



**GROW
IN
GRACE**
NEWSLETTER

Volume 41, No. 33, August 18 , 2015 / 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. It 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."***

ALMIGHTY GOD IS At Work— Giving Blessings and Bringing Judgment!

(As we gear up for yet another Presidential Campaign— We Christians in America desperately need a REFRESHER in REALITY!)

Deuteronomy 11: 13-28; Deut. 28:1-68— The Old Testament book, Deuteronomy— 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 it during one of the most intense and significant spiritual battles of all time— when He was tempted by satan in the wilderness for 40 days! (**Read:** Matthew 4:1-10. **Then read:** Deut. 8:2-3; Deut. 6:16; Deut. 6:13-14)

BUT IN 2015 is Deuteronomy relevant to individual Christians, to local Bible-believing churches, to the nations of the world, and/or to America? Most folks would just say, "NO!" Moreover, in this 'the age of grace', does God still 'bless and curse'?

RESPONSE: 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, judgment has taken place, IS TAKING PLACE (Romans 1:18-32), and will take place. Here are 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, we read:**

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, (a harlot and many daughters in the eyes of God!), 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 22:28— GOD is THE GOVERNOR 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; **Psalm 115:3 / 135:6**— GOD has done whatsoever He pleased in heaven, in the earth, in the seas, and all the deep places; **Proverbs 16:9**— A man’s heart deviseth his way; but the LORD directeth his steps; **Proverbs 19:21**— The counsel of the LORD shall stand; **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; **Isaiah 43:13**— God: There is none who can deliver out of my hand; I work and none can reverse it; **Lamentations 3:37**— Who is he that saith, and it comes to pass, when the LORD commanded it not? **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.***

QUESTION: What about events like **9/11**, or Hurricane Katrina, or earthquakes? WERE THESE God's judgment upon 'THEM' ... upon some who we may deem to be 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 of 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 LISTEN?**

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! Another example:** 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 of 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. VS 16- Survey after survey shows that many are fearful, stressed out or 'cursed', in the city and in the countryside.

2. VS 17- We are MAJORLY in debt rather than building wealth.

3. VS 18-22- The fruit of our bodies and land are cursed by cursed by disease. [Just one example: Approximately 80 % of world food crops are pollinated by honeybees. In the USA alone this accounts for 130 crops and \$15 billion of food each year. Two million honeybee colonies have been lost in the USA in recent years. Massive die-offs of bees have been reported from Europe. Taiwan discovered the disappearance of 10 MILLION bees in a two week period. U.K. Farming Minister Lord Rooker has advised that British honeybee population could disappear within the next 10 years.] <http://time.com/3821467/bees-honeybees-environment/>

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 in times past and may again use the ‘heathen’ and the ungodly to judge a ‘hypocritical nation’!!

10. VS 44- Other countries already own a significant amount of America. We are in debt to the Chinese... many TRILLIONS of dollars. Moreover, our government, large banks and others are ‘signing on’ to **‘SHARIAH-COMPLIANT FINANCING’**.

Note: 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, 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 that AMERICA shall escape the judgment of God. **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: 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!

It does mean SINS FORGIVEN AND A HOME IN HEAVEN! It does mean that the power to conquer fear and the power to rejoice in the hour of trouble are ours in Christ! It does mean the power to live a supernatural life of SHARING, GIVING, AND NOT HORDING. 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)**

AND TODAY, IF YOU HAVE NEVER COME TO CHRIST FOR SALVATION! COME TO JESUS NOW! (John 3:16-21; John 3:36)

Grace to all! James Bell

SOUTHSIDE NEWS NOTES:

TUESDAYS: Come and sing every Tuesday night at Gallatin Health Care nursing home. Meet at the front door at 5:30PM. Questions call Bradley Pennington at 615-804-3054.

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— CHURCH PRAYER SERVICE**... Come in side entrance, iron steps... meet in Ladies Sunday School Room

LADIES BIBLE STUDY— **NEXT, AUGUST 27, 11:00am**, The Life of David! Cindy Bell, teaching. {Meet in Ladies Sunday School Room: Come in FRONT doors of the church auditorium or the SIDE door at the top of the IRON STEPS!}

* **EVERY SATURDAY MORNING @ 8am: Men's Fellowship/Bible Study!** {Study in ROMANS}... Come to back of Church building... Come in under the drive-thru awning... walk forward... till you smell the coffee!

SUNDAY SERVICES!

AUGUST 23: 9:30am, Sunday School

10:45am, Worship Service; plus **Noon**— Covered dish Meal

[SPECIAL NOTE: No 'Early Afternoon Service. At 6:00pm UNTIL 7:30pm we will participate in the Bledsoe Baptist Association's 'ON MISSION CONNECTION'... We will have 2 Southern Baptist Missionaries! PLEASE SET ASIDE THIS TIME!]

AUGUST 30: 9:30am, Sunday School // **10:45am**, Worship Service // NO noon meal or afternoon service.

[SPECIAL FIFTH SUNDAY EVENING OF PRAISE— 6:00PM]

We gather as a body of believers to PRAISE THE LORD through the sharing of various songs, hymns, Scripture songs; by sharing Scriptures and testimonies.

SOUTHSIDE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL— *Uniting Church, Home, and School in CHRIST!* For the 2015-2016 school term we are offering Second through Twelfth

grades. Children need the Home, the Church, and the School to model and teach the same basic philosophy of life. ***Children are like young plants in a garden— they must be protected.*** <http://www.aceministries.com/curriculum/?content=presentingACE>