

## FROM CANAAN TO CANADA

INTRO: I have called this message, "From Canaan To Canada." I thought maybe I should call it, "From Canaan to Canaanda." Why am I giving a message like this? In the early part of 2012, our Alberta Government worked on passing Bill C2. It had to do with the Education Act of Alberta. Over the years I had said, "I have been in Christian ministry for so or so long, and never yet has the Canadian government placed any pressure or restrictions on me. An official has never been to my office." Well, that is still true today, but in 2012, I remember for the first time ever thinking, "The time may come for us to look for another country." And I remember the mixed emotions that sort of washed over me. Early this year, 2015, there was a new move to moral decline in the Alberta public schools. And I want to talk a bit about that later.

It has ever been the general nature of people to gather together into various places and groups. I am not a historian, but even a casual reading of Scripture shows this. It is also the general nature of whole groups of people to grow and then to degenerate morally or to corrupt from within. This is also clear from the Bible as well. And there comes a time when God has to judge such nations.

The subject this morning is Canada. Does Canada occur in the Bible? Well no, but we may draw some parallels between Canaan of old and Canada today. I thought I might call this message, "O Canada", or "O Canaanda" because of the fast moral decline of our nation. How fast? Not long ago, I understand, one could not have a government job and be divorced. Today, one is not only to be tolerant of the most morally corrupt life-styles, but I have heard that in some jobs one is expected to be supportive as well.

I believe we must think through what the recent moves in our government means for the future. It must be clear to us that we are moving disastrously fast, and that if this trend continues, we will not long remain outside of the reach of being required to endorse very corrupt morals or meet the consequences. It has been a God-sent blessing that we are allowed to home-school our children, but we cannot rest assured that we will keep these

freedoms. There is evil intent in the direction of our nation and our province.

So I want to set out a Biblical principle for us this morning, and set our minds to begin to contemplate that we may have to look for a place of residence more friendly and tolerant to a people who want to live according to the Bible.

## I. CANAAN

### A. The History of Canaan

Let me begin by giving us the history of Canaan. We are well familiar with the account of the creation of Adam and Eve. After Adam and Eve sinned, we have observed that through the first two sons, one became a professing believer and one a true believer, and the professing believer killed the true believer. By the end of 1600 years man had greatly multiplied in number and in sin. That is ever the general trend wherever man gathers and multiplies. Go to Genesis 6:5 (read). Well, you know the story how God destroyed the world with a flood and started the post flood world with Noah and his family.

After the flood the Lord said He would never again destroy the world with a flood. Well, Noah came through the flood with three sons, and those three sons were the source of mankind after that. They were Shem, Ham and Japheth. And one day Noah got drunk. I cover some of the thinking regarding this in the messages on 'Wine and the Bible'. But there is a sin involved here of which we do not know the details and it is related to Ham. Whatever happened, Noah later said, not, 'Cursed be Ham', but cursed be 'Canaan.' Canaan was the son of Ham, but he seems to have carried on the sinful problem his father Ham had.

Well, Canaan would go to the land that would later be known as Canaan, and still later it would become Israel. And in this land a number of nations would arise of the descendants of Ham. And God knew what would happen through the sins of Canaan and that He would eventually have to destroy this nation.

### B. The Destruction of Canaan

So, I want to show you now the destruction of Canaan and the ground on which God destroyed the people groups there. Because God knew that eventually He would have to destroy the Canaanites, He began to prepare a man, in Ur of the Chaldees, to take over this land when the time was ready, for God had chosen this land for Himself, and for a people He would choose for Himself, but the time was not right. So we move to the call of Abraham, to where the Jewish people began. And we are now about 2,000 years after creation, and 2,000 years before Christ. So go to Genesis 12 (read 1-3). Now note God said He would bring them to a land, and He would make a great nation of them. And the land God would bring them, was the land called Canaan.

Well, Abraham traveled to Canaan, which later would become Israel, and there was a famine in the land and he went to Egypt. Later, Abraham left Egypt and Lot, his nephew, was with him; and because of the size of their herds they separated, and Abraham gave Lot his choice of the land before them. And, ungrateful nephew that he was, he chose the well watered land of Sodom and Gomorrah. But Abraham moved into Canaan.

