

A COUNTRY IN NEED

1 CHRONICLES 15:1-15

Text:

Introduction:

The Bible has much to say about the blessings a nation enjoys.

Psalms 33:12

¹² Blessed *is* the nation whose God *is* the LORD; *and* the people *whom* he hath chosen for his own inheritance.

Of all the nations which have ever been established, conceived, or made, the USA is without a doubt the greatest Nation to ever grace the face of the earth. As a superpower, our ability to change leadership without firing a shot serves as a model to the rest of the world. The ways in which we conduct business and enjoy freedom are the envy of millions of people around the world.

In the beginning of this nation, our leaders were deep thinking men. Their intellect was unsurpassed. If you read the founding documents of this nation, you will discover that we have few, if any, who think as deeply as the likes of Franklin, Jefferson, Adams, and even Hancock. Additionally, these men were deep believers.

Although modern day history attempt to cover the true spiritual roots of this nation, any self-respecting historian is forced to concede our forefathers came to this place to have and offer “religious freedom.”

Their beliefs were deep enough to place at stake their lives, their livelihoods, and their families. They gave themselves to principles, ethics, morals, and yes, a belief that to succeed God would have to bless them. As is stated by many of our founding Fathers, we would need God’s hand to guide if there was to be a future for this nation.

Just a few days ago, we celebrated 232 years of independence from the King of Great Britain. When the 56 men signed the Declaration of Independence they knew the risks, they knew the situation, but most of all, they need the need of this new land.

Today, those spiritual foundation and moorings have been all but demolished and uprooted by leaders who do not think as deeply and certainly not as spiritually.

We have now become world leaders in all the things like evil, violence, immorality, etc. If something doesn’t change, God will either judge the USA or have to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah. We are a nation in need.

Turn with me to 2 Chronicles 15.

Chapter 15 relays to us a story about a good and godly King of Judah named Asa.

Chapter 14:2 tells us that Asa did what was good and right in the sight of the Lord HIS God and that the land had peace for 10 years.

King Asa took a good nation and made it better. He saw the needs and gave leadership to the people. Let's read about this and learn.

(READ TEXT)

Don't you like that last sentence? "The Lord gave them rest on every side." Just how did that happen? It is safe to respond that they were blessed of God, just like the USA was blessed in her early days.

The truth is this: I am concerned for my kids. When I consider how this country has turned her back on God in the last 15 years and realizing how everything is speeding up, I fear where we will be in the next 15.

Some will 'say' that we are still under God's blessing but I say we are in NEED of God's blessing.

Notice

1. THE CONDITIONS FOR GOD'S BLESSINGS

Although we don't care to admit it, God has conditions which He places on us. God gives us conditions for His blessings.

There are at least 3 reminders here.

A. The Lord is with you WHEN you are with Him.

When you get with God, He'll get with you. Again, we may not like this, but it's still God's word. And it gets worse.

B. If you seek Him, THEN He will be found by you.

Have you ever wondered why we don't "see God's hand" in our lives, our church, and our nation?

I read when the first cosmonaut went into space He said, "I saw God nowhere." Then Alan Shepherd went up and said, "I saw God everywhere."

If we seek Him, He's available.

C. If you abandon Him, THEN He will allow you to go choose your way.

This blows a hole in our wishful thinking. Surely if God is a God of love, He will never abandon us.

In fact, doesn't the Bible teach that He will never leave or forsake?

God will not leave you but allows us the choice to follow or sadly forsake Him.

2. THE CONSEQUENCES WITHOUT GOD'S BLESSINGS.

Let's look at what this passage tells us. The consequences are clear & costly. By the way, the parallel for the USA is striking.

A. The Land is filled with chaos.

The scripture tells us that there was no teaching priest and no law. When no one is teaching right from wrong, everyone is free to do what is right in their own eyes and minds. If there is no teaching going on, there are no laws being promoted and again, everyone does what is right in their own minds.

When this happens, it leads to confusion & chaos. Look around America today. People are confused about most foundational issues and chaos now exist about what is right and wrong. Chaos is progressive & leads

us to,

B. The Land is filled with conflict.

In Asa's Judah, there was no peace. Today, conflict rages from the house to the school house to the White house.

We can track its beginnings in this country. When we began removing God from our schools, government, and other public places, the conflict began. Over the last 40+ years it has grown to where;

C. The Land is filled with corruption.

Verse 3 says that for many years Israel (the people of God) have been without a TRUE GOD.

Corruption comes when there is no God. And the result of this is devastating for a nation.

Without God, there is little to pass along to the next generation except more of what we have had in the recent day.

Considering the consequences of being without God's blessings, take one more look around the USA and see the reality of our situation.

Today we kill the unborn at an alarming rate (in fact, my observation is that animals get more protection from the law and society than an unborn human).

