

Economic Depression:

Whose fault, is it?

1. The economic status of the client nation to God is often a sign of the spiritual status of that client nation. As goes the believer, so goes the client nation to God. Deuteronomy 28:15, 23-24, “But it shall come about, if you do not obey the Lord your God, to observe to do all His commandments and His statutes with which I charge you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you: (23) The heaven which is over your head shall be bronze, and the earth which is under you, iron. (24) The Lord will make the rain of your land powder and dust; from heaven it shall come down on you until you are destroyed [economically].”

2. When economic depression occurs, we have a tendency to blame someone; for example, the Federal Reserve, the policies of government and bureaucracy, poor management, or the demands of labor, but whatever the apparent reasons, you can always count on the fact that the economic status is a reflection of the spiritual status of that nation.

3. Depression means the pivot is shrinking. It means believers are not advancing to maturity, and therefore God is exercising His divine prerogative in administering the Five Cycles of Discipline.

Definition

1. ‘Famine’ in the Bible refers to economic depression and natural disasters.

2. Jesus Christ prophesied there would be many wars and famines until His Second Advent. Matthew 24:6, “Furthermore, you will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars. Be alert that you are not frightened, for those

things must take place, but that is not yet the end [of the Jewish Age namely the Tribulation].”

There would be hot wars and cold wars (rumors of wars) from the time Christ spoke up to His 2nd Advent. Believers are to be alert in understanding the historical trends as well as understanding how to make application to these historical trends. Believers are not to be disturbed or frightened by these historical events. God’s provision and the spiritual life are more than adequate to handle these historical upheavals.

Matthew 24:7, “For nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom, and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes.”

These things will occur in the Church Age as well as in the Tribulation. So, when historical disaster occurs, do not assume that you [the church age believer] are in the Tribulation. There will be many wars and disasters during the Church Age. Just because you find yourself in the middle of a world war or world famine does not mean that the Tribulation has begun.

Mark 13:8, “For nation will rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places; there will *also* be famines. These things are *merely* the beginning of birth pangs [a reference to the Church Age].

3. Since the Bible advocates free enterprise as part of the Laws of Divine Establishment, any violation of this law through sin, human good produced in the Cosmic System, or evil [of course also produced in the Cosmic System] results in recession and depression.

4. In the natural course of life, economic recessions and depressions occurs periodically in order to cleanse the system of poorly run companies, malinvestment and greed etc. Furthermore, depression is inevitable when government tries to play God and in so doing loads down the system with unnecessary, burdensome and anti-productive bureaucracies.

5. Economic depression is also divine judgment and punishment of a nation in degeneration and reversionism, Isaiah 51:17-20, “Awake, awake! Rise up, O Jerusalem, [the people of Jerusalem are pictured as being in some state of inebriation which is a form of sublimation by which they try to escape reality.] you who have drunk from the hand of the Lord the cup of his wrath, you who have drained to its dregs the goblet that makes men stagger [maximum divine discipline]. (18) Of all the sons she reared, there was none to take her by the hand [no integrity and leadership in the land]. (19) These double calamities have come upon you-- who can comfort you [They have rejected the only source of comfort and encouragement; they have rejected the Lord Jesus Christ, the God of Israel, and they have rejected the Word.]? Devastation [by economic depression] and destruction [by starvation and the sword], famine and sword-- who can console you [no one since they have rejected truth and the source of truth]? (20) Your sons have fainted [they have been destroyed in battle]; they lie [dead] at the head of all the streets [there is no one to bury them]; like antelope caught in a net [helpless against divine judgment illustrated by a wild antelope caught in a net and so uses all of his strength in struggling to free himself, but is unable to do so.]. They are filled with the wrath of the Lord and the rebuke of your God [the nation is being punished since the unbeliever has rejected both the gospel and the Laws of Divine Establishment; the believer has rejected the spiritual life and the Laws of Establishment as well].”

6. When political power or the law tampers with free enterprise, it results in economic depression. Economic depression is always the creation of politicians and the poor decisions of government.

