

¹ Blessed *be* the Lord my strength, which teacheth mine hands to fight, *and* my fingers to battle.

² *He is* my goodness and my fortress, my tower and my deliverer, my shield and in Him I trust, which subdueth my people under me.

³ Lord, what is man that Thou regardest him! *or* the son of man that Thou thinkest upon him?

⁴ Man is like to vanity; his days *are* like a shadow that vanisheth.

⁵ Bow Thine heavens, O Lord, and come down; touch the mountains, and they shall smoke.

⁶ Cast forth the lightning and scatter them; shoot out Thine arrows and consume them.

⁷ Send Thine hand from above: deliver me, and take me out of the great waters, *and* from the hand of strangers,

⁸ Whose mouth talketh vanity, and their right hand *is* a right hand ^[h]of falsehood.

⁹ I will sing a new song unto Thee, O God, *and* sing unto Thee upon a viol, *and* an instrument of ten strings.

¹⁰ *It is He* that giveth deliverance unto kings, *and* rescueth David His servant from the hurtful sword.

¹¹ Rescue me, and deliver me from the hand of strangers, whose mouth talketh vanity, and their right hand *is* a right hand of falsehood:

¹² That our sons *may be* as the plants growing up in their youth, *and* our daughters as the corner *stones*, graven after the similitude of a palace:

¹³ That our corners *may be* full *and* abounding with divers sorts, *and* that our sheep may bring forth thousands and ten thousand in our streets.

¹⁴ That our oxen may be strong to labor; that there be none invasion, nor going out, nor no crying in our streets.

¹⁵ Blessed *are* the people, that be so, *yea* blessed *are* the people whose God is the Lord.
(Psalm 144, GNV)

Psalm 144 (A.D. 2020)

Even with the un-modern language of the 1599 Geneva Bible, it shouldn't be very difficult to see something unsettlingly familiar in this work of King David, under the influence of the Holy Spirit. In fact, one might be tempted to use a catchphrase of an old television crime drama series, *ripped from the headlines*. I will, however, use the Geneva Bible because of the excellent commentaries on several verses that help to establish the connection with our time. If you wish, you may look up this Psalm in a more modern translation of the Scriptures, but please bear with me this translation first.

We are less than 100 days from the next Presidential election in the United States. (Time sure flies when you're going through seeming chaos, doesn't it?) Just as the last time around, we are hearing the cries from both sides of the political spectrum that this is the electoral equivalent of the Battle of Armageddon; that if things don't go that particular side's way, the nation is doomed.

But I'd like you to think for a moment – especially those of you who are “baby boomers” like myself, or even older. Those of you who remember when the nation was far more unified and civil than it is now. Doesn't it seem like we are already under God's judgment to a degree, and have been for years? Does the nation we now live in look strikingly different from that of our youth? I don't mean in

terms of modern conveniences, but in terms of our outlook on ourselves and the world at large. Many of us have this sense, but have found it difficult to put into words.

It turns out Psalm 144 (and its Geneva commentaries) can help us not only understand these feelings, but also to articulate and defend them to people who dismiss them as being racist, *select-a-phobic*, or simply *O.K., boomer*. Let's break the Psalm down using both the verses and commentaries and analyze:

- *Psalm 144:1* *Who of a poor shepherd hath made me a valiant warrior and mighty conqueror.* In David's time, this was with the sword, the spear and the other physical implements of war. Today, we have the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God (Ephesians 6:17). The Scriptures are a living weapon, capable of dividing falsehood from truth and revealing the secrets of the heart. Jesus Himself used this weapon against Satan with perfect effectiveness while tempted in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11); the devil could *quote* the Word of God, but Jesus *is* the Word of God made flesh (John 1:14). It is only through Him that the enemies of God are scattered, so it is in our best interest to learn His way of spiritual warfare.
- *Psalm 144:2* *He confesseth that neither by his own authority, power or policy his kingdom was quiet, but by the secret grace of God.* How often do we forget this – especially those of us who go into politics for whatever reason. Some go in with excellent motives but lose their way, some go in from the very beginning only wanting to “get on the gravy train,” as it were. Very rarely do we find anyone who remembers that God is the author of a nation's peace, and our job is to establish and carry out His policies. It is when a nation is at peace with God that it enjoys His peace and protection. We as a nation have not only turned away from Him but now are actively opposing Him. Some recognized the partial lifting of His hand of protection from America with the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001; unfortunately, some still do not get it, and His hand is lifted even further.
- *Psalm 144:3* *To give unto God just praise, is to confess ourselves to be unworthy of so excellent benefits, and that He bestoweth them upon us of His free mercy.* We honor good leaders – the reason for putting up statues of them or naming buildings for them in the first place – and we give honor to elders and those in authority over us (even if we later learn they *haven't* done as good a job as we had hoped). This is Biblical (1 Peter 2:17), and pleases God. Where we go wrong is when we elevate them to the status of godhood, and forget that it is He who establishes leaders (Daniel 2:21, Romans 13: 1-5). America is a great nation, but seeing anything beyond that is to do no better than to worship the sun, volcanoes, etc, worshipping the *created* rather than the *Creator*.
- *Psalm 144:5* *He desireth God to continue His graces, and to send help for the present necessity.* Outside of one organized effort that I am aware of (thereturn.org) and the private prayers of individuals, where are the believers crying out to God for help? Bars and protest marches are open, yet churches are closed. People are now burning Bibles in the street, in a manner eerily reminiscent of Nazi Germany. How long do you think it will be before we as believers are hauled off to camps for political “re-education,” or just plain shot? Not only must we seek God's face for the turning of our nation back to Him, but ask Him to raise up leaders that will not be turned by the corruption of the present times – and to give us the strength and the means to support them, both spiritually and materially.
- *Psalm 144:7* *That is, deliver me from the tumults of them that should be my people, but are corrupt in their judgment and enterprises, as though they were strangers.* *Psalm 144:8* *For though they shake hands, yet they keep not promise.* King George III was the first British monarch of the House of Hanover to actually be *born* in Britain; specifically, London. George the

