

The Josiah Project

By Doug Hamilton

Part One) All civilizations, cultures and nations have an end.

Statistics of an Immoral Nation (2008)

- Two generations ago in America, marriage was one man/one woman for life. Divorce was considered shameful. Last year in America there were more than 900,000 divorces that took place.
- Two generations ago it was shameful in America to have a child out of wedlock, yet today 40% of all children in America are born out of wedlock.
- Two generations ago it was a shameful thing to shack-up and engage in relations with another outside of the bonds of marriage, but today it is perfectly acceptable.
- Two generations ago it was considered shameful for a woman to show her cleavage in public, but today she is frowned upon if she does not.
- Two generations ago it was illegal to abort an unborn child, but last year there were more than 1.3 million children ripped from their mother's womb with the aid of the medical community.
- Two generations ago it was shameful to not pay debt or to keep your word in a business agreement, but now the culture struggles to keep the written contracts.
- Two generations ago the average size of a home was less than half the size of today and the average family that lived in the house was twice the size, yet they were typically close.
- Two generations ago in this country it was a shameful thing not work hard to provide for your family, but today there is the perception that the government is the head of the family.
- Two generations ago it was shameful to be the town drunk, but today he is glorified by the world as THE MAN.
- Two generations ago, businesses were closed on Sunday as the majority of the nation went to worship in church, but today it is primarily a day of sports, beer and fix it projects for the house.
- Two generations ago politicians in our country still called fornication SIN, lying SIN, cheating SIN and whatever else was sinful as SIN, but today they poke fun at the Bible, virtues of God, the Church and her people.

Obviously there is a wave a change that has come our way in this country and it is not in the best interest of the God's kingdom. We have lost our way and have strayed from the Christian roots that our nation was founded upon.

The purpose of this lesson this morning is not to depress you, but to impress upon you a hard truth. All civilizations, cultures and nations have an end. If you expected things to stay the same or never go downhill, you are violating the essence of the track record of humankind. Take a stroll down history lane and you will see.

The Civilization of Noah

- It was during the days of Noah that the world had fallen into great wickedness. *Gen 6:5 Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.*

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- Jesus commented on this in *Matt 24:38-39* "For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, they were marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, 39 and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so shall the coming of the Son of Man be.
- God put that civilization on death row and their days were numbered one hundred and twenty years. *Gen 6:3* Then the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, because he also is flesh; nevertheless his days shall be one hundred and twenty years."
- For decades while Noah constructed the ark, he was a "preacher of righteousness" (2 Pet 2:5), bringing the message of the coming doom as threatened by God. 1 Pet 3:20 informs us that the evil civilization continued ungodly disobedience "...when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark..." Heb 11:7 says "By faith Noah, being warned {by God} about things not yet seen, in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world..."
- The civilization of the time of Noah was committed to their sinful ways and God could not spare them any longer. His patience was tried and the civilization would be wiped out.
- All civilizations, cultures and nations have an end.

The Culture of the Cities of the Plain

- According to Genesis 14:2 there were five ancient "cities of the plain" near the Dead Sea. They were Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboiim and Zoar (Gen 14:12).
- Gen 13:13 states "Now the men of Sodom were wicked exceedingly and sinners against the LORD." 2 Peter 2:6-7 identified the specific nature of their sin as "sensual conduct of unprincipled men" and Jude 7 adds that they "...indulged in gross immorality and went after strange flesh..." They were deeply entrenched in fornication, even considering it their "right" to rape visitors who passed through their town (Gen 19:5). They lived for sex.
- *Gen 18:20* And the LORD said, "The outcry of Sodom and Gomorrah is indeed great, and their sin is exceedingly grave." Because of their rampant demoralized fornicating ways, God said that He would wipe them off the face of the earth. *Gen 19:13* for we are about to destroy this place, because their outcry has become so great before the LORD..."
- Gen 19:24-25 Then the LORD rained on Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven, 25 and He overthrew those cities, and all the valley, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground.
- The devastation was so complete that to this day these locations do not even have plant life just as predicted in *Deut 29:23* 'All its land is brimstone and salt, a burning waste, unsown and unproductive, and no grass grows in it, like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboiim, which the LORD overthrew in His anger and in His wrath.' Jeremiah went on to confirm that "...No man will live there, nor will {any} son of man reside in it..." (Jer 50:40).
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The Kingdom of Jeroboam the son of Nebat

- It was around the year 931 BC and Jeroboam the son of Nebat became the king of the newly formed Northern Kingdom that had broke off from the Southern Kingdom of Judea. Ahijah the prophet warned Jeroboam in *IKing 11:38* *"Then it will be, that if you listen to all that I command you and walk in My ways, and do what is right in My sight by observing My statutes and My commandments, as My servant David did, then I will be with you and build you an enduring house as I built for David, and I will give Israel to you."*
- He established pagan shrines in the major locations of Dan and Bethel; he set up golden calves to be worshipped, established his own priesthood to be followed and forbade the true worshippers of God from going to Jerusalem to worship.
- *IKing 13:33* "...*Jeroboam did not return from his evil way...*" *1 Kings 14* informs us that God sent a wake-up call in the form of sickness and death upon his son.
- *IKing 14:7-10* "Go, say to Jeroboam, 'Thus says the LORD God of Israel, 'Because I exalted you from among the people and made you leader over My people Israel, 8 and tore the kingdom away from the house of David and gave it to you-- yet you have not been like My servant David, who kept My commandments and who followed Me with all his heart, to do only that which was right in My sight; 9you also have done more evil than all who were before you, and have gone and made for yourself other gods and molten images to provoke Me to anger, and have cast Me behind your back 10 therefore behold, I am bringing calamity on the house of Jeroboam, and will cut off from Jeroboam every male person, both bond and free in Israel, and I will make a clean sweep of the house of Jeroboam, as one sweeps away dung until it is all gone.
- In just a few years, Jeroboam's dynasty would be dead in the grave and his dynasty would be taken over by Baasha. Jeroboam's dynasty began and ended in less than a quarter century because he chose the path of idolatry.
- The pattern of sinful, collapsed dynasties of the Northern Kingdom would be carried out numerous times, often being referenced to Jeroboam the son of Nebat. Ultimately leading to the complete destruction by Assyria in 722 BC.
- All civilizations, cultures and nations have an end.