Recession and depression are part of the cycles of discipline

1. Economic recession is a part of the second cycle of discipline on a national entity as per Leviticus 26:18-20, “If after these things you will not listen to Me, then I will punish you on an intensified basis seven more times for your sins. [The first phrase implies that some wake up as a result

of the first cycle of discipline. Everything in the first cycle is intensified in the second cycle by seven. (19) Then, I will also destroy the arrogance of your power; [Notice that once the first cycle of discipline is administered and it does not turn around the nation, arrogance sets in. Today, we have the greatest arrogance in places of power. God actually punishes such arrogance among those in power who do not use their power properly.] I will make your sky like iron and your earth like bronze. [This refers to economic ruin in an agricultural society resulting in economic depression.] (20) Then, your strength will be spent uselessly for your land will not yield its produce, nor will the trees of the land bear their fruit." [No matter how hard you work, you cannot get ahead. This was written at a time when the economy was based on agriculture. So, the second cycle of discipline is a depression, bad social life, loss of national pride, and a people who even though they may work hard, cannot prosper.]

2. The fourth cycle of discipline, described in Leviticus 26:23-26, is an intensification of economic collapse. So far, nothing but grace warnings have been given. Now, God will really judge the nation. There will be great uncontrollable crime, military invasion and partial defeat, disease from overcrowding, a shortage of food causing starvation, and even greater natural disasters. "And if by these things you will not be corrected by Me, but will continue to be hostile toward Me [negative volition from cosmic involvement in the stages of reversionism], (24) Then, I myself will be hostile toward you, and I will strike you seven times more for your sins. [Again, there is the intensification of the characteristics of all the cycles, with something more added, as stated in the next verse.] (25) I will bring the sword upon you to avenge the breaking of the covenant, and when you retreat into your cities I will send an epidemic among you, so that you will be delivered into the hands of your enemies. [the breakdown of the military establishment. The Jews have to retreat into their fortified cities because their armies could not win in the field. Once there are

overcrowded cities, disease becomes rampant.] (26) When I cut off your food supply, ten women will bake your bread in one oven, and they will dole out your bread by weight, so that you will eat and never be satisfied."

[When an army begins to lose a war on its own soil, the first thing to go is food supply. So, one of the inevitable results of the fourth cycle of discipline is the beginning of starvation. Ten women baking bread in one oven means there is food rationing. Therefore, after eating a small piece of bread, you are just as hungry as you were before, and even more so.

3. So, the second cycle of discipline is economic recession; the fourth cycle of discipline is economic depression.

4. Economic depression often results in the collapse of a nation as the administration of the fifth cycle of discipline to the client nation, Deuteronomy 28:25-26, "The Lord shall cause you to be defeated before your enemies [after the economic depression mentioned in the previous two verses]; you will go out one way against them, but you will flee seven ways before them, and you will be an example of terror to all the kingdoms of the earth. (26) Your carcasses will be food to all birds of the sky and to the beasts of the earth, and there will be no one to frighten them away [to chase the animals and scare the carrion eating birds away]."

Economic depression is a test for the function of the faith-rest drill

1. Abraham and his family were facing an economic crisis in the land, but this was a test to see if Abraham would advance to spiritual maturity. However, he sought help in Egypt and the context of the following passage makes it quite clear that Abraham was failing in his spiritual life at this time. Genesis 12:10-13, "Now there was a famine in the land; so, Abram went down to Egypt to sojourn there, for the famine was severe in the land. (11) It came about when he came near to Egypt, that he said to Sarai his wife, "See now, I know that you are a beautiful woman; (12) and when the Egyptians see you, they will say, 'This is his wife'; and they will kill me, but they will let you live. (13) 'Please say that you are my sister

so that it may go well with me because of you, and that I may live on account of you.””

2. Economic depression is used to test believers regarding the place of doctrine in their lives and the logistical grace rationale, Genesis 26:1-3, “Now there was a famine in the land, besides the former famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went to Gerar, to Abimelech king of the Philistines. (2) And the Lord appeared to him [Isaac who was about to go to Egypt], and said, "Do not go down to Egypt; dwell in the land of which I shall tell you. (3) Sojourn in this land, and I will be with you, and will bless you; for to you and to your descendants I will give all these lands, and I will fulfil the oath which I swore to Abraham your father.”

The Importance of Preparation for Economic Depression

1. Genesis 41 teaches the importance of liquidity or cash in a depression. As Prime Minister of Egypt, Joseph, knowing God's plan, saw the seven prosperous years as a time to prepare for the seven depression years. By his preparation, Joseph was able to keep Egypt in a state of liquidity so that, during the seven depression years, Egypt not only survived but increased its economic power.

