



**GROW
IN
GRACE**
NEWSLETTER

Volume 44, No. 29, July 18, 2017 / Southside Baptist Church & Christian School / P.O. Box 1594 / 1028 South Water Avenue, Gallatin, TN 37066 (615) 452-5951 / The Grow in Grace Newsletter **is a weekly Bible Study**, plus local church news notes— designed first and foremost for members and those attending services at Southside Church; and is sent forth with the desire to aid one and all, (including friends far and wide), in the experience of 2 Peter 3:18. ***"But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our LORD and Saviour JESUS CHRIST. To Him be glory both now and forever. Amen."***

BLESSINGS, JUDGMENT, CURSINGS from GOD!

Deuteronomy 11: 13-28; Deut. 28:1-68

IT MAY BE A SURPRISE, but **the Holy Spirit has New Testament writers quoting Deuteronomy nearly two hundred times.** It was our LORD'S favorite book to quote. In fact, He quoted, cited, paraphrased it during one of the most intense and significant spiritual battles of all time! (**Read:** Matthew 4:1-10. **Then read:** Deut. 8:2-3; Deut. 6:16; Deut. 6:13-14) **BUT IN 2017 is Deuteronomy relevant** to individual Christians, to local Bible-believing churches, to the nations of the world, and/or to America? Also, in this 'the age of grace', does God still 'bless and curse'?

Like it or not, the entire Bible unveils God bringing JUDGMENT upon individuals, the nations of the world, Israel, and even the true church of Jesus Christ. Moreover, the Biblical revelation is NOT LIMITED to future judgment! Judgment has taken place, IS TAKING PLACE, and will take place. Here's a few of many Biblical examples:

IN GENESIS we have God's judgment upon the people of Noah's day, the Tower of Babel, Sodom and Gomorrah.

IN ISAIAH there is much STRONG teaching on this subject: Isaiah 13:9-13 — *“Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: **and He shall destroy** the sinners thereof out of it. For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. **And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity**; and I will cause the arrogance of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible . . . I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the LORD of hosts, and in the day of His fierce anger.”*

THE REVELATION sets forth our LORD’S encouragements, directives, **and** warnings of judgment to His churches. (**1 PETER 4:17-19** clearly **states** that— JUDGMENT MUST BEGIN WITH THE CHURCH!) Other chapters in the Revelation unfold God’s judgment upon the world’s church, as well as God’s judgment upon unrepentant individuals and nations of the world. (Read Revelation 17-18) Indeed, this world is headed for much more than ‘global warming’— 2 Peter 3:4-7!

IN ROMANS 1:18-32, the Holy Spirit moves Paul to write that the WRATH OF GOD **is right now being revealed** as God ‘gives people over’ ... releases restraints (vs. 24, 26, and 28). Back to the Old Testament, Hosea 4:17— “Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone!”

We should not be surprised at these verses because **GOD IS SOVEREIGN AND HE IS INDEED AT WORK AMONG THE NATIONS: Psalm 75:6,7**— GOD is THE JUDGE and He puts one down and sets up another; **Psalm 103:19**— The LORD’S kingdom rules over all; **Proverbs 21:1**— The king’s heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water; He turneth it whithersoever He will; **Daniel 2:20-21**— GOD: He removes kings and sets up kings; **Daniel 4:17; 4:34-35; 5:21**— *The MOST HIGH GOD rules in the kingdom of men, and He appoints over it whomsoever He will.*

HOWEVER, is God presently at work in our world, bringing judgment? What about events like ‘9/11’ or Hurricane Katrina or the massive Oil Spill problem or earthquakes? ARE, WERE THESE God's judgment upon ‘THEM’ ... upon some who we may deem more wicked than others?

In Luke 13:1-5 Jesus does not explain any of the specific 'WHY?' of those who were killed in Jerusalem when a tower fell or others who were murdered while they worshipped. Rather, Jesus asked the question, "Do you suppose they were worse sinners than all the others in Jerusalem because they died this way?" **And he said, "No." He said, "But unless you repent, you, too, will perish."**

Reality: None of us are qualified to be God's mouthpiece in stating all of God's specific intentions for '9/11' or Hurricane Katrina, etc. NEVERTHELESS, God does indeed judge the nations, individuals, cities, and even CHURCHES! Yes, judgment is here and JUDGMENT is coming. **How loud will God have to shout before we will hear?**

In light of all these things, let us give careful consideration to Deuteronomy 28:1-68! Of the sixty-eight verses— Fifty-four are curses against rebellion and fourteen verses concern blessings for obedience. **Does God prefer cursing over blessing? No, He prefers warning over judging... even as** the people of Noah's day were warned for over 100 years before the DAY OF JUDGMENT SUDDENLY CAME! **God has long patience! However, there is an unseen day that divides between God's mercy and God's wrath!** Proverbs 29:1 states, *"He who, being often reprov'd, hardens his neck shall suddenly be destroyed and that without remedy."*

