

It's Not the Economy Stupid—It's God!

Fred R. Coulter—April 25, 2009

This is a special sermon to go along with the ad in the *Washington Times*: “It's Not the Economy Stupid—It's God.”

We're living in a time when people are wondering how did we get the government that we have? How did the banking system go down the way that it went down? Why are all of these things coming upon us? A lot of people have done research and they understand that they now have in place enough executive orders to slam down a police state on the United States of America that would make the Third Reich look tame. If you don't believe that, go online and look up the executive orders available to the president. It doesn't matter if it's Obama or whoever it may be, they are there.

Also, the Department of Homeland Security, what did they do? Remember the big uproar last week about that they said, ‘We have to watch out for these returning vets, because they may be possible terrorists.’ That's only part of the story. Do you know who else are terrorists, possible terrorists?

- those who keep the Sabbath
- those who believe in the Bible
- those who believe in the return of Jesus Christ,
- those who believe the United States and Britain are Israel

Now why do you suppose that they included all of these people in the big sweep on it? Because there's probably a part in the Telephone Surveillance Act that if they are designated as a suspected terrorist, they can tap your phones, they can open your mail. Why are all of these things happening? How did we come to a point where we're losing all of our freedoms; we are losing our economic well being; we have high unemployment; we have banks that are broken; we have corporations in bankruptcy; we have liars and cheats and thieves who have been ripping off money, not to say nothing about what the Federal Reserve has done to the nation. Why are all of these things happening? And everyone thinks, ‘We've got to fix it with new votes. Let's put other people in there.’ Let me remind you, **both parties are responsible**. And all the American people combined are responsible, because it's not the economy, stupid, **it is God!**

So let's look in the Bible and let's see how God thinks, what He is doing, why these things have come upon us, and what we need to do as individuals. Because you all know the politicians are not going to change. You all know that all the difficulties and problems that we have in the nation are because of the sins of too many people. A lot of

people who think they are right and good and upstanding citizens, nevertheless, before God are practicing sinners. And someone would say, ‘**You mean me?**’ *The answer is yes!*

Let's first of all start out from God's point of view. Let's understand that there is nothing that we have that we didn't receive, and it all came from God. Let's come to the book of Psalms 24; let's see what God says and let's see how God defines it. Here's where we need to begin. Let's not talk about **our** country, **our** state, **our** county, **our** city, **my** house, **my** children. **Let's start with God.**

Psalms 24:1: “The earth is the LORD'S... [God made it. God created it. He made us after His image for a great and tremendous purpose, but as we will see people have turned their backs on God.] ...and the fullness of it, the world, and those who dwell in it... [Every human being is a special creation of God.] ...for He has founded it upon the seas and established it upon the waters” (vs 1-2).

Now let's come to Isaiah 40 and let's see what God says. Let's see the message of God to man. He talks here about some idols. Now we have lots of idols and, of course, the biggest idols that we have are self. Isn't that true? Remember this, whenever you reject God and reject the Truth of God and reject His Word, you are making yourself greater than God. So ask yourself a question, what have you done? And all of those who don't want the laws of God, the commandments of God, the Truth of God, the Bible, they don't want it taught in the schools, they don't want it taught in the churches, they don't want it taught publicly. And people, if they hear the Word of God, some of them will even sue you because they're offended! Let's see what God says. Let's get a greater perspective of Him.

Let's come here to Isaiah 40:12. So if you think that you are strong; if you think that you are smart; if you think that you are intelligent, think again. I have a DVD in my hand called *The Privileged Planet*; and yes, indeed, the earth is the privileged planet because God made it that way. He set before all of us life and death, good and evil and we are to choose. The majority of people have chosen the evil and that's what's wrong with the world today and that's what's wrong with the United States of America today. So God says I want you to understand this. Isaiah 40:12: “Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out the heavens with a span? And who has comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Who has directed the Spirit of the LORD,

and who was His counselor that he might instruct Him?... [That's why God created things in such an awesome way, so we could see it took a Creator, a Designer. This just didn't happen by osmosis or evolution. That's a figment of the imagination of self-intelligent men who think they're greater than God.] ...With whom did He take counsel, and *who* instructed Him and taught Him in the path of judgment, and taught Him knowledge, and made known the way of understanding to Him?" (vs 12-14).

