



"The vague and tenuous hope that God is too kind to punish the ungodly has become a deadly opiate for the consciences of millions."

—A.W. Tozer

17-Nov-23

## Peace and Safety

The apostle Paul gave a warning to the church at Thessalonica that we would do well to heed:

For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes [as a thief in the night](#). For when they say, "[Peace](#) and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. ([1 Thessalonians 5:2-3](#))

Far from being a reference to Sunday—or the [Sabbath](#), for that matter—the "Day of the Lord" is when [Jesus Christ](#) returns, overthrows the governments of the earth and anyone else opposing Him, and establishes His [Kingdom on earth](#). Though the ultimate end will be happy, the Day of the Lord signifies a great deal of calamity and destruction!

Those who believe in a sovereign [God](#) know that human military might is of no consequence to Him. God protects whom He chooses to protect and destroys whom He wills to destroy. The size of the armies was irrelevant

when Gideon's 300 men conquered 120,000. Physical stature mattered not when David brought down Goliath. The Empire of Egypt was all but eliminated without Israel so much as raising a sword. Even [Satan](#) was powerless to harm Job *until* God lessened His protective hedge. This may be impossible for secular Americans to grasp and even difficult for religious Americans to comprehend if they do not take God at His Word. But from these examples, it is evident that neither the size nor skill of armies is relevant. What *is* relevant is God's will. What matters is which side *God* is on.

How much longer will God be on our side? How long until our sins—national and individual—demand a reckoning?

There is little doubt that America is still on top of [the world](#) right now. Economically and militarily, we remain essentially unchallenged. Ancient Israel also stood at or near the height of her power when God saw fit to allow Assyria to conquer her. Her wealth and armies could not save her, just as America's vaunted power will not save the United States if God's will is contrary. If God is against us, who can be for us? As history tends to rhyme, the same stench that arose from ancient Israel is now wafting up from modern America.

The [book of Amos](#) records an almost exact parallel account to what is happening in our day. It chronicles the social, political, economic, military, and religious conditions and attitudes prevalent in ancient Israel in about 760 BC, about forty years before Assyria invaded and completely devastated the nation. So awesome was Israel's defeat that, as far as the world is concerned, her people disappeared from history and are now considered the "Lost" [Ten Tribes](#) of Israel.

What were ancient Israel's sins? Ezekiel 20 lays the charges of idolatry and Sabbath-breaking at their feet. Amos goes into great detail in describing greed, materialism, pride, oppression of the weak, perverted justice, an overall moral degeneracy including sexual sins, and a religion that allowed them to feel good about themselves even while bringing in heavy elements of paganism. They were complacent about immorality—within themselves or in the culture at large—because of their wealth. They were "rich, and increased with goods," and by their own accounting, they needed nothing—

physically or spiritually. Are things so different today? Are we not mistaking our physical blessings as signs of God's acceptance of our behavior?

This nation collectively crowed over the capture of Saddam Hussein and again at the elimination of Osama bin Laden, Muammar Gaddafi of Libya, and Qassem Soleimani of Iran. But have not more innocent human beings been legally killed in the womb in civilized America than at the commands of all these evil men together? This fact cannot stand as a defense of Islamic despots or terrorists, but it should make one question this nation's appropriation of the moral high ground. America has been blessed far beyond the nations descended from Ishmael and Esau, both materially and in having access to God's Word. Yet "to whom much is given, from him much will be required" ([Luke 12:48](#)).

God truly is [merciful](#). But He is also just, so He cannot allow blatant sins against Himself or His creation—of which mankind is preeminent—to continue indefinitely. Without national [repentance](#), national calamity becomes a certainty. Using ancient Israel as a guide, being the world's sole superpower matters not a whit if God is against us. In this past year, decade, and century, a steadily increasing moral decline has been begging for His intervention.

The biggest threat to the United States is not a bellicose Russia, a rising China, or an Islamic uprising in our midst. Our greatest threat is our own proclivity to trample on the instructions and the intentions of the Sovereign who decides the fate of nations.

- David C. Grabbe

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## From the Archives: Featured Sermon

### [The Day of Israel's Calamity](#)

by John W. Ritenbaugh

The day of Israel's calamity is right upon the horizon. One perennial theme of the major and minor prophets is the deplorable faithlessness of Israel,

depicted as a fickle, spoiled, pampered, well-dressed streetwalker. To the remnants of this decadent civilization of modern Israel, God provides the book of Proverbs as an antidote. Wisdom is inextricably linked with fear and reverence for God. Without wisdom, genius and brilliance are useless at best and dangerous at worst. Wisdom warns us not to let the world squeeze us into its mold. Unfortunately, as a nation, we have rejected wisdom in favor of foolishness, bringing about major devastating calamities: famines, pestilence, earthquakes, cosmic disturbances (graphically depicted in Deuteronomy 32, Jeremiah 4, and Ezekiel 2-3,6-7) upon our apostate faithless people after the prior devastation of Gentile nations who didn't have a relationship with God.

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## **From the Archives: Featured Article**

### **[Who Is America's Greatest Enemy?](#)**

by Richard T. Ritenbaugh

In the wake of a pandemic, war, and inflation, global conditions have worsened considerably over the past few years. At the same time, the United States, the world's superpower, finds itself divided and weakened by internal troubles. Richard Ritenbaugh analyzes America's enemies, foreign and domestic, and comes to a disturbing conclusion.

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