

**March 22, 2011**

### **The American Dream — Satan's Trap**

Many years ago a friend purchased a 200-year-old house in Connecticut. As he was tearing out a wall during remodeling, he found 12 dead mice, one behind the other and stuck in the narrow passage behind the wall. The rodents were emaciated, having been confined there a long time. As best as he could determine, each had followed the next until the first got stuck. The passage was too narrow for any of them to turn around. How would you like to die nose-to-tail?

This depicts exactly what Satan has been doing through the lie of the "American Dream." The American Dream is a national ethos of the United States in which freedom encompasses the possibility of prosperity and success. James Truslow Adams expressed the American Dream in 1931: "Life should be better and richer and fuller for everyone, with opportunity for each according to ability or achievement regardless of social class or circumstances of birth."

When Adams wrote about the American Dream, the Great Depression had been intensifying. But he missed a crucial element in his evaluation of the American Dream, namely that God had passed judgment on this nation as a result of the widespread decadence of the "Roaring 20's." Caught up in the fairy tale of the American Dream, President Roosevelt enacted the Social Security Act and other similar programs.

In establishing these measures, Roosevelt established the government as the 'god' in whom so many Americans have put their trust. For example, government rather than family became the caretaker for the elderly. And through delegation of that biblically-based responsibility once undertaken by kinfolk without question, intergenerational connectedness has deteriorated ever since.

This unholy merger of unbiblical goals and misplaced trust has seduced countless millions into seeking an "earthly heaven" — life, liberty and the pursuit of the desires of their own sin nature. This is the hidden deceit of THE American Dream: dogged pursuit of a pleasure-filled "heaven" on earth, a "heaven" without dependence on God.

Yet at what cost comes this earthly pursuit in violation of Scripture's warning? *"Do not love the world or **anything in the world**. If anyone **loves the world**, the **love of the Father is not in him**. For **everything in the world**—the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does—comes not from the Father but **from the world**. The world and its desires **pass away**, but the man who does the will of God lives forever"* (1 John 2:15-17).

Those who are Spirit-minded have nothing in common with those whose hearts are firmly fixed on worldly gain: *"O LORD, by your hand save me from such men, from **men of this world** whose reward is **in this life**"* (Psalms 17:14a).

And isn't Paul issuing a dire warning of what lies ahead for Jesus followers whose values have been compromised with those of the world? *"For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, **eager for money**, have **wandered from the faith** and **pierced themselves with many griefs**"* (1Timothy 6:10)?

The foundation Jesus gives His followers for our way of life on earth is far removed from pursuing the self-satiation of the American Dream:

***"If anyone would come after Me,  
he must deny himself and  
take up his cross daily and follow Me.  
For whoever wants to save his life will lose it,  
but whoever loses his life for Me will save it.  
What good is it for a man to gain the whole world,  
and yet lose or forfeit his very self?"*** (Luke 9:23-25)

Following Jesus with wholehearted devotion leaves no room for the idol of *self*. "Losing your life" — forfeiting worldly goals and values for the sake of loving and serving Jesus — is a motive of the heart and a way of life in Him that leads through the "Narrow Gate." And that narrow, biblical path of obedient trust is the ONLY way we can enter heaven. Several generations have passed since the government installed itself as god of the people. The rotted fruit of this "earthly deity" is successive generations in bondage to ever-increasing greed, a greed which has spawned massive, unpayable debt to curse generations yet unborn.

What an awful heritage the American Dream has generated, much to the delight of our Enemy! During the past few decades the devilish "health and wealth gospel" and Church Growth Movement have led the way in seducing multitudes of Christians to join unbelieving Americans in the pursuit of greed (see 2Timothy 3:1-5). A stop sign is needed NOW for these who call themselves God's people to reconsider who they're following and where their interests lay. It isn't too late yet to repent!

### **Isaiah Still Speaks**

If you're clinging to the way of our Lord in the face of such widespread evil, Isaiah's words will strengthen and encourage you:

- *"Tell the righteous it will be well with them, for they will enjoy the fruit of their deeds" (3:10).*
- *"You will keep in perfect peace those whose mind is steadfast, because they trust in You. Trust in the LORD forever, for the LORD, the LORD, is the Rock eternal" (26:3,4).*
- *"The fruit of righteousness will be peace; the effect of righteousness will be quietness and confidence forever" (32:17).*

However, God also speaks through His prophet to utter warnings to those who have forsaken His holy standards and brought His judgment on this nation:

- *"The look on their faces testifies against them; they **parade their sin like Sodom**; they do not hide it. Woe to them! They have brought disaster upon themselves"* (3:9). The specific sin of sodomy condemned by Paul in Romans 1:24-27 was once despised in this nation, then became tolerated, and now is touted and paraded.

