

A classic example of the Day, in its historical aspect, is the judgment by God upon the armies of Egypt at the decisive battle of Charchemish (“fort of Chemosh”), as related in Jeremiah 46:1-12. This battle crushed the military power and political significance of Egypt in the ancient Near East, and catapulted Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, into a position of regional dominance. Listen as God predicts the outcome of this significant skirmish between Egypt and the Chaldeans and note how He refers to it as the “Day of the Lord”: *“For this [is] the day of the Lord GOD of hosts, a day of vengeance, that he may avenge him of his adversaries: and the sword shall devour, and it shall be satiate and made drunk with their blood: for the Lord GOD of hosts hath a sacrifice in the north country by the river Euphrates. Go up into Gilead, and take balm, O virgin, the daughter of Egypt: in vain shalt thou use many medicines; [for] thou shalt not be cured. The nations have heard of thy shame, and thy cry hath filled the land: for the mighty man hath stumbled against the mighty, [and] they are fallen both together”* (Jer. 46:10-12).

By contrast, the Endtime “Day of the Lord” is a much more extensive period of cosmic disturbances, geopolitical upheaval, international perplexity, and unprecedented bloodshed that will affect every nation of the earth. This period is a frequent theme in the preaching of the prophets, and is likewise a New Testament emphasis (I Thess. 5:1-3; Revelation 6-19, etc.).

The “Day of the Lord” as an historical judgment, on the other hand, is any period of a nation’s existence when God is calling its inhabitants to account for their sins and failure to repent. Just such an historical “Day of the Lord” is slated for

America. Right now this nation is receiving its final call to turn from its pride, self-sufficiency, rampant adultery, fornication, sodomy, and drunkenness. However, if present trends hold, the vast majority will maintain their heedless addiction to merrymaking, and entertain notions of impunity until destruction suddenly strikes. The Day of the Lord in this country will be similar in character to the Day of the Lord in other countries in previous periods of history. But there will be special parallels with God’s judgment upon 7th-century Judah, which spurned the repeated warnings of the compassionate prophet Jeremiah, who warned his countrymen of a catastrophic demise, if their form of godliness were not converted to genuine repentance. Let us look at the special features of that day that will soon shake this proud nation and drastically alter its status among the nations of the earth.

### ***America’s Final Call***

*If thou wilt return, O Israel, saith the LORD, return unto me: and if thou wilt put away thine abominations out of my sight, then shalt thou not remove. And thou shalt swear, The LORD liveth, in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness; and the nations shall bless themselves in him, and in him shall they glory (Jer. 4:1,2).*

Much like Judah before the Babylonian invasion, America is receiving its final call in the form of a stern summons to repentance. The prophet is here pleading for a sincere, wholehearted return to the Lord, accompanied by a putting away of the detestable idolatry and immorality that had become commonplace among the people of God. The point seems to be that a superficial repentance, that stops short of vital connection with God will be unavailing.

If Judah, and if America, would return to God, then its individual inhabitants must do more than merely engage in a superficial show of repentance and adopt a hypocritical form of godliness (II Tim. 3:5). They must do more than profess repentance and submit to outward rites of religion, such as circumcision (which suggests an inward change); they must possess the reality, the root of the matter, and not simply the semblance. This warning was especially appropriate in view of the recent revival under Josiah which had come and gone and left but a fleeting impression upon the people (Jer. 3:10; Hosea 6:4-6). If Judah is to return, let them do more than adopt an empty confessional; let them experience and express genuine contrition and conversion. After the 9/11 attack in New York City, there was a sudden upsurge in church-attendance in this country. People felt insecure and were looking for assurance and solace that they thought religion would afford. But after some time, the attendance rate dropped off and people were back to business as usual. It was a superficial return with little lasting effect.

### ***Break Up Your Fallow Ground***

*For thus saith the LORD to the men of Judah and Jerusalem, Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns. Circumcise yourselves to the LORD, and take away the foreskins of your heart, ye men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem: lest my fury come forth like fire, and burn that none can quench [it], because of the evil of your doings (Jer. 4:3,4).*

Additional breaking was the need of the hour, and is the need among the people of God in America. Past revivals

and seasons of refreshing will become just a drinking of the rain of heaven to no practical effect; a receiving of the grace of God in vain (Heb. 6:7,8; II Cor. 6:1,2); unless they become revivals that touch the heart of the matter, which is the matter of the heart. God would do a subsurface work in our lives that runs deeper than a religious veneer and which plows new ground. Virgin, untouched areas of our lives must feel the blade of the Master-tiller, and the soil of our hearts must be raked to remove all the thorny seeds of disobedience and inordinate affection from our lives. It is this inward work, as Christ is formed in us, that will give significance to the external rites of religion such as circumcision, or in the new dispensation—baptism, profession and church-attendance (Hosea 10:12; Matt. 13:22).

### ***The Destroyer is on His Way***

*Declare ye in Judah, and publish in Jerusalem; and say, Blow ye the trumpet in the land: cry, gather together, and say, Assemble yourselves, and let us go into the defenced cities. Set up the standard toward Zion: retire, stay not: for I will bring evil from the north, and a great destruction. The lion is come up from his thicket, and the destroyer of the Gentiles is on his way; he is gone forth from his place to make thy land desolate; [and] thy cities shall be laid waste, without an inhabitant. For this gird you with sackcloth, lament and howl: for the fierce anger of the LORD is not turned back from us (Jer. 4:5-8).*

Contrary to the thought of the unconcerned masses, Judah, and like her, America, is being stalked by a deadly enemy intent on destroying the nation. Therefore, the Word of the Lord comes, “Blow ye the trumpet in the land.” The

warning is to be sounded, lest the destruction overtake the masses unawares. An alarm, of course, is designed to raise the alert level and to convince the populace of the need of making preparations for flight. The people of Jeremiah's day were woefully unprepared for the calamities that were about to befall them just as many in America shrug off warnings of coming judgment and envision the future as a long stretch of undisturbed peace and prosperity. Jeremiah announced that not only would judgment come; it had already commenced. The Destroyer of the Gentiles was on his way and despite the present calm, the anger of God remained unabated.

