



Series: The Mind of Christ: The Healing of Messiah

The Healing of the Nations

By Elizabeth Kirkley Best

©2006 Elizabeth K. Best, All Rights Reserved

The Healing of the Nations : Introduction



We will return in this blog shortly, to a discussion of the different kinds of personal healing which are made manifest in Jesus' life on earth. Most of what we have discussed so far has been from the individual's perspective: physical healing, emotional healing, spiritual healing, healing and deliverance, and the Healing of the Cross. Before moving on though, to the particulars of the 'kinds' of personal healing, we stop to describe an aspect of scripture and teaching that in modern times has only been briefly alluded to, but is just as essential and works similarly in macrocosm to personal healing. The issue is the "Healing of the Nations".

The clearest scripture that deals with the "**healing of the Nations**" is in Revelation:



[Rev 22:2](#) In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, [was there] the tree of life, which bare twelve [manner of] fruits, [and] yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree [were] for the healing of the nations.

We think often about the idea of the healing of bodies and occasionally of minds, but we do not think often about the "healing of nations", and yet if one looks at the world today, it becomes obvious, that healing is more needed on the national level than anywhere else. To most, that would mean a lack of conflict, and while that certainly would be central, it does not imply a one world government. In perfect healing, diversity can exist and so can peace, but that is not often understood today. The Healing of Nations though, is only mentioned in those exact words once, but is seen as a theme throughout the Old and New Testament.

Israel as the First Among Nations

When issues of healing nations arise, Israel is most often the 'prototype' which God holds up, to show how He deals with nations. This is why we can often apply the principles and commands God used in dealing with Israel to other nations across the centuries, because though Israel was unique as a divinely

appointed theocracy among nations, it also acted as a 'firstborn' and ensample for all to learn from.

Jeremiah, Israel and the Potter's Wheel

In another bible study, we discussed the issues of national healing with regard to the Potter's Wheel Jeremiah mentions, while speaking of the Potter [God] being both the Creator and Destroyer of the pot: the word itself can refer to both. When a nation is either not formed correctly or strays from a right path, healing is necessary, or the nation is destroyed, that a new thing may be created. This is why there is a constant cry from God's heart throughout scripture to bring Israel back to her God and to righteousness: to 'right ways', for it is not in the heart of God to destroy even a recalcitrant nation. The passages in Jeremiah which deal with the breaking of a nation though, also shows a standard way God deals with a nation He rightfully deals with: with the harsh and sometimes almost unbearable 'destructions', come also covenant and promise of healing, making whole, and setting right the nation which has erred.

Jer 19:8 And I will make this city desolate, and an hissing; every one that passeth thereby shall be astonished and hiss because of all the plagues thereof.

But with the multiple curses in addition to the above, comes a prescription for repentance and 'turning around', away from the sins which caused God to judge Israel, and example of which is found in Jer 22:3

Thus saith the LORD; Execute ye judgment and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor: and do no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood in this place.

Jer 22:4 For if ye do this thing indeed, then shall there enter in by the gates of this house kings sitting upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, he, and his servants, and his people.

And even when severe and devastating judgment is sworn by God against the Land, God always couches the rebuke and judgment, in His trait of Justice, with His dovetailed trait of mercy:

Jer 23:3-5 And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase. And I will

set up shepherds over them which shall feed them: and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the LORD. Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this [is] his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS

So that we see a threefold primary dealing with a nation which is 'diseased' and in need of healing:

I. The Statement of Sin and Call to Repentance, with a detailed description of forthcoming Judgment

II. The Giving of a Prescription or Command for Obedience which will turn the course of judgment, and

III. The Promise given upon forthcoming Judgment when Israel [or nations] fail to repent, of Mercy, and the covenant of taking the desolations and turning them to the good.

The one difference between Israel and other nations in the way God deals with them, is that God does not seem to be under any 'contractual' or covenantal obligation to restore or have mercy on a 'pagan' nation, especially if it is an enemy of Israel. Assyria and Babylon, once they had been used as God's 'sword' against his own people as an instrument of judgment and chastisement, is not promised a return to grandeur, and in fact neither returned to the grandeur of the time ever again! In sum, though, the above pattern of God's dealing with and healing broken and even rebelling nations often holds.

II. Therapeia and Ethnos

The word used in the expression "healing of the nations" for healing is **Therapeia**, from which it is obvious, we derive our modern English word 'therapy' and 'therapeutic'. BlueletterBible.com uses the following definition:

Service, care (hence healing), household.

And **'therapon'**, a related word is a servant or person who renders service.

The ideas which emerge are a submission and service, within a body, and those principles at least are quite applicable to the healing of nations.

Ethnos, from which we derive the word 'ethnic' refers to nations which are Gentile, pagan, or foreign, often described as 'heathen' or a 'people'. Various levels of persons within a government are similarly derived such as '**ethnarches**' which means governor, **ethnikos**, which refers to a pagan or Gentile, or **Ethnikos** as an adjective referring to 'after the manner of Gentiles'.

While a word study is not enough by itself to intuit all of God's purpose or plan in the healing of a nation, it is clear that the intent of God with regard to even Gentile nations [**goyim**] is healing and 'setting right' and 'making whole' and according to their divine and expected purpose. A fascinating aspect of this study, which we will examine in more detail later, is that it is the Leaves [**Phyllon**] of the tree of life, the one that sits in the midst of Eden and Heaven, that are 'medicinal' to the healing of nations, and I posit that to mean both metaphorically and literally.

We will turn in the next study, to look at what the characteristics and descriptions are of 'national' healing.

08/26/2007 E.K.Best

Posted by Elizabeth K. Best, PhD at [8/23/2007 05:27:00 PM](#)

Labels: Bible Study, Christ, Christ's healing, darkness, deliverance, healing, Healing of the Nations, Jesus Christ, leaves, Messiah, Mind of Messiah, Nations, religion

Sunday, September 02, 2007

Healing of the Nations: Part II

The Ways and Characteristics of God's Healing of Nations.



Israel, eminent among the nations, was set as an ensign for the world to view as the way God deals with nations in general. In history, despite opinion, the scriptures declare it the only God-appointed Theocracy. The Only one. One of the earliest secular historical mentions of Israel, mentions the children of Benjamin, desert wanderers whose God was King, and later, contrary to God's heart, Kings and Judges were appointed in Israel, some very good, some very bad, and all a type and kind of Israel's Meschiach to come.