Well, Abraham was in Canaan and God spoke to him there. Go to Genesis 15. We are here in a time after the birth of Ishmael and God has just promised Abraham a son through Sarah. So let us read Genesis 15:13-16. Now, what I want you to notice is that it says Abraham's people would go to a land that was not their own. This was Egypt, and this prophecy would be fulfilled at the time when Joseph became governor of the land during the seven years of famine. Notice in verse 16, it says that Abraham's people would return to the land of Canaan after the fourth generation. Because they lived quite long at that time, it would seem that a generation was about 100 years, which then corresponds to the 400 years of verse 13.

Now I want you to notice why God did not immediately bring Abraham's people out of Egypt back to Canaan. We find this also in verse 16 (read). Why was it? Because the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full! And here is the main principle I want to point out this morning. There comes a

time when a people's cup of iniquity comes to the full!  
There comes a time when God's love gives way to justice,  
and His wrath on a people is poured out without remedy!

And so it happened that eventually, Abraham and Sarah had a son, by name of Isaac. And Isaac had a son by name of Jacob, and Jacob wrestled with the angel of the Lord and became Israel, prince with God. And Jacob had 12 sons, and they sold Joseph, their brother to the Midianites and they sold him as a slave in Egypt. And you know the story, how in Egypt he eventually became the highest man in authority under Pharaoh, and how eventually his whole family came to Egypt.

But while Abraham was still in Canaan, the iniquity of Sodom and Gomorrah was filled up. The sins of Canaan were coming to final fruition. God Almighty destroyed all men, all women and all children. Let me challenge those who hold to the God of the Bible as a God of unconditional love, make that fit consistently with their theology. The Lord spared only Lot and his two daughters.

Well, Abraham had pled with God the night before. He said, "Lord, if there should be 50 righteous people there, would you destroy these cities?" And God said, "No. No, I wouldn't do that." You know how Abraham bargained with God. If there are 50; if there are 40, if there are 30, if there are 20, if there are 10 righteous people, would you destroy them? And God said, "No, I wouldn't do that."

And I think Abraham must have thought, "OK, there are Lot and his wife and his children, and surely he has turned a few to righteousness, surely 10 is safe." But the next day Abraham got up in the morning to see the smoke of these cities billowing into the skies. Scripture says the smoke that went up was like a furnace (19:28).

Well, it was some time after that, when Joseph had become governor of Egypt that Abraham went down to Egypt. And there his people, who were now the children of Israel, Isaac's son, abode their time until the iniquity of the Amorites was full. We might question why it is called the

iniquity of the Amorites? John Gill thinks it is because they were a very strong and powerful nation.

I suspect rather that it was more likely that the Amorites were the people who led the rest of the Canaanites into their wicked sinfulness. You see, there are certain sins, when you reach that point of degradation, you have reached the bottom of the barrel and God's love gives way to justice, and His wrath is poured out. Why does God wait that long? It is the grace and mercy and love of God that causes Him to wait this long. He waits until repentance is no longer possible. But when mankind reaches, what we might call 'God's red line', there is no hope of return. There is no hope of repentance. Man is too far gone to ever restore again and he will just reproduce people who have no chance of repentance. There is then but one remedy; destruction. Death to all. There comes a time when the destruction of all men, women and children is the greatest mercy that can be shown. What a horrible moment to come to. This is our principle this morning.

Well, what happened? Pharaoh had been preparing Israel to leave Egypt. You see, God's people had now made themselves at home in Egypt and they did not want to go to Canaan. And God allowed Pharaoh to stir up their nest and make it so uncomfortable that they eventually became willing to leave Egypt. I dare say a lot of Christians today, are comfortable in their Egyptian churches, and there seems to be no amount of shaking that will bring them out.

But the iniquity of the Amorites was full. It was time for Abraham's people to go home. And so it became so miserable in Egypt that they became willing to leave. And after God had His people out of Egypt, He had a very hard time getting Egypt out of His people. And so it took some 40 years to get them to the point where they finally began to destroy the people whose cup of iniquity was running over.

Now I want you to turn to Leviticus 18. In much of Leviticus God instructs the Jewish nation how to live in the land He is giving to them. And in this chapter he warns them of physical immorality. We won't read much of this because of the range of age represented here, but in 18:1-

20 God's people were instructed on whom you may marry and whom you may not marry. And in verse 20 is the warning against adultery (read). Adultery is a nation destroying sin. It is a sin that leads to divorce. And we must admit to this, our land is filled with the sin of adultery!

