

Ichabod

Future of nations

- Optimism: God controls nations; His cause will triumph.
- Pessimism: God judges nations.

The wicked shall be turned into hell, And all the nations that forget God – Ps.9:17.

Righteousness exalts a nation, But sin is a reproach to any people – Pr.14:34.

1 Sm.4, Ichabod

1-2: Philistines defeated Israel in battle

3: Israel turned to secret weapon (charm / idol)

4-5: a mighty shout... (secret weapon)

¹God will not be manipulated

²Majority opinions do not represent truth

1 Sm.4, Ichabod

6-9: Philistines have more faith in God...

10-11: God is not a genie

12-18: a break

19-22: baby Ichabod [I-Chabod]

- Lost glory
- Lost God?

Historians agree (1/2)

[Israel's role in redemption]

“But Israel was not serving alone in this holy enterprise. In unwitting – not to say, unwelcome – co-operation with him, Greek and Roman were working toward the same grand attainment. ‘The flood of preparation for Christianity flows steadily down the ages in three main streams – the Greek... the Jewish...the Roman...

Historians agree (2/2)

“**Rome** was bringing the world to a state of peace and order, and providing facilities of communication, which would make possible the unhindered advance of the message of redemption. **Greece** ... was preparing a mind which could penetrate and interpret the profound truths of the Christian religion, a spirit which would furnish susceptible and fertile soil ... a language which could express the message of redemption with a beauty and accuracy which has not been equaled anywhere else in human speech” – Dana

Gibbon:

Decline and Fall of Roman Empire

- Five reasons for fall of Rome
- Parallels – Israel, Rome, U.S.

I. Rapid Increase of Divorce...

Israel – 1 Sm.2:22-25

- Priest scandal [Lv.10]
- Preacher's kids
- Eli: disengaged dad; friend, not father

Judgment begins at house of God

Israel – 1 Sm.2:22-25

Rome – powerful but flawed (1/2)

Average family in Graeco-Roman world was small (they couldn't afford to feed many).

The one child family was most common.

Children had no rights.

Abortions were often fatal to mother, so parents were allowed to destroy newborn, or throw it out to die of exposure, or be picked up by slave-traders.

Israel – 1 Sm.2:22-25

Rome – powerful but flawed (2/2)

Papyrus from Egypt, 1 B.C.

Hilarion writes his wife from Alexandria:

‘I beg and entreat you, take care of the little one, and as soon as we receive our pay I will send it up to you. If by chance you bear a child, if it is a boy, let it be; if it is a girl, **expose it**’ (P. Oxy. 744).

Ro.1:31; 2 Tim.3:3.

Israel – 1 Sm.2:22-25

Rome – powerful but flawed

U.S.

‘As goes the home, so goes the nation’

America’s family is under attack

For we are not, as so many, peddling the word of God’ but as of sincerity, but as from God, we speak in the sight of God in Christ – 2 Cor.2:17.

Mt.19:3...7 – sounds familiar

Mt.19:4-6, 9 – always binding

I. Rapid Increase of Divorce...

II. Higher and Higher Taxes...

Israel: 1 Sm.2:12-17

- 27-29, man of God [cf. 8:10-18]

Rome: Lk.2:1-2

- Census every 14 years

“By four things does the empire exist: by its tolls, bathhouses, theatres, and crop taxes” (i.e., taxes and entertainment) – Rabban Gamaliel II

U.S.

- Death and taxes...

I. Rapid Increase of Divorce...

II. Higher and Higher Taxes...

III. Mad Craze For Pleasure...

Israel: 1 Sm.2:30-34

- Their rebellion will end.

Rome: Gladiatorial combats...

U.S.

- 2 Tim.3:4 ...*lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God*

I. Rapid Increase of Divorce...

II. Higher and Higher Taxes...

III. Mad Craze For Pleasure...

**IV. Building of Gigantic
Armaments...**

Israel: 1 Sm.4:1-11

- Is.10; Dn.4
- No army can protect a nation that dishonors God and rots within

Rome: false sense of security

U.S.:

- “...*The arm of flesh will fail you...*”

“Not until I went into churches of America did I understand the secret of her genius and power. America is great because America is good, and if America ever ceases to be good, America will cease to be great” – de Tocqueville

I. Rapid Increase of Divorce...

II. Higher and Higher Taxes...

III. Mad Craze For Pleasure...

IV. Building of Gigantic Armaments

V. Decay of Religion

Israel: 1 Sm.4:19-22

Rome: polytheism

- Christians who refused were held in same light as flag-burners today

U.S.: 'post-Christian Era'

- Most churches: social clubs
- Mega-churches replace gospel with entertainment. 2 Tim.4:3-4
- Who would have thought denominations would lose ability to decide moral issues?
2 Pt.2

Lessons –

1. God is the Ruler yet. Jn.19:10-11.
2. We must live in corrupt world until we die or Jesus comes. Ro.12:2.
3. We cannot place our trust in government.
 - a. We obey, Ro.13:1-4
 - b. We pay, Ro.13:6-7
 - c. We pray, 1 Tim.2:1-2
 - d. They praise, 1 Pt.2:13-14