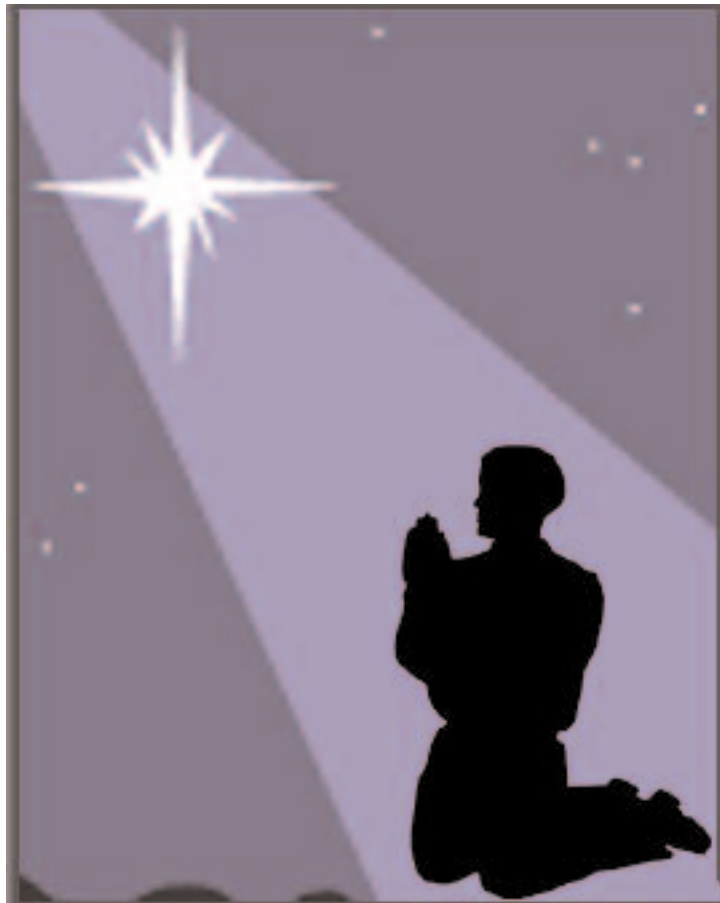


Prophetic Insights:

# A Time for the Men of Issachar

*“There were men of Issachar, who understood the times and knew what [God’s people] should do.”*

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Restoration Ministries International

Mike & Sue Dowgiewicz  
Restorationministries.org

## A Time for the Men of Issachar

*“There were men of Issachar, who understood the times and knew what [God’s people] should do” (1Chronicles 12:32).*

### Introduction

We’re grateful to our Father that He reminded us of this message to share with you again. During the years since we first sent it out in January, 2001, the need especially for men of understanding and wisdom to be raised up for Kingdom purposes is all the more pressing. The United States has already been judged and there is nothing that can stop that judgment. We were told by the Spirit that the children of that time would not become grandparents before the judgment comes. Our longsuffering God has shown such mercy as He has waited for people to turn from their sin and find forgiveness in Jesus through new birth (see Ephesians 2:1-5). His holiness and righteousness won’t allow Him to be in the presence of the unrepentant who aren’t covered by the sacrificial blood of His Son as Lord of their life. Our Father intends to chastise the US for its rebellion and lawlessness. This message aligns with the prophetic word He gave us to include in our book *Pastoring by Elders*. The “Dark Days” of chastisement to come on the United States is also the period when the Hebraic message He gave us in Israel would begin to bear fruit. Until that time we were to “share this message,” that is, to make people aware of how our Lord would have His own live, and to equip them to live by His Spirit in love-grounded obedient trust.

