

For over a century and a half, America has not had a foreign troop on its soil. We haven't been invaded, attacked or bombed. We have sent our soldiers to fight in many wars, but always in other nations' land. Indeed, we have been spared - we have enjoyed peace and prosperity.

Even now, America breathes a sigh of relief because there no longer seems to be a nuclear threat. We believe Communism is dead, that Russia will never again rise as a world power.

As I write this message, Boris Yeltsin is in power in Russia - but I believe he is just a temporary leader. The Communist clique still exists - and soon Yeltsin will be cast aside and a new, aggressive government will arise. The fact remains that 20,000 nuclear warheads are still at the former Soviets' disposal - most of them aimed at America! Recent pacts to reduce these warheads may never be honored.

Right now China is like a giant, waking from its sleep. In just a few years Hong Kong will be turned over to China completely. It will become China's pearl city -- a major money center and the gateway to wealth for Chinese markets. In time, China may bypass Japan as an economic power. Keep your eyes on China!

But America's problem is not Russia, China or the newly formed European United Nations. No - like Israel in the days of Hosea the prophet America is self-destructing! America is being ruined from within!

This is exactly what happened to the great British Empire. Just 350 years ago it was said, "The sun never sets on the British Empire." Great Britain had colonies all over

The Self-Destruction of America

the world. It was the most powerful, blessed and prosperous nation on the face of the earth. Spain, France, Italy and Turkey all had threatened Britain, waging war unsuccessfully.

The British boasted that God was on their side, blessing their armies and navies. But in 1659, Puritan watchmen were warning of the self-destruction of the British Empire. They were being raised up by God - to warn of the self-destruction coming upon them because of rampant sin and godlessness! The British Empire was crumbling left and right - and what was ruining them was decay from within!

Thomas Hall wrote: "The sins of England I fear more than all the enemies of the world. It is not Spain, or Italy, France or Turkey, that I fear... it is the atheism, blasphemy, apostasy and the profaning of all that is holy, and contempt for the gospel.... If anything destroys us, it is these abominations that reign among us."

When the empire crumbled, another Puritan writer commented: "God humbled us with sickness, plague, poverty and decay of our economy... we threw off the yoke of Christ and now we have on us the yoke of pestilence and disease."

The Puritan Watchmen were crying out the same message that Hosea

delivered to Ephraim: "*Thou Hast Destroyed Thyself!*" (HOS 13:9).

Today in America, we hear these cries:

"Japan is destroying our economy by dumping cars and computers on us!"

"Germany is crippling us by keeping their interest rates so high!"

"We're destroying our economic base by letting manufacturers move to Mexico for cheaper labor!"

But God is saying to America, "Your suffering is not because of your trade partners, you are destroying yourself! Your help has always been found in Me - but you have cast Me aside. You have refused Me as your nation's King - and now your own sin is destroying you!"

God said to Israel: "*O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thine help. I will be thy king: where is any other that may save thee in all thy cities?*" (HOS 13:10).

Beloved, God is asking the same question today - but America is not listening! Can our President save New York, Detroit, Los Angeles - all the decaying cities in our land? He boasts he will rebuild our manufacturing base, create thousands of jobs and restore the economy. Indeed, he may prove to be a hardworking man in the White

House, very dedicated and sincere. But his job is hopeless!

Nothing is going to work. Everything is self-destructing - because the real King has been dethroned in America! America seems obsessed by demonic impulses to remove God completely from our society.

Only fifty years ago America was still "a nation under God." When I was in my teens, God was honored in our schools, courts, government, families. But today we are a nation that looks defiantly in the face of the God who told us, "*Thou shalt know no god but me: for there is no saviour beside me*" (HOS 13:4).

God begged Israel: "*Return unto the Lord thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity*" (14:1). And the Lord has called out to America time after time as well, But we refuse to turn to Him - even though our sins are destroying us!

I have searched the Scriptures that speak of God's judgment upon men and nations. And I have discovered certain "flash points" of His judgment - moments when the blood cried out from the ground, and God had to move!

I believe God is speaking to America right now through His word to Ephraim. You see, Ephraim is a type of any nation lifted high in its beginning. It represents any people who are blessed above all others - prospered, powerful, influential, feared, respected when in God's favor.

Ephraim was the largest, most prosperous and powerful of Israel's twelve tribes. They had been brought to fruitfulness by the goodness and mercy of God. But God brought Ephraim down to the pits of poverty because of incorrigible evils!

