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Dear Brethren,

Dolores and I traveled to Texas the third week in February, where we visited our daughter, Rachelle, and her husband, Chad—and enjoyed our grandsons Jeremy and Zachery. On the Sabbath of February 21 we had services in Waco, Texas, where we had 90 in attendance. The next day it was on to Houston where 40 brethren assembled for our meeting.

I had the opportunity to preach two messages in each location. Interestingly, circumstances presented a special opportunity for a sermon on marriage. As it turned out, Chad's brother, Branden Alexander, is engaged to marry Alisa Bohnert—the daughter of Norbert and Denise Bohnert (Norbert is our elder in Lethbridge, Canada). Alisa was there visiting Branden and his parents Andy and Elizabeth Alexander. So, in preparation for their wedding in May, I gave a message on *God's Sacred Marriage Covenant*. That afternoon I brought a message on *The Covenant of Eternal Life*. In Houston, I brought two messages on *The True Riches of God*. All four sermons are on the enclosed CD along with *The Covenant of Death #1 & 2*.

Since converting from cassette tapes to CDs, we are now able to send out *more* sermons and studies for *less*. Because we can include up to 12 (or sometimes more) messages on a single CD, we are in the process of digitizing all the sermons and study series that I have done over the years. For example, the *Book of Hebrews Series* required 39 cassette tapes—but only three CDs! This not only saves time, but also a great deal of money—allowing us to get more “bang for the buck.”

Booklet: As with last month's mailing, we are including a reformatted booklet: *The Grace of God in the Bible*. This booklet has been available for years in a larger, 8.5 x 11-inch format. The resized booklet contains the same information, but includes updated scriptural references to conform to the new Bible. A major reason we are utilizing the smaller format is lower mailing costs. The cost per unit for the larger booklet is \$1.51, while the smaller booklets can be mailed for 59 cents each—a substantial savings of 92 cents per booklet.

Pocket Holy Day Calendars: Last month we sent you two holy day calendars as book-markers. Many brethren, however, have requested “Pocket Holy Day Calendars”—which they can carry in their wallets or purses. For those of you in the USA, we have included two “Pocket Holy Day Calendars” in this mailing; those of you overseas will receive yours in a later mailing. Because they are business-card size, you may have to look carefully in the envelope to find them. If you need any more, feel free to request them, as we had 5000 printed.

Our National Problems Are Not Physical—They Are Spiritual: The nations of the world are confronted with massive economic and social problems unparalleled in human history. World leaders are using every means at their disposal in their attempts to solve these gigantic problems. But nothing seems to be working. They harder they work at solving our problems—the more trillions they spend attempting to rescue our economies—the *worse* and more *entangled* the problems become! *Why?* Because when humans *reject* God and *refuse* to believe and obey His laws and commandments, they are **left to their own devices which always fail**—for indeed “there is a way which seems right to a man, but the end thereof *is* the way of death” (Prov. 14:12). Therefore, our real problems are not economic and social—**THEY ARE SPIRITUAL!** The nations of the world have forsaken God, rejected His rule in their individual lives and in their governments. They hate God. They mock Him. They abhor and reject His laws and commandments.

God inspired the ancient prophet Isaiah to prophesy of mankind's insoluble crises during these end times: “Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened that it cannot save, nor is His ear heavy that it cannot hear. **But your iniquities have come between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you,** that He will not hear, for your hands are defiled

with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue has muttered perverseness. None calls for justice, nor does anyone plead for truth; they trust in vanity and speak lies” (Isa. 59:1-4).

God is not far away, but sin and iniquity have cut mankind off from God! Men want to go their own way, and make and follow their own devices which are laden with iniquity—ways which will never work. Isaiah continues to lay bare the spiritual problems of our times: **“They conceive mischief and bring forth iniquity.** They hatch adders’ eggs and weave the spider’s web; he who eats their eggs dies, and that which is crushed breaks out into a viper. Their webs shall not become clothing, nor shall they cover themselves with their works; their works *are* works of iniquity, and the acts of violence *are* in their hands.

“Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood; their thoughts *are* thoughts of iniquity; wasting and destruction *are* in their paths. They have not known the way of peace, and *there is* no justice in their ways. They have made crooked paths for themselves; whoever goes therein shall not know peace. **Therefore justice is far from us; nor does righteousness overtake us. We wait for light, but behold, darkness; for brightness, *but* we walk in deep shadows. We grope along the wall like the blind, and we grope as if *we had* no eyes. We stumble at noonday as in the night; among those who are strong, we are like dead men”** (Isa. 59:4-10).

Such is the state of the nations of the world today. Their problems are *spiritual*—not physical or economic. None is exempt! Little do they realize that God is actively judging every nation on earth at all times.

How God Judges the Nations: When studying politics, government and national events and trends, very few analysts understand *why* things are the way they are—because they are utilizing a *human* perspective. Our leaders only want political victory—or some compromise in order to please the majority of their constituents and placate their opponents. As leaders, their decisions are greatly lacking in judgment and miss the mark, because they do not understand the truth of how God views and judges the nations of the world.

In the Bible, God makes it very clear that at *all times* He is actively judging the nations by His laws and commandments. As He told Jeremiah, He rewards accordingly with blessings or cursings: **“If at any time I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck it up and to pull it down, and to destroy it; if that nation, against whom I have spoken, will turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do to them. And if at any time I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build it and to plant it; if it does evil in My sight, that it not obey My voice, then I will repent of the good with which I said I would do them good”** (Jer. 18:7-10).

Since God is the Sovereign Ruler of the universe, *He* sends blessings or cursings upon nations according to His judgments—based on their obedience to his laws and commandments, or their disobedience and evil doings (see Deut. 28 and Lev. 26).

There are two outstanding examples of national repentance in the Bible—where both the leaders and the people repented of their evil when warned by God. In both cases, God—according to His word—accepted their repentance and relented of the evil He had pronounced against them. The first example occurred during the days of King Josiah of Judah, as recorded in II Chronicles 34. The second instance is when God sent Jonah as a prophet to warn both the king and the people of the nation of Assyria. In both examples the kings repented and called upon all the people to repent of their wickedness and iniquities and obey God.

An important key in understanding how God judges the nations is that He expects people to keep His laws and commandments in the letter of the law. The more commandments they keep as a people or nation, the more blessings they receive from God. The more they transgress against God’s laws, the greater the degree of cursings they receive from God.

Today, when we look at the political intrigue, social trends and human events taking place around the world, we need to view them from God’s perspective, through the lens of Scripture. Otherwise, we simply will not understand what we are witnessing. As we examine the *fruits* of America’s new president—and the fruits of the American people—we must do so from God’s perspective. This will enable us to more clearly see the *true causes* behind the profound events taking place around us.

The Fruits of the Policies of the Obama Administration: There is no question that we face unprecedented times—here in America and around the world. Moreover, it is apparent that the policies of Barrack Hussein Obama—who has been in office now for only two months—will profoundly affect every American and have significant ramifications for the rest of the world. Rather than looking at specific issues of the Obama administration, we should focus on the *spiritual condition* that underlies the political and economic actions being taken. The truth is, political and economic issues are always a reflection of spiritual problems and sins—individually and collectively. Jesus said, “You shall know them by their fruits.” Thus, we must examine the fruits of this new administration and judge accordingly—through the Word of God.

Obama campaigned on the promise of “hope” and “change we can believe in.” As a master of doublespeak, the rhetoric of his campaign was lofty, like brightly painted word pictures. Smooth talk and hypocritical lies, indeed. The reality, however, is that Obama is rapidly turning toward Socialism (perhaps it should be spelled Commie-Socialism) as evidenced by his blatant socialistic policies and appointments of radical leftists to his Cabinet. Moreover, the massive tax increases proposed by Obama will lead to a staggering seven trillion dollars in deficit spending over the next two years. That is more money than all the Presidents and Congresses have spent since the founding of this nation! Undoubtedly, it will lead to the collapse of the dollar and the destruction of America as we know it—with dire consequences for the rest of the world. (I will cover *economic news* in a sermon or two in the near future.)