A foundational verse for the Hebraic Restoration is Genesis 18:19 was spoken by our Lord to His servant Abraham: *“For I have chosen [Abraham], so that he will **direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing what is right and just, so that the Lord will bring about for Abraham what He has promised him.**”* It was because the Hebrew, Abraham, became the father of everyone who puts their trust in Jesus that the Lord gave us the term *Hebraic Restoration* to define what our Father is now doing. Like Abraham’s responsibility to direct his children to keep God’s ways, every father is given the same requirement by God: *“Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.”* (Eph. 6:4). Faith communities as well as governments are ordained by God to help a father within his home to carry out this responsibility. The *home*, not the school system or the congregation, is the basic building block of spiritual training for children.

The Restoration Diagram below shows the *relational priorities for spiritual development* as they were understood by God’s people through the millennia. In



order to develop and enact leadership qualities, men must go through a progressive pattern to lead as God intends: first, yielded submission to *our Father and Lord Jesus* by the Holy Spirit; then having a *home* in which he learns to love a wife as Christ does His spiritual bride (if God so blesses him with marriage), and to raise a Godly generation; next, share in the one-anothering of an *extended spiritual family* that fellowships in one another’s homes; and as the Spirit brings about, a *gathering of local fellowship families* and gatherings of fellowship families *throughout a city*. This relational progression raises up *wise biblical elders* who will train qualified successors to guide the generations to come, both within faith communities and beyond. A man who realizes the seriousness of upholding God’s standards of righteousness within his home and within a home fellowship family is potentially well-qualified to lead in other areas.

We’re firmly convinced that our Lord is preparing for the dark days to come upon this nation by recruiting men of justice from different cultural and racial backgrounds to cooperate together. These men won’t stop His judgment, but they *will* gather a remnant to be light among their people as darkness descends.

## Desert Shield Prepared the Way for Desert Storm

Two weeks ago the Lord revealed something to us concerning the timing of our ministry. You may recall the conflict of the early 90s called “Desert Storm,” the battle with Iraq; but not many remember “Desert Shield.” Desert Shield was the time of preparation for Desert Storm. A dear friend from back in my navy days was the admiral in charge of the *logistical preparations* to ensure that not only American troops but also soldiers from other countries who needed supplies lacked nothing when the war began. My friend didn’t fight in Desert Storm, but his logistical efforts were instrumental in bringing the war to a successful conclusion.

The Lord has made known to us that we are in the time of “Desert Shield,” a period of *preparation*. A “Desert Storm” will arrive when the Dark Days of chastisement come upon the US. Some of us may not even be around when the Dark Days come, but we can earnestly and intentionally prepare and disciple those whom our Lord desires to be light during those difficult days. We believe that our Lord is recruiting a transcultural group of men of justice who can respect each other and cooperate for the common good of all people. We’ll explain more fully why “men of justice” are foundational to preparing for the Dark Days. But now we’d like to discuss some of the insights our Lord has been giving us as we help prepare people during this time of “Desert Shield.”

## Choices: Which Kingdom to Serve?

God had anointed David to be king many years before he received the throne. In the interim David suffered greatly at the hands of King Saul, and yet in deference would not usurp the right to reign. The young man’s season of suffering was God’s means of development for him so that David would be a *just* king. When it was God’s time for David to rule, many men of valor—men with a *sense of justice*—joined him at Hebron. Most of these had been disenfranchised from King Saul because they wouldn’t let their support be purchased as Saul had done with so many others (see 1 Samuel 22:7,8). Most of the tribes of Israel who came to David arrived with thousands of warriors, but among the tribe of Issachar were 200 men who ***understood the times and clearly understood what God wanted them to do.***

Self-serving rebellion and lawlessness today are infiltrating and devastating biblical Christianity and this nation just as they did Saul’s kingdom. Yet God is now recruiting specific men for His Kingdom purposes. Just as with Issachar there are men today dispersed among different racial and ethnic groups in this country to whom God is giving specific insight on behalf of their people. But the voices of most of these men are not being heard because they’ve been driven away from the mainline religious community. Like David many of these men are prophetic. Because they are standing for God’s righteous laws and His holy reputation, exposing tolerated and rationalized sin in their faith communities, they’re being driven out. Like King David, they have entrusted themselves to their Lord rather than becoming embittered over their treatment. Without realizing it many of these men have learned the path of walking justly before God *through their suffering*. And this lesson is crucial for any man in any culture whom God is going to use to lead others.

