

IT IS SETTLED!

"Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Ecclesiastes 12:13b)

By Howell Lasseter

From Heaven, or of Men (Part 5)

Since the tragedy of 9/11, which was carried out by those who hate the U.S. and which caused the deaths of many of our fellow-citizens, an old song has been revived. The song, "God Bless America" hasn't been used much since the WW2 era, though those of us who were schoolchildren during that era heard it often in our classrooms and school assemblies. The question being considered in today's article: What will it take for God to bless America?

Let's consider two truths at this time. First, God has not ever blessed those who rejected Him. One of the valuable uses of the Old Testament is to give examples of God's dealings with man over the centuries. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scripture might have hope" (Romans 15:4). Genesis chapters 6 and 7 reveal that, because of sin, all but 8 human beings were drowned in the flood. Noah found grace in God's sight; he was not living in rebellion to God, as were all others. The nation of Israel was delivered from Egypt because they obeyed the instructions for the Passover. Even as they were fleeing, those Israelites who escaped Egypt saw the destruction of the Egyptian army in the Red Sea. But, God expected continued obedience from His chosen people. On the brink of going into the promised land, the sin of unbelief entered the camp. Twelve spies were sent into the land for 40 days to view the land and bring back a report. Ten of the 12 spies cast doubt on God's willingness and ability to give Israel the land. Because of this sin, none of those who were over the age of 20 at the time Israel escaped Egypt, were permitted to enter into the promised land. Israel wandered 40 years in the wilderness till all who were age 20 and over had died.

Second, read the book of Judges. You will see that time and time again, Israel left their faithfulness to God. They chose to decide for themselves which of God's laws they would keep and which they would discard. They embraced the idolatrous religions among whom they lived. (Can we not see that today man-made religious groups practice the same?) Each time Israel so sinned God ceased blessing them, and brought foreign, pagan armies to conquer them. The entire Bible gives no comfort to nations who forget God and trample His laws. In fact, the Bible assures us that to forget God and His law is the sure way to national and personal destruction. Read Joshua's farewell address to Israel in Joshua 23:6-8.

Individuals and religious groups today who disregard God's law of the New Testament are weakening not only themselves, but our great nation. Readers, it is time for each of us to seriously seek to know God's Will, and to obey it in our lives!