

BLESSED IS THE NATION WHOSE GOD IS THE LORD

Psalm 33

7/3/16

As we prepare to celebrate the 4th of July, it is only appropriate to recognize that we have been blessed as a nation.

We have been blessed with freedom that few people have enjoyed throughout history.

We have been blessed financially and materially.

The United States comprises only 4.5% of the world's population, yet we produce 28% of all of the world's goods and services.

Over the years I have had the privilege to travel to a number of different countries.

Many are considered advanced modern nations.

But in very few of them can you drink the tap water or flush toilet paper down their toilets.

The average American owns more than all but the very wealthiest people in most countries.

Only 9% of the people in the world own a car.

How should we respond?

1. It is fitting that we sing for joy in the Lord. 33:1-3

a. Sing joyfully to Him. v. 1

- It is *becoming* (fitting, appropriate, right) for those who are saved to joyfully praise Him.
The righteous and upright are the people of God.
They are those who have had their sins washed clean.

b. Sing praises to Him. v. 2

Joyfully extol God with a variety of instruments.

- ♦ Praise for what He is like
- ♦ Thanks Him for what He has done

c. Sing a new song to Him. v. 3

- Fresh and personal, not simply a religious ritual
- Sing His blessing in your life
- Play skillfully with a shout of joy.

2. It is fitting that we give thanks to God. 33:4-7

a. Give thanks because His word is upright. v. 4a

- It is "straight". (accurate, reliable)
- It is not crooked, twisted, distorted, or perverted.

b. Give thanks because He is faithful. v. 4b

- He is dependable.
- You can trust Him to do what He says He will do.

c. Give thanks because He is righteous and just. v. 5a

- He is morally upright and fair.

d. Give thanks because of God's love which is seen in His creation. v. 5b

The earth is full of God's lovingkindness.

The Hebrew word (hesed) has the idea of a loyal love.

We see God's loyal love in:

- ◆ His faithful provision of rain
- ◆ The growth of plants to provide us with food
- ◆ The bright colors and sweet smell of the flowers
- ◆ The radiant beauty of the night sky
- ◆ The awe inspiring sunset, the majestic mountains, the brilliant colors of the trees in fall, and the dainty lacy snowflakes of winter

e. Give thanks because of God's power which is seen in His creation. vv. 6-7

- God spoke and the universe came into being.

We see the power of God's spoken word that produced the giant nuclear explosions of hundreds of billion stars.

His power is seen in His lifting up the earth and separating it from the deep waters of the vast oceans.

- The display of God's power in creation should elicit awe, praise and thanksgiving.

3. It is fitting that we have a healthy fear and awe of God. 33:8-11

a. We should have a healthy fear and awe of God because whatever He says happens. vv. 8-9

- All the inhabitants of the world should fear Him.
 - ◆ What He says goes.
 - ◇ The God who made the world rules it according to His own purposes.
 - ◇ No power is able to successfully oppose Him.

b. We should have a healthy fear of God because He nullifies the counsel of the nations. v. 10

- He frustrates the plans of the peoples.
 - ◆ Ask the Egyptians. Cf Exodus 1-14
 - ◆ Ask the Assyrians. Cf 2 Kings 19; Isaiah 37

c. We should have a healthy fear of God because His counsel stands forever. v. 11

- The God who made the world is powerful enough and wise enough rule over it.

4. Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD. 33:12-22

a. All nations are accountable to God. cf Proverbs 14:34

Proverbs 14:34 Righteousness exalts a nation, But sin is a disgrace to *any* people.

All nations are accountable to God whether they acknowledge Him and submit to Him or not.

I believe that we have historically been blessed as a nation because our forefathers recognized and honored God.

Mayflower Compact. (November 11, 1620)

We whose names are underwritten . . . having undertaken, *for the glory of God, and advancement of the Christian faith* . . . solemnly and mutually *in the presence of God*, and one of another, covenant and combine ourselves together into a civil body politic . . .

Declaration of Independence July 4, 1776

“With firm reliance on the protection, of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.”

George Washington

“. . . it is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey his will, to be grateful for his benefits, and humbly implore His protection and favor . . .”

“It is impossible to rightly govern the world without God and the Bible.”

Benjamin Franklin

“We have been assured, Sir, in the Sacred Writings that except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it. I firmly believe this. I also believe that, without His concurring aid, we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel.” (**The Rebirth of America p. 31**)

Abraham Lincoln

“It is the duty of nations, as well as of men, to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God and to recognize the sublime truth announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history, that those nations only are blessed whose God is the Lord.”

“In God we trust” is the official motto of the United States and has been on our currency since 1864.