Understand this: It is *impossible* to resolve debt problems *caused* by over-borrowing by borrowing even greater amounts of money—which in reality does not exist! The Federal Reserve will have to print such money—which means it will have no backing of real wealth, gold or silver. Furthermore, countries such as China that have loaned America money in the past by buying US government bonds and other debt instruments, will soon no longer be willing or able to buy more of our debt. As a result, the economic situation will only become much worse. It is an impossibility that the proposed mammoth deficit spending can restore an economy already drowning in debt. Lying and deceit *caused* the massive debt problem in the first place. Additional lies and deceit *creating more debt* is a recipe for destruction.

Obama is simultaneously creating the greatest expansion of government in our history. His mandated restrictions and controls over businesses—never before seen in America—are creating an overbearing, intrusive, bureaucratic government bent on controlling the lives of Americans. Even Vladimir Putin, Prime Minister of Russia, warned Obama not to take this road, noting that the USSR’s 70-year experiment with communism was a colossal failure—bathed in the blood of 50 million citizens slaughtered to enforce the will of the government.

Homosexual Agenda: As official policy, Obama is promoting the homosexual agenda at all levels of government, and has even promised new laws for the enforcement of non-discrimination and acceptance. However, **no civilization in history has ever survived blatant, rampant, widespread homosexuality. As happened to Sodom and Gomorrah, God served notice that when people and nations embrace such perversions as normal, they have signed their own death warrant via God’s fiery judgment.**

Open acceptance of this kind of abominable “life style” always begins with the approval of religious leaders. Obama sent a message to the world—but primarily to God, with arrogance and contemptuousness—by having Episcopalian Bishop Maurice Robinson, who as an outspoken homosexual is “married” to another man, bring the opening invocation at his inauguration. The apostle Jude, the half-brother of Jesus, writes of God’s punishment for this kind of ungodly behavior: “For certain men [religious leaders] have stealthily crept in, those who long ago have been written about, condemning *them* to this judgment. *They are* ungodly men, who are perverting the grace of our God, *turning it* into licentiousness, and are personally denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.

“But I myself want to remind you, though you once understood this, that the Lord, af-

ter saving a people out of *the* land of Egypt, the second time destroyed those who did not believe. And the angels who did not keep their own original domain, but deserted their habitation, He is holding in eternal bonds under darkness unto the judgment of *the* great day. **Just as Sodom and Gomorrah—and the cities surrounding them, in the same manner as them—having given themselves over to sexual debaucheries, and having gone after different flesh, are themselves exhibited as a *perpetual* example of undergoing *the* punishment of eternal fire, in the same way also, these dreamers of *filthy dreams* are defiling *the* flesh, and are declaring as invalid *the* lordship of God, and are blaspheming *the* divine powers”** (Jude 3-11).

Obama Promotes Infanticide: Obama has always supported abortion at any time during a woman’s pregnancy—even partial-birth abortion at full term. Worse yet, he supports allowing the death of a live-born infant who survives a botched abortion by denying any medical care be given to the baby so it may survive. As a senator of the state of Illinois, he voted *twice* not to allow any medical care to be given to babies who survive a botched abortion. That is infanticide! Recently, in outlining his first budget, Obama showed his true character by authorizing \$400 million for “Planned Parenthood” abortion clinics—as well as monies to other nations to assist them with the costs of abortions. Yes, Obama’s actions declare that his “show front” nominal “Christianity” is nothing but abject hypocrisy—as he arrogantly mocks God and His Word.