**Justice is first and foremost a heart issue.** “*So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets*” (Matthew 7:12). Justice girds a humble person who refuses to treat another in a way he wouldn’t want to be treated in the same circumstances. This attitude inherently carries humble regard for one another’s interests that God calls for in *all* people because we are made in His image. A truly just man has ***Theocracy in his heart***. His life and purpose flow from God Himself by His Spirit into one of Christ’s own.

Peter cited Jesus as the perfect role model and the path men must follow: “*To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in His steps*” (1 Peter 2:21). Jesus explained how men of justice would be developed: “*Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you*” (Matthew 5:10-12).

David was a man of justice. Like Abraham and Moses before him, he was a man guided by **Theocracy in his heart**—an awareness and recognition of God in all matters of his life. What does a man look like who has called on God as the ruler of his life? Let's appraise David:

- He was fully aware of his need for God's specific guidance, His *rhema*.
- He was consumed by hunger for God's Word to discover what pleases Him and to know the boundaries that would keep him from sinning.
- He purposed to not treat others in a way he would not want to be treated (despite his adultery and tragic role in Uriah's death).
- He was quick to repent when confronted with his sins.
- He never excused himself for wrongdoing nor blamed anyone else.
- He readily acknowledged God as his only Provider.

David's relationship with God was so passionately fervent that we're told he was "*a man after God's own heart*." To summarize the connection between David and the just men of different racial and cultural backgrounds who will be coming together during this season of "Desert Shield":

The Christian religious system of today is analogous to Saul's kingdom—full of self-seeking rebellion and lawlessness. The Theocratic republic that is coming out of the Dark Days will be analogous to David's kingdom. Those whom God will use to prepare this Kingdom are being disenfranchised from the present establishment religious systems which serve their own purposes, control through vested interests, and ignore or distort God's guidance.

The Kingdom that is coming will not move without a word from the Lord. The men of valor who are being recruited aren't concerned about their own benefit or position in this Kingdom nor are they bothered by what others think. To walk humbly and justly before their God while extending His mercy—this is what motivates them.

During the "Desert Shield" preparation period there are spiritual factors of sweeping proportions that will be confronted as the Dark Days draw closer. Men of Issachar will incur ire, even outright persecution, by the "Saul Religious System."

***"Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up"*** (1 Corinthians 8:1).

### **Desert Shield: The Time for Men of Justice to Become Free of Hellenist Influence**

Many people think the world revolves around their particular ethnic history. Even in the founding of the United States and the growth of this nation we generally ignore the reality that there were nations of people here long before we arrived. These people groups had a history. They had forms of government. They hoped to pass along the wisdom of their ways to generations to come. And they often extended practical kindness to the earliest European settlers and were worthy of their respect.

The motives of the newly arrived Europeans, however, were mixed. A large number were fleeing negative circumstances because of their religious beliefs and were hoping for a better life on this continent. Whether they actually followed Jesus as Lord or were motivated by temporal values, the European settlers generally considered themselves to be "Christians." In reality, though, their enactment toward each other was more like swarms of antagonistic insects as the different religious groups argued over points of **creedal difference**. It was this creedal antagonism that kept them from establishing a **Theocratic republic**. Because of **creedal differences** the Founding Fathers, among whom were deists, touched base with God and His Word. But devoid of Spirit power, they couldn't establish a government which flowed from His ways to carry out His will upon the earth. Thus, the government was established for the people's sake rather than for God's purposes.

The Founding Fathers attempted to adapt biblical principles upon which to establish the government. But the early Europeans arrived on this continent burdened with centuries of Hellenist church history and a series of monarchies heavily influenced by institutional religion.

- Hellenism and Roman religious domination had brought about "The Dark Ages" in which biblical beliefs and practices were forbidden.
- Hellenist ecclesiastical control had held the Bible captive in the Latin language for 1,100 years.

