

America's Greatest Moral Crisis Is the Lack of God Consciousness

Several years ago my good friend and frequent debating partner, Rabbi Shmuley Boteach, challenged me to debate the question, "Is Homosexuality America's Great Moral Crisis?" My answer was that homosexual activism is certainly a matter of great concern, but our country's greatest moral crisis is the lack of consciousness of God.

What has happened to the fear of the Lord? What has become of holy reverence? Where is the recognition that one day, all of us will give account to the Judge of the whole earth?

Almost 25 years ago, in my book *How Saved Are We?* I wrote a chapter entitled "Whatever Happened to the Fear of God?" Looking back today, almost a quarter-century later, the question is all the more urgent.

Twenty-five years ago, I wrote:

"America is ripe for judgment! Our selfish deeds have come up before the throne of God—and we have been found sadly lacking. Our sinful lives have been weighed in the balance—and we have come up pitifully short. Our preachers haven't clearly warned us, and our teachers haven't told us the whole truth. *Judgment is already in our land.*

"Isaiah warned Jerusalem many years ago: 'The Lord, the Lord Almighty, called you on that day to weep and wail, to tear out your hair and put on sackcloth. But see, there is joy and revelry, slaughtering of cattle and killing of sheep, eating of meat and drinking of wine! "Let us eat and drink," you say, "for tomorrow we die!"' (Isa. 22:12-13)

"Today we sing a new tune: 'Let us eat and drink and be glad. America shall not die!' Little do we realize that the land of the free and the home of the brave is perishing before our eyes.

"We are filled with an unreal optimism, not knowing that deterioration is already rampant in our culture. We sit smug and secure, proud and protected—but the divine axe has already been laid at the root of our society. We are too busy having fun and pursuing our dreams to even realize that America is falling apart."

Friends, if this was true back in 1990, how much more true is it today?

In *How Saved Are We?* I asked this simple question: "Then why aren't we busy repenting? Why are we hardly interceding for our land? Why are we so nonchalant and numb?"

The answer was also simple: "*It is because we too have lost the fear of God.* Judgment has become an almost meaningless word. We have forgotten the Law of the Lord. But His holy standards have not changed."

To be clear, I did not mean then and I do not mean now that as followers of Jesus, we are under the Law of Moses. What I did mean then and what I do mean now is that there are things God hated 3,000 years ago that He still hates today, and the nation that practices those things will come under His judgment.

And it is God's Law that often teaches us what God hates and what God loves.

For example, we see from the Law, reinforced throughout the entire Bible, that morality and honor are sacred before God, and the severe penalties prescribed by the Torah were given so that "all Israel will hear of it and be afraid" (Deut. 21:21, NIV).

The problem today, as I explained in 1990, is that “the exact opposite has occurred (we don’t need to start stoning adulterers again—but we’ve gone to the other extreme). We have not purged the evil from our midst! Blatant sinners go unpunished, high-handed criminals walk away free, and it is often the guilty who are protected by law. That’s why America has not ‘heard’ and is not ‘afraid.’ That’s why so many among us do such evil things again and again.

“Some judges have persecuted parents for home schooling their children while preventing other parents from knowing that their own daughters are having abortions. In fact, those who protest abortion are jeered; those who practice abortion are cheered. Perversity has gripped our land! ‘Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter’ (Isa. 5:20). Woe to the nation whose courts commit crimes! Recently a two-time murderer was released on *two dollars* bail—only to kill again!”

Sadly, “From our earliest days we are taught that sin is OK and that wrongdoing is only relative. We do what is right in our own eyes. Even our churches wince at the thought of discipline. We preach a great grandfather God. He is kindly and smiling and warm. He never gets indignant or angry. In His eyes we can do no wrong. He is blind to our sin and our guilt.”

And may I remind you that all this was written long before the rise of the modern hyper-grace message? Today it is even harder to proclaim these truths, given the compromised spirit of the age.

Please allow me, then, to share a few more quotes from *How Saved Are We?* with the hope that these words will stir your heart afresh.

I personally believe that God is going to shake our nation and

that a great awakening could be at hand. I also believe divine judgment is already in our midst as we reap the fruit of our sinful choices. So listen and read and pray and weep and seek His face.

It is not too late for God to move in our land. Yet it is anything but a time for complacency. As I wrote in 1990:

“Here is a frightful thought. *Every sin that is not under the blood must be punished.* Every transgression must be judged. God has a record of every abortion, every rape, every theft, every murder, every lie, every injustice, every blasphemy, every adulterous affair, every homosexual union, every pornographic act, every satanic ritual, every godless sermon – every single sin that has ever been committed in our country. He remembers all the cries of the helpless little children who have been abused, of the terrified wives who have been beaten, of the destitute poor who have been forgotten. Think of how much divine wrath has accumulated for our land! *The containers of judgment are brimming.*

“Our ‘anything-goes’ gospel has put us to sleep. We have been sadly deceived! But ‘God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows [this holds true for a nation as well]. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit will reap eternal life’ (Gal. 6:7-8). We have sowed to please our sinful nature. We are beginning to reap destruction. The Day of accounting is here!

“‘Do not pollute the land where you are. *Bloodshed pollutes the land*, and atonement cannot be made for the land on which blood has been shed, except by the blood of the one who shed it. *Do not defile the land* where you live and where I dwell, for I the Lord dwell among the Israelites [does His Spirit dwell among us today?]' (Num. 35:33-34). But with garbage cans overflowing with the torn-up bodies of aborted babies and our city streets stained with the blood of the slain our very

future hangs precariously in the balance.

"Let us tremble with fear for our land. The kindness of God has been spurned.

"So much light has been given to us. How much obedience will be required of us? So much knowledge has been imparted to us. How much responsibility lies at our feet?

"May God awaken us, may God bring back an awareness of His holiness and His justice, and may the name of Jesus be exalted again in our midst.

"It is not too late for mercy, but we would do well to pray the prayer of Habakkuk who cried out to the Lord, 'in wrath, remember mercy' (Hab 3:2)."

Have mercy on our nation, Father, and restore to us the reverential awe of the Lord.

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