Without a doubt, the majority of Americans do not realize how evil and abominable abortion is in the eyes of God. It is government-sanctioned premeditated murder of the most innocent, helpless human beings—the infant in its mother’s womb, God’s special creation made in His image. While the US government campaigns for the protection of the environment, they wantonly murder and destroy the greatest creation of God by the millions—unborn babies (over 50 million to date in the USA alone!). Yet, they hypocritically say they want to rescue the polar bears, whales and even tidal mice from global warming. While the Obama administration portrays itself as caring for people and the environment, it is marching down the path of Nazi Germany, which can only end in the destruction of this nation.

Few people have ever read of God’s virulent anger against the nations of Israel and Judah for the “birth control” sacrifice of their children as burnt offerings to the sun-god Baal: “ ‘For the children of Israel and the children of Judah have only done evil before Me from their youth. For the children of Israel have only provoked Me to anger with the work of their hands,’ says the LORD. ‘For this city has been to Me as a cause of My anger and of My fury from the day that they built it even to this day; that I should remove it from before My face **because of all the evil of the children of Israel and of the children of Judah, which they have done to provoke Me to anger, they, their kings, their princes, their priests, and their prophets, and the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem** [their heinous sins permeated the whole society—from the greatest to the least]. And they have turned the back to Me, and not the face; though I taught them, again and again, yet they have not hearkened to receive instruction. But **they set their abominations in the house which is called by My name, to defile it. And they built the high places of Baal, in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to cause their sons and their daughters to sacrifice their sons and daughters which I did not command them, nor did it come into My mind that they should do this abomination, to cause Judah to sin’** ” (Jer. 32:30-35).

As a result of their intractable sin of child sacrifice—along with a multitude of other sins—God sentenced them to destruction and death. Thus, Jerusalem and Judah were destroyed and the people sent into exile in Babylon. Since they delighted in the heinous, abominable fire-sacrificing of their children and infants to Baal, God poured their sins back upon their own heads. Notice God’s stinging indictment against them: “Thus says the LORD, ‘Go and get a potter’s earthen jar, and *assemble some* of the elders of the people and of the elders of the priests. And go out to the valley of the son of Hinnom by the entry of Potsherd Gate. And there declare the words that I shall tell you’ ” (Jer. 19:1-2).

Verses 3-5: “And say, ‘Hear the Word of the LORD, O kings of Judah, and people of Jerusalem. Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, **“Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, which shall cause the ears of him who hears it to tingle. Because they have forsaken Me, and have profaned this place and have burned incense in it to other gods**

whom neither they nor their fathers have known, nor the kings of Judah, and have filled this place with the blood of innocents. They have also built the high places of Baal to burn their sons with fire for burnt offerings to Baal, which I never commanded nor spoke, nor did it come into My mind.” ’ ’ ’

Verses 6-13: “ ‘Therefore, behold, the days come,’ says the LORD, ‘that this place shall no more be called Tophet, nor the valley of the son of Hinnom, but, The Valley of Slaughter. **And I will make the counsel of Judah and Jerusalem come to nothing in this place, and I will cause them to fall by the sword before their enemies, and by the hands of those who seek their lives. And I will give their dead bodies to be food for the birds of the heavens, and for the beasts of the earth.** And I will make this city a waste and a hissing. Everyone who passes by shall be astonished and shall hiss because of all its plagues.

“ ‘And I will cause them to eat the flesh of their *own* sons and the flesh of their *own* daughters, and they shall each one eat the flesh of his friend in the siege and distress, with which their enemies and those who seek their lives shall afflict them. Then you shall break the jar before the eyes of the men who go with you, and shall say to them, “Thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘Even so I will break this people and this city, as *one* breaks a potter’s vessel that cannot be made whole again. And they shall bury *them* in Tophet until there is no place *left* to bury. I will do this to this place,’ says the LORD, ‘and to its people, and make this city as Tophet. And the houses of Jerusalem, and the houses of the kings of Judah, shall be as defiled as the place of Tophet because of all the houses on whose roofs they have burned incense to all the host of the heavens, and have poured out drink offerings to other gods.’ ” ’ ’ ’