Israel though, was not loyal in heart, an adulterous wife, so much so that by the time of the Babylonian destruction, the image of her in God's heart was presented via the prophet Hosea forced to take a harlot for a wife. While Israel had been before in exile or under foreign rule, such as under a Babylonian King for 8 years earlier in her history¹, or in the Egyptian exile, it had not always been a judgment because the the extremity of sin. By the end of the Division between the Southern and Northern Kingdoms, with 10 of the 12 tribes willingly rebellious not only in national issues but issues of false worship, and with the degradation of sin brought to bear, a severe 'breaking off' occurred, as a limb in need of completely being reset, and the Northern Kingdom was taken captive by Assyria, and the Southern, later by Babylon. [Babylon and Assyria had both been one nation, but had split and was used as an instrument of God's chastisement]

God's dealing with the nation of Israel and his healing process included several tenets:

- 1) The 'Disease' Process of Israel falling away from God**
- 2) The Beginning of Healing in Exile- Repentance, the Anointed, and the Remnant**
- 3) The Dealing with a Rebellious King: Healing earthly sovereignty**
- 4) Restoration to Health.**

The Healing of 'a' nation is one thing, the healing of 'the' nations, is a very unique thing in God's sovereignty. The healing of any nation at any time, follows the pattern and meanings of the healing of individuals. Most often it includes repentance of a people, even a 'heathen' or pagan/unbelieving nation, towards the truth of the true God of Heaven. An example of this is found in Jonah. Jonah, a genuine prophet of God is called to Nineveh, the people who have brutally treated Israel, to preach judgment and repentance for the salvation of Nineveh.

Jonah 1:2-Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me.

Jonah, however having seen the brutality and destruction the Ninevites wrought on Israel, runs the other way, on the Ships of Tarshish [comfort and ease], only to find the vital severity of God in dealing with recalcitrant prophets. Eventually though, after a short travel into death and the depths, he is thrown on the shore of Nineveh to do God's bidding, and the call is made and answered with more repentance than even Israel was willing to do at the time:

Jonah 3:5 So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them.

Jon 3:6-8 For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered [him] with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. And he caused [it] to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste any thing: let them not feed, nor drink water: But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that [is] in their hands.

Saturday, September 15, 2007

Healing of the Nations- The Beginning of Healing in Exile-

Repentance, the Anointed, and the Remnant-Part III



In discussing the nature and pattern of healing of a nation or the 'healing of nations' [both are a separate concern], we have already discussed that first, the 'dissensioned' state of a nation which has removed itself from the right ways of God must be recognized as lacking wholeness, being 'diseased' or corrupted and in a state of disequilibrium. Many examples of this appear in scripture, such as the Babylonian empire around the time of Belshazzar, in which the kingdom is wrested away from Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar, or in the period in Israel just prior to the Exile, when Israel was in such a condition, that every prophet of the time is given similar prophecies regarding the destruction of the nation loved by God because of a sin state. Once the disease is recognized, though, or the dissensioned state of a nation, either of God's or the world, The second stage in healing in Scripture is a

- 1.call to Repentance,**
- 2.the appearance of the anointed,**
- 3.a Return, and**
- 4.the re-establishment of at least a Remnant.**

Repentance and God's Anointed

Jonah, the recalcitrant Prophet, eventually rises up in Nineveh, calls for repentance, the first rung in the ladder of the Healing of a Nation, and Nineveh, the vile city is spared the prophesied destruction for 120 or so years. Two things are characteristic of the prophecy that leads to that healing:

- I. The Prophet is compelled to the Prophecy and Call to Repentance**
- II. While the Nation Repents and is healed for the next generation, the original prophecy of destruction of Nineveh for its many crimes still takes place at a later time.**

So REPENTANCE, the first rung of a Nation's healing, can change the immediate fate of a nation leading it into a whole state in equilibrium, but the PROPHETIC PRONOUNCEMENT is still true. When Nineveh turns away from its repentance, the judgment returns. (See Nahum).

Repentance turns a nation which has fallen into distress back to the path of healing. In the Holy Scripture, to my knowledge there is not a time when God heals either Israel or any of the 'Heathen' nations without a heart repentance of that nation.

The Repentance of Israel

There are a number of instances of national Repentance in Israel, which lead to healing of Israel. The healing almost always involves a total restoration, abundantly above all that is asked or expected. Several examples of the national repentance of Israel are found in the Wars of Israel, in which the nation in repentance and supplication goes on to win a war after an initial failing. One such example is in Joshua's Battle with the Southern Canaanites in Israel's route into Canaan. In the first battle, God commands the taking of the mountain where the Anakim dwell, where the Southern Canaanites dwell, and Joshua and Caleb spy out the mountain, reporting back to Israel that they can take it though it be fearsome. Israel, though, despite the command of God, turns back, afraid to go to battle. [Numbers 14] They then turn to repent, but out of step with the Lord's command, they fail to do things the Lord's way and fail:

And they rose up early in the morning, and gat them up into the top of the mountain, saying, Lo, we [be here], and will go up unto the place which the LORD hath promised: for we have sinned.
Num 14:41-44 And Moses said, Wherefore now do ye transgress the commandment of the LORD? but it shall not prosper.

Go not up, for the LORD [is] not among you; that ye be not smitten before your enemies. For the Amalekites and the Canaanites [are] there before you, and ye shall fall by the sword: because ye are turned away from the LORD, therefore the LORD will not be with you. But they presumed to go up unto the hill top: nevertheless the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and Moses, departed not out of the camp. Then the Amalekites came down, and the Canaanites which dwelt in that hill, and smote them, and discomfited them, [even] unto Hormah.

In the case of the defeat even with repentance, it was not repentance fully, for they turn again to the battle, only without waiting for the Lord. They are soundly defeated.

In the Life of a Nation, the first and foremost step in healing a 'dissensioned' nation is for the problem to be identified, and acknowledged as sin and separation from the ways of God, along with a seeking of God with the heart and mind and soul not only of individuals, but of a whole nation.

There are times when on behalf of Israel, a few repentant prophets and people prayed in proxy for their people who had forgotten and despaired of turning back to their God. One such prophet was Daniel, one of the most great trial-ed prophets in the Holy Scriptures. Daniel had been taken as a child from a royal family and in the midst of war and destruction and the sacking of Jerusalem was taken captive by the brutish armies of Nebuchadnezzar. One really needs to meditate a bit on what that meant: royal children are spoiled at least a little: they have servants, a lush lifestyle and comfort and are tenderly treated. These were the children taken by a brutal army and ripped from parents, comfort, love and innocence: some were made into eunuchs, in a cruelty so unspeakable, that none could fathom any child having to face it.