Pledge of Allegiance- “One nation under God”

Yet not all is well.

Today we are a nation in rebellion.

We are like Israel in the days of Hosea. (Hosea 4:1-10)

We, like Israel, have turned our backs on God.

- ◇ Dishonesty, immorality, and rebellion
- ◇ Divorce is up 700% in the last century.
- ◇ Many who call themselves Christians are little different from the rest of society.
- ◇ We have given new names to old sins.
- ◇ We call good evil and evil good.
- ◇ We deny God-ordained gender differences.
- ◇ We have redefined marriage.
- ◆ Tolerance and political correctness rule the day.

- ◇ People are not upset with the sin, but with anyone who speaks up for God or finds fault.
- ◇ God and the Bible are ridiculed and openly rejected.

God blesses nations that honor Him and judges nations that turn to wickedness

Isaiah 1-24 pronounces judgment upon at least 11 nations

There are many ways that God can curse a nation. cf Deuteronomy 28:15-68

Devastating diseases

Natural disasters- Tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, tsunamis, and floods

Military defeats

Economic collapse

Draught, insects, famine

Financial collapses

Our national debt has almost doubled in the past 8 years.

Today we are \$19 trillion dollars in debt.

- ◇ A million dollars in tightly bound \$100 bills would produce a stack forty inches high.
- ◇ A billion dollars in tightly bound \$100 bills would produce a stack over three thousand feet high.
- ◇ A trillion dollars in tightly bound \$100 bills would produce a stack nearly six hundred thirty miles high!
- ◇ \$19 trillion dollars? It would take a stack of \$100 bills 11,970 miles high to pay off our national debt.

b. Our hope is not in our own abilities. vv. 13-17

- God sees all that is going on.
- He understands our hearts and knows our inner thoughts.
- Our hope is in God, not our own abilities.
 - ◆ Not in our strength and ingenuity
 - ◆ Not in the political process
 - ◆ Not in our military might
- On April 30, 1863 Abraham Lincoln proclaimed a national day of fasting, humiliation, and prayer.

“We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven. We have been preserved, the many years, in peace and prosperity. We have grown in numbers, wealth and power, as no other nation has ever grown. But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us; and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own.

Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to God that made us! It behooves us, then to humble ourselves before the offended Power, to confess our national sins, and to pray for clemency and forgiveness.”

c. Our hope is in the fear of the Lord and in His loving kindness. vv.18-19

- God’s eye is on those who fear him.
 - ♦ To deliver their soul from death
 - ♦ To keep them alive in famine
- He sees our situation.
 - ♦ He sees those who are trusting in Him for salvation.
 - ♦ He is able to protect us and care for us.
 - ♦ He is our deliverer.

d. We demonstrate our faith in three ways. vv. 20-22

- Our soul waits for the Him. v. 20
 - ♦ He is our shield of protection
- Our hearts rejoice in Him. v. 21
 - ♦ Because we trust in His holy name
- We pray to Him. v. 22
 - ♦ The more we understand God’s lovingkindness, the more we are strengthened to rest our souls on Him.
 - ♦ The more confident we are that God’s plans will succeed.

5. Truths That Matter

a. God is active in creation and history. We can count on Him to be to be active in our future.

b. God saves those who repent and believe in Him.

Ezekiel 33:11 "Say to them, 'As I live!' declares the Lord GOD, 'I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn back, turn back from your evil ways! Why then will you die, O house of Israel?'

Mark 1:15 "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

Luke 24:47 and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.

Acts 20:21 solemnly testifying to both Jews and Greeks of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Timothy 2:25 with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth,²⁶ and they may come to their senses *and escape* from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.

c. It is only appropriate that we thank Him.

- He has promised Christians an inheritance. Eph 1:11
- He has sealed us to with His Holy Spirit. Eph 4:30
- He has promised that nothing can separate us from the love of God. Rom 8:31-39
- God promises to work all things together for good for those who are His. Rom 8:28
- God promises us a bright future. Jer 29:11; Rev 21:14

Jeremiah 29:11 'For I know the plans that I have for you,' declares the LORD, 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.'

Revelation 21:4 and He will wipe away every **tear** from their eyes; and there will no longer be *any* death; there will no longer be *any* mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away."

- God promises us that He will always be with us. Isa 41:10; Heb 13:5
- God promises heaven to those who receive His Son.

Star Spangled Banner (last stanza)

Blessed with victory and peace, may this *Heaven- rescued land*
 Praise *the Power that hath made and preserved us* a nation!
 Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just;
 And this be our motto: '*In God is our trust!*'
 And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave
 O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave."