

The Messenger

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Malachi 3:1 "Behold, I send My messenger, and he will prepare the way before Me."

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Prepare America!

A Prophetic Word to a Nation in Crisis

Part 3 of 7

Prepare Your Spirit

by Rob Winters

Approximately a week after a 9.0 magnitude earthquake devastated Japan on March 11, 2011, I abruptly awoke at 1:23 AM. I did not give it much thought, until the very next night I again suddenly awoke at precisely 1:23 AM. Knowing that the Lord was speaking through this prophetic sign, I carefully examined all of the 1:23, 1:2-3, 12:3 and 123 scriptures in the Bible. I discovered within the 123 scriptures the following clear and timely prophetic message to America. I am elaborating on this message in seven consecutive editions of *The Messenger*, this one being the third.

The Lord has been prescribing the same remedies for America's spiritual diseases for the past forty years. His prescription will not only heal our land, but also sustain us through the season of adversity that lies ahead. Interestingly enough, the Lord's prescription to the Church of America - to humble ourselves, pray, seek His face, and turn from our wicked ways, are mirrored in the "123" scriptures referenced in this chapter (II Chronicles 7:14).

It is crucial that we prepare ourselves now - spiritually, emotionally, and economically, before hard times envelop us. Indeed, we must become as light in the darkness - else we will be consumed by the darkness that is covering the earth and its people. Moreover, if we faint in the day of adversity, our testimony of faith will shamefully be deemed counterfeit, bringing a reproach to the name and cause of Christ. Therefore, it is imperative that we prepare our spirits now to sustain us during the days of trial that are quickly approaching (Proverbs 18:14; 24:10, Isaiah 60:1-3).

Humble Yourself

Pride is a spiritual disease that manifests in different ways. One form of pride is vanity. Often thinking more highly of ourselves than we should, the vanity of

Americans has kept our focus on ourselves instead of the Lord. We have become a self-centered instead of Christ-centered nation, spending more time applauding one another than giving glory to God. Without a doubt, we narcissistic Americans are in dire need of regimented doses of humility, which is the cure for pride. Like many vitamins, humility is one spiritual supplement that we don't have to be concerned about overdosing on.

Ecclesiastes **1:2-3** "Vanity of vanities," says the Preacher; "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." What profit has a man from all his labor in which he toils under the sun?

Romans **12:3** "For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith."

Unfortunately, the pride of America has not only blinded us and stained our reputation, but also drawn certain judgments that at this juncture are unavoidable. Nevertheless, if we will corporately humble ourselves, God's grace will prove to be sufficient in the midst of these inevitable judgments. Moreover, humility and genuine repentance will extend the Lord's hand of mercy to lessen their severity (James 4:6, II Corinthians 12:9).

Pray for Mercy

One of the greatest acts of humility is prayer. Prayer is not only an acknowledgement of our dependence on God, but also an act of faith. While good works serve as a public exhibition of our faith, prayer is a private expression of our trust in God. Over the years, Americans have become known for our abundance of good works. Regrettably, some of our good deeds have been catalyzed by vanity and selfish ambition. Indeed, our lack of humility has kept us seeking the praise of men, instead of the presence of God through prayer (Ephesians 2:10, James 3:26).

On March 19th, 2011, eight days after a 9.0 M_w magnitude earthquake rocked Japan, renowned Prophet Bob Jones had a significant prophetic dream. In the dream, the Father was waiting for the Church to lay a petition before Him so He could grant mercy to Japan and the United States. The following "123"scripture mirrors the prayer for mercy that the Lord desires to answer.

Psalm **123:2-3** "Our eyes look to the Lord our God, until He has mercy on us. Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us!

The measure in which we pray for and demonstrate mercy as a nation will determine the measure in which we receive mercy in our time of need. Surely, judgment is without mercy to those who have shown no mercy. Therefore, it is vital

that America demonstrates and petitions the Lord for mercy in this hour – for mercy triumphs over judgment (James 2:13).

Return to the Lord

As children, we looked to our parents for what they could provide for us – food, clothing, shelter, security, education and love. Later in life, most adults esteem their parents for who they are, and for the indelible impression and impact they have made on their lives. The Lord expects His children to mature in their relationship with Him as well. Unfortunately, American Christianity has largely appealed to our carnal nature, conditioning us to seek the hand of God instead of the face of God. Surely, it is time for Americans to spiritually grow up.

As a nation, we are not only spiritually immature, but also backslidden. Like the church of Ephesus, we have left our first love. Therefore, the Lord is beckoning the church of America to return to Him in genuine repentance.

Zechariah **1:2-3** "The Lord has been very angry with your fathers. Therefore say to them, 'Thus says the Lord of hosts: "Return to Me," says the Lord of hosts, "and I will return to you," says the Lord of hosts.

The preceding "123" scripture from the book of Zechariah clearly echoes the Lord's desire for His people to seek His face again. Our departure from the Lord has not been overt in nature, but instead a gradual exodus from the faith, primarily due to the sin of idolatry (James 4:8, I John 5:21).