- Hellenist anti-Semitism persecuted and tyrannized the Jews as well as true followers of Jesus.
- Hellenist religious systems and dictatorial monarchies governed through force and control rather than by servanthood and genuine care for the people.
- Hellenist syncretism brushed aside God's Word as sole authority by adopting a myriad of pagan practices as church ritual to make Christianity more appealing to the heathen. For example, the biblical feasts which God established among His people and recorded in the Older Testament were replaced by syncretized pagan celebrations such as Easter and Christmas. The scriptural pattern of wise elders shepherding God's flocks was cast aside in favor of clergy who performed the functions of pagan priests.

The European settlers arrived on this continent ***far more in need of help themselves*** than they did being prepared to offer spiritual life to those already inhabiting the land. Tragically the forms of Christianity they did offer have even now hindered Native Americans from experiencing the freedom God desires for them in His Son. All too often the Native people have experienced as "Christian" a religion which has produced ***legalistic perversion*** to control people—using fear that they'll inadvertently sin and invoke God's wrath.

Hellenism blinded much of the European-rooted colonial church through pride and superiority. Most couldn't come to grips with the fact that God had brought them to the Native peoples to be instruments of light to them. And while the Europeans were technologically advanced compared to the tribal groups, the tribals evidenced an interconnection of their spiritual beliefs with their daily life practices—an enactment far different than the compartmentalized religious form that was so evident in European culture. If they had been receptive, the colonists could have observed a family and government system that approximated more closely what our Lord desired for His faith communities before the Hellenist incursion into Christianity in the 2nd and 3rd centuries. God had brought the Europeans to the New World to show them men who had qualified for leadership by years of life experience in gaining wisdom. The colonists saw firsthand what true *zakens* (Hebrew sages) were: older men of wisdom and understanding who lead justly because they *care* for their people.

Grievously, the colonist invasion became a clash between European intellectual knowledge and Native life wisdom. To the detriment of us all, "knowledge" won. So many today in the puffed-up establishment religion of western Christendom still can't understand why the Native people don't perceive Christ in European-based religious organizations.

### **The Founding Fathers Sought Native Wisdom. Why Didn't the Church?**

The men who were forming the foundations for the colonial government initially sought the wisdom of the Native people. Benjamin Franklin invited leaders of the Iroquois nation to explain their system of governing and leadership to a gathering in Albany, New York. The Iroquois model helped a special delegation form "The Albany Plan of Union" which served as a model later for the Articles of Confederation and, ultimately, the Constitution.

Even though the drafters of our Constitution embraced the republic form, the church battled within itself, ranging from autocratic faith communities in which clergy ruled to democracies such as the Congregationalist tradition. The Hellenist mindset prevented church leaders from looking beyond themselves to the biblical beauty of God as He had revealed His ways among the Native people. The Reformation had not taken place so far back in history that the former Europeans would have forgotten the victory of *personal* knowledge and application of God's Word. Perhaps in His mercy God brought the colonial leadership to Native peoples who were already living out the Hebraic relational mindset of the early Church. Then *together* they could experience more of God's Kingdom here on earth.

***"He has made everything beautiful in its time.  
He has also set eternity in the hearts of men"*** (Ecclesiastes 3:11).

### **God's Witness in the World**

A number of Christian religious systems perceive that God interacts and involves Himself only with Jews and Christians. From this perspective the rest of the world has gone on without His inter-

vention for countless centuries. Yet God *has* put a general revelation of Himself in all mankind and has set an awareness of eternity in the hearts of all people groups. Consider the cultures which archeologists have investigated that were so aware of an after-life that they buried their dead with items to use in the hereafter.