Then in verse 21 he warns against child sacrifice. And may I say this as well: Our land is filled with child sacrifice! Our sacrifices are to the god of pleasure. Do you think some of those Israeli children were unwanted children because of immorality? I understand they had loud drums to drown out the cries of those babies as they were burned to death!

But it gets worse and we will leave some of this but go now to verses 24-25 (read). Why would God use His people to destroy the Canaanites? They had reached the point of no return. Now go to Deuteronomy 7 (read 1-2, 16). Now notice this expression, "because of these sins, the land vomits out its inhabitants." The land of Sodom and Gomorrah vomited out its inhabitants with fire and brimstone. The Canaanites were vomited out of their land by the Israelis.

But let me read a few verses from Deuteronomy 9 for you. Here is what God said to Israel: "4 Do not think in your heart, after the LORD your God has cast them out before you, saying, 'Because of my righteousness the LORD has brought me in to possess this land'; but it is because of the wickedness of these nations that the LORD is driving them out from before you. 5 It is not because of your righteousness or the uprightness of your heart that you go in to possess their land, but because of the wickedness of these nations that the LORD your God drives them out from before you, and that He may fulfill the word which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. 6 Therefore understand that the LORD your God is not giving you this good land to possess because of your righteousness, for you are a stiff-necked people."

Now go to Deuteronomy 20 (read 16-18). Now go to Numbers 33 (read 50-56). But go now to Judges 1 (read 21a, 27a, 29a, 30a, 31a, 33a). Let me just make application here to us. One might parallel this to the Christian life, and take

note that if we do not deal thoroughly with sin it will come back to haunt us.

But all of that to draw this conclusion: There comes a time when a people's iniquity is full, and when that time comes God will deal with that people. God is longsuffering. He is patient. He stands ready to forgive. But there comes a time when a nation's cup of iniquity is full.

## II. CANANDA

### A. The History of Canada

We skip forward now in time from 1500 BC to 1500 AD to look briefly at the history of Canada. Just at the time Martin Luther led in bringing about the Reformation of the Catholic Church, and just as new Christians, who would become the Mennonites began to formulate their beliefs; explorers discovered Canada. Canada had first been discovered by Jacques Cartier, a Frenchman in 1534 but it took until July 1, in 1867, for the nation of Canada to be founded.

Let me just mention for our own interest's sake that one of the two main branches of Mennonites, the Swiss Mennonites who immigrated to the United States of America moved into Canada long before Canada was founded. They moved into what is today known as Ontario in 1776, some 90 years before the founding of Canada.

By the 1860s there were a number of British colonies in what is now Canada. These were British Columbia, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and the Province of Canada. The Province of Canada was what is now known as Ontario and Quebec.

Well, July 1, 1867 Canada as a whole was founded. About that time our Mennonite people, who had been invited to Russia in 1789 by Tsarina Katherine the Great, were beginning to experience pressures on their faith from Russian authorities and they were then where some of us are right now. They were beginning to look for a new place to live. Then, between 8 and 14 years after the founding of

Canada, the first of three waves of Russian Mennonites came to Canada.

When our people moved to Russia, they had moved there with assurance from Katherine the Great's promises that they would be able to freely practice their faith. Tsar Paul 1 reconfirmed that like this. "We confirm the religious freedom which was promised to them and their descendants in order that they might practice unhindered their tenets and customs."

Well, when our people moved to Canada this land has treated far beyond what we have deserved. It is my view that we have failed the Canadian government more than they have failed us, and we, more than the Canadian government, are responsible for the ungodly state of our nation. Furthermore, from my studies I would say it is safe to say we never moved into a country because we expected that country to live godly or to have godly schools for our children or that they would require godliness within the country. We agreed to move to a country when they granted us the freedom to live by our convictions within that country.

By 1910, I believe it was, the government required us to send our children to their public schools. Some of our people moved then and they live in places like Mexico today. But the rest of us bowed to governmental pressure and most of our generation went to public schools. Today our people are all up in arms about what is happening in our public schools and in our country. We feel the government owes us a godly school, but we never moved here expecting godly schools. And beyond that, we bemoan the ungodly state of our country, when in fact we should be up in arms about the decrepit state of our own spirituality, as a people who said they wanted to live by the Bible.

