God from the principle of free grace salvation to the full counsel of God, the spiritual maturity structure of the soul, they said, "That's nuts. That's foolishness." Okay, you can go ahead and say that, but God says, "That's My message. And through the message of foolishness, which is being preached in expository churches, I'm going to save people. And I'm going to make people mature, so they can have a magnificent eternity, as well as a significant life on earth here."

1 Corinthians 2:16: "For who has known the mind of the Lord, that he should instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ." It's not improper for us to say, at the end of a service, "If you have received spiritual illumination, and if you have received the mind of God in some way in this service, because of the instruction which you have received, we invite you to participate in the offering box at the door. If you have not received anything of the mind of Christ (of spiritual instruction), don't bother with the offering box. You have nothing that you owe us.

How many churches could have much of an offering box on the basis of what a person gets in an average service of illumination from the Word of God? Who is digging in and taking the trouble to learn Scripture, so he can explain it to the people of God?

Then, there is Ephesians 4:14-16, which is establishing that nothing is more important in our lives than the regular intake into our souls of the Word of God: "As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine; by the trickery of man; and, by craftiness and deceitful scheming."

One of the things we will do on this campout is that we will take the kids one night, after we're through with our evening Bible study, and games and other activities, we'll go out and walk down the beach to Bob Hall Pier, and we'll walk out there, and hope that somebody's out there fishing, and may be catching a shark to bring in, or something. The fishermen will work out there at night. But as we walk out there on that the pier, there is that thundering rolling in of the water. It'll come beating against the pier, and it'll be beating in against the beach. And then, as we walk along the beach, we'll see all the scum; all the dead fish; and, all the debris that has washed up on the beach.

Now, Paul says: "No more of that for the Christian life. We're not going to be a bunch of children; a bunch of immature teenagers; or, undeveloped kids." We are going to be mature men and mature Christian women. And we are not going to be tossed about by every wave of somebody's crazy religious idea, and doctrine like what we're seeing on TV now. We’re not going to be carried away or impressed by any of that. We're going to understand that every wind of doctrine is not going to blow us over, because we're going to know what's true doctrine, and what is false. How? Because some preacher gave us the frame of reference. He explained the Scriptures.

So, Ephesians 4:15 says, "Instead, we will be speaking the truth in love. We are to grow up in all aspects in Him, Who is the head, even Christ." This is speaking to the body of Christ: "From whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies." Every part of our body has to have something provided, or you don't operate well. You break one piece of this physical structure, and it's not going to work right until that piece is repaired; and, every joint (every member – every Christian at that local church assembly) is there because of a purpose, and a mission, and a provision that God has enabled you to provide in His work.

I'll not go into detail, but I can tell you that Satan is alive and well in the undermining of our tape ministry in so many ways. Right now, it is unbelievable, while we stand on the edge of a breakout, and a breakthrough, and a potential: who knows how far on this earth it could go via those tapes. And every time people get hold of them, they come alive spiritually, because it is the mind, and it is the Word, of God. And nothing is more important than the Word, and the Word; and, the word, and for us to get it out. And you would think that now everything should come together. But just like I expected, key features are being challenged.

However, I can also tell you the enormous victories. We have a victory over against a lot of attacks and undermining of Satan. And when somebody gets undermined, because they think there's something better out there in the world's religious system, and getting entangled in the life of the world, they think there's something better than the wisdom of God, in fulfilling your mission in life in Christian service. Then we have got a joint that isn't working – a joint that gets out of kilter. And all it takes is one of us not doing the provision; not providing the things you should be providing; or, not being engaged where you should be engaged, and the whole local body is hurt. And I guarantee you that in a place like this, every one of you is on a high priority list, by the fact that you're a supporter of this ministry. You're on a high priority list with Satan. Therefore, walk (to use the Bible's word) "circumspectly," which means looking here, and looking there, before you step off, and before you take a step.

Ephesians 4:16: "From whom Christ, the whole body being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love." With the undermining one of our people (the undermining of one of our believers), part of that body cannot be building itself up.

Then, in 2 Timothy 1:13-14, Paul says, "Retain the standard of sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. Guard, through the Holy Spirit Who dwells in us, the treasure which has been entrusted to you." Now, this is a rather pointed saying, because 2 Timothy is the end of the line. Paul is now going to be executed, and here he is. Timothy is this young man who is going to have to replace Paul. In 2 Timothy, he is told: "Guard through the Holy Spirit that treasure that dwells in you." What treasure? The Word of God – the instruction that he received from a child, when he sat there with his parents. And Timothy was one of those who never evaporated, just because he became a teenager. He was still there. And when he went into his adulthood, he was still there. He knew where the real gold was. And he was not fooled by the fool's gold that Satan puts out in the religious world.

