

# THE UPWARD CALL

*Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet;  
but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead,  
I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God  
IN CHRIST JESUS.*

(Philippians 3:13-14 NASB)

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## ***America – Time to Wake Up!***

Articles #63, *Abrahamic Covenant*, and #64, *Fullness of the Nations*, contain much of the background information for what follows. If you have not read these articles, see the links below. In particular, article #63 offers some glimpses into the history of America and its relationship to ancient Israel. It has been proposed that America is a modern-day Israel or, if you will, the rebirth of ancient Israel. Obviously, this goes against the grain of commonly held views, especially among many evangelicals who have fallen into the trap of what is called *Christian Zionism*, viewed through the lens of the modern-day nation called *Israel* in the Middle East. Frankly, I do not intend to write on this particular subject anymore unless world events dictate it, so I am setting it aside.

*Fullness of the Nations:* <http://www.kingdomandglory.com/art/art64.pdf>

*Abrahamic Covenant:* <http://www.kingdomandglory.com/art/art63.pdf>

As the year 2014 comes to an end, it is being reported that Americans are more optimistic about 2015. It's good to be optimistic; after all, our nation has been through some tough economic times and many people have been suffering because of it. But, is being able to buy a bunch of Christmas gifts on usurious credit grounds for optimism? Or, is the Stock Market reaching stratospheric heights grounds for optimism?

As Christians, we should be optimistic (or, perhaps, content) regardless of what is going on in the world or even in our own environ, whether we have much or little (Philippians 4:12). Jesus is seated at the right hand of His Father, and we are seated with Christ in the heavenlies. **Our life is now hidden with Christ in God, and when Christ, who is our life is revealed, then we also will be revealed with Him in glory, for Christ in us is the hope of glory** (Colossians 3:3-4; 1:27). Could there be anything more optimistic than this? I doubt it!

But this begs for a few questions. On what basis are more Americans feeling optimistic about 2015? Is it wishful thinking? As a nation, have we turned a corner based on some facts, or are people being persuaded by feelings that might be fed by hyped-up optimism from the media, perhaps even our own government? Are we no longer a debtor nation but have become a creditor to the world? Have we given up our insane obsession with materialism and consumerism that drives people to stand in line for hours for the latest and the greatest *whatever*? Are the global corporations and financial institutions no longer dictating government policy and laws, and we have reverted back to a government by the people and for the people? Are our politicians now hugging trees together? Have we discarded the laws of men for the laws of God? Have we become a righteous and moral nation? Have we overcome racism? Have we laid down our arms for peace? Have we discarded our obsession with health care and the need for all sorts of drugs that are more dangerous than the condition they are trying to treat? Are we no longer the leader in the world for the amount of drugs we use? Have we discarded a justice system that is penal, in favor of one that brings about restitution for all parties? Have we chosen life over abortion? Have we declared that **Jesus, the Son of God, is the King of Nations**, especially of America? Hardly!

But let's not leave out the at-large church. Is the church no longer marketing its special brand of the spirit of the world, all in the name of Jesus, and exporting it throughout the world? Is the church in the world but no longer of it? Have the many tickling-the-ear, begging-for-money ministries of men shut down in favor of truth? Have the true and hidden leaders of the church that know the heart of God risen to the surface yet? Has the church finally figured out what its true message is? Has it come into the glorious truth of the good news for all mankind and all creation? Has the church figured out that a savior's job is to actually save ones that cannot save themselves, no matter how much free will they exercise? Does the church truly believe **God is love** to the ultimate good of ALL?

Well, I could go on with the questions, some of which, obviously, reveal my own biases, but I think you get the drift. Let us not deceive ourselves with a false reality. As of this writing, and as far as I know, the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ has not taken root among the nations. We are ruled by men, not by God.

Our leaders pride themselves in a feigned piety by closing their speeches with "**God Bless America.**" Our nation's motto is "**In God We Trust.**" Who among our national leaders is truly trusting God for divine wisdom to lead this nation? **They speak falsehood to one another; with flattering lips and with a double heart they speak. ... "With our tongue we will prevail; our lips are our own; who is lord over us?"** (Psalms 12:2-4). **'THIS PEOPLE HONORS ME WITH THEIR LIPS, BUT THEIR HEART IS FAR AWAY FROM ME. 'BUT IN VAIN DO THEY WORSHIP ME, TEACHING AS DOCTRINES THE PRECEPTS OF MEN.'** "Neglecting the commandment of God, you hold to the tradition of men" (Mark 7:6-8). Is this not an indictment of our nation and the church today?

We are a nation that was truly birthed by Almighty God and that has been blessed in great measure in its 407-year history since the first English colony was planted on our shores. In the last century, America has risen to become the greatest superpower on earth and a blessing to the people of the world. Many probably disagree, but America's foundation was and still is Jesus the Christ. Unfortunately for us, many false things have been built upon this foundation, not only in our governance but also in our Christian heritage, and we are suffering for it in our day. For the most part, we are a post-Christian nation, in spite of the many Christians living in our land and church buildings on many street corners. We need to sweep the foundation clean and get back to our Founder!

We have become like ancient Israel when the Lord called it *Jeshurun*. **"But Jeshurun grew fat and kicked—you are grown fat, thick, and sleek—then he forsook God who made him, and scorned the Rock of his salvation.... You neglected the Rock who begot you, and forgot the God who gave you birth"** (Deuteronomy 32:15-18). *Jeshurun* means "upright one." As a play on words, this is what Israel was supposed to be, an upright or righteous nation, but they had become fat and sleek, which is like saying: "You have become gross and trampled down or despised." Not a very good testimony! They were to be one thing but had become something entirely the opposite. They turned to other gods, that is, idols of their heart, and forgot the God who gave them birth.

Data would tell us that we have literally become fat, as in obese. This is a sign! As a nation, we have grown fat in our prosperity and have not only neglected but also forgotten the Rock of our salvation. But worse, we have become spiritually fat, thinking we are above reproach so that we now sacrifice to the idols of our heart.

We have forgotten our Founder and our calling as a nation. We are a type of Manasseh, the older brother of Ephraim, who was blessed with the name *Israel* to become a great people. **Manasseh** means "**forgetting**" or "**made to forget.**" America has been made to forget its birth and its roots that go back to Abraham and Moses.

**"For they are a nation lacking in counsel, and there is no understanding in them. Would that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would discern their future!"** (Deuteronomy 32:28-29 NASB)

Like ancient Israel, we are a nation lacking wise counsel. No matter where we turn, whether it is to government or the so-called *institutional* or *at-large church*, much of it is mixture and carnality. Where are the wise and the true leaders of God? Where are the ones speaking forth from the heart and wise counsel of God? Where are the ones who stand in the counsel of God and speak forth the oracles of God?

**Dear people of God in America, please hear this: We have forgotten the God who gave us birth. We don't even know our own history. We are blind and ignorant. As a nation (not necessarily individuals), we have turned from worshipping God in our heart to worshipping the idols of our heart. It is time to wake up and discern our future! Do we want to be chastised (perhaps severely) by God, or do we want to be blessed to overflowing?**

In spite of all this, there is good news. Israel is destined to be saved and to come into the glory of God. **So all Israel will be saved** (Romans 11:26). Or, better yet: **Indeed, as I live, all the earth will be filled with the glory of the LORD** (Numbers 14:21). Whom do we want to eliminate from this glory when God says ALL? Be assured; glory is coming, for the **King of Glory** stands at the door! Hallelujah!