Now as God looks down on the world, the sinning world, and the world thinks that 'Oh, yes, we have this power and that power, and we can do this, and that, and the other thing.' Verse 15: "Behold the nations *are* like a drop in a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the scales; behold, He takes up the isles as a very little thing.... [All the islands of the world, a very little thing.] ...And Lebanon *is* not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts of it sufficient *for* a burnt offering. **All nations before Him are as nothing**... [Because God wants you to know how great He is.] ...and they are counted by Him as less than nothing, and vanity. To whom then will you compare God? Or what likeness will you compare to Him? The workman melts a graven image, and the goldsmith spreads it over with gold, and casts silver chains.... [Lots of idols. Go into any church, are there idols there? Know for sure if there are, God's not there. A lot of those people who go there think they're good upstanding people, but the questions is, it's not how we think we are, it's how God views us. Its how we relate to God in our lives or don't relate to God because we sin and transgress and trample His commandments and despise His Word. And idolatry is a tremendous thing in the world. Most of the idolatry that is in so many people is right here between their temples. *They worship themselves and have idols in their minds.* So God says:] ...He who is too poor for *that* offering chooses a tree that will not rot; he seeks a skillful workman for himself to prepare a graven image that will not totter" (vs 15-20). Oh yes! Isn't that wonderful?

Men are going to do all of these vain things, so He asks the question: "Have you not known? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood *from* the foundations of the earth? *It is* He who sits above the circle of the earth, and its people are like grasshoppers' *It is* He who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them out like a tent to dwell in; Who brings the rulers to nothing; He makes the judges of the earth as vanity" (vs 21-23). So this is how God views what's going on, on the earth.

So as we go through this, let's each one of us ask the question concerning our own personal lives, concerning our families, concerning the country we are living in, concerning that we are on a collision course with God. Because *it's not the economy, it is God!*

Let's turn over here to Isaiah 45:5. God says: "I *am* the LORD, and *there is* none else. *There is* no God besides Me; I clothed you, though you have not known Me.... [Doesn't God provide for everyone in the world? *Yes, He does!* He's talking here of Jacob; He's talking here of the descendants of Israel. But Jesus said that God 'makes the rain to fall on the just and on the unjust;' and 'the sun to rise on the wicked and the good.' And **everything we have comes from God because He has created it.** And are we giving back to God what is His? or are we lying, cheating and stealing, or are we committing adultery? or are we committing idolatry? You have to ask those questions yourself, and then answer them before God.] ...that they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that *there is* none besides Me. I *am* the LORD, and there is none else; I form the light and create darkness; I make peace and create evil" (vs 5-7).

Now a lot of people get upset when they say that God creates evil. Why would God who is Holy and righteous and true do that? **Because He has given us choice; because He has set before us life and good, blessing and cursing, death and evil.** So when people transgress the laws and commandments of God—and how many of you have heard in your pulpits, 'The laws of God have been done away,' and then they turn around and they endorse a politician and demand that the politician live by the rule of law. Now you talk about a twisted reasoning. "There is none else besides Me... I formed the light; I create darkness; I make peace and create evil," (vs 6-7). So whenever you sin there is evil.

How much evil have you been seeing in the economy? *Lots of it!* What were the sins? *Lust, greed, lying, cheating, stealing*—everybody from the greatest to the least. You can blame Wall Street, but you can also blame the lettuce-picker. I know personally in our town of Hollister, there was a lettuce-picker who made \$15,000 a year and he got together with a real estate agency and a loan broker and because they didn't require proof of income, and they didn't want to tell the truth that he only made \$15,000 a year, they put on his application that he made \$150,000 a year. And he bought, and the bank financed, a home worth \$750,000. Needless to say, they foreclosed on it. So don't blame Wall Street; they're only part of it. Don't blame Washington; they're only part of it. Don't blame Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac; they're only part of it. Don't blame the loan brokers; they're only part of it. Don't blame the

buyers; they're only part of it. But everybody has been lying and cheating and stealing, committing adultery and swearing falsely and all of those things against God. And then they wonder, 'Well, I wonder why the economy is falling down?' ***Because you've been sinning against God.*** We'll cover that here in a little bit.