Relocated, 'deported' to a foreign land under these circumstances, and placed in the palace of a horrendous King, only a few resolve not to lose their faith or identity: Daniel, given the Babylonian name Belteshazzar [not Belshazzar], and Shadrach, Meschach and Abednego, of the fiery furnace fame. Even within the courts though, forced to read and study the abomination of dark arts and magic of the Chaldeans, Daniel notes as he grows in excellence, the timing due in the Jewish scriptures of the Return, and sees the need of the Healing and Repentance of the Nation of Israel, precipitous to the Great Return.

As with others at times of Israel's distress, Daniel, knowing his nation to be in a dissensioned state captive in Babylon, does not rush to think that all Israel will bow the knee and ask God to save and deliver them from Babylon. Most of Israel has grown old in exile in this time: the ones who were very young children are now old men, and many of a lesser character have forgotten the great need of repentance: they do not remember much about Israel, it became in Babylon as it became in the holocaust or Shoah: "Ha Eretz Y'israel", the semi-mythical Utopia of the Jews which in exile appears as the only hope, distant, unattainable and far away.

Daniel however is not willing to leave it as a distant and unattainable hope: through his studies of Jeremiah's prophecies and through prayer, constant prayer, he falls on his knees hoping to repent not only his own sins, but the Sins of a people, the nation of Israel.

Chapter 9 of Daniel details that prayer of national repentance and serves as a prototype of heart repentance for a nation in dissension or a nation in exile. The Book of Esther also contains national repentance and prayer as Mordecai and Esther place their lives on the line before a pagan King, Ahasuerus, and all Israel falls in fasting and prayer to save their lives. In Daniel, however, it is a 'proxy' prayer, as one 'warrior' intercedes with God for a whole nation which has lost its way, and does not even remember the true ways of Israel before her bridegroom.

Dan 9:3 And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes:

Dan 9:3 And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes:

Dan 9:4 And I prayed unto the LORD my God, and made my confession, and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments;

The issues and characteristics of national repentance will be examined in the next section before moving on to other issues of the Healing of a nation

Sunday, October 14, 2007

Prayers of National Repentance: Daniel, Esther, & More



The national repentance which is required for the Healing of a Nation is clearly seen in several passages of scripture. The Ninevites turned in national repentance at the prophesying of Jonah; Daniel's repentance brought the vision of the future of Israel clear to the end of time, along with a Return to the Land, the national repentance of the Jews saved them in Medo-Persia from India to the Mediterranean [the following is by Elizabeth K. Best] from the foes raised by the edict Haman procured. Ezra

demands by God a national repentance and the putting away of 'strange wives' in the purification of Israel, and there are a number of other times as well. [E.g. the repentance of Israel during certain wars] Corporate confession of national sin came either by

1) The whole nation praying a confession or

2) By a person praying in Proxy for the sins of the Nation

Daniel's prayer is the essence of the prophet praying in Proxy for the Sins of Israel, supplicating God for the time which has been determined as the prophesied time for the end of captivity.

And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes:

The form is worth noting: First there is the

-ACKNOWLEDGING OF THE MAJESTY OF GOD,

-THE CHARACTER OF GOD, and the critical

-COVENANT



Dan 9:4 And I prayed unto the LORD my God, and made my confession, and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments;

Following the praise and essential declaration of Covenant, which has kept Israel alive and protected her throughout captivity, the major tenets of the sin are listed:

Dan 9:5 We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments:

Dan 9:6 Neither have we hearkened unto thy servants the prophets, which spake in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land.

Posted by Elizabeth K. Best, PhD at 10/14/2007 03:37:00 PM

Tuesday, November 13, 2007

Healing: Prayers of National Repentance Continued

Daniel continues in the prayer in Chapter 9, that will lead to the healing and restoration of Israel back to :

- 1. Who She is as a Nation and**
- 2. Recognition of what she has done which caused the Captivity and**
- 3. The Supplication for God's Healing of the nations and return from Exile.**

When Daniel makes the supplication to the God of Heaven, as has been mentioned, he is aware that the timing of the Return according to Jeremiah is at hand, and that the Lord is faithful:

I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.

[Dan 9:2](#)

and

...the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments; [Dan 9:4](#)

Here is a critical issue in the healing of the Nation of Israel: **THE ACKNOWLEDGMENT of THE COVENANT**. The **COVENANT** is EVERLASTING and holy and has been from the beginning. This means that the 'RIGHT' state of Israel is when she is keeping **COVENANT** with her GOD. When Israel moved away from GOD 'missing the mark', a definition of sin and national sin, then she was in a 'diseased' state, and the intervention of God became necessary to bring her back into a whole and right state.

Blut und Boden

In Germany in WWII, there was a concept of '*blut und boden*' or blood and soil, which entailed the identity of the German people or 'Volk' being so tied up in the land they lived in and on, that to be German was to be on Aryan soil, and to be on Aryan soil was to be German by necessity. This concept, many are not aware gave rise to the modern environmental movement, but caused a severe persecution of the Jews to drive them out of the bloodlines (*blut*) of Europe and off of the land (*boden*) to create a pure 'oneness' of people, spirit and land. (See [Blood and Soil](#)) In the case of Germany, the concept was used against the Jewish people.

In God's Covenant with the Chosen people though throughout history, the promise of the Seed and Land, a Jewish form of *blut und boden*, was essentially different though because it was holy, set apart, in the purposes of GOD and meant for the salvation of the world. The late German form was merely an emulation of the COVENANT, essentially opposite from the COVENANT of the Everlasting nation and meant not for the preservation of the Jews, the oracles and vehicles of the Word of God but for the opposite. Why is this important in the discussion of the healing of a nation? Because there really is an issue of the healing of the Jewish nation being tied to them being:

1. In the Covenant

2. In Obedience

3. In the Land

in order to be in that perfect, healed state, an equilibrium and balance when all is as it should be, when

they are in a 'RIGHTEOUS' state.

Why does this matter in the national healing of Israel? Because Israel, to be healed needed to be back in the Land!. It was part of her 'wholeness'. Is this true for all nations? It is somewhat difficult to answer because virtually all nations are on their own land. During WWII, a few monarchs and heads of state had to flee Nazi occupation: without their heads, nations such as the Netherlands felt downtrodden and hopeless: they were in a **dissensioned** state.

When their rightful leadership was back in place, their form of government, etc, they began to HEAL as a nation. Israel is a special case of the nations having survived in and out of the land for 5000 years, depending on how some historians count origins.