Illustration:

A man out west was imprisoned and fined for killing a grizzly bear as he was being mugged while he was walking his dog.

We view violence in video games and TV which gives them a faulty view of life and death.

We live in a culture which is so vile that we have to register sex offenders.

This “Christian” nation will be electing a President from two men whose views of the Bible are questionable, at best.

The cost of walking away from God is high. What are we to do? What was done in Judah?

We are a country in need. Of what are in need?

3. THE CHANNEL OF GOD’S BLESSINGS.

If we are to experience God’s blessings once again, we need to learn from this text. 2 things.

A. We need Godly People

It seems to me that the people in Judah were very grateful for a leader who would step forward and give fresh leadership.

They became godly by their attitudes and actions.

Notice:

- They recognized their corruption.

Where do I find this truth? The fact that they came with a mind to worship.

The sacrifice would have not taken place, worship would have not been experienced, and what follows would not be recorded had this people not recognized their own corruption.

This was and is the starting point, for a nation, a church, and a person. While we don't care to admit it, corruption exists in each one of us.

When we refuse to acknowledge our sinfulness, there will be no change in us because there is no reason to change. However, when we admit our corruptness, God moves in to help.

- They responded with a covenant.

A contract is based on law, while a covenant is based on love. A contract is about property while covenant is about people.

When the people came to realize their condition and that their condition was impacting their family and their futures, they responded to God in the form of a covenant.

This was a simple covenant which said, “I will seek the Lord.” But remembering their history, they carried it to the next level. “I will seek the Lord with all my mind and heart.”

- They required a commitment.

This people were so grateful to the Lord that it was not enough to take the oath themselves. As a part of this agreement, they instituted a “no tolerance” policy for those who would NOT seek God. (verse 13)

Think about it, Capital punishment for those who would not seek God.

- They rejoiced in their correction.

Verse 14 gives a Biblical picture of a “worship service.”

Can you hear this service? The Bible says, “a loud voice” (everyone), “shouting” (to the top of their voices), “trumpets” & “ram horns”.

They wanted everyone to hear. Why?

2 Chronicles 15:15

¹⁵ And all Judah rejoiced at the oath: for they had sworn with all their heart, and sought him with their whole desire; and he was found of them: and the LORD gave them rest round about.

- They rested in their connection.

This is where we began. The “Lord” gave them rest.

In His presence there is fullness of joy, there is love, there is peace, there is contentment, and the list goes on.

B. We need Godly Leaders

There are several phrases in the Bible which leads me to believe King Asa was a godly leader.

2 Chronicles 15:8

⁸ And when Asa heard these words, and the prophecy of Oded the prophet, he took courage, and put away the abominable idols out of all the land of Judah and Benjamin, and out of the cities which he had taken from mount Ephraim, and renewed the altar of the LORD, that *was* before the porch of the LORD.

“He took courage.” He LED with courage.

It takes courage to make needed changes.

Look at 4 things He did;

- He Removed the Idols.

Anything which takes our focus off God is an idol.

In this country, we have placed many things before God.

Most go into the voting booth these days and vote their pocket book instead of biblical principles. By the way there is a difference in conservatism and Christian.

- He Renovated the House of Worship.

Have you ever driven around a community to look at the landscape of a community? Drive through the old part of town and given an honest evaluation, it looks tired, aged, and many times abandoned.

On the outskirts of the town there are some new building, new architecture, new energy, and new growth.

Focus your attention on the church buildings with the same discerning eye and you’ll discover the same

characteristics. The church buildings or the Houses of God, many times look like relics from a former day while the Houses of People are state of the art.

When I observe this, I am reminded of Haggai 1

Haggai 1:1-7

¹In the second year of Darius the king, in the sixth month, in the first day of the month, came the word of the LORD by Haggai the prophet unto Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, saying, ²Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, This people say, The time is not come, the time that the LORD'S house should be built. ³Then came the word of the LORD by Haggai the prophet, saying, ⁴*Is it* time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled houses, and this house *lie* waste? ⁵Now therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways. ⁶Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages *to put it* into a bag with holes. ⁷Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways.

- He Reunited the people.

He gathered everyone together. Asa knew the importance of building unity among the people.

The old song states a principle, “United we stand, divided we fall.”

- He Restored Authentic Worship.

He turned people's heart toward God and led them to offer "sacrifices" to the Lord.

This is a great message for us. We are a country in need.

A relationship with God through Jesus Christ is the answer.

This is the only thing which will heal our Land.

Here is a prescription for the healing that we need. 2 Chronicles 7:14.

2 Chronicles 7:14

¹⁴ If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

The only way this land will get "healed" is if God hears from heaven and forgives our sin.

This means we have to admit and repent of our sin. What exactly does it mean to repent? "Humble ourselves, Pray, Seek God, and Turn from our wicked ways."

This is the NEED of this nation and every person.