

“The Coping Christian in One Nation Under Satan”

by Doug Hamilton

IX) When Satan Takes Over the Nation.

Sir John Bagot Glubb (1897-1987), a highly honored British general and historian, wrote about the collapsed empires of the past. In his 1978 book *The Fate of Empires and the Search for Survival*, he described a common pattern fitting the history of fallen empires. He observed that nations experience a common life-cycle pattern from infancy to death. They are as follows:



The Seven Stages of a Nation's Life-Cycle

- 1) The Age of Outburst
- 2) The Age of Conquests
- 3) The Age of Commerce
- 4) The Age of Affluence
- 5) The Age of Intellect
- 6) The Age of Decadence
- 7) The Age of Decline and Collapse

Over the course of time, the belief system of the nation slowly changes. Military, religious, economic and political events affect the culture constantly and creates new normals for society. Without recognizing the gradual transformation, the populace repeatedly follows a downward slide eventually arriving in chaos. A detailed examination of these seven stages will guide us in what our future likely holds for the United States of America.

1) The Age of Outburst

The people have a common vision which leads them to make great sacrifices. More often than not, the core thrust of this stage is anchored in religious conviction. For the people of Israel, they shared the vision of taking the Promised Land as foretold by God. With His help they departed Egypt in search of a new life in a new land (Exodus 14).

2) The Age of Conquests

A nation will conquer the lands with which they will reside. The Book of Joshua illustrated this stage for the nation of Israel. With God's help, the Israelites went into the land and wiped out the enemy, dispossessing them from the land (Joshua 1:11).

3) The Age of Commerce

The nation opens up trade with the other surrounding nations. They become viable in currency, industry and production. Israel experienced great times of commerce with their neighboring countries early on. The wars of David secured peace and his son Solomon opened it up for great commerce.

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4) The Age of Affluence

With great commerce comes great riches. As a result, massive works of architecture are built as a demonstration of that wealth. Solomon built a large palace and the first Temple in Jerusalem (1 Kings 4-12). Archaeology reveals that he also built great horse stables and other impressive structures, some of which remain today. Another common feature is that the wealth begins trickling into the hands of a few.

5) The Age of Intellect

All the prosperity causes a shift to seek a "New and Improved" attitude concerning knowledge. It brings about a harsh attitude toward the tested values of the past. Many of the kings which followed the reign of Solomon became "*wise in their own eyes and clever in their own sight*" (Is 5:21). They dismissed time-tested policies and replaced them with impulsive follies.

6) The Age of Decadence

In their self-proclaimed wisdom, the intellectuals redefine morality. People tend to do what is "*right in the own eyes*" (Judges 21:25) as they seek to build upon their false logic. There also tends to be a greater hostility against the old traditions, religion and morality. When Israel reached this stage of her history during the days of Manasseh, immorality was at a new high (2 Chronicles 33:1-9). It was also during that time that God condemned the nation to face destruction for they had passed the point of no return. There was no turning back from His wrath.

7) The Age of Decline and Collapse

At this point the nation reaches a tipping point. The downfall of a culture will either be from within, without or a combination of the two. In Israel's case, they were deteriorated morally and economically from within. Being unable to unite in their narcissistic chaos, they were destroyed from without by Babylon, being carried away into captivity (2 Chronicles 36:10-ff).

Glubb confirmed that all the nations he studied exhibited this pattern prior to their death. We also know that many societies from the Bible experienced the same. It says in Hebrews 8:5, "*Behold the pattern...*" It would behoove us to place the United States on the backdrop of this pattern and further conform where we stand as a nation in this present time.

The United States of America on the Backdrop of This Pattern

1) The Age of Outburst

Our nation was founded primarily on the pursuit of freedom, and above all, religious freedom. The early settlers in this nation were victims of persecution by

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European royalty. William Bradford, the leader of a movement called the Pilgrims, wrote this about the religious persecution prior to their departure to America.

"But after these things they could not long continue in any peaceable condition, but were hunted & persecuted on every side, so as their former afflictions were but as flea-bitings in comparison of these which now came upon them. For some were taken & clapt up in prison, others had their houses besett & watcht night and day, & hardly escaped their hands; and ye most were faine to flie & leave their howses & habitations, and the means of their livelehood."

They were on the cusp of the age of outburst in pursuit of the freedom to worship the God of the Bible. It motivated hurting souls to make a perilous journey to a dangerous new world. Many others came from Europe over the next couple of centuries in search of the same freedom. They sought to use the Bible as the primary text of education and churches were built throughout the land. This freedom of religion to worship the God of the Bible can be seen throughout our early nation.

- The Founding Fathers were all devout in their faith toward God and his Son Jesus Christ.
- The Declaration of Independence contains five references to God — God as supreme Lawmaker, God as Creator of all men, God as the Source of all rights, God as the world’s supreme Judge, and God as our Protector on whom we can rely.
- The First Amendment to the Constitution sets out to guarantee us freedom of religion. This was because without it, all the other rights are going to come from man, not God.
- The Northwest Ordinance, a requirement of every state seeking to be admitted into the Union, required Christianity to be taught in every school.
- 197 of the first 200 colleges were founded by churches.
- Students seeking a law degree were required to have a theological degree first. The reasoned how could they interpret the laws of man if they did not understand the laws of God.
- We were a Christian nation founded upon Christian principles in an "age of outburst".