Then there is 2 Timothy 2:15 (that famous verse): "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the Word of Truth."

Then, in 2 Timothy 3:14-17, Paul says to Timothy, "You, however, continue in the things you have learned, and become convinced of knowing from whom you have learned them, and that, from childhood, you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." And then he goes on, on the authority of all Scripture, the verse that we read a little while ago.

Then one more in Hebrews 10:23-24, the most important thing in a Christian's life is the Word of God, and the intake of God's mind into his mind: "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering. For He Who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stimulate one another in love and good deeds." This is Christian influencing Christian. How are you and I influencing other believers in this assembly? To stay away from the instruction in the Word of God; to waste their lives out into the world system; and, to get entrapped in living like the people of this world live, and losing your personal dignity and sense of value as a child of God?

In Hebrews 10:25, here is the key: "Not forsaking our own assembling together (not failing to go to church), as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the day drawing near." What day? The day of the rapture. All the more, we should be involved in what is going on.

So, here's just a series of verses put together, all of which go from the Lord's statement: "Everybody has to live by the Word of God," and then showing how God has made that possible in the church age as never before – the magnificent condition of Bible doctrine exposition, and the grace system of perception.

Now, we have pointed out that this issue of wisdom pertains to the condition and destiny of nations. Nations which have abandoned the wisdom of God, as revealed in the Scripture, have historically been destroyed by God. I want to read you a very sobering passage, and I hope you have your Bibles here. In 760 B.C., here is Israel, who had the revealed Scriptures of God, and had living prophets who spoke for God, and who were there on the scene, conveying to them what God wanted them to do, and what He did not want them to do, and how He warned them: "Don't imitate the people around you. Don't imitate these other nations. Don't follow their lifestyle. These people are the devil's people. God's morality is what is true, not their moral ways. They're immoral pigs. Why do you want to live like them? Their gods are false gods. They made them themselves. Those gods can do nothing. Why would you want to worship them?"

Well, do you think that Israel wouldn't do that? Let's read this chapter. This is an amazing part of the Word of God. Let's start in Isaiah 2:22. Isaiah says to these people of Israel, their leaders, and the way the people are following their national leaders: "Stop regarding man, whose breath of life is in His nostrils. For why should He be esteemed?" Where were they getting this wisdom? From human viewpoint wisdom from the old sin nature. And Isaiah has prepared the way, now, in this context, and says, "Stop listening to people who are talking out of their own wisdom, and not out of God's wisdom."

Isaiah says, "Do you realize the comparison you're making? You're talking to people who, if they don't take their next breath, they're a customer for the undertaker. Every breath – and that's all he is. He's just a breath away from death. And you're going to listen to someone who's that finite, and that limited, instead of the infinite eternal God?"

**The Breakdown of Government**

Now, here's why he said that to them. Here's where the nation had come by 760 B.C. And what this is, at heart, folks, is the breakdown of the government of Israel. This is so pertinent to our times that it is scary. The breakdown of the function of the society of Israel within the government of the theocracy.

Isaiah 3:1: "For behold, the Lord God of Hosts is going to remove from Jerusalem and Judah, both supply and support: the whole supply of bread, and the whole supply of water." God says, "I'm going to move in on you now, because of the sin of this society, because you abandoned the principles of loyalty to Me and to My word (the moral principles). You are worshiping the false gods. You are operating on human viewpoint principles in living your lives. Now, I'm going to start moving in on you." Why? What will I do? Well, God says, "You've had such good times. I'm going to send you a famine. I'm going to contaminate your water supplies."

People are all worried about Y2K, the year 2000 computer glitch. And people are being told to store water and to store food, and that there's going to be a great disruption.

Well, this was Isaiah's warning that Y2K has come upon them. And God says, "I'm going to cut you off, and you're going to wake up and find that the grocery stores are empty. You're going to find that the water supply makes you sick. And I'm going to cut off your very means of sustenance. Yes, you've been praising these gods. Now I'm going to cut you off.

"Furthermore, I'm going to hit your military. I'm going to undermine your military prowess, so that you now become an easy pray for your enemies." Does that sound familiar?

**Soldiers vs. Policemen**

Isaiah 3:1: "The mighty man and the warrior; the judge and the prophet; the diviner and the elder; the captain of 50 and the honorable man; the counselor; and, the expert artisan." All these people who make society run; all these who are in civil authority; and, all these who are in the military realm – they are all corrupted. And one way you corrupt your military is to take your military and use it for policemen. People who are not experienced in military matters don't understand that training to be a soldier requires certain characteristics, and attitudes, and techniques, and skills, which are not used in training to be a policeman. And if you take your soldiers, and you keep making them do policeman duty, they lose the fine edge of what it takes to be able to kill people, and to break things, that is required of a soldier, and that takes a high technique, and a degree of skill to be able to do, or there's no victory.