The People Are Also Responsible: We need to realize that our problems are *not* the result of governmental policies alone. Rather, the blame rests squarely on the people of the nation as a whole—especially the young people, who have wholly embraced sinful values and beliefs as a way of life. This is why they elected Obama as president, because they believe exactly as he does. They love their sinful lifestyles and want the government to support the way they live. They are the product of previous generations of those who put sinful pleasure ahead of moral principles: First, the Woodstock generation of the late 1960s—rock music, sex, drugs and rebellion; in turn, their children blossomed into a liberal, God-rejecting generation, having been nurtured in godless state schools on sex education, drugs and satanic hard rock music—while looking to the state to provide them with welfare and free benefits. And now we have the current generation of young adults, 18 and up, the majority of whom have further degenerated into sex, hard satanic rock and rap music, alcohol, drugs and daredevil pleasures. From kindergarten, they too were taught sex education—and to look to condoms, birth control pills and abortion as acceptable methods of birth control. Their educators have upheld and glorified homosexual behavior as an alternate life style for both sexes.

Overcome with sexual promiscuity—the more partners the better—marriage has been cast off as unnecessary. The result: nearly 50% of babies are now born out of wedlock in the USA. Living together without marriage and single motherhood have become the norm. Encouraged by feminist organizations, single motherhood is in fact upheld as a badge honor. With husbands and fathers no longer considered vital to the family, they are denigrated and ridiculed—then cast aside and replaced by the state. Today, welfare programs provide money, food, housing and healthcare as if the government was a substitute “father.” Single mothers are actually *married*—to the government, the new father/nanny state.

In godless state-funded schools, children are not taught the true history of this nation. Neither are they taught anything about God, because the public school system has been scrubbed clean of any reference to God and prayer—with the exception of Muslim prayers—by mandate of the Supreme Court. Now with the advent of personal computers, the Internet, cell phones and Blackberries, children are given over to their own devices, to further rebel against their parents and society, destroying their lives. They are taught to accept evil and wickedness as the norm for good—thereby becoming willing captives of Satan and the occult. The Word of God proclaims: **“Woe to those who call evil good and good evil; who put darkness for light and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter! Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight! Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink: Who justify the wicked for a bribe, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!**

“Therefore as the fire devours the stubble, and the flame burns up the chaff; their root shall be like rottenness, and their blossoms shall go up like dust **because they have cast away the law of the LORD of hosts, and despised the Word of the Holy One of Israel.** Therefore, the anger of the LORD is kindled against His people, and He has stretched out His hand against them, and has stricken them...” (Isa. 5:20-25).

This passage describes those who voted Obama into office. Elsewhere in Isaiah, God aptly describes this present generation: “And I will give **young lads to be their princes, and capricious children shall rule over them.** And the people shall be crushed, every man by another, and every man by his neighbor; the **young shall rise up against the old, and the base against the honorable.... The look of their faces witnesses against them; and they declare their sin like Sodom.** They do not hide *it!* Woe to their soul! For they have rewarded evil to themselves.... **Woe to the wicked!** For the evil doing of his hand will be given [back] to him. *As for* My people, **children are their oppressors, and women rule over them.** Oh, My people, **those who lead you cause you to err and destroy the way of your paths**” (Isa. 3:4-5, 9, 11-12).

Isaiah continues God’s warning that *unless there is vast repentance* of our national and personal sins, from the greatest to the least, He will execute his correcting judgments against us with fury! “**Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for the LORD has spoken,** ‘I have reared and brought up children, but they have rebelled against Me. The ox knows his owner, and the donkey his master’s crib; *but* Israel does not know *Me*; My people do not understand.’ **Ah, sinful nation, a people burdened with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children who deal corruptly! They have forsaken the LORD; they have provoked the Holy One of Israel to anger; they have gone away backward**” (Isa. 1:2-4) Claiming we are “good Americans, good Brits, or good Aussies” will not cut it with God. That is not true repentance toward God, and such claims are boastful and self-righteousness. Unless our nations *genuinely* repent, God’s correction will continue to come like the waves of the sea—one right after the other. And the final wave will be a tsunami of total destruction (Deut. 28 and Lev. 26).