2. The importance of preparation can also be realized from watching the squirrel. The intensity of his nut-gathering activity in the fall indicates the type of winter to come.

Solution for Recovery from Economic Depression

1. Only the spiritual recovery of the believer will deliver a nation from its economic depression.

2. In 1929 when the Great Depression hit the United States, there was a rise of good Bible exposition. Some of the great Bible teachers of that generation became well known at that time. So, there was a spiritual recovery long before the United States realized economic recovery.

3. 2 Chronicles 20:9, "If disaster comes to us, whether by the sword of judgment or disease or economic depression, we will stand in Your presence before the temple that bears Your name and we will pray to you in our distress. Then You will both hear us and deliver us." [Economic disaster, like warfare or disease, always has a tendency to bring people back to the reality of eternal God. In the Old Testament economy was restored by mature believers going into the Temple and praying. Only the pivot of mature believers in the client nation can effectively restore the economy through their spiritual impact.]

4. When a client nation is under the fourth or fifth cycle of discipline, only the pivot of mature believers is able to provide the historical impact for deliverance. This emphasizes how important you are as a member of the royal family of God, and how important is your momentum in the Protocol Plan of God.

5. Psalm 33:16-19, "No king is delivered by the size of his army; no warrior escapes being wounded because of his great strength. A horse is an empty hope for deliverance; in spite of its great strength [horsepower], it cannot deliver you, but the eyes of the Lord are on those who respect [personally love] Him, on those who wait for His grace, to deliver them from death, and to keep them alive in economic depression." [In the time in which Psalm 33 was written, human solutions were such things as the size of the army, the strength of the individual, and the ability of the horse. Yet none of these can deliver. There are no answers to a client nation in apostasy apart from its spiritual recovery.]

Economic depression is often caused by rejection of Bible doctrine as it is taught by those authorized to teach it.

1. In the Old Testament, the authorized teachers were the prophets and Levitical priests. In the New Testament, they were first the apostles and now pastor-teachers. We're seeing such rejection today.

2. Psalm 105:15-16, "Do not touch [be hostile against] My anointed ones [those who teach Bible doctrine]; do My prophets no harm. [In other words, do not reject the message or the messenger. By rejection of the messenger, you reject the message.] (16) He called down famine [economic depression] on the land, and destroyed all their food supplies."

During economic depression, there is generally a lot of false teaching from false doctrine which intensifies the depression, Jer 14:13-28.

1. Politicians, religious types, and false prophets always promise no depression. Jeremiah 5:12, "They have said, 'Misfortune will not come on us; we will not see the sword or famine.'"

2. Compare that passage with Jeremiah 14:13-16, which says that ten years later, they were destroyed by both the sword and famine. They had tampered with God's laws for the economy. "But, 'Ah, Lord God!' I said, 'Look, the prophets are telling them, 'You will not see the sword nor will you have famine, but I will give you lasting peace in this place.' (14) Then the Lord said to me, 'The prophets are prophesying falsehood in My name. I have neither sent them nor commanded them nor spoken to them; they are prophesying to you a false vision, divination, futility and the deception of their own minds. (15) Therefore, thus says the Lord concerning the prophets who are prophesying in My name, although it was not I who sent them--yet they keep saying, 'There will be no sword or famine in this land'-- by sword and famine those prophets shall meet their end! (16) The people also to whom they are prophesying will be thrown out into the streets of Jerusalem because of the famine and the sword; and there will be no one to bury them--neither them, nor their wives, nor their sons, nor their daughters--for I will pour out their own wickedness on them.'"

God protects the mature and positive believer in time of disaster

1. Job 5:20, "In economic depression, He will deliver you from death, and in battle from the power of the sword." This mentions both the fourth and fifth cycles of discipline.

2. Romans 8:35-37, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall disaster, or anguish, or persecution, or economic depression, or privation, or danger from warfare? In all these things we win the supreme victory through Him who loves us."

Written by Claude M. Klein (Max)
Pastor of Grace Bible Church of Corpus Christi, TX
Contact: curlymaxk@hotmail.com

Based on the scholarly work of R.B. Thieme Jr.

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