But as it stands now, we must consider that the days of our freedoms to live by our convictions may be numbered. So, in light of principle of Leviticus 18, we need to look at where we are as a country in the progression of moral decline.



## B. The Destruction Of Canada

### 1. Divorce

Today, Canada is fast being destroyed. Let me start with one of the most destructive moves of the Canadian government - the allowance of divorce. I am not a historian, nor do I know what transpired historically that the Canadian government did not allow for divorce. Without doubt it was connected to the Bible. I have also learned that it was not until 1968 that Canada had its first unified divorce law. From there it has progressed to such a degree that divorce is hardly an issue any more.

But even today, the Canadian Encyclopedia says:

Marriage remains one of the most important social institutions in Canada, but overall the marriage rate in Canada is declining and the traditional portrait of a family is being transformed.

Here are the statistics of divorce in Canada (**OVERHEAD 1**). You can see what happened when the laws were changed. The sad fact is that the evangelical part of Canadian churches has been as fast to make changes as the Canadian government. Our own Mennonites have been shamefully quick to follow suite.

Here is what I said in a message I called, "Why God Hates Divorce." "Why does God hate divorce? It leads, ultimately, to all kinds of other such sins and together these sins destroy nations. There may be evidence in Malachi 2 that divorce leads to violence and thus even war. God destroyed nations in the OT because of such sins." I pointed out in this message as well that Edward Gibbons 1776 book on 'The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire' gave 5 reasons why Rome fell. And here is reason number one why Rome fell, which he gave before other things like high taxes and I quote: "The rapid increase of divorce; the undermining of [the] dignity and sanctity of the home, which is the basis of human society." I believe

divorce, though without doubt it had its forerunners, opened the floodgates of sin in our nation of Canada.

We read in the OT that when Israel entered Canaan, they were to destroy man, woman and children. And why was that? Because if they left them alive, they would lead them into their idolatry. I am not saying that Canada should have killed all the natives when the whites came. We Christians had the Gospel, and we should have evangelized them, but we failed in this. We had all the freedoms we could have wished for, and what did we do? Our governments, though out of good intentions, supplied them with money for alcohol. And we? It's shameful to say we had little use for them and even called them names like, 'un Brit.'

Furthermore, the Catholic Church double doomed them to hell. They held to strict laws on divorce and no marriage for priests while these same priests practiced almost every kind of sin with those they supposedly converted.

Today, our own province's efforts are to make our schools user friendly to those with diverse sexual orientation, gender identity problems and who desire divergent gender expression. And one of the strong opponents to that, I understand, is a Catholic priest. And how is a news reading nation to make sense of preaching standards when those preachers themselves have a history of breaking every one of those standards in most horrible ways? How is a non-believing world to add up a Catholic call for righteous standards with the history of Catholic mal practices constantly in the news?

And I ask, is it not amazing that while Catholics and Evangelicals are losing credibility at a fast rate, native spirituality is fast on the rise and more acceptable in our public schools and public places than Christianity? Is that not what God warned Israel of? What has happened to us? Have we declined this far because we failed to evangelize and because we failed to stand on divorce and remarriage? Surely we must take

some responsibility for the moral decline of the nation. The Church should be the conscience of the nation, and one can hardly find a pulse in the conscience of the Canadian Church. May God break us before it is too late.

## 2. Homosexuality

Well, sin contaminates. Sin moves. Sin never sits idle. And today we are in a country that for some 10 years now has allowed for Gay marriages. Canada is on the forefront of being progressively sinful. It was the fourth country to make the step into legalizing Sodomy.

Recently, at our prayer meeting we were studying 2 Thessalonians 2. And in the context of speaking of the antichrist, who is to come, 2:7 says, "For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work..." And we pondered what the mystery of lawlessness is? I would take it that the law that is in view is divine law. Lawlessness, in this respect, is ignoring divine law. Divine law also governs divorce and native spirituality and homosexuality and so on.

And I have come to think that the mystery of iniquity, or lawlessness, is the mystery of how lawlessness works. How does it work? And as we discussed that we said, "How does such a thing as transgender or homosexuality come into society as a thing to be pampered and protected and even promoted? We discussed this: How could a man like Yassar Arafat, with a list of terrorist activities as long as his arm win the Nobel Peace prize? How could President Obama be considered for the peace prize? Surly how this works is a mystery, and it is lawless.

