

Peace and Safety

(Sermon Notes) By Warren Zehrung 6/16/2018

There has been so much in the news recently that it is hard to put things in their proper perspective. Momentous happenings are taking place. As Christians we must be so careful not to get caught up in this world. With all of the chaos and confusion in the world, God warns us that the time is soon coming when we will have to be particularly cautious when evaluating world conditions.

I was reminiscing with an elderly Pastor in God's Church last week... he goes way back – being 15 years older than I am. And we were lamenting the downfall of our country from its pinnacle of world prominence and leadership. We placed the beginning date of our demise from our zenith or peak of prominence to be somewhere around 1947 to 1950. We've been descending ever since.

England, before us, had brought the **rule of law and order** to a **world** devoid of civilization. My friend and I both agreed that the tide has long turned on the blessings of Abraham that God promised to us more than 2,520 years ago.

Paraphrasing the "Blessings and Cursings" of Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28, my friend characterized the violations of God's law by saying that we have brought about a "Self-Imposed Disaster" on America and England. Herbert W. Armstrong often quoted these verses as applying to our day:

Isaiah 1:2 Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me.

Isaiah 1:3 The ox knows his owner, and the donkey his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.

Isaiah 1:4 Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward.

Isaiah 1:5 Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the **whole head is sick**, and the **whole heart faint**.

Isaiah 1:6 From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment.

'**whole head is sick:**' Eight years of **godless leadership** of America plunged this country into an immoral quagmire from which we will never fully recover.

Yes, God occasionally sends a "Strongman" like Sampson – in the days of the Judges of Israel, to delay our ultimate demise...

But, the damage has been done to the good morals that once made our nation great.

'**whole heart faint:**' The spirit of justice and fairness has turned to greed and bitterness. Here are just a few examples:

The **IRS** – the Internal Revenue Service has become politically corrupt to its core with a malignant cancer that cannot be rooted out.

They discriminate against those who hold the vestiges of our founding fathers' principles.

The **DOJ** – the United States Department of Justice has become so corrupt at its head that – – – let me use the words in Isaiah [don't turn].

Isaiah 59:14 Judgment is turned away backward, and justice stands afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter.

Isaiah 59:15 Yes, truth faileth; and he that departs from evil makes himself a prey: and the LORD saw it, and it displeased Him that there was no judgment.

The **FBI** – The Federal Bureau of Investigation, the once highly trusted domestic intelligence and security service of the United States—is no longer trustworthy.

The CIA, the EPA – we do not have time to go through the disappointing performance of the **heads** of the many departments entrusted with the sacred duty of protecting our domestic resources and national blessings.

The **whole head is sick**, and the **whole heart faint**.

Where is our nation headed? What will be the consequence of departing from the way of our living God? (Hebrews 3:12) God, Himself, gives us the result. Here is where America and England are headed:

Isaiah 1:7 Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire: your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers.

In God's Church in the past – we sort of had a narrative that said that things would be going along normally – and **bang** – all of a sudden we'd be blown up, captured, and carried away rapidly into captivity – if we survived at all...

Of course, so many people in the church weren't too worried about such things because they expected to be sitting snuggly in the Place of Safety.

Never mind the fact that they were not busily qualifying for the requisite overcoming of Satan by **loving not their lives unto the death** (Revelation 12:11). The title from here:

1Thessalonians 5:3 For when they shall say, **Peace and safety**; then **sudden** destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

It is not so much "instantaneous," as 'unexpected,' or as it is "unawares" in Luke 21:34 - that day come upon you unawares.

Specific Purpose Statement: The purpose of this sermon is to demonstrate that destructive forces are in place, and have been a long time coming.

It can cause us to **feel good** about our nation when we finally see our leaders take a strong stance against those who have been our sworn enemies after so long a time – as has recently taken place with North Korea. I was 7 years old when the Korean war broke out.

On 25 June 1950 the North Korean Communist army led by Kim Il-Sung (grandfather of Kim Jong Un) crossed the 38th Parallel and invaded non-Communist South Korea. That is about the latitude of St. Louis Missouri. North Korea could be a fertile and prosperous country.

As Kim Il-Sung's North Korean army, armed with Soviet tanks, quickly overran South Korea, the United States came to South Korea's aid.

That war is now finally slated to come to an end. What brought North Korean Chairman Kim Jong Un to the denuclearization table? The answer, sanctions—strong sanctions.