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2) The Age of Conquests

Land was fought for, purchased from possessors and negotiated for in detailed plans. As colonies and states were added to the Union, Christianity spread throughout. The laws that were written were based in the Bible. The people were expected to uphold the morality of the Bible. Men like George Washington, Patrick Henry, John Adams, Alexander Hamilton and Samuel Adams influenced the nation in ways of righteousness. Their words and actions were closely orchestrated with the God of the Bible. It was an "age of conquests".

3) The Age of Commerce

With the shackles of Imperialism broken apart through the Revolutionary war, commerce among the young nation thrived. We became a country of mass production of natural resources, inventory and invention. Economic freedom combined with a biblical work ethic led our nation to be a major exporter to the entire world. Farming was still the number one industry and personal land ownership was higher than anywhere else in the world. It was an "age of commerce" like the world had never seen.

Special Note:

Around this time a French historian named Alexis de Tocqueville came to our country to study the American democracy for five years. He wanted to observe our government and understand how this new country could be as great as it was. He wrote that *“America is great because she is good. If America ceases to be good, America will cease to be great.”*

He could see the morality of the people and how their national strength in how it was carried out in the hearts of the people. He also warned that *“When the taste for physical gratifications among them has grown more rapidly than their education...the time will come when men are carried away and lose all self-restraint...It is not necessary to do violence to such a people in order to strip them of the rights they enjoy; they themselves willingly loosen their hold...they neglect their chief business which is to remain their own masters.”*

4) The Age of Affluence

Though America became a shining light among the nations of the world, she still had faults to contend with. The Southern states expanded slavery largely to the need to have cheap labor to work the land for the prospering plantation owners. The Civil War stalled the nation for some time, but the prosperity returned shortly thereafter.

With the emergence of great commerce came an expansion of the upper and lower classes. Many of the great industrialists blossomed onto the scene during this era. Carnegie became the leader of the steel industry; Rockefeller mastered the oil industry; J.P Morgan monopolized the banking industry; Ford cornered the automobile industry;

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Vanderbilt excelled in shipping and rail. They became rich beyond human imagination. At the same time the majority became poor at their expense.

This was further exacerbated in the Great Depression. It was also at that time that great structures like the Chrysler and Empire State buildings were reaching new heights among the expanding cities. Our influence on the world was great and our "age of affluence" became obvious.

5) The Age of Intellect

Around the same time of the “intellectual” approach, our nation took control of public schools away from the churches in 1895. Men like John Dewey influenced the schools to learn the ways of Humanism. Evolution was being taught in place of Creationism. The colleges began to teach us to question authority and tradition. Prayer and the Bible were taken out of the public schools through the same efforts.

Every year the national trend was higher divorce rates, higher unwed pregnancy rates, higher abortion rates, higher crime rates and lower test scores in the areas that mattered like math and science.

Because all this led to higher poverty, more welfare and assistance programs were needed. The government determined it was going to fight an all-out war against poverty, but in the end they only made it worse. It seems the country had more problems with the "new way of thinking" in place of the original belief system of the early nation like hard work, honesty, strong families and morality. The "age of intellect" left us further away from God.

6) The Age of Decadence

Glubb wrote that you can tell a lot about a nation by the heroes they choose. If that is true, then we are in serious trouble. Fifty years ago our nation honored men like George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Patrick Henry, Christopher Columbus, Thomas Jefferson, Betsy Ross and Daniel Boone. Today our people honor unprincipled Hollywood actors, immoral athletes, filthy-mouth rap singers and dishonest politicians as their heroes.

More than that, we have become a nation of materialists, immoral sexual deviants and narcissistic radicals hell-bent on walking over the top of others for our own appetites. We have a nation of fools warring against our Christian traditions like marriage, the Bible, loving our neighbor and yes, even Christmas.

We do not value unborn human life or the elderly as precious from God, but an inconvenience to be disposed. Singers turn our heads as unborn babies are slaughtered and sold for body parts. We take a half-trillion dollars of medical funds from the elderly to redistribute to the slothful and lawless. No longer is marriage made from one man and one woman, but whatever we want to redefine it as. Now the same reprobates are attempting to lower the age of consent for children as low as 8-years old.

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We are in the United States’ “age of decadence” and it only goes downhill from here. As God said of the dying nation of Ninevah in Jonah 4:11, we “*do not know our right hand from our left.*”

7) The Age of Decline and Collapse

As mentioned before, the morality will continue to fall and narcissism will take over. Our nation is on deathrow. This is because there is no national glue to hold that nation together. We are broke morally and financially. Exactly what Alexis de Tocqueville had predicted is coming true; Just like the historians have taught us; Just like the Bible has confirmed to us over thousands of years, we are in the “age of decline and collapse”.

How long does our nation have before her end?

Only God knows for sure, but the handwriting is on the wall (Daniel 5). History is clear; we cannot continue much longer in the way we have without natural consequences finally catching up. We have sown the seeds of destruction (Galatians 6:7) and there is a bumper crop of destruction headed our way.

Application: Recognize the Warning and be alerts!

Jesus said concerning the destruction of Jerusalem in *Matthew 24:32–33* “*Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near; ³³ so, you too, when you see all these things, recognize that He is near, right at the door. Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place.*”

The worst thing we can do is turn a blind eye to the truth. In doing that we leave ourselves open to many further consequences. *1 Peter 5:8* “*Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.*” In the next lesson we will cover in detail what are society will look like at the time of our fall. By doing so, we will be able to best prepare for what is to come.