Let's come to Romans 1:1 in the New Testament. Here is something that is a perpetual witness. Let me also ask you this:

- Do you have a Bible at home?
- Do you read and study it?
- Do you try and conform your life to it?
- Do you understand it?

You probably would have to answer no to *most* of those questions, and if you do, understand this: God sent it to you so you could know. So maybe you better be about opening your Bible and studying it.

Romans 1:18: "Indeed, *the* wrath of God is revealed from heaven upon all ungodliness... [And that's what we're seeing in this country, an ungodly country that legislates God out of the courts, out of the schools, out of our lives and virtually the only place you can really learn about God is in your own home today.] (Here's the key): ...Because that which may be known of God is manifest among them, for God has manifested *it* to them; for the invisible things of Him are perceived from *the* creation of *the* world" (vs 18-20). You can look at the creation and understand there has to be a Creator. And not only that there is a Creator, but He's created you and He's created every human being for a great purpose *if* they will come to Him; *if* they will seek Him. Because men say, 'Oh, God, I don't want You here. I don't want you to tell me what to do. I'm a good boy now; I want to do it on my own.' God says, 'Have at it.'

There's another god in the world who is called Satan the devil, and you would be surprised how many people worship him. That's another subject. Let's go on. "...being understood by the things that were made—both His eternal power and Godhead—so that they are without excuse" (v 20).

Come to Romans 3; let's see something else. We are also going to see how God judges the world, because He judges the world. It is also true that judgment begins with the house of God. So all of those who are true Christians, because there are many false Christians, let me just say this, there are millions of false Christians, perhaps billions. And they think they're fine. So you also need to ask the question, am I a true Christian or a false Christian? Being a true Christian deserves another sermon to delineate between them. Nevertheless, God is judging the world today; God is judging this nation today and part of His judgment is the economic

collapse for our sins, is the government that has been elected into office in Washington, D.C., and all of the ungodly things that they are doing and spending trillions and trillions and trillions of dollars, which is only going to lead to the total collapse of this nation, because there's no repentance.

Romans 3:3: "For what if some did not believe? Shall their unbelief nullify the faithfulness of God? **MAY IT NEVER BE!** Rather, let God be true but every man a liar... [That's just the way it is. We have a deceitful nature and the first way to help you understand how to come out of the difficulties and problems that you may be in, in your life; though you may think you've been victimized by some people, and yes, maybe you have been. All men are liars, ***start with yourself.*** That requires repentance to God.] ...'That you may be justified in Your words, and might overcome when You are being judged *by men*'" (vs 3-4). Now that's the correct translation of it.

Everyone has an opinion about God and that is a judgment against God. Rather than finding out who the true God is and what He is; rather than finding out how to really love God and serve Him and obey Him, they have an opinion about God. 'Oh, I think this; I think that.' And so there are millions of gods in the world, right? *Yes.* Speaking of judging God, some people are going to say, 'Well, why would God do this?' *Because of sin.* The 'wages of sin is judgment and the end thereof is death.'

Verse 5: "But if our unrighteousness brings to reality God's righteousness, what shall we say? *Is* God unrighteous to inflict His wrath?... [Which is what we're suffering as a nation right now. And other nations have suffered it. Zimbabwe is suffering it right now, other nations as well. And are we going to follow the way of Zimbabwe? *Some people think so.*] ...**MAY IT NEVER BE!** Otherwise, how shall God judge the world?" (vs 5-6). For God judges the world.

Now let's come back here to Jeremiah 18 and this shows us how God judges the world, judges different nations. And you will read in the Bible how God raises up one nation, puts down another nation. What did God do to His own people Israel and Judah because they sinned?—and 'sin is a transgression of the law.' *He sent them into captivity*—did He not? *Yes, He did.* You can read it in the whole book of Jeremiah. If you've never read the Old Testament, what I suggest you do is this, you read the book of Jeremiah and instead of having Israel and Judah there, just put good old U.S.A., Canada, Australia, New Zealand, United Kingdom.

Jeremiah 18:5, this is after God told Jeremiah to go down to the potter and let's see what

he's making. "Then the Word of the LORD came to me saying, 'O house of Israel, can I not do with you *even* as this potter?' says the LORD. 'Behold as the clay is in the potter's hand, *so are you* in My hand, O house of Israel... [That's the whole ten tribes of Israel.] ...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*... [So God is the one who brings the fate of the nations. That's happening to us now. We are coming down, we are being pulled down. God is doing it because of our sins. Now this is why this message. Hopefully, people will repent.] ...If that nation, against whom I have spoken, will turn from their evil..." (vs 5-8). What does that mean?