It is arrogance for Christians of any period to believe that God limited Himself to a Judaic-Christian line of history that came through Europe. For instance many years ago we met a follower of Jesus whose faith ancestry had emerged from the Far East, where the apostle Thomas had planted faith communities all the way to India. By the 5th century an estimated 8 million Christians sprang from Thomas' initial efforts. Tragically, due in part to their lack of the written Word, most of these believers were wiped out by Islamic persecution. Only pockets of them remain. Interestingly these followers of Christ have little in common with Hellenist Roman Catholic/Protestant doctrinal arguments.

Paul affirms a universal awareness of God among humanity: "*Since what may be known about God is plain to them, because **God has made it plain to them.** For since the creation of the world **God's invisible qualities—His eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that **men are without excuse****" (Romans 1:19,20). The world indeed began with the knowledge of the one true God. But the perversion of sin has blinded most but not all: "*Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, since they show that **the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them. This will take place on the day when God will judge men's secrets through Jesus Christ, as my gospel declares**" (Romans 2:14-16).**

Almost every culture in history has had some form of religious expression. They acknowledged someone transcendent to themselves and established specific methods of approaching their gods. Within this framework two diverse perspectives are apparent:

1. **Power seekers.** Those cultures which over time observed creation around them and developed religious and governmental systems using dominance and power to control others; for example, most of Europe, the Incas, and the Aztecs.
2. **People blessers.** Those cultures whose religious systems did not rely on domination and whose laws were just. The just men of these cultures counseled together to enact laws based on the principle, "Don't do to others what you would not want done to yourself." Most native North American cultures were of this persuasion. They exhibited a *republic form of government* rather than a power-based monarchy as in Europe.

## **Redemptive Analogies in the Pre-Hellenist Early Church**

The revelations of God which were embraced by different cultures can be used as "redemptive analogies" by those who wish to share the Gospel cross-culturally. When missionaries take the time to understand these analogies, they can build a bridge for God's Word to that culture. In other words, they can affirm "*that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts.*"

Paul used a redemptive analogy as a starting point with the Athenians: "*For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. Now **what you worship as something unknown I am going to proclaim to you**" (Acts 17:23). The apostle was able to make a bridge and reveal Who the "unknown" God is.*

## **Consideration for Oral Tradition**

Both European and American missionaries long disregarded the value and prevalence of oral tradition among the people groups they encountered. The European mindset was, *If it isn't in writing, it can't be true!* Several years ago I (Mike) sat listening to a Navajo elder. He was recounting for me some of the oral traditions that had been passed along for generations by his people. The Navajo may have descended from eastern Mongolians who crossed the Bering Straits centuries earlier. As I listened to this man of wisdom I asked, "Do you realize that you're articulating the conditions of the covenant that God made with Noah?" Their oral tradition, which perhaps goes back to the sons of Noah, has been kept faithfully all these centuries. Realizing that many Native people understand the importance of covenants, I asked him about the missionaries who had come to the Navajo: "Did

they present Jesus as God's new and final *covenant* for the people?" "No," he replied sadly, "they were just interested in getting us 'saved.'" A missed redemptive opportunity...

One of our friends spent years in ministry in Iran. One day he met an Iranian who called himself a "Baptist." Asking to which Baptist affiliation the man belonged, my friend was amazed to learn that he, like his family for centuries before him, had resolutely followed the teachings of John the Baptizer. They had never heard that the Messiah had come, but for generations had meticulously passed along all that John had taught. What a great opportunity for our friend to build on that beginning and press on with the fulfillment of John's hopes in Jesus!

## **THE GOD Who Loves the Whole World**

Before any sinner ever put his trust in Jesus, God loved him. This is a crucial truth to implant in our hearts to undo the Hellenist arrogance that somehow Christians are more loved by God than unbelievers. The Scriptures reveal God's genuine concern and care for those who have yet to know Him. Consider Hagar, Sarah's Egyptian slave. After she fled Sarah's harsh treatment, God came to the aid of the distraught woman in the desert. His messenger angel prophesied to her that twelve tribes would come from the baby she was carrying, Ishmael. Consequently, Hagar called the place *Beer Lahai Roi*, "well of the living One who sees me."