BACK TO REPENTANCE

The Prophet Repents for a Nation in Captivity

One of the first things to realize as Daniel prays, is that without their 'permission' or even knowledge, Daniel, the prophet of exile takes it upon himself to pray vicariously in repentance for the good of the nation. Why would God receive Daniel's prayer in this way? Would it not take the whole nation repenting? Well, it happens both ways: in Daniel, the prophet prays in Proxy as a representative of the whole nation of Israel in Babylonian captivity. In Esther we see the whole nation called to prayer for their self-defense and protection, including severe repentance.

We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments:

Neither have we hearkened unto thy servants the prophets, which spake in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land.

O Lord, righteousness [belongeth] unto thee, but unto **us** confusion of faces, as at this day; to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and unto all Israel, [that are] near, and [that are] far off, through all the countries whither thou hast driven them, because of their trespass that they have trespassed against thee. O Lord, to us [belongeth] confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee. -[Dan 9:5-8](#)

In Esther:

And in every province, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came, [there was] great mourning among the Jews, and fasting, and weeping, and wailing; and many lay in sackcloth and ashes. Esther 4:3

Now in Daniel, the Prophet stands in proxy of the people, declaring unto God in heart and soul, his sorrow over his and their sins which set them in captivity to a pagan nation. In Esther, we see both: Esther intercedes with the pagan King Ahasuerus for the nation of Israel, Mordecai 'stands in the gap' for Israel when he sees the nation about to fall to the wicked Haman, and later all Israel mourns, weeps, fasts, wails and lays in sackcloth and ashes, begging for the great hand of God to again defend the beleaguered nation. Is this merely about begging for protection? No, it is also about the healing of the nation beginning with repentance.

If a soldier is wounded on a battlefield, his wounds are not neatly attended to there: he needs to be dragged off the front, to a place of safety and some rest so that he can be healed and made whole. Rest is required. In the case of a nation, they are substantially asking to be 'dragged off the battlefield' to a place of rest where they would be made whole again, by the hand of GOD. REPENTANCE, both via a representative in this case a prophet or a Queen, or leader of Israel (Mordecai), brings the desired intervention and in all three cases, a miraculous healing of the nation. For Daniel, the **Repentance is intense and severe** and occurs amidst a pagan atmosphere, and risks the wrath of the king and courtiers.

Daniel notes that the nation has fallen to CONFUSION because of rebellion:

*O Lord, to us [belongeth] **confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers**, because we have sinned against thee.*

*To the Lord our God [belong] mercies and forgivenesses, though we have **rebelled** against him;*

Dan 8-9

and that the failure to obey the LAW (Torah) of GOD, has resulted in the 'diseased' condition of the captive nation:

Neither have we **obeyed the voice of the LORD** our God, to **walk in his laws**, which he set before us by his servants the prophets.

Why is national repentance needed? Because a whole nation sinned:

-

all Israel have transgressed thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey thy voice; therefore the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that [is] written in the law of Moses the servant of God, because we have sinned against him.

We will continue with this study again shortly but a few points in summary are applicable not only to the Israel of long ago, but to all nations today:

1. We have fallen to a 'curse' by

-disobedience,

-sin,

-failure to hear God,

- failure to walk in His Law or Way

[I am the WAY , the TRUTH and the LIFE [Jn14:6](#)]

2. The 'Curse' of National Sin results in

-Confusion

-Inability to hear from GOD

-Captivity and brutal treatment

-A lack of Clarity as in confusion, lack in decision-making

-Lack of leadership and direction

-'Dissension' of the fabric of society

3. Both Prophets and Ministers of God need to Repent for the Nation and Themselves

4. The Nation Must Repent in Seriousness

- Calling on God with Praise, Fasting and Supplication
 - Turning from the way they are on by obeying Christ's commands
 - Spending the time necessary to seek out GOD's forgiveness and will.
-

By Elizabeth Kirkley Best

Posted by Elizabeth K. Best, PhD at 11/13/2007 09:18:00 PM

Labels: Daniel, Daniel Chapter 9, Esther, Healing of the Nations, Mordecai, National Repentance, National Sin, Sin

Saturday, December 01, 2007

The Prophetic Vision and the Healing of a Nation



In the previous discussions regarding the healing of a nation, the 'broadest' healing spoken of in the Bible after the Salvation of mankind, we have seen that

1. A Nation Must Recognize their sin or be shown it

2. A Nation must own their sin and admit it

3. A Nation must turn in Mourning from their sin

4. A Nation must plead with God for forgiveness, mercy and direction and guidance

5. A Nation must obey God

In the course of this healing process, which is very simply bringing a nation into God's correct order and to obedience, the Prophetic Utterance often occurs and is seen in prototype in the Assyrian/Babylonian exile. Warnings occur regarding the 'ill' or dissensioned nature of the nation long before the actual overthrow, as Isaiah and Micah prophesy long before the event. Nearing the time of Nebuchadnezzar's overthrow of Jerusalem, after Assyria has already taken Hazor and the North of Israel, Jeremiah cries in constant pleas to heed God's Word and call for repentance, but except for a few Rechabites, Jeremiah and a few at court, none hear.

The Affliction of Jerusalem

After Jerusalem falls, and the Jews are carried away into captivity the demoralization, alienation and 'dissolving' of the national spirit of the Jews takes place to the point that after 70 years in captivity, their national identity has waned, their resolve is gone. At the end of the period as mentioned before, Daniel discovers the time of a prophesied return is at hand by reading the book of Jeremiah. But other things happen near the end of captivity as well, heralding the healing of the nation that is to come:

-Nehemiah becomes the King's cupbearer and mourns for the re-establishment of Jerusalem ([Neh 1:1-6](#))

And they said unto me, The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province [are] in great affliction and reproach: the wall of Jerusalem also [is] broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire.

And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned [certain] days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven, And said, I beseech thee, O LORD God of heaven, the great and terrible God, that keepeth covenant and mercy for them that love him and observe his commandments: Let thine ear now be attentive, and thine eyes open, that thou mayest hear the prayer of thy servant, which I pray before thee now, day and night, for the children of Israel thy servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel, which we have sinned against thee: both I and my father's house have sinned.

-Cyrus declares for Ezra the rebuilding and restoration and replenishment of the Temple,

-Hadassah, or Esther, ascends to Queen in Vashti's place, and implores the King under Mordecai's guidance for the deliverance of her people from Haman's edict of genocide.

The time is at hand in the above passages for the healing of the Nation of Israel, but a few things are going on-

1. Certain key Jews are moved into position in a pagan nation: Daniel as court advisor, Ezra as courtier, Nehemiah as the King's cupbearer, Mordecai as the King's rescuer, Esther as the Queen of Artaxerxes.