- Turn from your pagan worship of Sunday.
- Turn from your holidays of Christmas, Easter, New Years, and all the occult holidays.
- Turn from your lying, your cheating, your stealing, your adultery, your covetousness, your drug-taking.

That's what God is saying. *If you will turn from it*, God will change His mind, but *if you will not turn from it*, it's going to get worse, much worse. God guarantees that! So just think about it. God is true, His Word is true, and His Word is living and in action *all of the time*. That's why there's so many broken lives and broken homes and broken minds, and broken emotions because people have been living in sin, taught to live in sin, stay in sin, and when they go to church they can't find God. When they ask for help, they don't know how to get the help. You look to the government and it's full of sin and corruption and bloated excess beyond description. If you think that's kind of harsh, maybe consider this. Do you think the United States will end up somewhere down the road like Mexico is today? *Think on that!*—because God is the One Who is doing the judging.

"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.... [That means toward God, not in a political sense, not with tea parties, not with 9-12, though that may be a good start; but with turning to God with all your heart, repenting deeply from within, asking God to forgive your sins.] ...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" (vs 9-10).

So God is fair, God is just. Now let me draw a little analogy for you. Do you think that you can live by violating all the laws of the land and not suffer the consequences from it? *Of course not!*

Sooner or later it's going to come upon you—is that not correct? Even some of the most vilest of crimes, supposedly upstanding men in the community have been found out to be mass killers or mass sexual predators--and by the way, not only do the people need to repent, all the ministers, all the priests, all the bishops, *they all need to repent*.

- Repent of your lies from the pulpit
- Repent of your idols in your churches
- Repent of your pedophilia
- Repent of your homosexuality
- Repent of your adultery

The world is so twisted that a man who is a sexual pervert, a priest, who has the sexual behavior of a seven-year old, is called *father*. And we think, 'Oh, God bless us, we're good people.' *No, it's not so.*

Let's see something also very important. You can read in the book of Jonah about the Assyrians. When God sent Jonah, He said, 'Go tell them I'm going to punish them.' They repented, from the king down to the animals, in sackcloth and ashes, and God turned and held back the punishment just like He promised He would here in Jer. 18. So God could do it here and we'll see what that will take a little later.

Let's come to Deuteronomy 8 and let's see something. Let's talk about wealth and how we get wealth and where does it come from. All wealth comes from the ground—isn't that true? Or *it comes from what is created*. I want you to think as I am reading this about the United States of America and how it came to be at its very beginning, even before it was formed into the states, as we know it now. How many people have said this, 'America's the greatest country in the world, the most blessed country in the world.' How did it get that way? 'Oh, Americans are hard working and industrious.' That's the wrong part of the equation. That may be true. We got that way because God brought us here and God gave this country *by promise* to Abraham. *All of us are here*, one way or the other, *as a result of what God has done*. Now we have a fantastic country, a lot of resources, marvelous wealth beyond belief—right? It talks about in Isa. 2 that the chariots are without number. Every time I drive on the freeway, I think, I wonder, how many millions of cars are going right now at this minute.

This is what a lot of people don't like to hear. A lot of you who have been Protestants have been told, 'You don't need to read the Old Testament because the laws and commandments of God have been done away.' *Lie!*—'wages of sin is death' and 'sin is the transgression of the law.' So if you believe your minister or evangelist or preacher or teacher who said that to you, you've believed a

lie. You are living in sin. Let's read it. Here's what God expects:

Deuteronomy 8:1: “All the commandments which I command you this day shall you be diligent to observe *and to* do that you may live and multiply and go in and possess the land which the LORD swore to your fathers. And you shall remember all the way which the LORD your God led you these forty years in the wilderness... [You can read all about that in the book of Exo. and the book of Num.] ...in order to humble you, to prove you, to know what is in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not.... [That's exactly why we're in the trouble we are today.

- Are we going to be humble?
- Are we going to repent?
- Are we going to look to God?