God is giving us *time* and *space* to repent—while pleading with our nations: “**Why should you be stricken any more? You will revolt more and more; the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even to the top of the head there is no soundness in it; only wounds and bruises and putrefying sores; they have not been closed, nor bound up, nor soothed with ointment.**

“Your country *is* a desolation, your cities *are* burned with fire. Strangers devour your land right in your *very* presence, and *it is* wasted, as overthrown by strangers. And the daughter of Zion is left as a booth in a vineyard, like a hut in a garden of cucumbers, like a besieged city” (Isa. 1:5-8).

God continues to implore the modern-day descendant nations of Israel to repent and stop being sanctimonious in their false religions—which they brazenly and blasphemously practice in their churches, just as ancient Israel did at the temple of God. Likewise, many who consider themselves to be “righteous”—because they are *religious* and *claim to believe* in God—are actually *living in sin* themselves. How so? Because they reject and refuse to keep God’s holy seventh-day Sabbath, the Christian Passover and God’s annual holy days. They think they are righteous because they keep Sunday—Baal’s day of worship; they partake of the Lord’s Supper/communion/Eucharist—which actually honors the sun god (Satan) and not the true God; and they observe all the satanic occult holidays—Christmas, Easter, Halloween, etc. All of these pagan holidays and forms of worship are *sin* and unacceptable to God!

God is calling *everyone* to repentance—the blatant sinners as well as those who *think* they are righteous just because they are “religious” and “profess Jesus”—but who refuse to keep God’s commandments. Here is His message to them today, just as it was for ancient Israel: “**Hear the Word of the LORD, rulers of Sodom; give ear to the law of our God, people of Gomorrah.** ‘To what purpose *is* the multitude of your sacrifices to Me?’ says the LORD; ‘I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I do not delight in *the blood of* bulls, or of lambs, or of he-goats. **When you come to appear before Me, who has required this at your hand, to trample My courts? Bring no more vain sacrifices; incense is an abomination to Me—new moon and [your] Sabbath, the calling of assemblies; I cannot endure iniquity along with the solemn assembly!**

“ **Your new moons and your appointed feasts My soul hates; they are a trouble to Me; I am weary to bear *them*. And when you spread forth your hands, I will hide My eyes from you; yea, when you make many prayers, I will not hear; your hands are full of blood** ’ ” (Isa. 1:10-15).

God is furious with such *false*, rebellious and sanctimonious forms of worship—which embrace all of the pagan occult days of worship! *Why?* BECAUSE THEY ARE SIN! THEY ARE AN ABOMINATION TO GOD! Here is what God thinks of them: “**I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies....** Take the noise of your songs away from Me; for I will not hear the melody of your harps” (Amos 5:21, 23).

Jeremiah perfectly lays bare the multitude of sins which our nations commit every day. We transgress the laws and commandments of God wantonly—practicing sin, living in sin, wallowing in sin, multiplying and exalting sin and wickedness as though it were normal. Yet, in denouncing our sins, God calls us to *repent* and *amend* our ways! We need to apply the following words to ourselves individually, examine ourselves and repent to God the Father and Jesus Christ with all our hearts and minds:

“Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, ‘Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place. **Do not trust in lying words**, saying, “The temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD *are* these.” [Today we would say, “We’re Americans!” “We’re Brits!” or “We’re Aussies!”] For if you thoroughly amend your ways and your doings; if you thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbor; *if* you do not oppress the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and do not shed innocent blood in this place, nor walk after other gods to your hurt; then I will cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, forever and ever.

“ **Behold, you trust in lying words that cannot profit. Will you steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense to Baal, and walk after other gods whom you do not know; and then come and stand before Me in this house which is called by My name, and say, “We are delivered to do all these abominations”?** Has this house [the modern-day nations of the House of Israel], which is called by My name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, even I have seen it,’ says the LORD” (Jer. 7:3-11).

