

An Important Message for those who are concerned about the future of the USA.

Many believers are ignorantly violating one of the most fundamental laws of the Spirit in our criticism of President Obama. When a nation falls into disobedience, God sovereignly brings judgment on that nation through various methods of chastisement. When it comes through the weather and earthquakes (“acts of God”), we (hopefully) don’t criticize the weather, but look to God and either humble ourselves and cry for mercy, or rise up and take dominion through prayer. (Dt. 28:15f, Lev. 26, 1 Ki. 8:22f, Mt. 8:26)

Why is it then that when chastisement comes through political leaders we criticize *them* in direct violation of many scriptures (listed following this article) in which *God* tells us to “honor the king” and *pray* for “kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence?” (1 Pet. 2:17, 1 Tim. 2:1-2)

And the king at that time was Nero, the most perverse of the god-emperors, and a picture of the antichrist. His persecution of Christians, his wild spending, burdensome taxation, and ridiculous policies to a large extent led to the rebellion of the Jews and the destruction of Jerusalem, and eventually the fall of Rome.¹ His paranoia-driven assassinations of so many, including his mother, wife, and close friends, finally led to his own end. Before he killed himself he had beheaded Paul and crucified Peter.” (1 Pet. 2:17, 1 Tim. 2:2)

And *God* expected His people to *honor* this wicked king. Why? Because in so doing, we’re taking our position in heavenly places, seated with Christ “far *above* all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.” (Eph. 1:21)

In other words, God wants us in the *driver’s seat with Him*, not upset over earthly things that have their origin in the spirit realm. For our battle is against demonic powers of darkness in the spirit realm, not “flesh and blood.” (Eph. 6:12).

Why God waits

After Joshua died the Israelites failed to finish the job of driving out the wicked nations they had conquered, but instead ended up partaking of their idolatry. So “the Angel of the Lord” came to them at *Bochim*, which means *weeping*, and rebuked them, warning them that these wicked nations would be “as thorns in your side,” adversaries and snares. (Jud. 2:1f)

So the people *wept* there and offered sacrifices, but later continued with their idolatry. “And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel. So He delivered them into the hands of plunderers who despoiled them;

and *He sold* them into the hands of their enemies all around, so that they could no longer stand before their enemies. Wherever they went out, the hand of the LORD was *against them for calamity*. (Jud. 2:14-15a)

Of course God knew this would happen, so he used these same wicked nations to *test* them and teach them spiritual warfare through the “plunderers” and “calamity” that resulted. Even though the battles were physical, they miserably lost or miraculously won depending on their obedience in the spirit realm. (Jud. 3:1f)

Their oppression and captivity would last until their cry reached a certain level of brokenness and humility, as in Isaiah 30:19, “For the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem; You shall weep no more. He will be very gracious to you at the sound of your cry; when He hears it, He will answer you.”

Verse 18 is the clue to how long it takes: *God waits* because *He* wants to be “*gracious*” and “*exalted*.” From the belly of the whale, Jonah received this revelation: “Those who regard worthless idols forsake their own mercy” (Jonah 2:8).

Idols effect us in two ways: they steal our minds and our hearts. They rob God of our *attention*, and they *satisfy* our hearts with a *substitute* for Him. But it’s quicker and easier than trusting in and waiting for a God we can’t see and who tries our faith with all kinds of offenses. It’s hard to blame people, because I do it too.

But God’s goal for us is not earthly gain, but coming to “Zion at Jerusalem” – unity and harmony with our brothers and sisters in Christ? “For there the LORD commanded the blessing—Life forevermore. Then “all these *things* shall be added to you.” (Is. 30:19a, Ps. 33:3, Mt. 6:33)

Before God gave victory through Samson, it took 40 years for them to get desperate enough for deliverance, which was a short time compared to their years in Egypt as slaves. (Ex. 1-3, Jud. 13)

His ways or His acts?

