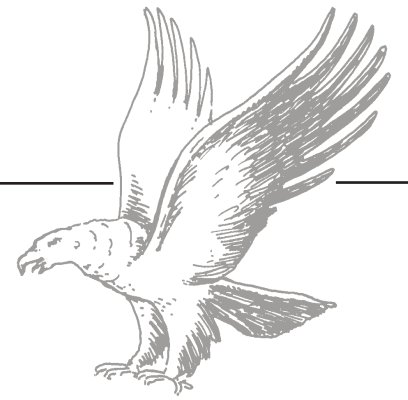


Wings

*"Those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles."
Isaiah 40:31*



March 25, 2018

The Land Vomits Out Its Inhabitants

Just as a physical body expels a microbe that threatens its survival, the earth casts out humans who defile their role in it. Is our turn coming?

"For the land is defiled; therefore I visit the punishment of its iniquity upon it, and the land vomits out its inhabitants. You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, and shall not commit any of these abominations, . . . lest the land vomit you out also when you defile it, as it vomited out the nations that were before you" (Lev. 18:25).



All of us who have had a bout with sickness can appreciate the metaphor God is using here. Vomiting is nature's way of expelling a harmful pathogen from the body. It's a gruesome experience, but necessary for our long-term health. In most cases, we feel better soon after it's over.

This metaphor was God's way of explaining why He was giving the land of Canaan to Israel. It was not because Israel was so good, but because the current inhabitants were so bad. He recited a long list of crimes the Canaanites were committing—incest, adultery, child sacrifice, homosexuality, bestiality (v. 1-24). The Canaanites had become a sick-

ness within the land, and it was time for the land to vomit them out. This was not an arbitrary judgment, but a natural phenomenon that governs the life cycle of every society. If a group of human beings become sufficiently corrupt, the land will reject them like a body expels a nasty virus. It's the way God created this world to function.

This principle was not limited to the Canaanites. God warned the Israelites not to imitate the behavior of the current inhabitants, "lest the land vomit you out also." God is an equal-opportunity judge, and Israel was subject to the same standard by which the Canaanites were measured. Over the course of several centuries, the Israelites descended into the same cesspool of debauchery as their predecessors, and were expelled from the land by a foreign invader, just as the Canaanites had been long before.

The downfall of these nations explains the violent end of so many other civilizations throughout history. When a society becomes so depraved, so lawless, so corrupt, that there is no prospect of restoration, the only solution

is for the land to physically "vomit them out." The expulsion of the human virus may be violent and ugly, but once the offending element is expelled, the catastrophe is often followed by period of peace and prosperity. Another group of people are given an opportunity to occupy the land and do good with it.

America is not exempt from this principle of divine judgment. For several centuries, our land has been blessed by the presence of a people who, for the most part, have respected God and His moral standards. In recent years, that heritage has been jettisoned, replaced by behaviors that bear eerie resemblance to the character of the Canaanites. That did not end well for the Canaanites. Will Americans suffer the same fate?

Whatever the future might hold for our nation, God's people have a solemn obligation to be an influence for good. We must take care to set the right example in our own lives, and plead with others to turn back to God. If our land must experience a violent expulsion, at least let us be a holy remnant through whom God can start anew.

— David King



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