1. The blessings of Deuteronomy 28 are wide-ranging and include matters of agriculture, industry, family life, financial security and even the weather: **READ: DEUT. 28:1-14 Note: These verse are like reading about the grand benefits with which God has blessed America!**

2. The curses: Read Deut. 28:15-68. **FRANKLY, IT IS ALARMING how many of the curses of Deuteronomy 28 are HAPPENING today—**around the world, but especially in America! **Read the following verses and then consider these statements:** **(1) VERSE 16-** Survey after survey shows that many are fearful, stressed out or 'cursed', in the city and in the countryside. **(2) VERSE 17-** We are MAJORLY in debt rather than building wealth. **(3) VS 18-22-** The fruit of our bodies and land are cursed by disease. **(4) VS 22-** The 'sword' smites our nation—from endless wars, gangs, drug wars, etc. **(5) VS 30 - Family life is**

cursed by infidelity and divorce. Children are especially hit with the effects of divorce. - Forty percent of children growing up in America today are being raised without their fathers. - Most victims of child molestation come from single-parent households or are the children of drug ring members. - A Child in a female-headed home is 10 times more likely to be beaten or murdered. - Children of divorce are at a greater risk to experience injury, asthma, headaches and speech defects than children whose parents have remained married.- People who come from broken homes are almost twice as likely to attempt suicide than those who do not come from broken homes. - **Seventy percent of long-term prison inmates** grew up in broken homes. (From: The Hidden Effects of Divorce on Children)

(6) VS 32, 41 - Children are taken away. Children are becoming strangers to their parents— often through divorce; or through an education system that trains them in philosophies contrary to parents and that increasingly decrees that the children belong to the state.

(7) VS 33, 36 - MUCH OF THE APPARENT wealth of our nation is now owed to other nations ... even our enemies!

(8) VS 38-42 - Our agriculture is being destroyed and is dependent on ever-increasing use of pesticides and genetic engineering. [**CLICK or copy/paste:** <http://www.seedsofdeception.com/>]

(9) VS 43- Strangers within our gates, Illegal immigrants, (especially Islamic), are gaining influence and power. **How could it be? READ: Isaiah 10:5-6; Habakkuk 1:6-12!!** God has and may again use the 'heathen' and the ungodly to judge a 'hypocritical nation'!!

NOW: It WOULD BE easy to SIMPLY say that we have done all these things to ourselves without God's help! HOWEVER, IT IS GOD WHO HAS ORDAINED☐ "Sowing and Reaping!" **1. IF WE HEED GOD☐** We sow faith and obedience and reap blessings! **2. IF WE REJECT GOD☐** We sow pride and rebellion and reap CURSES! **3. BUT IN EITHER BLESSINGS OR CURSES— GOD IS NOT PASSIVE!**

Example: **A part of God's judgment to rebellious Israel was to give bad laws**: *Because they had not executed my judgments, but had despised my statutes, and had polluted my sabbaths, and their eyes were after their fathers' idols. **Wherefore I gave them also statutes that were not good, and judgments whereby they should not live; ...*** (Ezekiel 20:24-25) **GOD DID THAT!!**

Yes, we vote for politicians and they pass new laws— laws which they have not even read. BUT GOD WILL NOT BE MOCKED. As Ezekiel reveals, it is possible that THE BAD LAWS COME AS JUDGMENT! It is possible that THE ELECTION RESULTS COME AS JUDGMENT. We get who and what is a reflection of us. Because of our sin, we are shut off from wisdom!

THEREFORE, THE NEED IS NOT TO LAMENT or BLAST THE BAD LAWS OR BAD POLITICIANS. THAT MISSES THE WHOLE POINT! THE CALL OF GOD IS FOR US TO REPENT! WE HAVE SINNED!
Nehemiah 1:4-11 and Daniel 9:3-23 are good Prayer Models for us!]

BACK IN DEUTERONOMY 28, from verse 45 onward, the curses are restated and deepened; invasion comes and siege, Plague and disease come and THE PEOPLE ARE SCATTERED abroad IN SLAVERY. **MAYBE those extremes look improbable today? However, the PRESENT state of things in AMERICA would have seemed improbable forty years ago!**

In fact, Deuteronomy 28 is borne out by the lessons of history: Egypt, Sodom and Gomorrah, the Canaanite civilization, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece and mighty Rome— **THEY ALL DEGENERATED down the rubbish-chute of history.** YES, GOD JUDGES NATIONS! "***The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.***" (***Psalm 9:17***) Even Israel and Judah succumbed and were judged!

