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# East Columbus Bulletin

## “The Most High rules in the kingdom of men”

I assume that the reader believes in God and that the reader believes God is involved in the affairs of men. (Dan. 4:32) Conditions on Earth have everything to do with man’s relationship with God. Times of war bring out the best and the worst in us and among us. Peace and prosperity are good for teaching the biblical virtues, but good times make folks “fat and sassy.”

Further, riches and poverty leave their respective marks on individuals. Consider the Rich Young Ruler, or Ruth, who came to a new land with nothing. As with genes, each person is given possible routes to take in life, and each is expected to seek God in those circumstances. (Heb 11:6)

As to God’s dealing with peoples and persons, He uses at least four means to accomplish His will.

**One, He DESTROYS nations.** Peter speaks of God’s punishment of the whole race who had gone bad and a city which had gone bad.

*“...If he did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a herald of righteousness, with seven others, when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly; if by turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes he condemned them to extinction, making them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly...” (2 Pet. 2:5-6)*

God has destroyed other civilizations from the face of the Earth. Unbelievers have sometimes painted God as a genocidal tyrant for the way He is portrayed in the Bible, but even men realize that there are certain evils which must be stopped in their tracks. To illustrate, not only did we Americans drop atomic bombs on imperialist Japan, but seven countries today have arsenals totaling 19,000 nuclear weapons – just in case a rogue party

<u>Times of Services</u>	
<u>Sunday</u>	<u>Wednesday</u>
9:00 a.m. Bible Study	7:00 p.m. Bible Study
10:00 a.m. Worship	
<u>Other Study and Worship Opportunities</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Pines/Cady Hills Bible Study -Sun. &amp; Thurs. at 7:00 p.m.</li> <li>• Young Bible Scholars –November 11, 6:00 p.m.</li> <li>• Lady’s Bible Classes at YMCA – To be announced.</li> <li>• Sunday Sermon is recorded and placed on Darrell Powell’s Facebook page and can be viewed later when posted.</li> <li>• Second Sunday Neighborhood Bible Study – 3:30 p.m. TBA</li> <li>• Third Sunday – Trinity Care Home Service - 1:30 p.m. (NEW)</li> <li>• Fourth Sunday Song Service following 10:00 a.m. sermon</li> <li>• Gospel Meeting at North Columbus church of Christ November 13-18</li> </ul>	
<u>News and Notes</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Prayer Requests:</b> Patsy Chunn, Jim Ratcliff, Doug Wheeler, Steve and Lynette Coburn, Mike Butler, Lee Gallop, the Andy Elliott Family, and Mike and Marilyn Lavender.</li> <li>• <b>Sick:</b> Lee Gallop is recovering from health issues at home. Patsy Chunn has had successful surgery and will be taking preventive cancer medications. Andy Elliott is recuperating from a back injury.</li> <li>• <b>Deaths:</b> Sam Alton Westmoreland, grandson of Marilyn and Mike Lavender passed away on October 18. We extend our deepest sympathies to the family. Eden Roberts, wife of Ernest Roberts, evangelist on Island of Grenada, passed away due to multiple health issues on October 2. East Columbus has supported brother Roberts for four years as he labors in Granada.</li> </ul>	
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needs to be obliterated. From this perspective, God doesn't look quite so bad considering He is God, after all. He is within His rights to destroy the wicked.

**Two, God PUNISHES nations.** Intriguing is the story of how God made of one man a whole nation for His own purposes (to bring Christ into the world). That one man was Abraham whose grandson, Jacob, had twelve sons, who ventured into Egypt and there multiplied like rabbits. Do you remember when Pharaoh became afraid of the Israelites (Jacob's offspring) and cast their babies in the Nile? (Talk about a genocide!) The children of Abraham had become a mighty nation, and *Exodus* records the rest of the story.

But God punished Israel for their sins. After centuries of God's chastening His own people, Jeremiah warned of a great punishment from Babylon, speaking of "*the sword, famine and pestilence*" as God's instruments for correction.

Although God's destruction of whole nations shows God's feelings about the sin of nations and of individuals, His restraint to merely punish sinners shows us His mercy. "*The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.*" We should "*account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation...*" (2 Pet 3:9-11)

In the world today there is a brutal and seemingly unjust war in the Ukraine. There is an ongoing pandemic. Also, there is (for some at least) a threat of global warming with unimaginable consequences. These things fit pretty well into Jeremiah's "*sword, famine, and pestilence.*" If God's hand is in these matters, we must conclude that God is trying to get somebody's attention.

Punishment (as opposed to destruction) is a call for repentance. (Rev 9:20-21; Heb 12:5-11) Jeremiah called for repentance, even at his late date in dealing with Israel. (Jer 26:3) Also, Christ and the New Testament call for repentance for all nations and individuals – "that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations..." (Lu 24:47)

**Three, God sometimes leaves sinners to THEIR OWN DEVICES.** That's what happened with the Gentile nations as God was dealing with Israel. "*For this cause God gave them up to vile affections...And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind to do those things which are not proper...*" (Ro 1:26-28) The following list of improper behaviors include hatred, murder, deceit, malice, lawlessness, and many other such things, which sadly, are seen more and more in our own society.

Incorrigible is a word which describes people who cannot or will not be corrected. We, as a society often give up on such people and they might end up in prison or without a home. When individuals and nations do not submit to God, they are not banished but continue in life like "*functioning alcoholics.*" They might well carry on in life and manage the consequences of their godless lifestyle, but they are without God. Eventually their sins will find them out. (Num 32:23).

**Four, God BLESSES THE RIGHTEOUS.** Jesus said "*Ye shall know them by their fruits.*" Today's world religions offer quite an assortment of philosophies/religions, including atheistic communism, eastern religions with their karma and an impersonal god, Islam with their proclivity for war, Judaism which clings to the simple Old Testament laws, and some form of belief in Christ, which calls for a belief in the God of Abraham and the fulfillment of the promise to Him. Now, which one of these religions has been a blessing to humanity?

Nationally, God has blessed America, through His providence and through the teachings of the Bible. We still write "*In God We Trust*" on our money. We pledge allegiance to "*one nation under God*". But the less our nation respects God, the less God will bless our nation. The more ungodly our neighbors become, the greater our risk of being left to our own devices, of outright punishment for our sins, and even the possibility of national destruction.

Do we have a conspiracy theory going on here? No, rather, the business of learning from history – biblical history. Governments and society can make serving God difficult, and although the powers that be cannot altogether obliterate faith in Christ, they can make life very hard for our children and grandchildren.

Let us each turn from sin, obey the gospel, and serve God.

George Hutto

Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal: "*The Lord knoweth those who are His,*" and, "*Let every one who nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.*" 2 Timothy 2:19 (KJV)