Where is America in the Turnings of Civilization?

Ecclesiastes 1:5,7,9

Over time life turns and what once was is once again; Solomon wrote: “That which has been is what will be, that which is done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun” (Ecclesiastes 1:9).

The Chicago Cubs won the World Series for the first time in 108 years; everything was lined up for the Cubs to win; everything is lined up for this nation to fall unless we as a nation repent of our sins; that fall will come at the hands of divine judgment.

I am not by nature a pessimist; I am a biblical realist; I see things through the lense of Scripture; that is the wisest way to view life; “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding” (Proverbs 9:10).

We are a divided nation--- perhaps more so than at any time since the Civil War; people are marching the streets holding signs TRUMP IS NOT MY PRESIDENT ; there is the hatred on the left for anyone who does not agree with their political position

Our educational institutions teach tolerance, but in themselves are the most intolerant; patriotism is no longer important to our younger generation for whom Colin Kaepernick, quarterback for the San Francisco 49ers,who refuses to honor our flag and National Anthem

The Cycles of Civilizations

The turnings of civilization… A popular book written by Neil Howe and William Strauss called The Fourth Turning; it reveals a four way cycle of of all civilization.
HIGH: When a nation has a spirit of pride and nationalization.

AWAKENING: Arrogance and individualism sets in; people think more of what they can attain than thinking of the greater good of others and their country.

UNRAVELING: This leads to an autonomous or self rule society; moral relativism becomes the norm to determine right and wrong.

CRISIS: This leads to depression, to a resistance in Judeo-Christian values; to a secular upheaval that rejects civil authority resulting in violence and racial clashes.

To put this in other words: Patriotism----> Individualism----> Moral Relativism ---->Rebellion; according to Howe and Strauss each cycle lasts 80-90 years.

The trouble for our nation... Where are we as a nation today? In their 1997 book Howe said, “We will be in an existential crisis...” An existential crisis is a crisis for the existence of our nation; Forbes’ Magazine June 24, 2016, Howe wrote: “It will be an existential crisis in which the strongest institutions collapse, or are severely stressed and the crisis can be economic, military, religious, or all the above. Our national survival is in serious doubt.”

Arnold Toynbee said the “age of decadence” is the biggest reason for the collapse of a civilization; civilizations last 250 years; does that mean we have 10 years left? Look where our nation has gone since the 1960’s when prayer and Bible reading were taken from our public schools and what we learned from Anthony Weiner’s Wikileaks emails.

The Cultures of Civilization

Pastor Jeff Vines of Christ’s Church of the Valley, San Dimas speaks of three different cultures:

THEONOMOUS: God’s law, Theos is God; nomous is law; our nation nwa founded on Judeo-Christian values and laws; quotes from Patrick Henry, George Washington, John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, John Jay.
In a ten year effort, the Political Science Department of the University of Houston collected 15,000 pieces of writings by the founding fathers to ascertain where they got their ideas for the writing of the Constitution; the three most quoted were Sir William Blackstone (1723-1780), Baron Montesquieu (1689-1755) and John Locke (1632-1704); yet the Bible was quoted 16 times more often than these three men; 34% of all quotes by the founders were taken straight and from Scripture and another 60% were quotes from those who in their writings had quoted the Bible; in total 94% of the founders’ quotes came either directly or indirectly from the Bible.

John Adams: “Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate of any other;” our three branches of government—legislative, executive, judicial came from Isaiah 33:22 and the reason for three branches from Jeremiah 17:5-11.

Twice our Supreme Court declared we are a Christian nation; in 1892 in Holy Trinity v. USA; in 1931 in USA v. Macintosh.

Our nation was founded not as a theocracy where God rules, but as a democracy under the law of God; that is what theonomous is all about.

HETERONOMOUS: Other law; heteros means “other;” this is rule from the top down; it is dictatorship; it is Saul Alinsky’s Marxist socialism; it is Sharia Law in Islam which directs every area of a Muslim’s life.

AUTONOMOUS: Self rule. Autos means “self;” this where we are as a nation; we have rejected the moral laws of God for moral relativism; once we had a culture that theonomous, now we have a culture that is autonomous (see Isaiah 5:20); when a culture has no point of reference it brings the wrath of God (see Romans 1:18-32).

We have become our own god; the election we just had will bring one of two results: we will either as a nation repent and turn to God, or God will show us what life is like without Him; in the election of a secularist like Donald Trump I believe God is giving us one more opportunity to come back to Him; God raised up a pagan in Cyrus the Great to return the Jews to their homeland to rebuild the Temple; if God can use Cyrus for His purpose, He can use Donald Trump.
The Control by God

*When God wants to send a message He will work in the affairs of mankind...* One of the names our founding fathers used to speak of God was Providence; *pro*, “before” and *video*, to see; the word means “to see before;” Solomon wrote: “Many are the plans of man’s heart, but it is the LORD’s purpose that prevails” (Proverbs 19:21).

This is illustrated in the story of Elisha and the wealthy Shunammite woman (see 2 Kings 4:8-37; 8:1-6); Isaiah wrote of God: “My purpose will be established and I will accomplish all My good pleasure (Isaiah 46:10); the psalmist wrote: “Our God is in heaven and He does whatever He pleases” (Psalm 115:3).

*When God wants to shatter a people for their sinfulness He will raise up an enemy more evil than that of the people He punishes...* God “changes the times and seasons; He removes kings and raises up kings” (Daniel 2:21).

God raised up Nebuchadnezzar to destroy Jerusalem and take Judah captive; when Habakkuk learned that God was raising up to bring judgment on Judah he was dismayed (see Habakkuk 1:5-11).

He responds to God “You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look on wickedness. Why do you look on those who deal treacherously, and hold your tongue when the wicked devours a person more righteous than he?” (Habakkuk 1:13); he acknowledges that God will be God and He will do whatever He pleases (See Habakkuk 1:12); and “the just shall live by faith” (Habakkuk 2:4b).

*When God wants to save a people He will raise up a rescuer...* Two biblical stories:

1) Joseph sold as a slave to Egypt and ends up interpreting the dream of Pharaoh to become second in the land that saved the family of Jacob from possible extinction from a seven year famine (Genesis 39-45).

2) Esther becomes queen of Persia to save the Jews from genocide at the hands of wicked Hamen; she was queen “for such a time as this?” (Esther 1-7); has God raised up Donald J. Trump for such a time as this?.