2. The discovery of the prophesied time is determined for healing

3. Mourning and Repentance are called for and accomplished,

4. The Remembrance of the Afflictions of Jerusalem is made, e.g.

The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province [are] in great affliction and reproach: the wall of Jerusalem also [is] broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire. [Neh 1:3](#)

or

I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the *desolations of Jerusalem*. [Dan 9:3](#) And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by *prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes:*

or

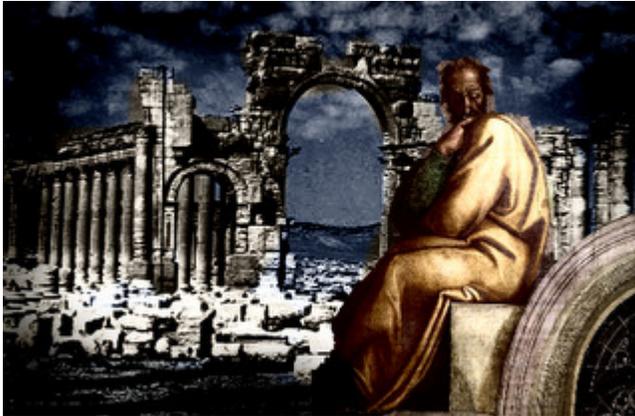
Esther 7:4

For we are sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish. But if we had been sold for bondmen and bondwomen, I had held my tongue, although the enemy could not countervail the king's damage.

The Remembrance first is made, followed by mourning.

Saturday, March 15, 2008

Obedience to the Prophetic Utterance: A King Obeys the Prophet



Within the context of Prophetic Utterance, it is often the case that a direction or command is given, which if followed results in God's Will, an increase in faith, and the 'instructed' person accomplishing a goal. In this day and time, most Prophetic Utterance, or prophetic gift we see, is in the local church, particularly charismatic or

'Pentecostal' churches, and usually involves a direction for the church or people in the church, and only occasionally do many with the gift predict events of national consequence. "Predict" is actually not a very good word to use because

- 1. It is often associated with occult practices such as 'mediums' predicting the future or**
- 2. It implies that the person with out knowledge of the future is 'predicting' what will happen.**

The reason the second is important is because God is all knowing, and while a medium may 'predict' what happens, occasionally being right, God is never wrong, knows the future, and so the relaying of God's expressions through the Prophetic utterance is a relaying of knowledge of the future just ahead which God wishes believers or specific people to have. God did not 'predict' the Babylonian exile: he foretold it through Jeremiah. Jeremiah did not 'predict' gloom and disaster, he relayed the message. A weatherman, using scientific tools, claims to 'predict' the weather, but he is really guessing based upon patterns, histories, readings of instruments, radar, etc what will probably happen. When I was in psychology one of our psychological 'catechisms' was that the aim of science was control and prediction. The truth is, psychology does not 'predict' either, it guesses, and that is quite different than FORETELLING, in which God gives knowledge of

a forthcoming event usually for the sake of meeting the trouble head on as when Joseph incited Pharaoh to store grain and such for 7 years so that Egypt would be prepared in famine. Jeremiah , Isaiah and all of the prophets 'FORETELL' events in their immediate and our distant future. They foretell of the Exile and war, famine, dearth, the coming of Messiah and what he will be like and the events near the end of time.

Obedience and the Prophetic Utterance

Often, a person in a church will pray for a 'word of knowledge' which may be delivered during a prophetic utterance or separately, regarding a sincere life event, in which they do not know which way to turn, or what God's will is, but are seriously desirous of obeying and doing the right thing. In microcosm, those who understand the gifts understand this use, and have 'seen it done' with the consequence of success when directed. It should be noted though, that there are many incidents in these trying times in which persons attempt to fake the practice of gifts, and may give not a 'word of knowledge' but really just a personal opinion. False prophecy was rampant also in the 'old days': while Jeremiah prophesied the Word of the LORD of the oncoming slaughter and captivity, many other so-called prophets were prophesying Israel's strength and telling Israel to stand, when God through the real prophet was telling Judah to fall into the hands of her captors without incident. Jeremiah was even thrown in prison trying to 'undermine the morale' of the King and nation, who could not believe a prophet would tell the Children of Israel who had decayed into corruption, sin, and degradation, to quietly acquiesce to the hands of the enemy. The LORD however saw the oncoming armies and slaughter and was concerned at that point in history with saving his people and the line of Messiah. The human mind is always thinking in terms of immediate human justice, but God's plans and ways are divine and eternal, and his prophetic utterances are also.

A Case of Prophetic Utterance with National Consequences: A King Obey

In [II Kings 6:20-23](#) Elisha after opening eyes in Israel to see divine support, comes to Samaria, and opens the eyes of those he is with. King Jehoram, opens his eyes and says unto Elisha

My Father, shall I smite them? shall I smite them"

And Elisha replies,

"Thou shalt not smite them; wouldst thou smite those whom thou hast taken captive with thy sword and with thy bow? Set bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink and go to their master."

A couple of things are worth noting here:

1. The King calls the Prophet 'My Father' a term of respect and affection, indicating that at the time, even in divided Israel, even in the northern Kingdom where the faith had become more dissensioned, there is still a respect for the prophet of God , even up to and by the King, at that time Jehoram.

2. The King inquires of the prophet: He is of an understanding that the Prophet really does express the will and ways of God, and shows enough faith to seek him out

When the prophetic utterance is given, the first thing one can see is the difference between carnal man and God in the resolution of situations. Jehoram stands before an enemy, his inclination is to 'smite' them, or kill or at least harm; that is what Kings do to enemies. His ultimate aim, though, is safety for Israel and victory away from the Syrian army.

Through Elisha though, God directs him instead to feed and give drink to his captives, an almost unheard of thing in the midst of pending war. Another cogent issue here though is that **God's call for mercy in the Utterance is immediately heeded:**

II Kg 6:23

"And he prepared great provision for them; and when they had eaten and drunk, he sent them away, and they went to their master."

The King not only OBEYED the utterance of God through Elisha, he did so abundantly and without hesitation, a great act of faith for a king of Israel during that time.

The effects of immediate and abundant obedience to the instructions of Elisha, God's prophet brought about swiftly and cleanly the very motive and goal Jehoram sought: the captors return to Benhadad and the Syrian army, and do not come back to trouble Israel for the time.