To Moses God made known His *ways*, but the children of Israel only knew His *acts*. People who don’t know God’s ways, *why* He does what He does, impatiently tend to complain, as Israel did, wanting God to *do* something, without realizing God wants to do His acts *through us* as He did through Moses, who dealt with Pharaoh using *spiritual* weapons, not carnal! (Num. 14, Dt. 9, 1 Ki. 17:1f, Ps. 103:7, 2 Cor. 10:3-6)

The heart of *worship* is to acknowledge and prostrate ourselves before the sovereign rule of God in preparation for ruling and reigning with Him, that is, taking our authority over the powers of darkness—the Kingdom (rule) of God! (2 Cor. 4:4; 10:4-6, Eph. 6:10f)

Habakkuk habitually went to God for answers regarding the wicked, and God answered him: He had appointed the world’s worst enemy—the Babylonians—to chastise His own people!

That horror caused the prophet to seek God even more—to find out His *ways*. In response God then gave him the key to the entire New Testament: we must humble ourselves and live by *faith*, which Paul used as the key to all of his teaching. (Hab. 1-2:4, Rom. 1:17, Gal. 3:11, Php. 3:9, Heb. 10:38; 11:6-7)

Judgment will bring desolation. God told Habakkuk, but in the midst of it is the best time to *joy in the God of our salvation*, for faith will reach its greatest strength, giving us the sure footed, hill-climbing feet of deer. Then God is free to deal with the enemy through our praise and prayer warfare! (Jer. 50-51, Rom. 4:19-20; 8:35-39, Ps. 149)

“Who is he who speaks and it comes to pass, when the Lord has not commanded it? Is it not from the mouth of the Most High that woe and well-being proceed? Why should a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins? Let us search out and examine our ways, and turn back to the Lord.” (Lam. 3:37-40)

What should we then do?

Our response should rather be twofold: (1) “If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land” (2 Chr. 7:14).

Statistics say many or most “believers” are now virtually no different than the world. The digital age has lured us into endless distractions. We hardly know what it means to “pray through” (pray until we get the *assurance*—faith—of an answer.” Nor what it is to “wait on (or for) God,” and how could we without our I-phones or Facebook? (Ps. 40:1; 69:3, Zeph. 2:3, Lu. 8:14, Acts 2, 1 Cor. 7:5, 2 Cor. 3:18)

Are we any different than the “lukewarm” church of Laodicea, or of Sardis, which had a name or reputation for being alive (“an awesome worship team”?) but were *dead*? Or of Ephesus, known for their patient endurance, faithful diligence in the Lord’s work, and unwavering and fearless in its stand for truth against false apostles, which Paul had warned would creep into their church?

Yet Jesus was about to remove His presence from their midst because they had been doing all this without *personal, intimate fellowship with Him*, having left their “*first love*”! (Rev. 2-3, Acts 20:17,29) Daniel, an ideal role model

(2) The ultimate example of the right response to political disaster and intrigue is that of Daniel. He was taken from his homeland—Judah—to the most wicked city in the world—Babylon—as a prisoner by Nebuchadnezzar, the idolatrous dictator of a “one-world government.” *God* had chosen this proud emperor as *His servant to destroy Jerusalem and the holy temple*. (Jer.25:9-11; 27:6)

Yet Daniel, along with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, still maintained a good, submissive attitude of respect and honor for the dictator and submitted to him when it didn’t go against the law of God. (Jer. 25:9; 27:6; 43:10, Dan. 1-2, 4)

As a result, God gave *Nebuchadnezzar* a dream and Daniel the interpretation, which so overwhelmed the king that he *fell prostrate* before Daniel in reverence and awe. This is virtually unheard of in the annals of royalty, especially regarding the most absolute monarch in history with unlimited authority and sovereignty. But it reveals *who* is actually in control—*God*! If Nebuchadnezzar is in heaven, it is entirely because Daniel knew how to fight with spiritual weapons, not carnal. (Dan. 2:46, 2 Cor. 10:3-6)

At the end of the 70 year captivity which God had spoken through Jeremiah, only Daniel *understood his responsibility* in this regard. Without complaining or wondering why Jeremiah’s prophecy was not coming to pass, he set his “face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.” (Dan. 9:1f)

Then he *shared in the blame for Israel’s disobedience* as a their representative and *confessed their collective iniquity, rebellion, and wickedness* as though he were a part of it, even though he’s probably the only man in the Bible about whom we know any biographical detail who is totally without fault (Joseph is a close second). (Gen. 37, 39)