What about the United States?

Do you really think the United States can defy a pattern that has been followed by every nation that walked in the same steps? Do you really think the America will be the one to actually figure it out how to sidestep the principles of God and maintain His blessing? Nations have tried to do that since the beginning of time and have failed because they all have humans involved and ultimately turn against God and His principles.

The Cycle of the Judges is Alive and Well Today

A nice section of history to illustrate this pattern would be in the Book of Judges. This writing exposes a pattern that is carried out over and over again. A people of bondage have faith in deliverance from enslavement. Once delivered, they walk in a high standard of morality that leads to peaceful prosperity. Complacency soon follows and then

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immorality because their guard was down. Then there is ignorance of where they really stand and finally bondage. As the last verse in the book states, *Judg 21:25 In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.*

This cycle often occurs many times in the life of a nation, but ultimately it will have an end. It appears that we are in the complacent/immoral transition for our own country which means we are headed for even more immorality and ignorance of the word of God.

Punishments given for National Sin

Because God judges only individuals in the afterlife, He must judge nations in the present life. These are just some of the national punishments that God has been known to allow in judgment against rogue nations.

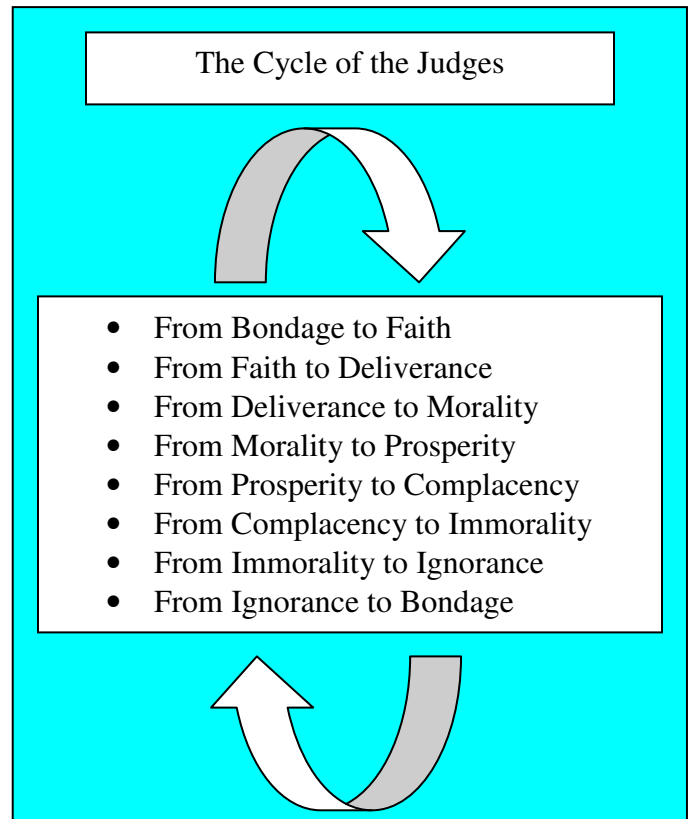
- Generational Disintegration
- Economic Collapse
- Natural Disasters
- Plagues and Disease
- Invasions by Enemies

We have examples of all these both in and out of the Bible. We do not know how and when this will end here in our own country, but make no mistake, it will end. God cannot reward a nation when the nation does not deserve a reward.

In Conclusion of Lesson One:

The people of God always must make adjustments for the period of culture that they are in, for they do not want to waste a good crisis. Christians have been adjusting and suffering through evil cultures for millennia and you are not alone.

Heb 11:32-38 And what more shall I say? For time will fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets, 33 who by faith conquered kingdoms, performed {acts of} righteousness, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, 34 quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness were made strong, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. 35 Women received {back} their dead by resurrection; and others were tortured, not accepting their release, in order that they might obtain a better resurrection; 36 and others experienced mockings and scourgings, yes, also chains and imprisonment. 37 They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were put to death with the sword; they went about in sheepskins, in goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated 38 ({men} of whom the world was not worthy), wandering in deserts and mountains and caves and holes in the ground.



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Just like Adam, Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, Solomon, the prophets and John the Baptist, we are going to have to continue living the life of a Christian in the midst of this crooked and perverse generation. That is where the next lesson will continue through the life of Josiah. We cannot stop that pattern from being carried through, but we have the power to delay it. Next week we will examine this power and employ it for action.

Phil 2:15 "...prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world..."