"So the bands of Syria came no more into the Land of Israel"

Syria comes no more to Israel but turns to attack and seige Samaria, the land of emulated worship. The great famine ensues because of the siege where a mother even devours her child. Eventually Jehoram is sought regarding the suffering, and turns on the prophet thinking it may be intimated that Elisha must be at fault, making a common mistake of confusing the infallible and all knowing God with the prophet who merely relays the message. He even sends to harm Elisha in verse 30 by beheading, although as soon as his messenger comes he foretells an end to the horror within 24 hours. Within a day, the Syrian army hears the 'sound of chariots and horses' not really there, and in fear they take off leaving all their provision: the starving city plunders the spoil and the famine ends.7:6. Syria not only does not kill Israel, but upon their return and threat, ends of fleeing in fear and leaving Israel provision. If the King had not listened to the prophet, the battle and subsequent slaughter would have been great, and the goal not achieved.

Obeying the Prophetic Utterance

Belief that God can speak to or through man is not new at all, but it is a 'hard sell' today, when unbelief in general is rampant and when the church too often believes because of the infusion of dispensationalism and other man made doctrines that God 'closed shop' around the first century on the gifts. It is rather like believing that a tree planted only needed sap and chlorophyll for the first week and a half and for the rest of the time would rely on whatever it could reach. The result for both is the same: dead wood.

When Obedience is mentioned, though, one can understand that if one has enough faith to understand God is real, that Christ exacted the work of the gifts along with the blood bought salvation on Golgotha and walking out from the tomb, then faith leaves the rank of religion and becomes real. If God is real, faith is real, then the gifts are really God at work: the modern mind cannot deal with God at work, even seeing miracles and acts of power and healing before them. If God can deal with man through preaching, and work through him in healing, exhortation, etc, then it is not a far step to understand that God may

help his people through the prophetic utterance, but that if he does, disobedience to the command is absolutely untenable and is likely to be chastised even more than if the utterance had not been sought. You can't doubt God's wisdom once it is given, one instead has only to obey. The King of Israel named Jehoram sought the prophet, obeyed the prophet, and later turned on the prophet, but his abundant and immediate obedience kept Israel safe. We need apply that lesson in our own life when confronted by the directives of the Holy Spirit.

Posted by Elizabeth K. Best, PhD at [11:23 PM](#)

Sunday, March 14, 2010

Good Prophet Bad Prophet: Jeremiah Stands his Ground Against Hananiah To Which Prophetic Voice Should a Nation Listen?



Bringing the News Nobody Wants to Hear

In the New Testament, Jesus, on his way to Golgotha makes this mournful statement regarding the prophets that had visited Israel:

***Mat 23:37** O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, **[thou] that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee**, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under [her] wings, and ye would not!*

In this day when we remember the distant prophets of God as legends and heroes of the faith, we seldom consider how they were treated in their day and time. Jesus cries with sorrow to the Children of Israel that he loves them and would have gathered them to protect them, but they turn their back on him and the prophets of old. Why did Israel turn her back on the prophets? Would we have been any different? It is unlikely we would even have heeded the prophets as much as they did!

Israel at least, had the 'concept' of a prophet. Modern society laughs at the idea of a prophet. In the days when God spoke to Israel through his prophets, though, they were heard and respected, all the while hated and abused, a seeming paradox. The problem with prophets, is that while they comforted and reminded Israel of God's ever abiding eternal love and covenants for them, they also warned, exhorted, rebuked, called for repentance, and relayed some very unpopular and troubling utterances to Kings and nations.

Almost all of the Kings of Judah, had prophets available to them. They regularly sought prophets regarding wars, major decisions, or their status with God, and many prophets in Chronicles and the books of Kings are noted as having kept books, or stories (Midrash) of the acts of prophecy and the Kings during their 'office' as prophet: Iddo and Shemaiah are mentioned as keeping a record as are a number of others. David was anointed by a prophet as was Saul, and both consulted prophets, particularly Samuel, Nathan, and Iddo, and David was considered a prophet. Saul, after his headstrong disobedience to the prophet Samuel, spent much of his life desperately reaching for the prophetic utterance to little avail: his trip to the witch of Endor to 'conjure' up Samuel after death showed his desperation.

1Sa 28:11 Then said the woman, Whom shall I bring up unto thee? And he said, Bring me up Samuel.

Just as the Kings though had a love hate relation with the prophets, so did the people of Israel. If one observes where and how the prophets lived, it was often traveling from place to place, even if they had a primary location, such as Samuel, going where called, but located at the Temple. Elijah shows up at the Jordan, on Mt. Carmel, and in Zarephath among others. Prophets were sometimes at the palace, sometimes in the desert, and in Saul's lifetime a 'company' of prophets is mentioned: Jeremiah ended up in a miry prison for prophesying the truth, and John the Baptist took to the desert area near the Jordan, I suspect knowing how little his righteous message would be received by those whom had bought their priesthoods from Rome.

When the prophets prophesied God's love and comfort and good will, they were sought out and had little problems. When they prophesied judgment and the need for repentance, and even great destruction, they were chased, threatened, had death threats, were imprisoned and generally persecuted beyond measure. Little has changed over the centuries: people do not want to hear bad news at all, and they certainly do

not want to hear that God is not pleased with them, or requires them to give up idols or the pleasures of life.

Jeremiah and Hananiah

Two prophets encounter King Zedekiah during the 'eve' of the siege of Jerusalem by Babylon: Jeremiah, the renowned prophet of God, and a 'courtier' prophet from the time named 'Hananiah'. Zedekiah was the King of Judah before Judah and Benjamin fell to Nebuchadnezzar's armies, and Israel had her own encounters with the Assyrian armies, and fell first. News of the impending doom of Babylon's army had reached the kingdom, but the concern was not as realistic as it should have been: the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar were marching slash and burn style over the 'known' world, and were winning every war, although most were not offering much resistance when confronted with the massive army.

In spite of the great threat, though, many of Israel were hopeful that they could resist Babylon, and were suggesting that God was on their side, because they ignored the great influx of carnality and idolatry which had reached by then even down into Judah. In the 4th year, in the 5th month of the reign of Zedekiah, Hananiah, the son of another prophet, Azur, of Gibeon, speaks to Jeremiah in sight of the priests and the people---but it is a false prophecy! Hananiah will use a prophetic illustration, and glowing words and will even make Jeremiah the object of humiliation, but a battle of true prophecy vs. false prophecy ensues. Consider the prophecy of Hananiah:

Jer 28:2 Thus speaketh the LORD of Hosts, the God of Israel, saying I have broken the yoke of the King of Babylon. 3 Within two full years will I bring again into this place all the vessels of the LORD's house, that Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon took away from this place and carried them to Babylon. 4 And I will bring again to this place, Jeconiah, son of Jehoiakim, King of Judah with all the captives of Judah, that went into Babylon, saith the LORD; for I will break the yoke of the King of Babylon.