He wants to know what is in our hearts.] ...And He humbled you and allowed you to hunger, and then He fed you with manna which you did not know, neither did your fathers know *it*, so that He might make you know that man does not live by bread alone; but by every *word* that proceeds out of the mouth of the LORD does man live” (vs 1-3).

Question: do you believe in Jesus? *You probably do*. Have you ever read in Matt. 4 where Jesus quoted this as the duty of man in the New Testament as well? *Yes*. So this is how we are to live. Now, let's read what else He tells them because this chapter has a lot to do with wealth, and where we are right now in the United States of America, and in Britain, Australia, New Zealand, etc.

When they were in the wilderness He said, “Your clothing did not wear out on you... [Because there was no Wal-Mart out in the Sinai, so they had to have clothes that didn't wear out.] ...nor did your foot swell these forty years. And you shall consider in your heart that as a man chastens his son, *so* the LORD your God chastens you. And you shall keep the commandments of the LORD your God to walk in His ways and to fear Him. For... [Think about the land we are living in.] ...the LORD your God brings you into a **good** land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills, a land of wheat and barley and vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey, a land in which you shall eat bread without scarceness.... [Isn't that us today? We have more food than we could ever want. We throw away food that other people would die to come to our garbage dumps to get to use to eat as food.] ...You shall not lack any thing in it. It is a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills you may dig copper” (vs 4-9).

And, of course, coal and brass and oil; and God created all of those things. Oil did not come from dinosaurs; that's a stupid figment of the imagination of people who want to keep you enslaved to their agenda. Oil came because God created it with the heat of the earth beneath the surface of the earth, for the very purpose of using it in the way that we are using it. And oil is constantly being produced in the earth. All part of what God gave us.

Now notice, here comes the warning. Here's what we need to ask ourselves. This applies directly to the United States of America and all of the other countries that I have listed, and yes, the whole world, because God judges all nations in the whole world. Let me remind you that remember Zimbabwe was once Rhodesia, one of the colonies of the British Empire—correct? And they had an overflowing abundance of food and exported food, and though the British were considered somewhat oppressive, nothing like their own people against themselves. Now what are they? ***Starving, famine, war, killings, beheadings, rampages of thugs through the streets, inflation up into the millions.*** Will that happen here? Have the seeds been sown that that can happen here? *The answer is yes!*

Verse 11, He says: “Beware... [He gives a warning.] ...that you do not forget the LORD your God by not keeping His commandments, and His judgments, and His statutes, which I command you today. Lest when you have eaten and are full and have built goodly houses and lived in them, and when your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and your gold is multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied... [Because of the blessing of God.] ...then you become haughty of heart... [self-exalted; and I think ‘haughty in heart’ describes this generation, as nothing else does.] ...and you forget the LORD your God Who brought you forth out of the land of Egypt from the house of bondage” (vs 11-14). ***Forget God.***

Even in the churches, they tell nice stories and tales, don't they? How you can improve yourself. What they need to do is show the truth of human nature, that it's ‘desperately wicked above all things’ and help people come to repentance and have a relationship with God. That's what needs to be.

Then He says, v 16: “Who fed you in the wilderness with manna which your fathers did not know, so that He might humble you and that He might prove you to do you good in your latter end.” Because God wants to bless, but He's not going to bless unless you respond to Him. Why is it that people think that they can live in their sins, take their drugs, commit adultery, commit fornication, lie, cheat, and steal, commit idolatry, thumb their nose at the Sabbath and Holy Days of God, embrace the lies

of Sunday, Christmas, Easter, New Years, and all of that nonsense and say, 'Bless us Lord, we're good people'? *Doesn't work that way.* God is not that kind of God. **God is not lawless**, like most people are in their own hearts and minds.

So as we're going through this, you take the Ten Commandments and you think to yourself: Am I keeping these or not? Do I believe them or not? If you think you're a Christian, then ask yourself the question: Am I keeping these in the spirit of law as Jesus taught, and as Paul taught, and are you having them written in your heart and mind as Paul wrote in Heb. 10:16? Or does your experience with God, and God is not there, consist of just going to church on Sunday or watching a little TV for twenty minutes on Sunday morning, and then the rest of the day is on your activities, and so forth; God is not heard again, or mentioned again, or thought of again, because you're busy with yourself? **You have forgotten God.** If that's the case, **then you are going to suffer** because you won't learn any other way.