### **The Presidential Nightmare**

*And it shall come to pass at that day, saith the LORD, [that] the heart of the king shall perish, and the heart of the princes; and the priests shall be astonished, and the prophets shall wonder. Then said I, Ah, Lord GOD! surely thou hast greatly deceived this people and Jerusalem, saying, Ye shall have peace; whereas the sword reacheth unto the soul (Jer. 4:9,10).*

When the day of reckoning arrives, the vaunted wisdom of this nation's advisors, leaders, political pundits, and economic forecasters will flounder before a grave and frightful development that defies solution. America will be under attack! And even the most sagacious will see that there is no way out from the wave after wave of destruction (Jer. 4:20-22). This nation's leaders will stand in bewilderment as they see the unthinkable taking place before their eyes.

### **The Sirocco of War**

*At that time shall it be said to this people and to Jerusalem, A dry wind of the high places in the wilderness toward the daughter of my people, not to fan, nor to cleanse, [Even] a full wind from those [places] shall come unto me: now also will I give sentence against them. Behold, he shall come up as clouds, and his chariots [shall be] as a whirlwind: his horses are swifter than eagles. Woe unto us! for we are spoiled. O Jerusalem, wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved. How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee? For a voice declareth from Dan, and publisheth affliction from mount Ephraim. Make ye mention to the nations; behold, publish against Jerusalem, [that] watchers come from a far country, and give out their voice against the cities of Judah (Jer. 4:11-16).*

The invading foes will resemble a hot, scorching wind from the desert regions around Judah, known as a sirocco. Its strong winds will serve no productive purpose, but rather spread devastation in their wake, issuing in an unstoppable storm of fury.

### **When Watchmen Must Speak**

*My bowels, my bowels! I am pained at my very heart; my heart maketh a noise in me; I cannot hold my peace, because thou hast heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war. Destruction upon destruction is cried; for the whole land is spoiled: suddenly are my tents spoiled, [and] my curtains in a moment. How long shall I see the standard, [and] hear the sound of the trumpet? For my people [is] foolish, they have not known me; they [are] sottish children, and they have none understanding: they [are] wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge (Jer. 4:19-22).*

Jeremiah could not be a dumb-dog watchman, and neither can God's true servants in America (Isa. 56:10-12). Like Peter of old, they cannot but speak the

things they have seen and heard (Acts 4:20), and in warning the wicked of the coming sword (Eze. 3:17-19), they deliver their own souls.

### **Descent into Chaos**

*I beheld the earth, and, lo, [it was] without form, and void; and the heavens, and they [had] no light (Jer. 4:23).*

Jeremiah beheld a judgment so catastrophic, that there seemed to be a reversal of the established order of creation. It is a dark and dreary picture of doom, a vision of coming chaos, with entire cities broken down at the presence of the Lord (Jer. 4:23-26).

### **Travailing to Bring Forth**

*For I have heard a voice as of a woman in travail, [and] the anguish as of her that bringeth forth her first child, the voice of the daughter of Zion, [that] bewaileth herself, [that] spreadeth her hands, [saying], Woe [is] me now! for my soul is wearied because of murderers (Jer. 4:31).*

The national chaos and social upheaval of the time, however, will produce a preserved remnant whom God has reserved unto Himself (Rom. 11:4,5). This vision of the nation in travail was seen by other prophets (Micah 5:3; Jer. 30:7; Isa. 66:8; Rev. 12:1-5), and speaks of the dire circumstances that will bring a godly remnant of believers to the birth. Therefore the calamity, chaos, and catastrophe associated with a national demise will actually facilitate the emergence of a manchild-company of saints, who born out of sorrow, and acquainted with affliction, will survive the Day of the Lord in America as a remnant with whom it will be well (Jer. 15:11)!

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## **The Day of the Lord in America**

The day of the Lord is coming to America. Yes, after many years of longsuffering in which God has continually and graciously called a nation characterized by religious hypocrisy to repentance, the Divinely sent emissaries of destruction are poised to strike. And strike they will. Not, however, with the light affliction (Isa. 9:1), and sustainable blows with which the country has become familiar, but with a blow that carries catastrophic consequences and will bring this proud nation to its knees. The seeds of this destruction have been sown in years of pleasure-seeking, greed, and rampant immorality. The roots of the Divine punishment are in a general neglect of God (Heb. 2:1-3) and in the adoption of a hypocritical form (Titus 3:5) on the part of the people of God. It will be a blow that brings demise. And as America staggers at the sheer force of this blow, she will fall to rise no more.

### **Understanding the Day of the Lord**

The "Day of the Lord," or "for the Lord," is a technical phrase employed to describe *historical occasions* in which God dramatically intervenes in human affairs (punishing sinners and preserving a remnant) and *endtime events* which commence with the coming of the Lord as a "thief in the night" and stretch throughout Daniel's seventieth week on to the end of the Millennium. The historical aspect of the Day often involves a day of visitation upon a nation or group of people because of their prolonged resistance to the revealed will of God.