This month, primarily in response to those very restrictive **sanctions** on imports and exports North Korea anxiously agreed to come to the negotiating table. Not only tough sanctions enforced by the United States, but surprisingly those of China and Russia in response the United Nations Security Council which unanimously approved those tough new sanctions against North Korea because of its launch of a ballistic missile that Pyongyang, Capitol of North Korea, says is capable of reaching anywhere on the **U.S. mainland**.

The leaders of North and South Korea have committed themselves to the **complete denuclearization** of the Korean Peninsula and pledged to bring a formal end to the Korean War, after 68 years of hostilities.

We suffered 900,000 casualties in that three years of engagement.

North Korea is financially destitute – Go online and look at a satellite image of Korea at night – there is an incredible difference between North and South Korea. Israel is supposed to be a light and blessing to the nations of this world. We would like to see the impoverished people of North Korea **prosper** like all the other free nations.

Kim Jong Un would certainly like to have his family's dynasty preserved with a **security promise** from the U.S.

When I was in High School, the first book that I remember reading was "Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo." It was about Jimmy Doolittle's retaliation raid on Japan that came less than a year after the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. Those B-24 bombers flew 2,000 miles from an aircraft carrier – overflew Japan – and crash landed in China when they ran out of fuel.

What the world **does not know** very well is how brutal the Japanese were in retaliation to the Chinese who aided the survivors of Doolittle's raid. Japan's bio-attacks killed hundreds and hundreds of thousands. Up to a half million villagers and farmers who helped the downed American flyers.

The effects linger today of the only documented **mass use** of germ weapons in modern times.

Scholars say that we will never know exactly how many were killed. Chinese, American, and other Western physicians who have examined the survivors, documented their histories, and photographed their wounds claim that they are victims of the most gruesome biological warfare attacks in modern history. For those of you who would like to know more – search: Jimmy Doolittle and Unit 731 Museum.

Only now that China has emerged as **Asia's leading power** has it begun to highlight Japan's biological / germ warfare crimes against it. The focal point of this effort is the Unit 731 Museum, just south of the city of Harbin in Manchuria. Worse than anything that Hitler did to the Jews, upwards of 12,000 Chinese prisoners perished in cruel bloodcurdling experiments that Unit 731 performed in Japanese-occupied Manchuria.

Some of the young survivors are still alive today.

Those “experiments” were too **cruel and gruesome** to describe here in a sermon – and I only mention it to demonstrate **man’s inhumanity to man** which will be at its worse in the last days. My Grandmother lost two brothers in WWI to German nerve gas - **man’s inhumanity to man**.

We are fast approaching the end time when Satan will fully unleash his **fury** and wrath as the force behind the beast power. Paul told Timothy:

2Timothy 3:1 This know also, that in the last days **perilous times** shall come.

Daniel 12:1 ... and there shall be a **time of trouble**, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time:

I want to talk specifically about China. Keep your eye on China. The Bible says precious little about China specifically: A passage in Ezekiel, written some 2,500 years ago informed Mr. Armstrong’s accurate forecast.

Ezekiel 38:2 Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him.

Referring to Ezekiel 38:2, Mr. Armstrong wrote in the April 1981 Plain Truth:

“There is general agreement among students of prophecy that “Gog” in the land of “Magog” is the vast regions of northern Eurasia extending from the Baltic to the Pacific [modern Russia and **China**].”

The U.S. trade deficit has grown to an unsustainable figure. We are deeply and hopelessly in debt to foreign nations. We are the world’s most mighty nation and we can easily get to thinking that we’ve made ourselves rich and powerful. God wants us to be able to deal with other nations from a position of strength—**His strength**—and not our own.

Perhaps you heard of the new 4,735 mile, “Silk Road?” There’s a new **Moscow to Beijing** Railroad via Mongolia - Trans-Siberian route: It is a six-day trip. An important trade route.

United Nations ambassador Nicki Haley put together the support of Russia and China in supporting the severe sanctions against North Korea to force them to the denuclearization table.

Isn’t it surprising that the United States finds itself **in the same bed** with China and Russia in a bold move to denuclearize the entire Korean peninsula?

That is not my allegory but God’s who says to us that the time is coming that we will not be able to make ourselves attractive to other nations no matter how hard we try:

Jeremiah 4:30 When you are spoiled, what will you do? Though you clothe thyself with crimson [red lipstick and rouge], though you deck yourself with ornaments of gold, though you paint your face with cosmetics, in vain shalt you make yourself fair [attractive]; your **lovers will despise you**, they will seek thy life.