So, God says, "Now, I'm going to undermine your military, and these leaders of Israel were the ones responsible for that." They were probably bringing in female soldiers, to feminize the military in the process. And, at the end of verse three, it says: "And the skilled enchanter." God says, "I'm going to take these fortune tellers, that you've been going to find out about the future, and get advice. Your leaders are going to the sorcerers. They're not coming to Me. I'm going to give them a bunch of false information. You go ahead and speak to your enchanter, and are they ever going to point you down a blind alley, that's going to bring disaster on the nation."

Then He says, "I will make mere lads they're princes. I'm going to put youthful people in charge of them, or I'm going to put older people (middle-aged people) who are arrested adolescents. They are adolescents who have never grown up. And I'm going to put them in charge of you. That's the point. And capricious children will rule over them. The children will face their parents, and they will declare to them, "You are not my boss. You don't tell me what to do." And the parents will say, "Oh, I wish you wouldn't say that. I just wish you wouldn't." And people will be oppressed, each one by another, and each one by his neighbor. People are not going to be helpful to each other. People are going to be disloyal to one another.

Well: "The youth will storm against the elder, and the inferior against the honorable. The people who are inferior, and the people who are the non-producers are going to take action against the producers, so that they can have equality, and use the force of government to get the fruits of other men’s labors. That's what was happening in Israel.

Isaiah 3:6: "When a man lays hold of his brother, in his father's house, saying, "You have a cloak. You shall be our ruler. And these ruins will be under your charge." It's going to come to the point where they don't know who can lead them. The nation is going down in disrepair. The country is falling apart. The internal infrastructure is all breaking down in Israel. So, they're looking for somebody, and here this man says, "Here, you: you have a good suit of clothes. You look good out there. You have a cloak. You get out there. You're going to be our leader. A leader because you have a good suit of clothes? Well, just look around you. Just watch television. See how many of these guys are out there with those $7,000 to $8,000 suits. And that's what makes them our leaders. And people listen to them.

Isaiah 3:7-9: "On that day, will he protest saying, "I will not be your healer (that is, your leader, to solve these problems), for in my house, there is neither bread nor cloak." You're wrong. I don't even have anything to eat, let alone something to wear: "You should not appoint me ruler of the people, for Jerusalem has stumbled, and Judah has fallen, because their speech and their actions are against the Lord." Israel was saying the things that were in violation of the wisdom of God, and they're exalting themselves in their own human wisdom.

God says, "Fine. You're going to contradict Me? And you're going to call My moral code into question? You're going to call My divine institution for government into question? I'm going to deal with you accordingly." They rebel against His glorious presence. And that's what was so terrible here. The presence of God was there, evident to them, and they're rebelling against it: "The expression of their faces bears witness against them, and they display their sin like Sodom." Sodom said, "Here's our homosexuality. Here's our lesbianism in your face." And they were brazen about it. They did not hide it. They no longer were trying to conceal it. It was going to be openly thrust upon the public. And, in Israel, they were not only told, "You can't execute us anymore for this sin, even though the law requires that under the theocracy. And you can't do anything about it. And we're going to have public approval of our immoral lifestyle." They do not even conceal it.

"Woe to them, for they have brought evil on themselves." "And those who break the moral code of God do bring evil upon themselves, because there's a death sentence for these sins. While there's no theocracy to execute it, God does it Himself now with disease.

Isaiah 3:10-11: "Say to the righteous that it will go well with them, for they will eat the fruit of their actions." God says, "Now those of you who are loyal to Me, and to the Word of God, hang in there. Keep doing the right thing, no matter what goes on around you in your society. No matter what the other kids do, you stand straight and tall for Jesus Christ. Why? Because you're going to be supplied. You'll eat the fruit of your actions, meaning you'll be blessed. You'll have what you need. And your life will go on under God's care.

