



Jeff Sweeten

Thus Saith the Lord **A NATION'S FALL**

By Jeff Sweeten

Jeremiah's preaching career was none to enviable. His challenges were legion, his reception cold, and his heart was broken repeatedly as he dealt with a people whose sight dimmed toward the tip of their nose. Josiah, Judah's last good king, was in power as Jeremiah began his ministry to the Children of Israel, but his life's work saw God's people subjected to vassal statehood under Pharaoh Necho, and finally, and mercilessly, crushed by Nebuchadnezzar.

The foundation for this downturn in fortune was a combination of arrogant pride, self-reliant might, and tainted riches. "Thus says the Lord: 'Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, Let not the mighty man glory in his might, nor let the rich man glory in his riches; but let him who glories glory in this, the he understands and knows Me, that I am the Lord, exercising lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight,' says the Lord" (Jeremiah 9:23-24).

At the risk of being labeled an alarmist, I would suggest that our country is not far behind the plight of ancient Israel. Our pride is unrivaled on the globe; ask any American, we're #1. Some have observed that we have no friends, merely interests. We use our economic/military power in the role of global police, frittering about in foreign affairs until there is not one clod of virgin soil void of American influence. We are by far the richest nation in the world, yet in many ways, the most corrupt. Very few cultures tolerate the diverse deviances America is drowning in, and worse, some seek more than apathetic acceptance, they want constitutional protection and special treatment. A document founded upon the concept of a benevolent, allpowerful God supporting that which God finds repugnant is enough to turn the stomach. And, finally, Bible ignorance is so entrenched in "Christendom" that many "Christian" leaders no longer hold the Book in any reverence while simultaneously claiming it defines who they are.

The solution to Israel's sin was revealed in Jeremiah's admission. "O Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man who walks to direct his own steps. O Lord, correct me, but with justice; not in Your anger, lest You bring me to nothing" (Jeremiah 10:23-24). We must humble our selves in the sight of the Lord (James 4:10), we must admit to our weaknesses (1 Corinthians 1:25), and, as good stewards of the rich blessings of God (1 Corinthians 4:2; Exodus 19:5), use our resources to the glory of God, and not for selfish and perverse pursuits (1 Peter 4:10). But most of all, we must return God's Word to its place of honor in our homes, society, schools, and, yes, even in the church.

It was for "God and country" that men and women sacrificed their lives to establish this great nation in which we live. Remove God and the sacrifice was vain ... and a nation falls.

Thus Saith the Lord
is presented by the

Park Heights Church of Christ

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Hamilton
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Schedule of Services

SUNDAY

9:30 a.m. Bible Class
10:25 a.m. Morning Worship
1:30 p.m. Afternoon Worship

WEDNESDAY

7:00 p.m. Bible Study

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