Now He says here, v 17, here's where we are: "Beware lest you say in your heart... [This is what we've done.] ...'My power and the might of my hand has gotten me this wealth.'"" Bernie Madoff was a minor player. The biggest players begin with the Federal Reserve Bank. This world and this nation is in the grips of Satan the devil and sin on such a gargantuan deceptive scale that many people have been deceived for so long that if someone like I'm bringing in this message, brings you the Truth, you think that he is a raving lunatic. Think what you may want to think, but you're going to have to face God and deal with Him. Many people have said that. "Beware, lest you say in your heart, 'My power and the might of my hand has gotten me this wealth.'""

And what is the answer to it? 'Let's get out of this recession and depression, let's all work hard, let's have the entrepreneurial spirit, let's all get back and do those things, let's lower taxes.' **No, let's repent to God!**—that's what needs to be.

(go to track #2)

Let's continue on in Deuteronomy 8:18—very important. Now you know why the Old Testament applies? *Yes, indeed.* "But you shall remember the LORD your God... [How many people have forgotten the Lord God? Have you?] ...for *it is* He Who gives you power to get wealth... [Because He made and created the earth; He made and created you, so you could work and do things and think and invent things and build things and put it all together. God gave the power to do that. But man has to come along and have a lying, cheating banking system where they have leverage-lending and they got out to greater than thirty to one. God gives you the power to get wealth,] ...so that He

may confirm His covenant which He has sworn to your fathers as it is this *very* day. And it shall be... [Notice, heed, listen.] ...if you do at all forget the LORD your God and walk after other gods serving them and worshiping them... [And that's exactly what we are doing in the name of Christianity today. If you go into a Sunday-keeping church, you have the wrong Christ. If you go into an idolatrous Catholic cathedral, you have the wrong Christ. If you go to any other religion, whatever it may be, there's no salvation in any of them. God says this, if you do forget Him:] ...I testify against you this day that you shall surely perish—*yes, perish*" (vs 18-19).

Then He also gives a warning, because they were to go in and they were to take the land and they were to put out all the natives that were there. When you really understand that they were sinners, idolaters, that's why they were judged. So He says, v 20: "As the nations whom the LORD destroys before your face, so you shall perish because you would not obey the voice of the LORD your God."

Question: Did God remove them out of the land because of their sins? *Yes, indeed.* Question: those of us who are living here in this great land because of the blessings of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and we are doing the same things as a nation that they did back then, will not God also remove us out of it, take it from us? **You think about that!**

Let's come to Psalm 50. Now in it there are those who are true Christians and in it there are those who have repented. There are those who love God with all their heart and mind and soul and being. Yes, we love this nation; yes, we love the people, we certainly do, and we're thankful to be here, and we are thankful for the freedom of speech that God has given us and to you, and so forth. And these are the ones who love you and are concerned for you and the way that this nation and the people are going.

Psalm 50:1: "The mighty God, the LORD, has spoken and called the earth from the rising of the sun to its going down. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God has shined forth. Our God shall come... [Let me just tell you this, Christ is returning and we are rapidly approaching the days just prior to His return. And His return is not going to be some nice little thing that you are wafted off in some sort of 'rapture' to escape it all. He's going to shake the heavens, shake the earth, shake the sea, shake all nations, and you need to read and study your Bible and understand, you better be right with God now. Don't wait until it's too late.] ...God shall come, and He shall not keep silent; a fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous all around Him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, **so that He may judge His people**:... [Modern Israel today and also gather His saints.]

...‘Gather My saints unto Me and those who have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice’” (vs 1-5). And we have, and that sacrifice is total dedication to God, buried in baptism.

Come to v 16: “But to the wicked God says, ‘What is it to you to declare My statutes, and to take up My covenant in your mouth?... [All the lying Christians on Sunday mouthing words supposedly from God, twisting and turning and distorting the Scriptures and causing people to sin.] ...Yea, you hate to be taught... [Are you all riled up from what I said, does that make the hackles on the back of your neck stand up because of what I have said? Wait until God speaks, because He will.] ...Yea, you hate to be taught, and you cast My words behind you. When you saw a thief, then you were pleased to be with him... [Sound like a local politician you may have put into office in Washington, D.C.; or your local banker?] ...and you have taken part with adulterers. You give your mouth to evil, and your tongue frames deceit. You sit; you speak against your brother; you slander your own mother’s son. These things you have done, and I have kept silence; you thought that I was like yourself, but I will rebuke you, and set them in order before your eyes. Now consider this, you who forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver. Whoever offers praise glorifies Me; and he who sets his conduct aright, I will show him the salvation of God’” (vs 16-23). So God is saying to all of the sinners out there, repent, change, come out of it, don’t be that way.