When our nation looks to other nations for security and prosperity – instead of looking directly to God, God equates that disloyalty with **infidelity** toward Him. We have “cheated” on God. God considers **alliances, leagues and treaties** with ungodly nations to be a betrayal of His love. God says that it is unfaithfulness – spiritual harlotry - adultery, and so, He refers to those foreign nations as “lovers.” God says that our “lovers” will turn on us – and as we have betrayed Him – they will betray us, “...your lovers will despise you, they will seek thy life.”

The U.S. pays its **lovers** today – like prostitutes – funding and providing military equipment and supplies to its coalition partners.

Judges 2:2 You shall make **no league** with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall throw down their altars: but ye have not obeyed my voice: why have ye done this?

To placate the masses, the U.S. Government has made America's official policy and stance – **Multi-Culturalism** – which states that all religions and strange gods must be mixed together and treated equally. It is a not so well disguised attempt to make God and religion pretty much meaningless in a secular nation. Those countries with which we have treaties are going to turn on us and destroy us. God says that the **soon coming** national punishment is His retribution for rejecting Him and disdaining the tremendous blessings He has bestowed on us. We will be utterly let down by our allies.

Jeremiah 30:14 All your **lovers have forgotten you**; they seek thee not; for I have wounded you with the wound of an enemy, with the chastisement of a cruel one, for the multitude of your iniquity; because your sins were increased.

Speaking of America and England:

Lamentations 1:2 ...among all of her lovers she has none to comfort her.

We are living in a time of unprecedented peace and prosperity. God has blessed us – not because of our own inherent greatness – but because of His covenant with Abraham as He said:

Genesis 12:2 I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing.

God kept His promise to Abraham and made us a great and wealthy people. God expected ancient Israel, and He expects us also, to depend on Him entirely for every need. Israel was told not to make a military treaty, neither a defense alliance, nor to enter into a trading confederation with other nations. God expressly forbade Israel from entering into alliances, leagues or covenants with their neighbors for the purpose of security, religion, or commerce. God said:

Leviticus 26:12 I will walk among you, and will **be your God**, and ye shall be my people.
"Do not look to any others to protect and sustain you."

The Bible cannot be any clearer as to how God regards treaties when it comes to foreign nations. If we look to God – God will protect us. If not, "our lovers" will betray us. The Assyrians will lead the attack on the modern Israelitish nations of USA, Britain, Australia, Canada....

Exodus 23:32-33 You shalt make **no covenant** with them, nor with their gods. They shall not dwell in thy land, lest they make thee sin against me: for if thou serve their gods, it will surely be a snare unto thee.

Israel chose to enter into covenant-agreements with surrounding nations for the purpose of creating secure and prosperous treaties with its neighbors. God had warned Israel not to enter into alliances and treaties – but rather to look to Him for protection and blessings.

Historically, alliances have not been instrumental in preserving peace. It seems, in fact, that immediately prior to most major wars, there is a rapid realignment of treaties and alliances for the sake of strengthening strategic power. Brethren, we do not want to become complacent when we know that all is **not going to end well**.

China is rapidly buying up vast properties in this country with their huge trade surplus. It is too late to stem the tide. China is investing in America – immigration, businesses, homes, farmland, real estate, infrastructure and natural resources. You do not hear much about it, but China is **foreclosing** on America. God says:

Deuteronomy 28:43 The stranger that is within thee shall get up above you very **high**; and thou shalt come down very **low**.

Just yesterday the U.S. announced an aggressive new set of tariffs against China, setting a 25 percent import tax on \$50 billion worth of “industrially significant technologies” – mostly electronics – imported from China. That is only one-tenth of our annual \$500 billion trade deficit with China.

China has threatened to retaliate against such tariffs, stoking fears of a far-reaching and unpredictable trade war between the countries. It’s only a **lover’s** spat – while we trade untold hundreds of Billions with China every year! It is obviously a love-hate relationship: we hate that China is a communist nation with a dismal human rights record, but we love the cheap goods and cheap products.

China's economy is close to parity with America's economy. But due to current economic policies, U.S. growth is almost at a standstill. Meanwhile, China is growing rapidly—and is set to likely surpass the U.S. within a decade. USA's technological edge is all but gone.

China now consumes more energy than the United States even though our economy is still twice that of China. And yet, the Chinese economy already has roughly the same amount of purchasing power as the U.S. economy does. China is rising and America is in an advanced state of decline.