As a result of our sins, God declares: “Yet you have not called upon Me, O Jacob; much less have you troubled yourself about Me, O Israel.... [Rather] **you have made Me serve with your sins; you have wearied Me with your iniquities.** [However,] I, *even* I, *am* He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake, and will not remember your sins. **Put Me in remembrance; let us plead together; declare yourself, that you may be justified**” (Isa. 43:22, 24-26).

Not only are we to *remember* the true God, but He calls on our nations to repent deeply with prayer and fasting, confessing our sins and returning to Him: “ **Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do good; seek judgment, reprove the oppressor. Judge the orphan, plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together,**’ says the LORD. ‘Though your sins are as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be like wool; **if you are willing and obedient**, you shall eat the good of the land’ ” (Isa. 1:16-19).

Again, through the prophet Ezekiel, God warns the wicked to turn from their sins and pleads with Israel to repent: “But, if you warn the wicked of his way, to turn from it; if he does not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity, but you have delivered your soul. And you, son of man, speak to the house of Israel. Thus *shall* you speak, saying, ‘When our transgressions and our sins *are* on us, and we are wasting away in them, how then shall we live?’ **Say to them, ‘As I live,’ says the Lord GOD, ‘I have no delight in the death of the wicked, except that the wicked turn from his way, and live. Turn you, turn you from your evil ways; for why will you die, O house of Israel?’** ” (Ezek. 33:9-11).

If we *refuse* to truly repent to God the Father and Jesus Christ, the sword (war) will devour us—as is already happening on our southern border with Mexico. “ ‘But if you refuse and rebel, you shall be devoured *with* the sword;’ for the mouth of the LORD has spoken *it*. How has the faithful city become a harlot? *It was* full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it—but now murderers. Your silver has become dross, your wine mixed with water; **your rul-**

ers *are* rebellious, and companions of thieves; everyone loves a bribe, and is pursuing rewards; they do not judge the orphan, nor does the cause of the widow come before them. And the Lord, the LORD of Hosts, the Mighty One of Israel says, ‘Alas! I Myself will vent My wrath upon My foes, and avenge Myself of My enemies’ ” (Isa. 1:20-24).

If there is no profound repentance by our nations, from the greatest to the least, then God’s heavy hand of correction will not be turned back. In truth, the religious, civic and educational leaders have created a rebellious generation that will not listen to God. Yes, thinking they can save themselves, they have their own self-willed agenda. Yet, in the face of correction, they turn around and despise God, His word and His punishment: “ ‘Woe to the rebellious children,’ says the LORD, ‘who carry out a plan, but not of Me; and who form an alliance, but not of My Spirit, that they may **add sin to sin**.... [This] *is* a rebellious people, lying children. **They are children who will not hear the law of the LORD**; who say to the seers, “See not,” and to the prophets, “Do not prophesy to us right things, speak to us smooth things, prophesy illusions; go out of the way, turn aside out of the path, **cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us**.” ’

“Therefore thus says the Holy One of Israel, ‘Because you have despised this word, and trust in oppression and perverseness, and rely on them; therefore **this iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking comes suddenly, in an instant**. And He shall break it as the breaking of the potters’ vessel that *is* smashed in pieces. He shall not spare, so that there shall not be found in the fragments a shard to take fire from the hearth, or to take water out of the pit’ ” (Isa. 30:1, 9-14). The time is near, the correction of God is upon us. It is evident that God will not spare his correction against our nations, but there is *hope* for those who *personally* repent of their sins and believe and trust in God the Father and Jesus Christ.

Hope for the Remnant Who Do Repent and Turn to God: Within the *remnant* God speaks of—“Except the LORD of hosts had left us **a very small remnant**, we would have been as Sodom; we would have become like Gomorrah” (Isa. 1:9)—there are two groups: **First**, those individuals God is *now calling* to repentance, but who have not yet been baptized. It is highly unlikely that we will see repentance among our national leaders—both religious and political—in America, Britain, Australia, Canada and New Zealand. But such repentance *should* start with the leaders—Obama, etc. Yet, there are individuals who will heed God’s warnings and repent. They are the remnant who are *willing to turn to God*.