Let’s come to Ezekiel 16. Now today we have the symbol of the United States as the Statue of Liberty—entering in, coming into New York. God likens Israel also to a woman and here He talks about how with Israel He called her, clothed her, gave her all the good things, blessed her, and so forth. Ezekiel 16:13: “‘And you were adorned with gold and silver; and your clothing *was of* fine linen and silk and embroidered work. You ate fine flour and honey and oil; and you were exceedingly beautiful. And you advanced into a kingdom.... [Just like here in America. We grew great, increased in wealth, increased in might, increased in people. We ended up being the leading nation of the world after World War II because God said we would be a blessing to all the nations of the world. Were we that to all the nations of the world after World War II? *Yes!* Did we not raise up Europe, did we not raise up all the other nations? *Yes, indeed!* God intended that.] ...And your name went out among the nations because of your beauty; for it *was* perfect, My splendor, which I had put on you,’ says the LORD. ‘But you trusted in your beauty... [Rather than trusting in God. Think about how we’ve been eliminating God out of everything, trusting in

ourselves.] ...But you trusted in your beauty, and played the harlot because of your name, and poured out your fornications on all who passed by—on any who *would have it*’” (vs 13-15).

Think about all the foreign aid that we’ve given. We’ve given so much out there, we have just given it to them. God says that’s like a whore paying her customers to come to her. Shouldn’t have done that. Come over here to v 20: “‘And you have taken your sons and your daughters, whom you have borne to Me... [They’re God’s!] ...and you sacrificed them unto these images to be devoured.... [What are the images and idols we sacrificed them to? *All the modern technology today, drugs, sex, no God, games, athletic things; sacrificed the children in abortion.* Yet we want to go to Go and kind of, as God says, wipe our mouth and say, ‘What have we done?’ *We have done great evil.*] ...And in all your hateful deeds and your whoredoms you have not remembered the days of your youth, when you were naked and bare, and squirming in your own blood. “Woe, woe to you says the Lord God!” For it came to pass after all your wickedness, That you have also built yourself an eminent place, and you have made for yourself a high place in every square. You have built your high place at the head of every crossroad, and have made your beauty to be despised, and have opened your feet to everyone who passed by, and have multiplied your whoredoms’” (vs 20-25). Then he goes on. I suggest you read the whole chapter and how absolutely evil and wretched that this has been.

Let’s look at some other Scriptures we need to read here—Hosea 2:6. Because of what we’ve done, God says: “Therefore, behold I will hedge your way with thorns, and make a wall, that she [Israel.] shall not find her paths. And she shall follow after her lovers, but she shall not overtake them. She shall seek them, but shall not find *them*. Then she shall say, ‘I will go and return to my first husband, for then *it was* better with me than now’... [Only this was feigned, this was not in truth.] ...For she did not know that I gave her grain, and wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold, *which* they prepared for Baal. So I will return and take away My grain in its time, and My wine in its season, and will recover My wool and My flax *given* to cover her nakedness. And now I will uncover her lewdness in the sight of her lovers, and none shall deliver her out of My hand’” (vs 6-10). And so that’s where we are. That’s where this nation is.

Let’s see the consequences of it, over here in Hosea 4:1: “Hear the Word of the LORD, children of Israel, for the LORD *has* a controversy with the inhabitants of the land. ‘There is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing of adultery they break out; and blood touches blood.

Therefore shall the land mourn... [That's what's wrong with the land. That's what's wrong with the people. That's what's wrong here that needs to be corrected. *It's not the economy, stupid, it is God!* It is sin and transgression and going against God, all the while thinking how good we are. So He says the land shall mourn] ...and everyone who dwells in it shall languish, with the beasts of the field and with the birds of the heavens. Yes, the fish of the sea shall also be taken away.... [Ask any fisherman, where have the fish gone?] ...Yet let no man strive, nor reprove another, for your people *are* as those who strive with the priest. And you shall stumble in the day, and the prophet also shall stumble with you *in the night*, and I will destroy your mother. My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge....” (vs 1-6).