Hananiah has used Jeremiah, the true prophet in a scornful derision by symbolically breaking the yoke from off of Jeremiah as though this were a true prophecy, but was really a mockery of prophecy and God's true prophet.

Then Hananiah the prophet took the yoke from off the prophet Jeremiah's neck and brake it.

There are a number of things worth mentioning in the utterance of Hananiah: he was not incorrect about

the vessels of the House of the LORD having already disappeared when the King foolishly showed him Israel's wealth, but he was dead wrong about them and the son of Jehoiakim being restored. He was also dead wrong about 'breaking the yoke' of the King of Babylon, but he was far from being finished. He was telling Israel soothing words that sounded true, what they wanted to hear, but was a satanic lie. Consider then a few characteristics of false prophecy:

CHARACTERISTICS OF FALSE PROPHECY

1. Irrationally hopeful thoughts facing destruction (They knew what Nebuchadnezzar's army had already done)

2. Psychotic thinking that Babylon would graciously bring back pillaged spoil.

This was outlandish optimism, telling the people what they wanted to hear

3. Hananiah uses the LORD's name in vain, but even more, he attaches it in a believable way to a false prophecy.

4. Grandiose prophesying without calling for Israel's repentance: he is talking about replacing the King and bringing back all Judean captives. While one day 70 years later, the captivity would return, all other notable prophets had prophesied destruction and captivity.

Jeremiah, though, was a true prophet of God, and knew the dire mistake that the other prophet had made. Jeremiah makes the following response:

Then the Prophet Jeremiah said unto the prophet Hananiah in the presence of the priests, and in the presence of all the people that stood in the House of the LORD, 6 Even the prophet Jeremiah said, Amen: the LORD do so: the LORD perform thy words which thou hast prophesied, to bring again the vessels of the LORD's house, and all that is carried away captive from Babylon into this place.

Note that Jeremiah is not agreeing that Hananiah has spoken the words of God, but Jeremiah knows the very serious admonition to 'touch not God's anointed and do his prophets no harm'. Jeremiah knows the truth of what is coming to Israel: he has the true Spirit of God in his prophesying. Jeremiah knows that what Hananiah is saying is false, but he handles anyone even called a prophet very wisely and carefully. He is basically saying, 'Yeh, I hope so too', 'from your mouth to God's ear' in the modern vernacular. His 'Nevertheless' follow-up though, shows that a false prophecy cannot go un-shown.

...hear thou now this word that I speak in thine ears, and in the ear of all the people; the prophets that have been before me and before thee of old prophesied both against many countries and against great Kingdoms, of war, and of evil, and of pestilence 9 The prophet which prophesieth of peace when the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known, that the LORD hath truly sent him.

Jeremiah is pointing to the differences between Hananiah's prophecy and the prophecies which have gone before: they do not match, but even then, his gracious manner is one offering a litmus test, a 'reminder' that the thing prophesied has to come true, and that the prophetic office is one of Warning, more often than not. He does not directly call Hananiah a liar at first in front of the people or the priests, respecting the sanctity of the Temple and the holiness of the prophetic utterance. The 'test of things coming to pass' has not been met, and all the other true and tested prophets have seen something else. Hananiah, though, continuing in his foolishness does the following:

Then Hananiah the prophet took the yoke from off the prophet Jeremiah's neck and brake it. 11 And Hananiah spake in the presence of all the people saying, Thus saith the LORD; Even so will I break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon from the neck of all nations within the space of two full years. And the prophet Jeremiah went his way.

Hananiah even after the gentle rebuke continues to use the LORD's name in vain, and in addition dissensions the credibility of Jeremiah by using a true prophet as an object of scorn for a false prophetic illustration of a false prophecy, and endangers all of Israel.

Then, though, Jeremiah does turn to rebuke the other prophet:

12 Then the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah the prophet, after that Hananiah the prophet had broken the yoke from off the neck of the prophet Jeremiah, saying 13 Go and tell Hananiah saying, Thus saith the LORD; Thou hast broken the yokes of wood; but thou shalt make for them yokes of iron. 14 For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; I have put a yoke of iron upon the neck of all these nations that they may serve Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; and they shall serve him: and I have given him the beasts of the field also.

15 Then said the prophet Jeremiah unto Hananiah the prophet, **Hear now, Hananiah; The LORD hath not sent thee; but thou makest this people to trust in a lie.**

It is a very dangerous thing to use prophecy to sway politics, or opinions, or for reward or any other personal motive. God does give some grace though, for many things can happen to 'derail' a prophecy such as the dissensioned condition of the prophet (sickness, weariness) or prayer wars against the one prophesying, or distractions. Once warned though, it is inherent to correct any dissension in the prophetic utterance and Hananiah not only does not do that, he makes the one gently rebuking him into an object of scorn. It brings the quick wrath of God.

Therefore thus saith the LORD: Behold I will cast thee from off the face of the earth: this year thou shalt die, because thou hast taught rebellion against the LORD. 17 So 17 So Hananiah the prophet died the same year in the seventh month.

This continued false prophecy is called rebellion and judged. Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft in the Scriptures ([1Sa 15:23](#)), said by Samuel to Saul.

[1Sa 15:23](#) For rebellion [is as] the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness [is as] iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from [being] king.

Rebellion is also the sin of Lucifer who falls from heaven

[Isa 14:12](#) How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! [how] art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!

[Rev 12:9](#) And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

who though described as a beautiful angel of God, was disinherited from all things divine for the act of rebellion .

Hananiah was guilty of false prophecy: he was guilty of mocking the things of God and counting his name and truth lightly. Hananiah was guilty of misleading Israel in Jerusalem, telling them what they wanted to hear, and causing them to ignore Jeremiah's true warnings from God. Hananiah made a scornful derision using Jeremiah's yoke, mocking the true things of God. Even after rebuke, Hananiah continued trying to prove he was true and Jeremiah was false.

Nebuchadnezzar's army was rolling in: Jeremiah was warning the Judeans to surrender and be taken peaceably into captivity, but certain of the military and Hananiah were saying 'peace and safety' and assuring Israel they could resist, when it would have meant their destruction. God himself had set the judgment of Judah and Northern Israel: they gave themselves over to false gods and carnality, He gave them over to the end of their own ways: He fulfilled their bestial desire, to live in a kingdom ruled over by the Kingdoms wrought with idolatry and carnality: God did this because there was no other way to teach Israel to continue as a pure vine. When Hananiah prophesied that Babylon's yoke would be broken and all restored, he was contradicting and lying about God's righteousness and righteous judgment. He was defying the holiness of the prophetic office and utterance. Jeremiah might have been bound, mistreated, imprisoned and endangered, but he still stood his ground in telling the King, the people and the priests the truth of God's Will: they must surrender and walk through the judgment: they would return one day, a true vine, ready to listen to 'Good Prophets'.