First and the Second were born and raised in Germany, and learned how to rule from that perspective. Some historians have suggested that a Germanic, rather than native, influence and outlook on how one ruled as a king may have been a factor in George's policies toward Britain's colonies in America that drove Colonial leaders toward independence from Great Britain. Today, we have leaders who are (with a few exceptions) native-born, chosen from among the people as how our system works. But in their education and training for public service they have fallen under the influence of those who advocate not for our own people and our own country but for a globalist outlook. These people forget the needs of the ones who sent them to political office in the first place, and seek to impose a system upon us we not only do not recognize, but one that has failed in every other country in which it was applied. They take vows to uphold the Constitution of the United States, then immediately seek to remove its influence on the nation, no longer recognizing it – indeed, would overturn and discard it if they could. In effect, they came from *among* us but they are no longer *of* us.

- *Psalm 144:12* He desireth God to continue His benefits toward his people, counting the procreation of children and their good education among the chiefest of God's benefits. *Psalm 144:13* That the very corners of our houses may be full of store for the great abundance of Thy blessings. The birth rate in the United States has been steadily declining for the past 30 years, while at least 50 million abortions have taken place in the United States since 1973 when the *Roe v. Wade* decision made the practice legal. And lately we have the disturbing reports of the sexual abuse of children being far more widespread than the mere isolated aberrations we once believed them to be. During that same period we have become a service and consumer economy where once upon a time we led the world in manufacturing. Coincidence? I think not. How long can a people experience God's blessings while continuing to destroy His chiefest blessings? And if children are at the top of the list of blessings, who's to say that God is not only withdrawing His hand of protection on the nation, but is withdrawing the blessing of children (not to mention abundance of things) from those who do not appreciate it – indeed, abuse it?

In the last Presidential election, believers cried out to God not to let former Senator and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton win the office, fearing that she meant exactly what she said in her keynote address at the 2015 Women in the World Summit that Christians needed to change their beliefs away from God's Commandments to match the world's perspective, and that religious freedom (the Prime Freedom of America) would suffer even more under a Clinton administration. God granted that request, but He did more. He used Donald Trump to pull back the curtain, as it were, and let everybody see the depth and breadth of what is commonly referred to as "the swamp," the depravity in our culture, how far "we the people" have let things go. Even if President Trump wins a second – and final – term, we are far from "out of the woods." There is much more work to be done to save this nation, and it requires us as believers to not only get involved but *stay* involved until the job is done, even if it is something as seemingly small as writing letters or emails holding leaders accountable for their actions. And the job is never completely done. In 1790, John Philpot Curran, an advocate for freedom in Ireland, made a speech in which he used a phrase most people erroneously attribute to Founding Father Thomas Jefferson:

"It is the common fate of the indolent to see their rights become a prey to the active. The condition upon which God hath given liberty to man is eternal vigilance, which condition if he break, servitude is at once the consequence of his crime, and the punishment of his guilt."

Believers especially must reclaim their stake in this nation, because religious freedom is the one upon which almost all others are built upon. Do things stink now? Of *course* they stink – rotting things usually do. But if we do nothing, things will only get worse. So we need to ask God what He would have us do, hold our noses, rub vaporizing ointment under them or soak a cloth in strong cologne and tie it to our faces (we're told to wear a mask these days *anyway*), and get on with the job.

How do we start? With ourselves. Do you know Him? You've probably heard "God loves you" more times than you can count, but have you ever considered just what that love means? That God doesn't want us – and, yes, that includes you – to die in our sins, be separated from Him and be lost forever? That He took the punishment our sins deserved upon Himself in the form of His Son, Jesus of Nazareth, satisfying His Holiness, but opening the way for us to be reconciled to Him? And, by raising Jesus from the dead, he also promises that those who believe in Him will live with Him forever? You can know this love by:

- Admit to yourself that you have sinned against God, and repent (which means to agree with God that those sins are wrong and deliberately turn away from them).
- Ask God to forgive you and accept Jesus as your Savior, which means to accept His sacrificial death as the payment for your sins and to live for Him. Scripture says that, *If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.* (Romans 10:9) I offer the following as a guide for you to pray; you can put it in your own words if you wish, but the important thing is that you speak – out loud – to God from your heart in all honesty with Him: ***Lord Jesus Christ, I ask You now to please come into my life. I believe that You are the Son of God, that You died to pay for my sins and were raised from the dead by God the Father. I accept You now as my Savior and as my Lord; please forgive my sins and give me a new heart to live for You and I will serve You all the days of my life. Please do this now, I pray, in Your Name, Amen.***
- Tell others about your decision, because the first thing Satan is going to try to do is persuade you that what you just did never really happened. Telling others helps to firmly establish your decision in your own spirit.
- Get a Bible, and start reading. There are a number of modern English translations available to help with your understanding (the New King James Version is a good one). I recommend starting with the Gospel of John, then the other Gospels, then the rest of the New Testament and the Old Testament.

If you prayed that and meant it, then God says you are a New Creation in Him (refer to 2 Corinthians 5:17), but you'll probably know that in your own heart without having to be reminded. Welcome to the Body of Christ, and congratulations on the best decision you will ever have made! Please contact us if you have so that we can give you some help and direction in your new walk with Jesus.