Repent of Idolatry

The sin of idolatry is foreign to the mindset of many Americans. We equate idolatry with bowing down to a graven image or statue – a heathen activity engaged in by pagan civilizations. In reality, an idol is any person, place or thing that supplants God in our lives. We can identify potential idols by examining how we spend two of life's most precious commodities - our time and money.

Interestingly enough, the Bible contains not two, but three distinct "123" scriptures regarding the sin of idolatry. In the book of Deuteronomy, through the prophet Moses, the Lord calls for the complete eradication of the altars, names and images of every idol in their midst.

Deuteronomy **12:3** "And you shall destroy their altars, break their sacred pillars, and burn their wooden images with fire; you shall cut down the carved images of their gods and destroy their names from that place."

Despite the Lord's command to repent of idolatry, the high places for pagan worship remained in Israel, even during the reign of righteous King Joash.

2 Kings **12:3** "But the high places were not taken away; the people still sacrificed and burned incense on the high places."

In Paul's New Testament letter to the Christians in Rome, he warns them that God's wrath is manifested against all unrighteousness, including idolatry.

Romans **1:23** "And changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man - and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things."

Unfortunately, Americans have idolized everything under the sun that brings pleasure. Our worship of sex is nothing more than a form of Baal worship, which has created a multi-million dollar pornography industry. Not only are sixty percent of all websites pornographic, forty-seven percent of American families acknowledge that pornography is a problem in their home. Surely, it's high time we cleanse our eyes, hearts, and homes of the defilement due to sin of pornography.

Our hedonism has also created a culture characterized by an insatiable desire for alcohol. America has evolved into an inebriated and medicated society, where Dionysus, the Greek god of wine, is worshipped daily by millions. Advertisement slogan's such as "Weekends were made for Michelob" and "This Bud is for you" have characterized and catalyzed our devotion and glorification of beer, wine, vodka, tequila, and whiskey. Without a doubt, it's time for America to sober up.

Our love of pleasure has also caused us to forsake the pursuit and forfeit the fulfillment of our individual and corporate destiny. Unfortunately, American's appetite for adventure and accomplishment has largely been satisfied through surrogates – sports figures, rock stars, movie stars, and fashion models. Instead of pursuing our dreams, we have been guilty of idolizing those that are fulfilling their own. We satisfy our unquenchable thirst for entertainment and competition through fantasy football and video games. Consequently, America has become a society of idle, idol worshippers. Rather than participating in the game of life, we have settled for the life of a spectator – observing and idolizing the few that are making a difference. Indeed, it's time for us to awake and arise from our couches of complacency, and aggressively pursue our dreams and fulfill our destiny.

America's hedonism comes with a price tag. Indeed, our pleasure-seeking and frivolous spending on luxurious homes, automobiles, clothes, jewelry, entertainment and vacations has many of us drowning in a quagmire of debt. We unconsciously have chosen to serve Mammon, the god of money, instead of Christ. Even some preachers have succumbed to satisfying our love for money by proclaiming a skewed "prosperity" gospel that has kept us seeking divine provision instead of His presence. On the contrary, very few ministers have demonstrated the courage to issue a much needed call to repentance from the hedonism and greed that has ensnared our nation. Certainly, it's time to topple the idol of Mammon in America and return to the Lord (1 Timothy 6:9-10).

Moreover, Americans have fallen into such a depraved state of narcissism that we have legalized the most heinous expression of idolatry – abortion. In America, an

average of 3700 innocent human lives are daily offered on the altar of convenience, seemingly without consequence. However, since abortion was legalized in America in 1973, the blood of over fifty four million innocent children has not only defiled our land, but also brought a curse down upon us. In Old Testament times, the Ammonites and Moabites offered their children as human sacrifices to appease their respective pagan deities, Molech and Chemosh, also known as Baal of Peor. Americans are guilty of a much greater sin than these pagans, because we have committed this atrocity out of selfishness, not ignorance. Surely, it is time for America to repent of this horrific form of idolatry and Baal worship (Jeremiah 19:5-6, II Chronicles 33:6).

If we continue to regard our worthless American idols, we will forsake the mercy we have been praying for. Therefore, it is imperative that we repent of our harlotry and idolatry, and pursue the presence of the Lord, where fullness of joy and pleasures forevermore can only be enjoyed (Jonah 2:8, Psalm 16:11).

The frequency and intensity of economic and environmental shaking will increase as America moves further into this season of divine judgment. Hence, it is vital that Christians faint not in the day of adversity, but rather are prepared spiritually for such a time as this. If we will humble ourselves, pray for mercy, seek His face and repent of our idolatry now, we will then serve as beacons of hope and healing to those being consumed by the darkness (Isaiah 60:1-3).

Prayer: *Father, we desire to serve as lights in the midst of the approaching darkness. Therefore, we humble ourselves before you and repent of our vanity and self-centeredness. Have mercy on America, O God, as we turn away from our idols and return to You. Forgive us as we forsake hedonism, pornography, drunkenness, greed and abortion. We resolve to pursue Your presence, that we might be carriers of Your glory and a light to our nation in a time of crisis, in Jesus' name, Amen.*

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