Some more examples: God gave Pharaoh a dream and Joseph the ability to interpret that dream. He gave the pagan king Nebuchadnezzar a dream, and revealed to King Belshazzar the writing on the wall—both situations which the prophet Daniel was able through God to interpret. When God prophesied the destruction of Judah and Israel because of their unrepentance, He told them that He would raise up heathen nations against them. How did the Lord guide these nations which had no loyalty to Him yet were still used by Him to effect His purpose?

We cite the above instances of God's interaction with non-Jews and non-Christians to lay a foundation that He has been concerned with all of humanity since its creation. Scrutiny of the Hebrew Bible confirms that God chose the Jewish people to tell the world about Him. Likewise He has chosen the followers of our Lord Jesus to proclaim Him to the world. But our Father didn't send us into a world that He hasn't been readying to have ears to hear. He has prepared the way with revelations of Himself through putting awareness of Him in their hearts, and has created redemptive analogies and oral tradition for us to build off as we present Him. But the blindness of Hellenist arrogance has prevented His people from identifying the work He has already accomplished in advance among potential believers.

## **The Freedom to Develop Culturally-specific *Halakhahs***

Our research of the early Church supports the premise that as the Gospel went forth cross-culturally, those who shared it allowed for *halakhic application* that was unique to each culture. That is, each culture could express their faith using the appropriate cultural practices that were within biblical guidelines. If the missionaries who first shared the Gospel with the Native people had done this, Christ would have been embraced much more readily rather than being considered a "foreign" god. We would now be witnessing a *republic* form of government in Native faith communities, the "government" practice of the early Church through wise and proven elders. Instead, the creedal infighting which plagues European and American Christianity has created the same estrangement among the Native people.

The freedom to develop culturally specific *halakhahs*—specific biblical life applications—as a faith expression is what men of justice from different cultures will be able to recognize and respect, thereby honoring each other. Scripture rather than the dominant culture provides the guidelines for obedient, trust-grounded living.

***"Let justice roll on like a river,  
righteousness like a never-failing stream!"*** (Amos 5:24).

As we prepare cross-culturally during the time of "Desert Shield," it's critical that each man who would take part truly understands Who God considers Himself to be. If we're ever to live with a

**Theocracy of heart**, we must know Him *as He is* and live according to *what He wants* in and through us. One of God's characteristics is that He is *just*, showing no partiality. Isn't that what He is asking of men who would represent Him—to show no partiality? Doesn't He use His servant James to warn us about injustice? "***But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers***" (James 2:9). Just men are "color blind." They treat others from different ethnic and racial backgrounds the same way they themselves want to be treated.

During this "Desert Shield" season, just men who follow Jesus have an opportunity to build bridges of respect across race and culture. God is gathering men of justice together who are not biblical scholars merely *teaching Bible content*. Just men have ***applied the Word of God*** to all facets of their lives and have stood the test of rejection. They haven't gone along with the crowd just because it was popular. They've sought to remain as anonymous and faceless as possible so that our Lord Himself would be lifted up. When these men from the Black, Native, Hispanic, Asian, White and other communities are brought together, they will recognize courage in each other. They will have a love for our Lord and for knowing God's will as did David. They will hunger for His Word and be able to teach others how to apply it *by example*. They will seek out injustice and right the wrongs done against others. The men who have ***Theocracy in their hearts*** are the leaders who are being prepared for the biblical republic of the future. These men understand the entire Bible both as a continuum of God's revelation of Himself and as the articulation of the just laws by which all mankind should live.

## **Lawlessness — Injustice — Democracy**

Unaware people have no idea that democracy is the last step of societal degeneration before anarchy: "***When a country is rebellious, it has many rulers***" (Proverbs 28:2). Democracy is the final stage of lawlessness when it has come to full power. Sadly, much of Christendom itself has been duped into becoming tiny competing democracies. People vote with their wallets, and with the epidemic of mortgages held by churches, clergy are sensitive not to offend the wallet holders. "Democratic" congregations embrace the lie that the *opposite* of God's law is grace. To them grace is understood as a license to live apart from the law, or *lawless*. The Bible, however, teaches that the opposite of God's law is *lawlessness*, with individuals living according to their own self-serving desires.

