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HISTORICAL PERSECUTION OF BELIEVERS

LESSON 22

IN OUR OWN TIMES

We have looked at persecutions from the time of the apostles of Jesus up to the founding of America. Now we shall speak of the present-day situation.

Jesus had stated to his disciples that all of us who believed on Him would be hated by the world. That remains true today, although we in America have had it relatively easy compared to other parts of our modern world. Yet, I do think that the climate of tolerance for Christianity in America is rapidly changing for the worse.

Many Muslim countries of the Middle East have extreme hatred for Christians and Jews. Any Muslim person who converts to Christ does so under the threat of death. Countries such as Iran, Iraq, Syria, and others persecute and imprison believers, especially pastors of underground house churches. Pastors in Pakistan are often murdered.

Hindu radicals in India burn churches and the houses of Christians. When I was in India in 2008, our travel plans had to be altered because Hindus had very recently murdered a number of Christians near the area we had planned to minister. The state governor deemed that it was unsafe for us to travel anywhere in that state.

Christians are oppressed and pastors imprisoned in China. The Chinese Communist party just in the last couple of months has ordered a search to find any and all religious literature and burn it.

Voice of the Martyrs' monthly magazine tells of many other such places and of the peril to those who place their lives on the line to distribute Bibles and literature. In America Christians are quickly losing our favored place in society and government. Fifty years of liberal (leftist) education in our public schools and universities has indoctrinated millions. They have been taught that God has no place in government, schools, or society in general even planting in their heads the humanist philosophy that each person has the right to determine for themselves what is good or evil. A quote from their ideology: "if there is a god at all, it is one who cares nothing about you."

Our religious conscience rights are being undermined. Businesses are boycotted for their biblical stand while large corporations donate hundreds of millions of dollars to the most ungodly agendas. Our right to free speech is being censored. How long is it until we also come under physical abuse and persecution?

Are we prepared for the worst? We must prepare spiritually and mentally. Draw as close to the Lord as possible. Prepare also for God's judgment on the country. This is coming in the

form of famine like we have never known. Store two or three years of non-perishable food. Have a way to convert tainted or contaminated water into potable drinking water. Have a way to protect your food supply from those who would try to violently steal it from you.

Do you think this is nonsense? No, my friend. It is coming, perhaps very soon, perhaps in a more distant future, but it is coming.

There may even be a time still in America where you or I will have to take our stand for Christ and threat of death as did the martyrs we have just studied. Psalm 91 gives us consolation that "God's got us," but that does not mean we will never face hatred and persecution. He is our eternal tower of refuge and safety, but we must first endure our time on earth.