

Judgment of Nations

God is Judge

- We are to do good no matter what everyone else around us is doing.
- We are to live subject to the human authorities in our lives (1 Peter 2:13).
- We are to honor everyone and fear God (1 Peter 2:17).
- If we suffer persecution for doing good, we are following in Jesus's footsteps.

Biblical Foundation

Old Testament

- When God decided to punish Sodom and Gomorrah for their sins, Abraham recognized that God is the judge of men's actions (Genesis 18:2-25).
- In this case, God passed judgment, issued a verdict, and carried out the sentence.
- Psalm 75:7 declares, "But God is the Judge; He puts down one and exalts another."
- Nebuchadnezzar came to understand this (Daniel 4:37).
- Daniel passed this truth on to Belshazzar (Daniel 5:21-22).

New Testament

- The Bible teaches that sin is worthy of death (Romans 6:23).
- Therefore, the whole world is guilty before God (Romans 3:19).
- God has provided a way of escape through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus.
- Many of the parables of Jesus illustrate that judgment is a process that can lead to a decision for God:
- Parable of the minas (Luke 19), parable of the talents (Matthew 25), and parable of the ten virgins (Matthew 25).

New Testament

- In the future, God will judge people on how they live during the Millennium (Revelation 20).
- There will be a final judgment, both for believers and non-believers (Revelation 22).
 - Believers will be judged for their works.
 - Unbelievers will be judged for their unbelief.

Misinterpretations

God's Judgment?

- In the 1980s and 1990s we heard many suggest that AIDS was a judgment of God against homosexuality.
 - Many who engaged in homosexual behavior did not contract AIDS.
 - AIDS struck many innocent victims.
 - The same may happen with the coronavirus (COVID-19).



God's Judgment?

- When Hurricane Katrina struck New Orleans in 2005, people suggested this was God's judgment against the city.
- Callers from the Gulf Coast said the hurricane devastated their communities destroying homes, businesses, and churches.



Old Testament Principles on Judgment

**IS GOD ON
AMERICA'S
SIDE?**

THE SURPRISING ANSWER AND WHY IT MATTERS
DURING THIS ELECTION SEASON

ERWIN W. LUTZER



Principle # 1

God can both bless and curse a nation

God and Israel

“See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse—the blessing, if you obey the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you today; and the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of the Lord your God, but turn aside from the way that I am commanding you today, to go after other gods that you have not known.”

Deuteronomy 11:26-28

God Bless America?

- When we sing “God Bless America” do we really mean it?
- What do most Americans mean by the word “God”?
- After 9/11, God was “allowed off the reservation” (R.C. Sproul).
- Once the nation felt secure, God was safely tucked away and church attendance dropped.

Civil Religion

- We have a civil religion in America.
- “He is a deity without sovereignty, a god without wrath, a judge without judgment, and a force without power.” R.C. Sproul
- After 9/11 God was expected to put His approval on the American way of life without expecting us to repent of our sins.

Principle #2

God judges nations based on the amount of light and opportunity they are given

Israel and Other Nations

- Old Testament is a story of Israel.
- Because Israel had a unique relationship with God, the nation was judged more strictly than its neighbors.
- God was more patient with the Canaanites – it took four hundred years before their “cup of iniquity” was full, and then judgment fell on them.

Israel and Other Nations

- Paul points out (Romans 2:12-15) that in the end times, God would individually judge Jews and Gentiles by the amount of light they had when they were alive.
- When we speak of God judging a nation, we often simply mean that the natural consequence of the sin of a nation accumulated and is intensified.
- Thomas Jefferson - "I tremble when I think that God is just and His justice cannot sleep forever."

Principle #3

God sometimes uses exceedingly evil nations to judge those that are less evil

Judgment of Israel

- God reveals to Isaiah that He will use the wicked nation of Assyria to judge Israel (Isaiah 10:5-6)
- God reveals to Habakkuk that He was raising up the Chaldeans to march through the land, plundering, killing, and stealing (Habakkuk 1:5-11).
- Israel was blessed with undeserved opportunities, but God used evil nations to judge Israel.

America in the Balance

- America is a great country
 - America helps rebuild countries, sends missionaries and foreign aid
- America is a decadent country
 - America is the leader in exporting pornography, abortion, homosexuality
- What will America look like in the future?

Principle #4

When God judges a nation, the
righteous suffer with the wicked

The Righteous Suffer

- When God brought the Babylonians against Judah, Daniel and his friends were forced to accompany them.
- Moral evil: believers died at the Twin Towers and the Pentagon.
- Physical evil: Christians die in hurricanes, earthquakes, and tsunamis.

Principle #5

God's judgments take various forms

Family Destruction

“And you shall eat the fruit of your womb, the flesh of your sons and daughters, whom the Lord your God has given you . . . so that he will not give to any of them any of the flesh of his children whom he is eating, because he has nothing else left, in the siege and in the distress with which your enemy shall distress you in all your towns.”

Deuteronomy 28:53-55

Serve Other Gods

“The Lord will bring you and your king whom you set over you to a nation that neither you nor your fathers have known. And there you shall serve other gods of wood and stone.”

Deuteronomy 28:36-37

Principle #6

In judgment, God's target is often His people, not just the pagans among them

Judges His People

- “For it is time for judgment to begin at the household of God; and if it begins with us, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God? And ‘If the righteous is scarcely saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?’” (1 Peter 4:17-18).
- If judgment begins at the household of God, is the church under judgment?
- We live in a time when the church has a diminished influence.
- We should engage the culture with reason and grace.

Principle #7

God sometimes reverses
intended judgments

Michael - Jeremiah

- Micah warned Judah that her “wound is incurable” and that oppressors were on their way to overrun the land.
- A century later, Jeremiah is brought before the priests and false prophets. After hearing him, they appeal to the preaching of Micah (Jeremiah 16:19).
- Hezekiah listened to Micah’s words and sought God who withheld judgment.
- Another example is God’s grace to Nineveh (“forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown”).

English Revival

- Eighteenth century England was in decline (Parliament, slave trade).
- God reversed the trend through the preaching of John Wesley and George Whitefield.
- Some historians believe that this revival kept England from the fate of a bloody revolution (like France).
- William Wilberforce - slave trade, reformation of manners.



Choosing God

Choosing God

- First, we must choose the right battle.
 - How can we expect people in this nation to pray to a God they don't know and don't love?
- Second, we must use the right weapons.
 - We must be totally dependent upon God and His Word.
 - We may have to suffer (“do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you” - 1 Peter 4:12).

Giving Our Reasons

“but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence; and keep a good conscience so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ will be put to shame.”

1 Peter 3:15-16