May I ask you, are you still an Edmonton Oiler fan? Their own captain marched in the Gay Pride Parade. And when he was asked by the media why he did it, he said, "Well, hey, why not?" I could...

Just a few days ago I taught in our Catechism class. And I said to the young people, "Are you getting tired of my harping on cell phones and the internet?"

OneNewsNow reported that Josh MacDowel asked Barna Group to do a survey of Christians on porn sites. Here is what the article said, "To his disappointment, the statistics proved what he had already feared - pornography has infiltrated the church, especially among young adults. Of young adults 18-24 years old, 76 percent actively - and these are Christians - actively seek out porn." How many others run into it unintentionally? How long can we continue?

Well, recently we were informed that our Alberta Public Schools are due for some major changes. Our liberal CBC put out an article titled: *Alberta Students Define Their Own Gender: 5 Big Changes In New School Guidelines*. And what are the five big changes?

1. Pick your own pronoun

Here is the first change: "All individuals have the right to be addressed by their chosen name (not the name the parents chose or that is on their birth certificate) and to choose pronouns that align with their gender identity and/or gender expression" (**OVERHEAD 2**). Here is what the Canada's brilliant intelligencia says, "Some individuals may not feel included in the use of the pronouns 'he' or 'she' and may prefer alternate prnouns, such as 'ze,' 'zir,' 'hir,' 'they', or 'them,' or might wish to express themselves or self-identify in other ways (e.g. Mx instead of Mr., Mrs., or Miss, or no prefix at all)."

Is the mystery of iniquity at work here?

2. Play for the boys or girls team

The second change is that a boy may play on a girl's team and a girl on a boys team. Some boys are thinking they may actually amount to something in sports now. You will not believe this. I was

told the other day that the woman of the year in 2015 was a man; by name of??? Caitlyn Jenner!

3. Use male or female washrooms or neither

The third change is that anyone may use male or female washrooms or neither (**OVERHEAD 3**). It is their choice. If one day a girl decides she is a boy, no problem. If a boy decides zirs a hir, don't worry about the signs on the door; they may all be them anyway.

4. Pick the change room you prefer

Change number four, you may pick the change room you prefer. You see, the reasoning goes like this: "When it comes to change rooms, all students are to have access to 'facilities that meet their individual needs and privacy concerns.'"

5. Establish gay-straight alliances

And finally, change 5, students have the right to establish Gay Straight Alliances and they need to be made aware of this right. What is a Gay Straight Alliance? It is a place on North American high schools and colleges that are intended to provide a safe, supportive environment for gay, bisexual, transgender and queer/questioning (LGBTQ) youth.

Here is one of the comments to that article: I'm declaring myself blind, mute, mentally disabled, first nation, and transgender, which means I can get ANY job I want.

CONCL: And so, let us conclude. O Canada! What time is it? It is time to wake up thou sluggard! And why did I give this message? I wanted to show us that judgment for our nation is coming. I have given you a very mild message in light of where we are. I also wanted to show us that God does have a red line. I wanted us to think about this in advance. I want us to see that things will not remain where they are even now. I gave this message is to cause us to begin to think that we may not always be able to have Canada as our homeland. Our own Mennonite people had some

250 years in Europe, though they were squeezed from one place to another. Then we had less than 100 years in Russia until the first boatload left, and we have now had 142 wonderful years in Canada. But the sun is setting on our days here.

Let me hold out one ray of hope. A true God sent revival could lengthen the life of our land. But we must not pray for that for our sakes, but for God's sake. And along with that, let me warn of a worse possibility. Warren Smith says there is a false revival coming, and that is also possible. And if that happens, it will probably hasten a time of decision for us.

Let me make one more observation. Our world has become a global village. Places to run to are becoming less and less. We may be faced with decisions and have to make decisions our forefathers did not have to face. And it is possible, because we are now a global village, that the next time God sends destruction, it may not be on a country, but on the whole world. Do you know what that is? That is the tribulation. That is when God pours out His wrath on the whole world. You might wish to read the book of Revelation in that light. The principle of this message? When sin reaches a certain level, the land spews out its people. In our country we are reaching out to that red line.