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HOW GOD IS USING HITLER

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Why Hitler? Why Japan? Why the bombs over London? Why gutted Warsaw? Why ravaged Rotterdam? Why Pearl Harbor? Why tens of millions under arms? Why the shadow of death covering an entire earth? Why hunger, nakedness, pestilence, concentration camps, confiscation of honestly accumulated property, why Chekas, Gestapos? History firmly, inexorably, inescapably answers these questions.

At the end of our own Revolutionary War, about 1790, France was in the throes of its revolution. The leaders there, not content with guillotining, defied God by outlawing religion. For the first time in modern history a nation went on record against God. Going to the streets of Paris, they borrowed a gilded courtesan, enthroned her in Notre Dame, and adored her as the Goddess of Beauty.

Infidelity swept the luckless nation. Immorality followed in its train. France became the nauseous cesspool from which vomited forth all that was evil, all that was degrading, all that was defiling in styles, in amusements, in stage, in literature. In the wake of this immorality growing out of this godlessness, Gaul succumbed to the ravages of the most unmentionable social diseases. The penalty continued even to recent years. France lost the present war in the dens of Montmartre. God is using Hitler to bring France to its knees in bitter penitence over its infidelity and immorality.

What happened in Germany? History will tell you that Lutheran Germany was a thrifty, clean-living, moral, sober, home-loving nation. A change came with the introduction of rationalism, the school of thought which we here call modernism. About 150 years ago, there arose in German universities a group of rationalizing, so-called Christian philosophers, who denied the divine inspiration of the Bible, the virgin birth of the Lord Jesus Christ, the efficacy of the atonement, the resurrection from the dead, the judgment, hell, and heaven.

The foundations of faith and the fear of God were banished from the hearts of too many Germans. French indecency, hitherto stemmed by religious barriers, swept into this land also. Family and community religion began to die out. Cruelty, greed, bestiality, dreams of world conquest possessed the minds of the rulers. The swaggering, arrogant, sword-rattling Junker became the symbol of Germania. The loss of the last war rankled in the hearts of the military. Depression and the undoubted tyranny of some of the Versailles provisions added fuel. Hitler came along to become the match to set flame to this tinder-dry brushwood.

Hitler and Nazism are products of all the above contributing factors, permitted and used by God to bring to heel a God-dethroning, Christ-denying world. Hitler is the

noxious fruit of rationalism, irreligion, selfishness, immorality. Given the fervent, forceful, faithful Lutheranism of Gustavus Adolphus and the other Protestant worthies, Germany could have stemmed and stifled the plague Nazism at the source. God is using Hitler to teach the rational outcome of rationalism, to bring the drifting German Christians, preachers, professors, lay folk, to a realization of their need of the Christ and the unadulterated, unexpurgated Bible.

What happened in Russia? The record is self-instructive. Under the czars, the Greek Orthodox Church priesthood was ignorant, iniquitous, ineffective. Instead of standing for and with the people, it joined hands with the tyrants to oppress, depress, and repress all of the commonality who, dissatisfied with their terrible poverty and illiteracy, were seeking a way out.

The Bolsheviki came along, essentially atheistic. They were of the people and, in theory at least, for the people. Overthrowing the government, they strove and are striving to banish all religion. * * *

The rationalism of Germany, the infidelity and immorality of France, crossed the English Channel, inundating the land of Latimer and Ridley, of Cromwell and Bunyan, of Spurgeon and Parker. England had forgotten the God of Kipling's "Recessional." Many of England's preachers, being more interested in the latest pronouncements from Rome (shades of the Puritans!) or from Russia, were in pinkish politics and communistic conclusions.

Formality supplanted fervor, while polite platitudes replaced passionate pleadings. So-called Christian England, the defender of Democracy, saw Japan rape China, Italy despoil Ethiopia, Germany ravage Czechoslovakia, without saying too much. It was only when the Hun battalions came in sight of the English Channel that the lion bestirred himself.

It may be I am wrong. I am a Jew. My hope, the hope of my poor people, under God, is in the victory of the Allies. America is my beloved mother. God give her triumph over all her foes! But England waited an unconscionably long while. God was largely out of the picture. It was freedom, commerce, open sea lanes.

What happened in America? Again German rationalism, wedded to French immorality, this time enhanced by English indifference, dampened the fires and forces of religion and godliness. Drunkenness, irreligion, licentiousness, pornography on stage, screen, magazine stand, library shelf, radio, let loose a plethora of filth which swamped the decency, the honor, the patriotism of young and old.

God is forgotten. Christ is dethroned. The Bible lies about gathering dust. The house of God is half-filled. The Sabbath is desecrated. The marriage vows are annulled. Social diseases have become a burdensome, murder-

ous, maddening problem. Soul-winning is a lost art. Intercessors are conspicuous by their absence. Souls, so multiplied multitudes of them, are hastening down the broad way to hell. Many of our preachers are modernistic, and most of those who still claim the fundamentals of faith as their belief are lukewarm.

A million and more men, snatched out of the normal, productive, nation-building walks of life, trained to maim, to kill, to destroy, many of them to saturate some foreign soil with their hearts' blood, is the bitter answer. Pearl Harbor is the bloody answer. Nationwide blackouts are the bleak answer. God is using Hitler to remind America of the religion of the Pilgrim Fathers, the founders of this marvelous land of ours.

The Word of God is clear. The requirements of heaven are definite. "Come, and let us return unto the Lord," is the wide-open, the only available, way out.—King's Business and Religious Digest.

A CHANCE FOR PROMOTION

Some things which appear in the funny columns may contain more wisdom than humor. This story was told on an Episcopal rector, but it has implications by which any preacher might profit. This rector's church had been one of the sleepy, self-satisfied sort, but suddenly it took on unusual activity. A number of things long needed were done, and the sleepy congregation seemed to have experienced a new birth. A brother clergyman asked the rector what had brought about the change. The rector replied that he had made two decisions: "First, the parish needed a new rector; second, I will be the new rector." Well, to make a long story short, there are churches like that one in all denominations—with the same need, that of a new minister. It also follows that a new minister might be had without an action of the church authorities. What many a minister needs is to make himself new. It can be done, and it would mean a new church. It is one way—and a most valid one—for the minister to secure promotion. He advances to a better church when he makes his church better, and no other minister needs to move in order that he might be promoted. No promotion can bring the thrill and the abiding satisfaction like that in which the preacher promotes himself. The preacher has a better church and the church has a better preacher.—Religious Telescope.

The Bible standard—a Christian surrendering himself with all his powers, with his time and thought and love wholly yielded to the glorious God who has redeemed him, and whom he now delights in serving, in whose fellowship is heaven begun.—Andrew Murray.

After all, it is better to be a poor rich man than to be a rich poor man.