**Ahab and Jezebel**

"But woe to the wicked. It'll go badly with him, for what he deserves will be done to him (God will treat them accordingly, "all my people, their oppressors (the kids) are ruling over the adults. And how about this? "And the women rule over them." The time came in Israel where the women were running the show. The women were in authority over them. If they weren't in public office, or the women weren't running for the public office, their husbands were upfront. It was an Ahab and Jezebel-type of thing, where he had an unwholesome and weak leader – a self-indulgent man like Ahab, who would pout when he couldn't exercise his power to get what he wanted. But he had a pushy, brazen, heartless wife who got behind the scenes, and said, "You want Naboth's vineyard? What's wrong with you? I'll get it for you. I know how to make heads roll." And who was ruling in Israel under Ahab and Jezebel? It was Jezebel – not Ahab, the front man. It was Jezebel who was in charge. So, it was not beneath her to write the letters that accused Naboth of blasphemy, so as to get him executed, and to tell her husband to depend upon her, and then to run to him to be so happy to report that Naboth is dead: "You got his vineyard. I've gotten it for you. I've gotten that gang out, and gotten our own gang in there to run this thing.

And when Jehu rode up in his chariot, and threw her off the balcony, and then ran across her with his horses, the dogs came along sniffing, and they ate everything. The Bible, in 2 Kings 9:35, says, "Except her hands, that wrote that slanderous note; her feet, that gaily ran to tell the news to Ahab that she's got the vineyard for him; and, her head, that thought of these horrible, horrible deceits and vile actions. The dogs wanted none of those indeed.

"Your women rule over you. Oh my people, those who guide you lead you astray, and confuse the direction of your paths." What are we talking about? Bearing false witness. And in our television age, how easy it is to put out television ads that are telling the lie in such degree that the uninformed person really believes them after a while. And that was Adolf Hitler's principle: "Tell a lie, but make it a big one, and keep pounding it away through the public medium. And pretty soon everybody will get that in their head, and that's what they'll believe."

Isaiah 3:13-15 "The Lord arises to contend, and stands to judge the people." The Lord enters into judgment with the elders and the princes of His people: "It is you who have devoured the vineyard. The plunder of the poor is in your houses. What do you mean by crushing my people, and grinding the face of the poor," declared the Lord God of Hosts. Even the poor were no longer being treated with respect. Their families were not taking care of them as they were supposed to. And those who were in power and authority, who had the money, were taking advantage of the poor. They were berating (beating up on) those who were the helpless.

Isaiah 3:16-23. "Moreover, the Lord said, 'Because the daughters are proud (here come the women again), and walk with heads held high and seductive eyes." They would put on these long eyelashes, and then they would blink them, and they were very seductive and very attractive: "Then they go along with mincing steps." They walked with little shorty steps, and that looks very sexy: "And then they put the bangles on their feet." Those were these little jingly bells, and they would jingle: "Therefore, the Lord will afflict the scalp of the daughters or Zion with scabs." Holy-moly! There were scabs on these dressed-up dolls who rule the men, and who run things in the home, and in the nation now.

"And the Lord will make their foreheads bare." They're going to lose their hair. And there are going to be scabs – some kind of a disease: In that day, "The Lord will take away the beauty of their anklets; headbands; crescent ornaments; dangling earrings; bracelets; veils; headdresses; ankle chains; sashes; perfume boxes; amulets; finger rings; and, nose rings." Oh, there's a good one: nose rings. I wonder why that hasn't caught on with the boys who like to wear jewelry. I've often thought that they wear the earrings. Why don't they go up one on the girls, and come out with a nose ring? Of course, if you have a cold (a running nose), that poses a problem, but nose rings – I think that would add a class. If I were going to wear earrings, I would certainly get a nose ring. The girls would really be jealous then: "Festival robes; outer tunics; cloaks; money purses; hand mirrors; undergarments; turbans; and, veils." All of this stuff they possessed: all of their garments; all of their dressing up; and, all of their outward accouterments. This, they think (their costly garments) makes them leaders, and make them people of importance.

However, who is interviewed on TV, except the wealthy ones; the entertainers; the sports people; and, the people who are nothing, but who have money. And now they're important.

Isaiah 2:24, "Now, it will come about that instead of sweet perfume, there'll be putrefaction." These sores on their head are going to be runny, and the girls are going to stink: "Instead of a belt, they will have a rope around their neck, as they're led off into captivity. Instead of well-set hair, they will have a plucked-out scalp. Instead of fine clothes, they will have a donning of sackcloth. And branding instead of beauty." Their captors will take them, and they'll put a brand mark on them, like on a cow, and say, "You belong to me. You're my slave."

Isaiah 3:25-26, "Your men will fall by the sword. Your mighty ones, in battle. And her gates will lament and mourn. And deserted, she will sit on the ground." What a picture! The women rule. The men were wimps. The moral code of God was violated and held in contempt. They thumbed their nose at the divine institution of government. And everything got mixed up – the lines of authority. And they went with their human viewpoint, and they said, "This is better than God's point of view. And now, at the end, here these women are sitting in a huddled pile on the ground deserted, completely devastated.

