

America: Return to God

I. Return to God

Nehemiah 1:8-9 (NIV®)

⁸ "Remember the instruction you gave your servant Moses, saying, 'If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the nations, ⁹ but **if you return to me and obey my commands, then** even if your exiled people are at the farthest horizon, I will gather them from there and bring them to the place I have chosen as a dwelling for my Name.'

Jeremiah 3:6-10 (NIV®)

⁶ During the reign of King Josiah, the LORD said to me, "Have you seen what faithless Israel has done? She has gone up on every high hill and under every spreading tree and has committed adultery there. ⁷ I thought that after she had done all this she would return to me but she did not, and her unfaithful sister Judah saw it. ⁸ I gave faithless Israel her certificate of divorce and sent her away because of all her adulteries. Yet I saw that her unfaithful sister Judah had no fear; she also went out and committed adultery. ⁹ Because Israel's immorality mattered so little to her, she defiled the land and committed adultery with stone and wood. ¹⁰ In spite of all this, **her unfaithful sister Judah did not return to me with all her heart, but only in pretense,**" declares the LORD.

Jeremiah 24:6-7 (NIV®)

⁶ My eyes will watch over them for their good, and I will bring them back to this land. I will build them up and not tear them down; I will plant them and not uproot them. ⁷ I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the LORD. They will be my people, and I will be their God, **for they will return to me with all their heart.**

Malachi 3:7-8 (NIV®)

⁷ Ever since the time of your forefathers you have turned away from my decrees and have not kept them. **Return to me, and I will return to you,**" says the LORD Almighty. "But you ask, 'How are we to return?' ⁸ "Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me. "But you ask, 'How do we rob you?' "In tithes and offerings.

II. Refusing to Follow God

A. Downward Spiral

Romans 1:28-32 (NIV®)

²⁸ Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done. ²⁹ They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, ³⁰ slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; ³¹ they are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless. ³² Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.



B. Last Days, Escalation

Jude 1:17-19 (NIV®)

¹⁷ But, dear friends, remember what the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ foretold. ¹⁸ They said to you, "**In the last times** there will be scoffers who will follow their own ungodly desires." ¹⁹ These are the men who divide you, who follow mere natural instincts and do not have the Spirit.

2 Peter 3:3-4 (NIV)

³ First of all, you must understand that **in the last days scoffers will come**, scoffing and following their own evil desires. ⁴ They will say, "Where is this 'coming' he promised?"

C. Fierce Times

Matthew 8:28 (NKJV®)

When He had come to the other side, to the country of the Gergesenes, there met Him two demon-possessed *men*, coming out of the tombs, exceedingly fierce, so that no one could pass that way.

2 Timothy 3:1-5 (NIV®)

¹ But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. ² People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³ without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, ⁴ treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God-- ⁵ having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them.

- 1) Lovers of themselves
- 2) Lovers of money
- 3) Boastful
- 4) Proud
- 5) Abusive
- 6) Disobedient to their parents
- 7) Ungrateful
- 8) Unholy
- 9) Without love
- 10) Unforgiving
- 11) Slanderous
- 12) Without self-control
- 13) Brutal
- 14) Not Lovers of the good
- 15) Treacherous
- 16) Rash
- 17) Conceited
- 18) Lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God
- 19) Having a form of godliness but denying its power

1 Timothy 6:6-10 (NIV®)

⁶ But godliness with contentment is great gain. ⁷ For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. ⁸ But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. ⁹ People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge



men into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰ **For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil.** Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

III. God's Provision

A. The Son

Hebrews 1:1-3 (NIV®)

¹ In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but **in these last days** he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. ³ The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

B. The Spirit

Acts 2:14-21 (NIV®)

¹⁴ Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: "Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. ¹⁵ These men are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning! ¹⁶ No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: ¹⁷ **"In the last days,** God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. ¹⁸ Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. ¹⁹ I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. ²⁰ The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. ²¹ And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'