China is investing in America - businesses, homes, farmland, real estate, infrastructure and natural resources. Every tenth home in California is being purchased by a Chinaman. A \$7.2 billion contract to construct a new bridge between San Francisco and Oakland was awarded to a Chinese firm. There is precious little U.S. Steel or jobs in that deal. China now produces 11 times as much steel as the United States does.

The economic colonization of America has begun. We've seen near financial collapse a few times already. China is now the leading manufacturer of goods in the entire world. A recent investigation by the U.S. Senate Committee on Armed Services found more than one million counterfeit Chinese parts in the Department of Defense supply chain.

China, a god-less communist nation, would love to take over the leadership of the world. China's population 1.5 Billion

A declining U.S. dollar spells disaster for China's economy. China uses more cement than the rest of the world combined!

The **borrower** is always the servant to the **lender**. We are borrowing much money from China to finance our addiction to cheap goods and exponential debt - and China is happy to lend to us.

Deuteronomy 28:43 The stranger that is within thee shall get up above thee very high; and thou shalt come down very low.

Deuteronomy 28:44 He shall **lend** to thee, and thou shalt **not lend** to him: he shall be the head, and thou shalt be the tail.

In 1983 we were still a creditor nation - then we really began a downhill slide... The borrower is the servant of the lender, and we should have never allowed ourselves to get into so much debt. Now we will pay the price.

China owns about \$1.5 trillion of U.S. debt, and about \$3.5 trillion in other dollar-denominated assets. We're borrowing \$4 billion **each day** to pay our bills.

The cost to the U.S. is of a **magnitude** that we cannot imagine - more than 100 million dollars a day in interest on the debt that we owe them. According to an American Free Press article: "In addition to already owning vital ports in Long Beach, Calif., and Boston, Mass., the China Ocean Shipping Company is eyeing major ports on the East Coast and Gulf of Mexico.

China also owns access to ports at the entry and exit points of the Panama Canal.

"And due to fiscal woes plaguing many American cities and states, U.S. legislators have been actively seeking out Chinese investors.

"In one case, Baton Rouge, La., (Where Sharon and I raised our children) Mayor Kip Holden offered the Chinese government **ownership** and operating rights to a new toll way system if the Chinese would provide the funding to build it."

They've already done this toll road business in Indiana - sold toll roads to a company who used **Chinese money** to buy it.

It was recently announced that the **Federal Reserve** will now allow Chinese banks to **buy** up American banks.

God will break the pride of your power - more and more. (Leviticus 26:19)

Isaiah 9:14 Therefore the LORD will cut off from Israel head and tail, branch and rush, in one day.

Here is how it will happen:

Deuteronomy 28:43 The stranger that is within thee shall get up above thee very high; and thou shalt come down very low.

Deuteronomy 28:44 He shall lend to thee, and thou shalt not lend to him: he shall be the head, and thou shalt be the tail.

Deuteronomy 28:45 Moreover all these curses shall come upon thee, and shall pursue thee, and overtake thee, till thou be destroyed; because thou hearkened not unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which he commanded thee:

Deuteronomy 28:46 And they shall be upon thee for a sign and for a wonder, and upon thy seed for ever.

Deuteronomy 28:47 Because thou servedst not the LORD thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things;

Deuteronomy 28:48 Therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies which the LORD shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things: and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee.

It is coming. Do you speak Chinese?

Deuteronomy 28:49 The LORD shall bring A NATION [China?] against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a **nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand.**

Deuteronomy 28:50 A nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor shew favor to the young:

Deuteronomy 28:51 And he shall eat the fruit of thy cattle, and the fruit of thy land, until thou be destroyed: which also shall not leave thee either corn, wine, or oil, or the increase of thy cattle, or flocks of thy sheep, until he have destroyed thee.

Deuteronomy 28:52 And he shall besiege thee [from within] in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trusted, throughout all thy land: and he shall besiege thee in all thy gates throughout all thy land, which the LORD thy God hath given thee.

Deuteronomy 28:53 And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters, which the LORD thy God hath given thee, in the siege, and in the straitness, wherewith your enemies will distress you.

Revelation 9:16 The number of the armies of the horsemen was two hundred million; (200,000,000 man army)

Revelation 16:12 The sixth angel poured out his bowl upon the great river, the Euphrates; and its water was dried up, that the way might be prepared for the kings from the east.

HWA quoted these verses in reference to China. The USA is rapidly losing economic superiority to China who violates the World Trade Organization's guidelines. Herbert W. Armstrong first spoke of a Russia-China axis back in the June-July 1934 issue of the Plain Truth magazine. He wrote:

"Two great military powers will arise in the last days—one the revival of the Roman Empire ... ; the other Russia, with her allies ... possibly China or Japan."