As a result of his intercession, corresponding to 2 Chronicles 7:14, he gave God the legal basis to fulfil *two* prophecies, one by Isaiah 140 years earlier that Cyrus would release the Jews back to their homeland to rebuild their temple, and the other by Jeremiah, that the Babylonian captivity would end after 70 years. (Is. 44:28; 45:1, Jer. 25:11-12, Ezra 1:1-2)

“Surely the Lord God does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets. A lion has roared! Who will not fear? The Lord God has spoken! Who can but prophesy (speak it into existence)?” If we listen to God, He’ll tell us how to pray and speak with authority into the realm of the spirit, where everything originates. (Amos 3:7-8, Rom. 4:17)

Two years later Daniel began a three week period of mourning, eating “no pleasant food.” The Bible commentaries give three possible reasons for Daniel’s burden: (1) his concern regarding the vision in chapter nine of Messiah being “cut off” at a future time, (2) the reluctance of most Jews to leave the material comforts of Babylon and return to the ruined city of Jerusalem, and (3) the dangers and difficulties of rebuilding the temple by those Jews who did return. (Ezr. 1:1f, 4:1f)

God’s people face a similar situation today. We are moving toward the climactic events in Revelation through which God will both refine His Church in preparation for His

return, and deal dramatically with His enemies.

But modern Daniels are needed to provide a legal basis for God to fulfill His promises—more than political action and watching end-time movies. Daniel's 21 days with God sparked a powerful spiritual battle in the heavenlies during which God was able to deal with the *roots* of political darkness.

It wasn't an earthly king or leader, but rulers in the spirit-realm—the “prince of Persia,” and the “prince of Greece,” which would later replace Persian rule through Alexander the Great.

What amazing insight God has given us into the real world, where 2500 years later we are again dealing with an invisible prince of Persia who manipulates terror all over the world. And who knows what the prince of Greece represents, the European Union, or a much bigger union?

Conclusion: We, the family of God, have the most awesome opportunity in our history to move the hand of God. Not by “flesh and blood” weapons of criticizing and complaining about the *symptoms* of our disobedience as a nation (the means God is using to chastise us), but by dealing with the *root* of our problem. *our lost intimacy with Jesus and our loving concern for one another.* (Php. 3:10)

The fact that the rest of America and the church are messed up only mandates that those who consider themselves spiritual become there *representatives*. An intercessor is one who prays in the place of those who can't or won't pray for themselves, as though they are praying and pleading through us, their spokesmen. (Pr. 24:11-12; 31:8-9)

It gives God the legal basis to intervene and spare us, as He did through Daniel's intercession. He also spared Lot and his ungodly daughters through Abraham's intercession. (And don't forget Lot's wife, for whom Abraham's prayer was of no avail.) (Gen. 18:17-33; 19:29, Ex. 32:10-14, Ps. 106:23, Ez. 22:30-31, Lu. 17:32)

I don't fully understand why it works, when people deserve judgment and reap what they sow. I know it's about mercy and grace, or we'd all be lost.

But I think it also has to do with Satan's constant search to find fault with us so he can accuse us before God as he did Job, and thus make God look bad and His most mature saints worse! God looks for our love for one another; Satan looks for our disdain for one another; and when we disdain the leaders God appoints for whatever reason, I'm sure it “makes his day” (or night!) among the powers of darkness! Because these leaders become the *scapegoat* for our *own* disobedience, which opens the door for the chastening.

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ, *let's get back to our first love, put first things first, fight with real weapons of spiritual authority, and see what God will do for our nation!*

1. Scriptures

Exo 22:28 "You shall not revile God, nor curse a ruler of your people.

Ecc 10:20 Do not curse the king, even in your thought; do not curse the rich, even in your bedroom; for a bird of the air may carry your voice, and a bird in flight may tell the matter.

Act 23:3-5 Then Paul said to him, "God will strike you, you whitewashed wall! For you sit to judge me according to the law, and do you command me to be struck contrary to the law?" And those who stood by said, "Do you revile God's high priest?" Then Paul said, "I did not know, brethren, that he was the high priest; for it is written, 'You shall not speak evil of a ruler of your people.'"