The Bible warns us: "*Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come*" (1.Cor 10:11). God is saying, "Search the Scriptures, go to the prophets. See what I did to Sodom and Gomorrah. Find out why I sent the Flood. Learn why and when I send My judgments!"

I went to these passages, and I discovered a pattern. And that is, if we sin in the same way they did, we're going to pay the same price they all did! God rained fire on Sodom and Gomorrah as "*an*

ensample unto those that after should live ungodly" (2.PET 2:6). And if America continues in ungodliness, God will send fire from heaven on us as well - a nuclear rain!

Hosea gave many reasons for God's impending judgment on Ephraim. But there are three that relate directly to America:

1. There Was No More Truth, Mercy or Knowledge of God In the Land!

"Hear the word of the Lord, ye children of Israel: for the Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land" (HOS 4:1).

At one time Ephraim had been an evangelistic tribe, on fire for the Lord. But the wicked Jeroboam was now king, and he went wild after idols. He set up golden calves at each end of the nation, and he made it legal to worship these idols.

Sin began to creep into the nation - and soon everything degenerated. Prophets were mocked. The houses of God were shut down. Ungodly priests and false teachers were given office, and they spent their time deceiving the people and removing all true worship of Jehovah God.

Their removal of God from their midst birthed a merciless society of unruly children and sensuous adults. Now there was only "*swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood*" (HOS 4:2). The people had "broken out" from every godly restraint that held their society together. Under Jeroboam, Ephraim was wholly given over to idolatry - yet the law itself defended their apostasy!

I ask you: Have you ever in your lifetime seen such immorality and sin as are "breaking out" in America right now? Yet what should we expect in a nation that pushes God aside - that mocks truth and ridicules righteousness - that hates God and despises Christ?

One school was forced to remove a plaque bearing the Ten Commandments. Administrators said it might influence somebody to found a particular religion.

A female prison guard in New York was fired because she refused to stop wearing a necklace with a cross that she kept hidden under

her uniform. A court upheld the decision, saying, "If anybody saw the cross, they might be influenced toward Christianity."

This past Christmas, manger scenes all across America were legally banned - some ripped down, burned and thrown into the streets!

Yet less than fifty years ago, some high schools were teaching Bible classes. In 1949, Dallas schools used a book entitled, *The Lordship and Divinity of Jesus Christ*. It was taught by a pastor who was invited into the classroom! Yet today, if you are a teacher in Dallas, you dare not even lay a Bible on your desk without risking dismissal!

Is it any wonder that over 60 percent of high school and college students say it's okay to lie and cheat on tests in order to get ahead in life? Is it any wonder that teenagers curse like hardened criminals... that girls get pregnant and think it is a lark... that teenage gangs loot, rob and kill for sneakers and coats?

Should we be surprised when a teenage boy kills his mother and father in cold blood because they wouldn't let him use the family car to take his girlfriend out? Should we be shocked when another teenager kills and mutilates his father with a butcher knife, then goes to a friend's house and falls asleep? (When the authorities woke him up, he showed no regrets whatsoever!)

Should we be alarmed that in the past forty years crime has gone up 520 percent in our schools? We now live in a day when metal detectors are installed in school entrances. Our city kids go to class fearing gunfire in the halls!

2. The More They Prospered, the More They Sinned!

History has proven again and again that the more powerful and prosperous a nation becomes, the more the people tend to turn away from God. When prosperity came to Ephraim, they abused their abundance: "*As they were increased, so they sinned against me: therefore will I change their glory into shame*" (HOS 4:7).

Our fathers who framed the Constitution agreed that all of America's blessings came "from God and His Christ." They warned that America would fall into corruption and shame if God was ever rejected. Oh, how far we have come from that today! Now God is

making His judgment clear: "I'm going to change your glory into shame!"

Think about what has happened to America: All the things we once gloried in have been turned into shame! We gloried in having the greatest economic power, best educational system, top industrial complex, strongest infrastructure, best medical system, greatest tolerance of other races. Yet now we have fallen behind in every category!

Our manufacturing base is collapsing and our economy is in shambles. In the past ten years America has gone from being the world's greatest lending nation to the number-one debtor nation.

We gloried in our freedom and our religious heritage - and now those freedoms are being taken from us, one after another. Godless laws are being judicated by godless judges. Tax laws are being aimed at church properties. Special rights are being given to homosexuals. We have boasted for years about our leading educational system - but now we rank far behind many industrial nations!