- Is that what is happening to you?
- Does that describe your life?
- How much do you know about God?
- How much do you know about His way? You can be destroyed many ways,
 - mentally,
 - emotionally,
 - spiritually,
 - physically,
 - economically,
 - destroyed families.
 - ✓ You can be destroyed with drugs;
 - ✓ you can be destroyed with fornication;
 - ✓ you can be destroyed with homosexuality;

You can be destroyed with *all* of those things. Lack of knowledge, here's why: "...Because you have rejected knowledge, I will also reject you from being as a priest to Me. Since you have forgotten the law of your God, I will also forget your children” (v 6). I think about that when I'm out traveling and I see all of these young people with their parents: no conversation, no talking, they're plugged into their music, they're plugged into their cell phone, they're plugged into their BlackBerry, they're talking with their friends. They could tell their parents, 'Go to hell.' That's the result of it. *This is where we are. This is what has happened.*

Let's come to Isaiah 44. Here's what God wants us to do. He wants us to turn to Him with all our hearts, with all our soul, with all of our mind. He wants us to remember Him, remember Him to the point that we come back to Him. We may have to do this individually in our own particular lives because the way the world is today, there isn't going to be a turning back to God publicly by anyone.

- Can you think of anyone in government that's going to repent and say, 'Let's get back to the Bible and return to God?'

- Can you think of anyone in the Supreme Court that's going to do that?
- Can you think of any governor, any legislator, can you think of any university, any school of any kind that they will get back to God?
- Can you think of any church that will stand up there and say, 'We've been sinning by keeping Sunday and all of these holidays?
 - ✓ *Let's all repent*
 - ✓ *let's have days of fasting*
 - ✓ *let's come to God*
 - ✓ *let's study the Word of God*
 - ✓ *let's all repent.'*

No! We would that would be true, but we know that because so much evil abounds everywhere that that won't happen. *But it can happen in your life.* You have to confess your sins to God and you have to remember God. You have to come back to Him and you come to Him His way. God has promised that if you will *seek Him with repentance*, if you will *seek Him in truth*, if you will *seek Him in humility*, He will be found of you.

He says here in Isaiah 44:21: “Remember these, O Jacob and Israel... [Put your name there] ...for you *are* My servant; I have formed you; you *are* My servant; O Israel, you shall not be forgotten by Me.... [*God still remembers.* God is saying, 'Return to Me!' That's what God wants.] ...I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, your transgressions, and, as a cloud, your sins; **return to Me; for I have redeemed you**” (vs 21-22). That's what God wants.

That's what Jesus Christ said when He began His Gospel Let's come back here to Mark 1. Here's what we need to do. Here's how our lives have to be. Listen! You need to believe your Bible. Don't believe the lying ministers in the pulpit. You need to believe the Word of God; you need to believe the Truth of God. For Jesus said here, Mark 1:15: “And saying, 'The time has been fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is near at hand... [And it is, and the Kingdom of God is coming. And the whole solution to it is, the Kingdom of God ruled by Jesus Christ and the resurrected saints. *That's* the ultimate solution to the problems of this world. Now if you want part of that, God offers that to you, if you do what He says here.] ...the Kingdom of God is near at hand; repent, and believe in the Gospel.”

And that's what we need to do. We need to repent to God with all our heart, with all our mind, with all our soul, and with all our being, and return to God. And remember that everything that we have has come from God and He has given it. *So it is not the economy, stupid, it is God!!*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Psalm 24:1-2

- 2) Isaiah 40:12-23
- 3) Isaiah 45:5-7
- 4) Romans 1:18-20
- 5) Romans 3:3-6
- 6) Jeremiah 18:5-10
- 7) Deuteronomy 8:1-9, 11-14, 16-20
- 8) Psalm 50:1-5, 16-23
- 9) Ezekiel 16:13-15, 20-25
- 10) Hosea 2:6-10
- 11) Hosea 4:1-6
- 12) Isaiah 44:21-22
- 13) Mark 1:15

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Jonah
- Isaiah 2
- Matthew 4
- Hebrews 10:16