Rom. 13:1-2 Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. *For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God.* Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.

1 Tim. 2:1-4 Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

Titus 3:1-2 Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men.

1 Peter 2:13-14,17 Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme, or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good. . . . Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.

2 Pe 2:10-11 . . . and especially those who walk according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise authority. They are presumptuous, self-willed. *They are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries, whereas angels, who are greater in power and might, do not bring a reviling accusation against them before the Lord.*

Jud 1:8-9 Likewise also these dreamers defile the flesh, *reject authority, and speak evil of dignitaries.* Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses,

dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!"

2. Biblical examples:

a. There is no hint that Abraham criticized the pharaoh who stole his wife, Sarah. He left it to God, who dealt with him far more effectively than Abraham could have with words.

b. Had Joseph felt bitter or critical of

c. Anger, resentment, or bitterness destroys our authority in the spirit realm. Had Moses felt resentful, prideful, or critical in a carnal way toward Pharaoh, it would have cancelled the authority God gave him to deal with him as God's spokesman. Like Jesus, he only spoke what he heard from God. When he didn't, he messed up badly! (Num. 20:1f)

d. God kept the throne from David until his attitude toward King Saul matured to the point of *understanding* that he stood in the same need of mercy as Saul. A close study of 1 Samuel 24-26 shows this progression, from feeling conscience-stricken for cutting off the corner of Saul's robe (24), to the discovery that he, David, was capable of the same kind of senseless massacre Saul had performed (22,25), to the revelation that his responsibility was to *cover* his king, not *uncover* him (26). In the N.T. this is equivalent to “honor the king” (1 Pet. 2:17).

e. Jeremiah as God's oracle, urged the Jews of Judah and Jerusalem to submit to Nebuchadnezzar and “live.” They refused and God Himself saw that they were either taken as prisoners, killed with sword, famine, and pestilence, or left behind in the poverty of Judah's ruins, where they finally fled to Egypt in further disobedience. He told the Jewish captives who'd been taken to Babylon to pray for the peace of the city (Babylon!),

for in its peace (Babylon's) they would have peace.

f. Daniel came to Babylon as a captive of that day's dictator, Nebuchadnezzar, like the Roman emperors. As Titus did almost 7 centuries later, He had completely destroyed the Holy City with the sacred Temple and gouged out the eyes of King Zedekiah after killing his sons. But Daniel and his three Jewish friends submitted to Nebuchadnezzar's authority with such a cooperative and graceful attitude, that he placed them in positions of high authority, where they influenced profoundly the attitude and life of Babylon and its king. If Nebuchadnezzar is in heaven, it is because of these four Jews, who served their Babylonian king, except when it went against God's will.

Several years ago I heard Saddam Hussein had in his employ 60 Christians whom he trusted because of their honesty.

g. Esther and Mordecai served another dictator, Ahasuerus or Xerxes, the king of Persia. Read secular history of Xerxes and you'll see he was in the same class as any of the ungodly emperors.

Matthew Henry on Rom. 13:3

"The Christians were then in those persecuting times obnoxious to the sword of the magistrate for their religion, and they needed not make themselves more obnoxious by their rebellion."

Gill's commentary on 1 Peter 2:17, honor the king.

"Caesar, the Roman emperor, though a wicked, persecuting Nero, and so any other king or governor; who, so far as he acts the part of a civil magistrate, preserves the peace, the property, and liberty of his subjects, is a terror to evil works, and an encourager of good ones, and rules according to the laws of God, and civil society, is deserving of great honour and esteem from men; and which is to be shown by speaking well of him; by a cheerful subjection to him; by an observance of the laws, and by payment of tribute, and doing everything to make him easy, and honourable in his government: advice much like this is given by Isocrates (f),"

Clark's commentary on 1 Pet. 2:17

"Pay that respect to the emperor which his high authority requires, knowing that civil power is of God; that the authority with which he, in the course of his providence, has invested him, must be respected in order to its being obeyed; and that if the man be even bad, and as a man be worthy of no reverence, yet he should be respected on account of his office. If respect be banished, subordination will flee with it, and anarchy and ruin will rise up in their place. Truly religious persons are never found in seditions."