Consider this issue as presented clearly in both the Older and New Testaments. No one is declared righteous except by the blood of Jesus Christ covering them by faith. A person's best efforts or good works don't make him righteous. With this truth in mind, the "democracies" of deceived believers see no purpose in teaching God's righteous instruction and laws, His guidelines to live by. They choose to remain *lawless*, and to live and die blanketed in ignorance of God's law. Yet their desire to remain ignorant of His 613 commands in the Older Testament and His 1,050 commands in the New is an ***affront*** to Him. Unless they repent and turn to Him and His ways, He will be forced to chastise them. Most Christian counseling perpetuates the growth of lawlessness by sidestepping the biblical responsibility for each person to know God's law and abide by it through His Spirit; thus sinful actions and attitudes are excused or rationalized. People or events are blamed for their problems. The sinner is thus relieved of the guilt that the Spirit would use to draw him or her to repentance.

Those who choose to be ignorant of God's standards abide in what they perceive to be "democratic" faith communities—they can vote their approval with their wallet or their participation. The injustice of church "democracy" emerges when preferential treatment is given to those whose success is esteemed by the world's standards and to those who contribute the most. Their sinful shortcomings are more readily ignored for fear of financial loss, and their power and influence intimidate those who should hold their brother or sister accountable.

## **Law — Justice — Republic**

The just perceive God's holy commands from *His vantage point* as David did: "***I have hidden Your word in my heart that I might not sin against You***" (Psalm 119:11). David's relationship with His Lord compelled him to incorporate God's Word so deeply in his way of life that it was captured in his heart. Isn't this what is truly meant by "doctrine" in the New Testament? Doctrine wasn't creedal, as the converted Hellenist philosophers twisted it to mean. To the early followers of Jesus, doctrine meant a way of lovingly living out the teachings of God so that others could see to Whom they belonged and



bring praise to the Father.

David's view is reemphasized by Paul, who writes, "Therefore no one will be declared righteous in His sight by observing the law; rather, **through the law we become conscious of sin**" (Romans 3:20). Remaining ignorant of God's law doesn't make someone guiltless. Our righteousness comes only through Jesus Christ. Yet a person who truly loves God will desire to find out both what pleases Him *and* what offends Him. This pattern is true in all caring and meaningful relationships. God's law is His means for us to know the areas of freedom and boundary that are ours in our relationship with Him. Followers of Jesus seek to know and to live out His gracious commands *because they love Him*.

John joins Paul in declaring the importance of knowing God's commands so that we may know when we sin against Him: "**Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness. Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. He who does what is right is righteous, just as He is righteous. He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work. No one who is born of God will continue to sin [to live in lawlessness], because God's seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God. This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil [the lawless one] are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not a child of God; nor is anyone who does not love his brother**" (1 John 3:4,7-10).

Our compassionate Father understands the frailty of man and his inability to perfectly keep all His commands. Yet in light of our frailty He neither withdraws His commands nor excuses our sin. Instead, He shows us the means of restoring fellowship when we do sin: "**But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, His Son, purifies us from all sin. If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make Him out to be a liar and His word has no place in our lives. My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One**" (1 John 1:7-2:1).

John is preparing just men for these days of lawlessness with this admonition: "**If anyone sees his brother commit a sin that does not lead to death, he should pray and God will give him life. I refer to those whose sin does not lead to death. There is a sin that leads to death. I am not saying that he should pray about that. All wrongdoing is sin, and there is sin that does not lead to death**" (1 John 5:16,17). All sin is wrong, but there is a distinction. The Israelites sinned, but God did not judge them until they chose to sin in ways that **affronted** Him. Just men need to pay special attention to discern where they can help and where they should refrain. Some types of sin are a *direct affront to God* and no one can inter-vene justly to help. This is why no one can stop the judgment coming upon this nation.