Our once great health-care system is in ruin because of AIDS and other problems. Libraries and museums are closing because there are no funds to keep them open. Racial tension has hit its absolute peak. Everywhere you look, God has turned all our glories into shame!

American churches have increased in size and wealth. We have gloried in our mega-churches, with thousands in attendance. Almost every major city boasts of "America's fastest-growing church."

But a horrible thing has happened: The more the increase, the more the shame of sin has crept into the house of God! Prophets and watchmen have been replaced by slick entertainers - ministers who ought to be in show business rather than in the sacred pulpit! Too many want only crowds and influence - and they're ego-tripping on the backs of humble people!

Only a handful of preachers now preach against sin. Most are too afraid to offend the people, fearing they will leave or not pay tithes. Consequently, sin is flooding into many congregations. People want to be coddled in their sins, comforted in their adulteries and fornications. They cry, "Prophecy to us smooth things!"

Do you think all this is just natural - that this decay eating away at America is mere happenstance? No! God said, "You have forgotten Me! And in the height of your prosperity, I will come upon you and cast the shadow of shame over every proud thing you gloried in!"

3. God Says, "I'm Going to judge You Because of Deep Corruption Caused By Rampant Homosexuality!"

The day is not far off when I will not be able to say what I am about to say without being sued or jailed. It is because homosexual power is so strong in America - and it is growing in power daily!

Gay rights are nothing new. The book of Judges says this was the cause of the burning of Gibeah - and the consequent death of 40,000 Israelites. Hosea said it also caused God's judgment to fall on Ephraim. *"They have deeply corrupted themselves, as in the days of Gibeah: therefore he will remember their iniquity, he will visit their sins"* (HOS 9:9-10).

You remember Gibeah - the little Benjamite town where a Levite came to bring home his runaway concubine. As the Levite slept in his host's home, a group of angry homosexuals took his concubine and sodomized her all night long. They were angry because they could not have the Levite himself!

The woman was dumped on the door stoop and died before morning. When the Levite awoke and saw what had happened, he cut the woman's ravaged body into twelve pieces and sent the body parts to the twelve tribes. He gave them this message: *"Nothing like this has ever happened in all Israel!"*

I can see the messenger carrying that concubine's bloody limb to the leaders of the Benjamite tribe: "Homosexuals in Gibeah took this concubine and sodomized her all night. They murdered her! We've got to do something about it unless it spreads through the land!"

What was the Benjamites' response? They decided to defend the Gibeans! *"The children of Benjamin gathered themselves together out of the cities unto Gibeah, to go out to battle against the children of Israel"* (JUDG 20:14).

These men from throughout the tribe of Benjamin - every warrior and strong man, husbands and businessmen, 26,000 in all -

gathered together to defend the perverse "rights" of less than 700 homosexuals in Gibeah. Think of how jaded, abnormal and wicked these men must have been - forsaking wives, children, homes and land - to give their lives for a group of men who had gang-raped and killed a helpless woman!

Thank God for the tribes that rose up and said, "We can't allow this to happen!" Scripture says 15,000 Israelites died taking a stand against Benjamin. But 25,100 Benjaminites died defending the gay rights of the Gibeans!

Beloved, God is not concerned about the small percentage of radical ACT-UP homosexuals in America. Their number is infinitesimal. What God is more concerned about - and what is bringing God's judgment on America - is the growing number of homosexual defenders! They number in the millions! When Colorado voted against special rights for gays, the entire Hollywood establishment went into action, boycotting that state in defense of homosexual rights.

God's wrath is upon us because the majority of Americans have lost their values! There are masses of people who would not move an inch to defend America against an enemy aggressor - yet they would gladly lay down their lives to defend abortion rights. The last election showed that 40 million Americans defended the right to kill babies!

America was once renowned as a defender of truth and justice. Now, we have become defenders of baby killers, pornographers and perversions. Beloved, it is at this point that God moves! *"Therefore He will remember their iniquity, He will visit their sins"* (HOS 9:9). When God says, "I'm going to visit you!", He means a visitation of sudden judgment!

How does God judge a people or nation that has such blood and wickedness on its hands? The Lord judges in many powerful ways - but I will list only the two worst judgments. These two judgments have been God's main rods, and we see them in operation already:

1. "The Sorrows of a Travailing Woman Shall Come Upon Him"(Hosea 13:13).

