

From Our Pastor

March 3, 2018

Sabbath Greetings to Everyone!

On October 24, 1979, the Washington Post reported, "President Carter yesterday approved most-favored-nation tariff treatment for the People's Republic of China, marking a major advance in U.S. relations with Peking. Carter, in a letter to both houses of Congress, urged the lawmakers to act "as soon as possible" to approve the trade agreement signed with Peking and accept the emigration assurances he supplied. Chinese Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping at the White House last February offered to "send you 10 million Chinese tomorrow" to meet the emigration requirements. Carter quickly declined. On Capitol Hill, Sen. Henry M. Jackson (D-Wash.) hailed Carter's decision as the most important development in U.S.-China relations since normalization of diplomatic relations last January."

In the thirty-nine years since, a succession of Presidents and lawmakers have renewed the favorable trade status with China and opened-up our markets even more with treaties such as the WTO. The theory was that, as totalitarian, socialist, and dictatorial nations were brought into trade with the world the regimes would soften and want to become more like free nations. Many are now surprised to see how this plan has backfired.

Columnist Pat Buchanan wrote this week: "We deluded ourselves. It did not happen. Xi Jinping just changed China's constitution to allow him to be dictator for life. He continues to thief intellectual property from U.S. companies and to occupy and fortify islets in the South China Sea, which Beijing now claims as entirely its own. Meanwhile, China sustains North Korea as Chinese warplanes and warships circumnavigate Taiwan threatening its independence."

Financially it has been mostly one sided. China has run up \$4 trillion in trade surpluses with the United States. Much of that money has been used to build a modern high-tech military that now threatens most of the Western Pacific.

The record of good-intentions-bad-results in US foreign policy is a constant. The invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan were based partly on the hope that the conquered nations would adopt democracy and be an example for their neighbors. Instead we have spent trillions for two decades of death and destruction with no hope in sight.

What is our fundamental flaw in reasoning these things out? It is simple, we have discarded the Bible, the Word of God, as our guide. Our Creator told Moses to write down the principles and statutes for Israel to be a successful nation. These truths apply to the USA, Canada, the UK and the other nations of Israelite heritage today. In Deuteronomy 17, he wrote that in future years when Israel had a king, the king was to, "write for himself a copy of this law in a book, And it shall be with him, and he shall read

it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God and be careful to observe all the words of this law and these statutes, (verses 18-20)." If our national leaders of the past forty years had studied and applied the words of wisdom from the God of Abraham we would have avoided many mistakes and terrible consequences.

One paramount principle given by God was that Israel was to be an example of a righteous, prosperous, and peaceful nation. So much so that other nations would want to be like them. (Deuteronomy 4: 6-7). This in fact has worked. During the past 250 years a number of other nations have seen the personal freedom, prosperity and blessings of the USA and have modeled their governing documents after ours. Coercion and bribery do not work. Nowhere is there a directive to invade or try to entice or bribe other nations to change their governments. It has rarely worked.

The principle is the same on a personal level. Jesus instructed us to be an example. He said, "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." (Matthew 5: 14- 16). We cannot force change on the world or others, but we are to be an example of the kind of life Jesus wanted us to live--keeping His laws and commandments--summed up in the two great commandments 1. "Love God with all your heart, mind, and being and 2. Love your neighbors as yourself."

As Paul instructed Timothy, "... be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. " (1 Timothy 4: 12)

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