To illustrate this idea, compare two men: One arrives home late for dinner while another stares longingly at a sexy woman as he walks with his wife at the mall. Which wife would be more greatly offended? Why? Because the second husband's sin is an **affront** to her character and dignity.

Sins such as lying, cheating and stealing don't directly **affront** God's character. While these sins violate His law, they don't **affront** Him personally. But we affront His character when we *presume on the future*, which is solely His domain. *Worry about the future* shows our lack of trust in Him—another affront to His character. And the demonic **affront** of *lawlessness* totally disregards His righteous laws that reveal how to lovingly relate to Him. It's because of these **affronts**—this country's rebellion demonstrated by the absence of trust in God and by the lawlessness of so many—that judgment is coming. This nation and the host of "democratic Christians" have for too long affronted His character. As our Lord Himself exclaims, "**My name is blasphemed because of you**" (Romans 2:24). This nation, along with lawless "Christians," has prostituted itself and become a collection of spiritual adulterers just like Judah and Israel of old. God is impartial, and His judgments are meted out equally—as to the Jew, so to the Gentile.

**"I will make known My holy name among My people. I will no longer let My holy name be profaned, and the nations will know that I the LORD am the Holy One. It is coming! It will surely take place, declares the Sovereign LORD. This is the [dark] day I have spoken of"**  
(Ezekiel 39:7,8).

## **A God of Hope in the Midst of Chastisement.**

God's chastisements are *not* His rejection of His people nor His annihilation of the unrighteous. He disciplines those He loves, and even during periods of chastisement He extends hope. God gave the Israelites hope when He presented Ezekiel the specific measurements for rebuilding the Temple even after the prophet saw His *shekinah* glory depart. God ordered Jeremiah to buy a field as a sign that the people would return from captivity after the season of chastisement. And God is giving us hope for a future — a hope that will cause the wise to prepare as David prepared for his son Solomon to build the Temple, and as my navy friend in charge of logistics for “Desert Shield” prepared for “Desert Storm.” Our preparations for the Dark Days to come require men who have ***Theocracy in their hearts*** and can live and teach others to live justly before God. Out of their hearts they'll be able to build a Theocratic republic, teaching God's ways first to their families and then to their faith communities. Will this be embraced by many? NO! They will probably be persecuted so the Lord can show His power through these men as He did with men of justice in times past. The darker it gets, the more even a small light can be seen.

As more followers of Jesus become aware of the Hebraic Restoration that is underway, our Father will continue to recruit those whose hearts are already inclined to serve Him in Spirit and in truth. Even now we're encountering men who once viewed their religious life in terms of creedal allegiance. These men are being challenged and changed by our Lord to have a *relational* view of their faith as they respond to our Lord out of loving, obedient trust. They know the importance of guarding the gates of their homes to be a holy refuge of peace and righteousness in Christ. These men are not triggered to “fight or flee” every time someone differs with them. Their humility of heart entrusts differences to God as seen in this Hebraic verse: *“All of us who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too **God will make clear to you**”* (Philippians 3:15). As just men cooperate for Christ more and more cross-culturally, they will encounter many different expressions of worshipping God and living for Him. And their love and respect for one another will be the glue that binds them together as the body of Christ.

The cooperation of husbands and wives during the time of both “Desert Shield” and “Desert Storm” will require greater biblical insight, life application and Kingdom purpose than has been found in today's organized church systems. Many families have depended on their congregation for spiritual development of their children and even of themselves. Yet God in His faithfulness is once again raising up *the home* as the basic building block for developing Godly generations. Through individuals, couples, children, and loadbearing relationships of extended spiritual family, Christ will build His body of the called-out ones, His Church.

***“They will rebuild the ancient ruins and restore the places long devastated; they will renew the ruined cities that have been devastated for generations”*** (Isaiah. 61:4).