- *"People will **oppress** each other—man against man, neighbor against neighbor. The young will **rise up against** the old, the base against the honorable"* (3:5). Tensions today are great between the elderly with their medical needs and the next generation who fear that the government trough will be empty before they can feed from it. Federal and State administrations are adversarial, each demanding more from the self-preservational taxpayers who desperately clutch the little they have.

- Those who should be calling people to repentance are instead entertaining them with messages of false hope and counterfeit peace: *"Those who guide this people **mislead them**, and those who are guided are **led astray**"* (9:16).

- Biblical patterns leave no doubt—God's judgment IS coming. Those of you who are prophetic have been confirming this with us for some time. Surely our Lord has been long-suffering and patient as He has looked for response to His many warnings: *"See, the **day of the LORD is coming**—a cruel day, with wrath and fierce anger— to **make the land desolate** and destroy the sinners within it"* (13:9).

- The righteous in Christ need to remain repentant as terrible days come upon this nation. People who love evil will continue to pursue it, despising the grace that God has shown them:

*"But the people **have not returned** to Him who struck them, **nor have they sought the LORD Almighty**"* (9:13).

*"Though **grace** is shown to the wicked, they do not learn righteousness; even in a land of uprightness they **go on doing evil** and **regard not the majesty of the LORD**"* (26:10; see also Revelation 9:20, 16:9,11).

If you cherish righteousness and love Jesus as your Lord, we want to encourage you: ***NOW is the time to turn to the power of Jesus' name and make sure no darkness is found in your soul. Don't give the devil a foothold he can use to seduce you when everything around you is being destroyed.***

If you've wondered what the coming Dark Days of Chastisement might be like, just look at God's judgments currently going on throughout the earth. The Bible describes "birth pangs" and days of chastisement much like we see in Japan right now: earthquakes, floods, nuclear disaster, and bitter cold. Please, don't doubt that there will be a series of tragedies in this nation as well. Complacent disregard for God's holy commands will be shaken, and suddenly.

According to the unchangeable truth of God's Word, He brings judgment wherever there is **widespread toleration for sin** and/or **people worship false gods**. He destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah for their pervasive toleration for homosexuality and their disregard for the poor (Ezekiel 16:49). When God wanted to free the Israelites from Egypt and Pharaoh refused, He sent ten plagues, one at a time. Each plague was a direct assault on one of the false gods the Egyptians trusted in — powerless demonic entities in whom even some of the Israelites may have been seduced into worshipping. From time to time our God reaffirms that He is GOD and there is no other (Deuteronomy 4:35,39).

Is there a connection between some of the major catastrophes in recent years and the sins that were tolerated in those places?

Was Hurricane Katrina God's judgment on New Orleans and the Gulf Coast for the widespread prostitution, homosexuality and gambling rampant in that region?

Was the earthquake in Haiti an assault on their religious amalgam of Roman Catholicism and voodoo? Was it God's hand that the Bishop who should have upheld biblical truth was crushed inside his own flattened cathedral?

Was 9/11 an attack on the bastion of greed in New York that infects the entire country? Is the economic collapse both here and around the world His way of revealing that we are trusting in the wrong thing?

Was the attack on the Pentagon His way of making them give an account for the unjust wars both the administrations and the military have gotten this nation into? Thousands upon thousands of innocent civilians have been killed by the US because of our fear and greed. Remember, the last war this country won was World War II. In the meantime, many of our men and women have gone out to kill people who have not attacked us, and many of our own have died needlessly in unjust conflicts.

Japan is an empire of Buddha worship. Is God reaching them by undermining their confidence in a false god who neither hears their prayers nor can save them? Is He breaking down the self-sufficient, self-righteous pride of this demonic theology to humble them into having "ears to hear" the Jesus followers who are being thrust into their presence to help? Remember, our God doesn't want any to be lost, but all to enter into His Covenant in Jesus. Throughout history He has crippled the confidence of those who trust false gods, and has brought to them His chosen vessels of Truth.

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Our God is merciful. He sent Jonah to the Gentiles of Nineveh, who heeded the censure and repented of their sins. Father repeatedly warns people before He enacts judgment. But unlike repentant Nineveh, few today seem to be listening.

A word to the wise:

**A job is one of our Father's means to  
supply your provision.  
That income is secondary  
to the people He puts you in contact with  
through your work.  
Reaching them so they may embrace His Covenant  
is our Lord's goal, and it must be yours as well.  
He always puts you in proximity to people  
so that you'll represent Him!**

The Psalmist asked, "*When the foundations are being destroyed, **what can the righteous do?***" (Psalms 11:3). Plenty! Loving and pleasing our Lord by staying repentant, becoming and remaining free of strongholds, making His Word your way of life, and lovingly reaching others for Jesus will keep you from being shaken when the ungodly foundations of this nation are removed.

Whether or not we'll be on earth when God's judgments fully unfold, we both sense the time is getting short. Press on in His Spirit, assured of His faithfulness, power and love.  
**Mike & Sue**