Elizabeth K. Best

Posted by Elizabeth K. Best, PhD at [3:49 AM](#)

Labels: [Babylon](#), [enhancement of prophecy](#), [Hananiah](#), [Jeremiah](#), [Prophetic Gift](#), [siege of Jerusalem](#)

Conclusion: A Word on Healing a Nation

While the healing of a nation vs. the healing of a person seems a monumental and even impossible task, it really bears the same marks. People need healing to be made whole. People are a part of families, who need healing to be made whole. Families are a part of communities and cities, which need to be made whole by a healing process, and cities are part of States, States are a part of nations, which need to be made whole.

In the Healing of a Nation, there is no healing outside of the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. We live in a society where we hold back in saying that, knowing how many different groups and religions there are, for we fear man more than God: we fear being 'politically incorrect' or seen by some austere intellectual theologians as moronic or intolerant. The first step in the healing of a nation though, is the recognition of the only one who can heal the nation. That will no doubt send some insecure folks running, but there is no lasting healing without the one, who made the people, who made the communities, which make the Church, which make the State which make the nation: for a nation to be made whole, it has to start at the source of healing, the Lord and Redeemer of all.

A nation needs to listen to the prophetic voice: it is still around, God having never died. It is not a time to deride and ridicule the things of God nor the people of God, and certainly not the gifts of God, whose primary purpose is to protect the Church, but the healthy and whole Church, is the health of a nation.

A prayer, once a year, by a whole nation, is a good thing. It will hardly though make the total difference that needs to be made. Like Nineveh in the time of Jonah, they had to

1. Listen to the Prophetic voice
2. Obey, in genuine repentance

Are we truly sorry as a nation for the paths we have taken? We look around and bemoan the conditions of a wealthy nation, the violence which besets our streets, the rising number of suicides and people who are far from 'whole', wars abroad, corruption, avarice, and the wasting of the poor here and abroad, but are we sorry enough to fall weeping at what we have become? Or do we instead excuse and dismiss our own lack of wholeness? Like we do the Lord.

A nation becomes whole when it repents. Does that entail falling in the streets weeping and rending and tearing clothing? It entails a genuine, heartfelt desire to TURN from what we are to what we should be, with the Lord as the agent of change.

Washingtonians will scoff and mock at the idea that prayer and repentance could really change a nation. So will theologians at most Seminaries. Academics will be amused, and comedians will make a mockery of the suggestion, but that is the only way out.

A nation in decay will try everything else: bailout plans, restrictive laws, heightened surveillance, decreased and even the cessation of Civil Rights, the reinforcement of the military, and any number of other societal remedies but they never work longer than a moment, and in the end contribute to the problem.

Pray and repentance work. Would a Supreme Court Justice or the President, or Senators truly be willing to take to their knees not one day, but like Daniel, many for their nation in captivity?

Most would say, "we are not a nation in captivity": but God says we are utterly bound and captive when we go any way but His. Every solution ties a greater weight to our already sinking ships. He alone provides a way out, when He is sure we understand He is the only way out.

These Bible Studies are to reflect on a type of healing seldom discussed: the healing of a nation, and yet even in Heaven, the leaves of the trees, the leaves of the tree of Life, are for the healing of the nations. If we have learned one lesson from the Holocaust or Shoah, above all others, let it be the one of healing and repentance, and the critical nature of real, prevailing prayer, and yes, dear 21st century folks, fasting as well.

At the end of WWII, when surveying the devastating apathy of the Church at the end, when Germany lay in ruins, Europe lay in ruins, and 2/3 of the Jewish citizens of Europe lay dead, Pastor *Niemöller* of the Pastor's Emergency League, called for the very late repentance of the German Church, pleading with them to turn from the "spirit of force and retaliation" to the renewing Holy Spirit of God. In Stuttgart, at the end of the war, standing before all the representatives of the Churches who failed greatly to intervene, when the real Church lay in ruins as well, with most of its pastors imprisoned, dead or exiled, and certainly silence, Niemöller begged the clergy, begged the church to never let the world walk that way again: ever. Even then, some began instead of repenting, to argue and become defensive about whose fault it was and whether they should have to repent. Hearts that hard never will, and without

repentance, we see a Germany today, that while it has made great strides, still suffers neo-Nazi rallies, and even torchlight parades through the Brandenburg Gates.

We are biblically, by the command of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the King of the Jews, King of the nations, King of Heaven, to pray for our nation, plead for our nation, and be its best citizens, even when it becomes an oppression and horror. We are called to pray for our leaders (Romans 13) for even a nation gone wrong, still has an order ordained of God. Rallies and Assemblies have their place: we are free to protest, but protest is found hardly at all in the Word of God. We are not called to pray for the President to be ousted, but for God's will to be done, and for his Salvation and healing, and to 'see it God's way'. We are far more likely to reach our goals and set the nation on its right track, by fasting, prayer and repentance, 365 days a year, than by demonstrations becoming increasingly violent on both sides. (I believe in the very excellent right to assemble and protest and speak, but I also know the more excellent power of prayer.)

We increase in our power in prayer, by praying God's will, by surrender of self, and by staying daily in the Word of God. We find our prayers answered more often when we pray for God's agenda instead of our own: not a particularly popular concept today, but the concept called 'truth' has not fared very well over the centuries in a deceitful world.

Healing a nation comes about by

- 1. Prayer and Fasting**
- 2. Genuine Repentance (See Daniel 9)**
- 3. Listening to and heeding the Word of God**
- 4. Surrender and Obedience**
- 5. Honoring and heeding the Prophetic voice in the day and hour we find ourselves.**

Then is a nation healed. Only then. Recall the words of Neimoller when he said:

*I ask myself over and over again, what would have happened if 14,000 Evangelical Ministers
And the Evangelical Community all over Germany, had defended the truth with their very lives, in the
Year 1933 or 1934, when their must have been a possibility?*

Are we at the point, when we will stand? Will we even repent and pray? Judgment begins first at the house of God, and we are seeing it daily in the news. How firm is our foundation, 'ye saints of the Lord?'
Heal the nation: fast and pray, surrender and obey. Stand.