As Scripture plainly shows, everyone *who is willing* can examine themselves and confess their sins to God: “ ‘Therefore even now,’ says the LORD, ‘**turn to Me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning. Yes, rend your heart and not your garments, and return to the LORD your God: for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and He repents of the evil**. Who knows *if* He will return and repent and leave a blessing behind Him...’ ” (Joel 2:12-14).

Are *you* ready to turn from your ways, repent and seek God with all your heart? If you are, *we can help*. You need to be baptized by complete immersion in water for the remission of your sins and receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38).

The **second** group within the remnant is the “Congregation of God,” those who have previously answered God’s call, repented of sin and been baptized—and are actively serving Him. They personally *know* God the Father and Jesus Christ; moreover, they understand *why* God’s loving correction is now coming upon the modern nations of Israel: “Therefore hear, you nations, and know, O congregation [among them], what *will happen* to them [the modern nations of Israel among whom you live]. Hear, O earth; behold, I will bring evil on this people, even the fruit of their thoughts **because they have not hearkened to My words, nor to My law, but have rejected it**” (Jer. 6:18-19).

However, many of them are backsliders and need to repent—and restore a strong relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ.

When anyone truly repents and is baptized by full immersion in water, he or she enters into an irrevocable covenant relationship with God the Father through Jesus Christ by His sacrifice and shed blood. They are *true* Christians, not just “professing Christians” in name only, and they are under the grace of God. They are justified—that is, put in *right standing* with God—and receive the begetting of the Holy Spirit from God the Father. They then begin to de-

velop a spiritual relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ through prayer and Bible Study, as well as through keeping the laws and commandments of God as spiritually amplified by Jesus Christ. This is how the true Christian worships God in *Spirit and Truth* as Jesus taught (John 4:23-24).

Those who are truly Christ's, as just described, are called *saints* because they have been sanctified by receiving God's Holy Spirit. They are the ones who are described as *righteous* in the Bible.

During times of trouble, as we see in the world today, or during various trials, God promises true Christians that He and Jesus Christ, as well as the holy angels, will watch over them. Genuine Christians trust in God and claim His promises, such as this one from Isaiah: "Say to the righteous that *it shall be* well with him; for they shall eat the fruit of their doings" (Isa. 3:10). In times of trouble, distress, or when there is violence all around, God's promises in Psalm 91 give us comfort, courage and hope. There is little doubt that we will be facing such times in the near future, and we need to *know* and *claim* God's promises. "He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, 'He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in Whom I will trust.' **Surely He will deliver you from the fowler's trap and from the destroying pestilence. He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you shall trust.** His truth shall be your shield and buckler.

"You shall not be afraid of the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flies by day, nor for the plague that walks in darkness, nor for the destruction laying waste at noonday. A thousand shall fall at your side and ten thousand at your right hand; it shall not come near you. Only with your eyes you shall behold and see the recompense of the wicked.

"Because you have made the LORD, Who is my refuge, even the Most High, your habitation, no evil shall befall you, nor shall any plague come near your dwelling, for He shall give His angels charge over you to keep you in all your ways. They shall bear you up in their hands, lest you dash your foot against a stone. You shall tread upon the lion and asp; the young lion and the jackal you shall trample underfoot. 'Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore I will deliver him; I will set him on high because he has known My name. He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honor him. With long life I will satisfy him, and show him My salvation' " (Psa. 91:1-16).

Brethren, trust in the Lord at all times and continue to look to God for protection and safety in the troubling times ahead.

Once again, thank you for your continued help in serving the brethren, and for your tithes and offerings that you generously send. May God the Father and Jesus Christ be with you and bless you in all things with love, grace and understanding.

With Christ Jesus in love,

Fred R. Coulter
FRC