That's why the wise women always say to the men, "You do what's right. You follow the Word of God." And when you enter into marriage, you never marry below your own state of spiritually. You never marry somebody who cannot walk with you in the things of the Lord. You don't try to take a sheep of God, and put it to one of the goats of Satan. It's a bad combination, and it's misery.

Women who understand the lines of authority of God do not go around pushing their husbands, Jezebel-like, to do the things that they want them to do, because they have superior wisdom. They don't. Only God has wisdom, and that's where the men have to get it.

Well, this becomes so bad – the devastation of the men). They're going to fall by the sword. The men who are the prime military, experienced, combat soldiers are the ones who are going to fall. They are your mighty ones in battle, and they're going to fall.

Well, this chapter actually closes with Isaiah 4:1. It's a bad chapter break there: "For seven women will take hold of one man in that day, saying, "We will eat our own bread, and wear our own clothes – only let us be called by your name, and take away our reproach. It was approach not to be married. It was a reproach in Israel to be in a position like that. So, here these women can't even find men. There are no men, because God has destroyed them because they were not leaders. And the result was national destruction for Israel.

760 B.C. became the watershed. From then, it was on the slippery slope to 70 A.D., when finally, Titus and the 10th Legion army, came in, and destroyed Jerusalem and the temple, and scattered the Jews worldwide, never to return until 1948, when the regathering that God had promised would begin after that, began, and is continuing to this day.

All those centuries of punishment, of suffering, and of destruction – For what? For a people who knew God in a very close and personal way, and all they had to do was just follow the guidelines that God laid out for them, for blessing: how to live within their business relationships; how to live within their marriage relationships; how to treat their children; how to respect the lines of authority; and, how to maintain justice within the civil authority. It was all there. It was all explained, but they simply could not rise to it.

Nations have come into being, who, even without direct access to the revelation of Scripture, have operated from memory that has come down from the past experience of nations. They've operated on the principles of God. And they have learned from human experience in the past, what brings blessing. And those things, strangely enough, are the very things that the Bible says: "This is the way you should live." And when nations did that, even without knowing that this was directly from the Word of God, and when they came into being, such as Rome, they were a magnificent culture. Rome was founded upon the realities of God's wisdom, even though they didn't know God. The glory of Rome, however, finally came to an end in the fifth century A.D., because it gradually abandoned the original principles upon which the Roman republic was based. And those principles, though they did not have it from Scripture, were the wisdom of God that had been handed down from the background of the experience of the human race and other nations. They saw what happened, and the nation was founded upon those things as the base of their nation, which was to bring blessing.

Well, Rome's demise was the result of, basically, five major factors in its national life, which were laid out so well by Edward Gibbon, in his Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. And it all began with, of all things, the same thing that we're suffering from in the United States today: the breakdown of the family unit. What did it say that Israel was in Isaiah? The kids are telling the parents where they're going to go; what they're going to do; where they'll be going to church; and, where they'll be going in this activity. The children are telling parents whether they're going to go to church or not, and whether they're going to be there for Christian service activities or not. And the wives are pushing the husbands that they want them to do this, and the husbands say, "That's not a good thing. That's not a wise thing. I don't care what you say." And the women say, "We don't have enough money. We don't want to be giving money for the Lord's work. We don't want to be giving those offerings. We have so many bills to pay. No, I don't want you to do that until the husband says, 'Okay, I'm a wimp. I'll do it your way." And what comes? Disaster.

That is a classic passage, in Isaiah 3. And it'll happen every time on a national level. It will happen to you on a personal level. You may count on it. You cannot break the laws of God, especially if you are privileged to be in the church age, and to be a member of the body of Christ, where you have doctrinal illumination, and information such as no other group of human beings has ever had in history before. We know God. We don't see those magnificent, outward evidences of God, in those miraculous ways, that Israel did, but we see that same power of God; the same moving of the Holy Spirit; and, that same intuitive guidance. We're very much aware that He's there. And we're very much aware when we listen to him, as the result of the Word of God. We're very much aware of what we should do and what we should not do.

It is a dangerous game to ignore the Word of God. And for you as a Christian, there's one other thing I need to warn you about. And I want to warn our kids on the campout, because of the things they're going to be informed on at this campout. I'm going to tell them: If you violate these things now, then the judgment of God upon you is going to be much greater than had you not attended this campout. Scripture says that people in hell will experience different degrees of punishment, depending on how much information of truth they had from the Word of God. And for the Christian, it is the same thing. To the degree that you have turned your back upon the principles of the Word of God and the will of God for you, your rewards at the Judgment Seat of Christ will be that much less, and your eternity that much less magnificent.

God is justice, and we should never forget that.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1995

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