Will we be any different? I BELIEVE we are fooling ourselves if we think we shall be. THE JUDGMENT OF GOD IS ALREADY HERE! WE NEED TO FACE THAT REALITY AND THEN ASK THE QUESTION:

HOW THEN SHALL WE LIVE IN THESE TIMES?

1. We can put our heads in the sand! Isaiah 47:8; Jeremiah 5:12; Luke 12:19; 2 Peter 3:4

2. We can be consumed with fear and self- protection.

3. We can live it up today for tomorrow we may die!

4. INSTEAD, LET US REPENT; SERVE THE LORD AND REJOICE IN HIM: Let all in Christ go forward SERVING for God's Glory: (1 Peter 4:7-11

“But the end [consummation] of all things is at hand; therefore be **serious and watchful** in your prayers. **And above all things have fervent love for one another**, for *“love will cover a multitude of sins.* **Be** hospitable to one another without grumbling. As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If anyone speaks, *let him speak* as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, *let him do it* as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.” (NKJV)

Let all in Christ go forward SUFFERING for God's Glory: 1 Peter 4:12-19

“Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed *are you*, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified.

But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters. Yet if *anyone suffers* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter. For the time *has come* for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if *it begins* with us first, what will *be* the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God? Now *“If the righteous one is scarcely saved, Where will*

the ungodly and the sinner appear?" Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls *to Him* in doing good, as to a faithful Creator." (NKJV)

GOD STILL SETS BLESSING AND CURSING BEFORE US! The blessing DOES NOT mean that saints in Christ will be free from suffering in a world gone wild. Daniel was not free from suffering!

1. It does mean SINS FORGIVEN and we have A HOME IN HEAVEN!
2. It does mean that the power to conquer fear and the power to rejoice in the hour of trouble are ours in Christ!
3. It does mean the power to live a supernatural life of SHARING, GIVING, AND NOT HORDING.
4. IT ALSO MEANS that we must be busy and faithful as laborers for Christ! **The Gospel is still the POWER OF GOD! Let us be DEBTORS, ready to PREACH, unashamed!** (Rom. 1:14-16) **Ambassadors for Christ! (2 Cor. 5:14-21)**
5. AND TODAY, IF YOU HAVE NEVER COME TO CHRIST FOR SALVATION!
COME TO JESUS NOW! (John 3:16-21 / John 3:36)

Grace, Joy, and Peace in Christ! James Bell

SOUTHSIDE NEWS NOTES:

MONDAYS: Jail Ministry— First and Second Monday of each month at 7:30pm. Questions? Contact Mike Munday at 615-681-7533

TUESDAYS: Come and sing every Tuesday night at Gallatin Health Care Nursing Home. Meet at the front door at 5:30PM.

WEDNESDAYS:

□ 6:30pm— Children Ministry/activities;

□ 6:30pm— Youth Activities and Bible Study— (For both of these... enter via double doors by gym)

□ **6:30pm— Wednesday CHURCH PRAYER SERVICE...** Come in side entrance, iron steps... meet in Ladies Sunday School Room

***** LADIES BIBLE STUDY—** Studies in the Gospel of Luke! **[Luke 9:28-45]** ... Cindy Bell, teaching. **NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY, JULY 25, 2017 @ 11:00am.**

LOCATION: Park at the BACK of church, come in DOUBLE DOORS under the AWNING... **Door will be UNLOCKED by 10:30am... and locked back at 11:10am**

MEN: EVERY SATURDAY MORNING @ 8am: Men's Fellowship/Bible Study! *{STUDYING the Epistle of First John}* AT THE back of Church building... Come in under the drive-thru awning, walk forward, coffee & biscuits WAITING!

Sunday Services: * July 23— 9:30am - Sunday School // 10:45am - Worship Service // Noon MEAL & 1pm Prayer and PRAISE**

□ **FAITHFUL MEN: 5:30pm-7:30pm**

***** July 30— 9:30am - Sunday School // 10:45am - Worship Service Noon MEAL // 1pm [Missionaries Bruce and Laura Harris are scheduled to be with us. Bruce will be preaching during the worship hour; and he and Laura of their work in Japan during the 1pm service]**

ALSO on July 30.... CHURCH-WIDE 'LET'S JUST PRAISE THE LORD!' SERVICE @ 6:00PM— An hour of sharing SCRIPTURES

*AND CHRIST-HONORING, GOD-GLORIFYING PRAISE... said and/or sung! **(Inform Adam Troutt if you have something you desire to share!)***