"China's ... constant dream for centuries has been ultimate world conquest! ... China knows, however, that in this highly industrialized age she can accomplish this dream only as an ally of Russia." (Plain Truth, December 1959).

China is now emerging as the biggest economy in the history of the world.

What is Beijing building in the South China Sea? They are expanding airbases to newly built islands (protected with 12 mile boundary zones that U.S. respects) in the South China Sea – and flew a bomber into that new area this month. [look up Google Earth - Fiery Cross and Mischief Reef.]

They are in outer-space more than anyone besides the USA – they have their own Global Positioning System (GPS). They are perfecting space warfare. They are expanding their sphere of influence beyond the South-China sea – well down to the Philippines. China has threatened the Philippines, Taiwan, Vietnam and Japan. Since China began its extensive land reclamation program in the South China Sea in 2013, Beijing has focused on enlarging its presence and infrastructure beyond its region.

Xi Jinping lies at the apex of the Chinese political system. His influence now permeates at every level. He is the most powerful leader since Chairman Mao. The year 2021, marks the centenary of the Chinese Communist Party's founding, and Xi clearly intends that in 2021 China will showcase the achievements of its first centenary goals. By then, China expects to be the most powerful economy in the world (it is already there - on a purchasing power parity basis), and an emerging world class power – both in political and military terms.

Let's not close our eyes to the mostly hidden hostile nature of China. China is undecidedly and enormously aggressive in the geo-political, military and economic scene. China is stealing the USA blind of its intellectual property by its well-recognized **cyber**-warfare.

The free world is worried about the Chinese government itself as the ultimate example of a **sinister force** improperly accessing personal data. China is collecting a terrifying amount of surveillance data about its citizens and rationing out basic freedoms to "good" citizens only using a new "social credit score."

Questionable people are already being denied travel permits in China – undue control is already being exerted on private citizens.

The prospect of being monitored every moment by 176 million cameras would be unnerving even if there was not abundant reason to suspect the "social credit score" will be fudged by political considerations, giving the authoritarian state a pervasive and coldly impersonal system for punishing dissidents more comprehensively than ever before.

Furthermore, even advocates of the system in China have said it will include exactly the kind of information most people regard as deeply confidential. The system explicitly works by using Big Data as a corrupt instrument of surveillance and control, no matter what assurances to the contrary Chinese tech ministers offer at glitzy trade conventions.

China simply helps themselves to our technology – even military. They are building aircraft carriers. China is making alliances with America's enemies – like Iran. They are not to be trusted.

When China Turns Mean

When China **turns mean** the West will try one last time for **Peace and Safety**. For a short while everyone (except God's true servants) will believe that world peace has been achieved, but it will be a pseudo-peace. Notice what Jesus says:

Matthew 13:16 But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear.

This tells us that the world cannot put it all together, but we, brethren, who know the Plan of God, are able to understand the end-time sequence so much better. We must be careful because a single wrong assumption can throw us off terribly. Paul said it this way:

1Thessalonians 4:16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

1Thessalonians 4:17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

1Thessalonians 4:18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

1Thessalonians 5:1 But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.

1Thessalonians 5:2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

1Thessalonians 5:3 For when they shall say, **Peace and safety**; then **unexpected** destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

For the world in will be unexpected – but not for true Christians who will clearly expect it and see the destruction coming.

1Thessalonians 5:4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

The point is that God intends for His people to know! ...No one else. Our nation should be looking to God for peace and safety, but sadly, God is all but out of the picture.

1Thessalonians 5:5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

1Thessalonians 5:6 Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.

1Thessalonians 5:7 For they that sleep, sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.

1Thessalonians 5:8 But let us, who are **of the day**, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.

1Thessalonians 5:9 For God hath **not appointed us to wrath**, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,

'not appointed us to wrath' – it is not our fight – we are to be separate from the world.

We are in for some very deceptive days just ahead of us. I'm speaking about religious deception. I see politicians lie and lie again continuously – and people continue to empower them. It is so aggregating and confusing.

But the Bible tells us that men are coming on the scene that will have the power of Satan motivating them. How can we be able to deal with that spiritual deception? It is real – and it is at the door. How will we be able to survive? It will be only by the power of God's Spirit and the grace of God—and by keeping our nose in the Bible. There is no short-cut. We must do everything to stay close to God.

Brethren, when you hear the words, "**Peace and Safety**," don't you believe it.

End: Peace and Safety