God warns: "Your judgment is going to come suddenly - and it will be long and painful, like a woman travailing with child!" Picture this in your mind:

The time has come for a woman to give birth, and she is in labor. The pangs hit her - but the matrix is closed! The pain becomes excruciating. But there is no doctor or midwife to deliver the baby! Standing nearby is a merciful physician, anxious to help and deliver her, but she cries out, "Away with him - don't let him near me! I despise him!"

Beloved, America is like that woman travailing in pain, yet unable to deliver! She is in deep agony over AIDS, soaring taxes and health care, alcoholism, drugs, unemployment, a new tuberculosis outbreak, racial tension. We need deliverance - we need Dr. Jesus, who stands by so willing to come and save us. But we have told Him, "We don't need You!"

God looks on this scene incredulously:

"(Ephraim) is an unwise son; for he should not stay long in the places of the breaking forth of children" (HOS 13:13). He is saying to America, "How sad - how unwise! You need not remain in the place of misery and pain. I could end all this in a moment's time!"

That is so true! America's problems could be turned around overnight, if only we would repent as a nation and cry out to God, "Forgive us! Come back to us, deliver us - we put our lives in Your hands!"

I believe God would put an end to the AIDS plague. TB would stop dead. The economy would become robust. Crime would go down, and children would again play in our streets. America would regain all its lost ground!

Yet the attitude of America's courts and government toward God is, "Don't touch us! We don't want you here!" How foolish! How unwise can a people be?

2. All That Was Once Fruitful Will Become Barren, Withered and Dead! (Hosea 13:15)

God once promised to *"command (His) blessing" upon those who "would hearken diligently unto the*

voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments" (DEUT 28:1, 8). He told Ephraim, "If you'll just walk in My commandments - if you'll honor me and obey My Word - I will command My blessings upon you!"

Like Ephraim, America has been above all else fruitful. We sing of "America, the Beautiful" of "spacious skies" and "fruited plains." But rampant sin has brought on a curse of barrenness! God says:

"Though he be fruitful among his brethren, an east wind shall come, the wind of the Lord shall come up from the wilderness, and his spring shall become dry, and his fountain shall be dried up: he shall spoil the treasure of all pleasant vessels" (HOS 13:15). God is saying He will spoil all our precious resources!

For Ephraim, the east wind that blew in from the wilderness was the great Assyrian army. The Assyrians swept over the nation and plundered it, carrying away its wealth and leaving it desolate, a beggar nation.

America will also experience "a withering wind from the Lord!" His wind is blowing right now - and it's withering IBM, General Motors, the economy, marriages, schools. All are being withered and made dry! We are no longer the most productive - but instead have been helpless to stop the withering and decay of our once-great institutions and corporations. We have lost our influence. America is now the tail and not the head!

When God's wind blew on Jerusalem, the city was left empty and dry! *"He turneth rivers into a wilderness, and the water-springs into dry ground; a fruitful land into barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein"* (PSA 107:33-34).

What lies ahead for America? A withering of all things! God's wind is now blowing, and He is doing what He said He would do - spoiling our treasures.

Take Hope - Because There Are Bright Clouds on the Horizon for a Holy Remnant!

In the midst of all the withering judgments, God is going to cause a holy remnant to grow and flourish. Listen to God's message to Hosea: *"I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from Him. I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon.*

"His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree... Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? I have heard him, and observed him: I am like a green fir tree. From me is thy fruit found" (HOS 14:4-8).

We're going to be a people bearing fruit, spreading our branches - full of Christ! This prophecy has to do with both natural Israel and a holy church remnant. The Spirit will fall as dew upon God's holy ones, and they will grow on the vine - a people dependent on the Lord, bearing fruit, while the ungodly wither and die.

You may wonder, "But what's going to happen to my family during judgment? What of my house, my job? We're going to need it all!" Dear saint, those are material things - and your heavenly Father has promised to feed you and keep you Himself. He has said to you, "You'll never beg bread. What more promise do you need?"

You and I are going to have to live on that Word of God: *"Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? for the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein"* (verse 9).

If you know God is in control, you can lie back in His arms and say, "Thank You, Jesus." You can rest in the knowledge that God has everything under control.

Hallelujah!

David Wilkerson, 25.2.1993

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CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLIES INTERNATIONAL, P.O. BOX 888, COFFS HARBOUR NSW 2450, AUSTRALIA