

# Return to the Lord

Proverbs 14:34 (NIV84®)

Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people.

Proverbs 29:18 (NIV84®)

Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint; but blessed is he who keeps the law.

## I. A Revelation of God & His Kingdom

### A. Tremendous Power & Authority

Job 12:13–17 (NIV84®)

- <sup>13</sup> "To God belong wisdom and power; counsel and understanding are his.  
<sup>14</sup> What he tears down cannot be rebuilt; the man he imprisons cannot be released.  
<sup>15</sup> If he holds back the waters, there is drought; if he lets them loose, they devastate the land.  
<sup>16</sup> To him belong strength and victory; both deceived and deceiver are his.  
<sup>17</sup> He leads counselors away stripped and makes fools of judges."

### B. Mercy & Justice

Isaiah 1:18–20 (NIV84®)

- <sup>18</sup> "Come now, let us reason together," says the LORD. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.  
<sup>19</sup> If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the best from the land; <sup>20</sup> but if you resist and rebel, you will be devoured by the sword." For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

## II. Return to God

Isaiah 44:22 (NIV84®)

"I have swept away your offenses like a cloud, your sins like the morning mist.  
**Return to me, for I have redeemed you.**"

Acts 3:19 (NIV84®)

**Repent, then, and turn to God**, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord...

Acts 26:19–20 (NIV84®)

<sup>19</sup> "So then, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the vision from heaven. <sup>20</sup> First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and to the Gentiles also, I preached that **they should repent and turn to God** and prove their repentance by their deeds."

Malachi 3:7–9 (NIV84®)

<sup>7</sup> Ever since the time of your forefathers you have turned away from my decrees and have not kept them. **Return to me, and I will return to you**," says the LORD Almighty.

"But you ask, 'How are we to return?'

<sup>8</sup> "Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me.

"But you ask, 'How do we rob you?'

"In tithes and offerings. <sup>9</sup> **You are under a curse—the whole nation of you**—because you are robbing me."

Amos 4:1-2, 4-13 (NIV84®)

- 1 Hear this word, you cows of Bashan on Mount Samaria,  
you women who oppress the poor and crush the needy  
and say to your husbands, "Bring us some drinks!"
- 2 The Sovereign LORD has sworn by his holiness: "The time will surely come  
when you will be taken away with hooks, the last of you with fishhooks.
- 4 "Go to Bethel and sin; go to Gilgal and sin yet more.  
Bring your sacrifices every morning, your tithes every three years.
- 5 Burn leavened bread as a thank offering and brag about your freewill offerings—  
boast about them, you Israelites, for this is what you love to do," declares the Sovereign LORD.
- 6 "I gave you empty stomachs in every city and lack of bread in every town,  
**yet you have not returned to me,"** declares the LORD.
- 7 "I also withheld rain from you when the harvest was still three months away.  
I sent rain on one town, but withheld it from another.  
One field had rain; another had none and dried up.
- 8 People staggered from town to town for water but did not get enough to drink,  
**yet you have not returned to me,"** declares the LORD.
- 9 "Many times I struck your gardens and vineyards, I struck them with blight and mildew.  
Locusts devoured your fig and olive trees,  
**yet you have not returned to me,"** declares the LORD.
- 10 "I sent plagues among you as I did to Egypt.  
I killed your young men with the sword, along with your captured horses.  
I filled your nostrils with the stench of your camps,  
**yet you have not returned to me,"** declares the LORD.
- 11 "I overthrew some of you as I overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.  
You were like a burning stick snatched from the fire,  
**yet you have not returned to me,"** declares the LORD.
- 12 "Therefore this is what I will do to you, Israel,  
and because I will do this to you, prepare to meet your God, O Israel."
- 13 He who forms the mountains, creates the wind, and reveals his thoughts to man,  
he who turns dawn to darkness, and treads the high places of the earth—  
the LORD God Almighty is his name.

## Prayer & Proclamation

Psalms 25:4–9 (NIV84®)

- 4 Show me your ways, O LORD, teach me your paths;  
5 guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior,  
and my hope is in you all day long.
- 6 Remember, O LORD, your great mercy and love, for they are from of old.  
7 Remember not the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways;  
according to your love remember me, for you are good, O LORD.
- 8 Good and upright is the LORD; therefore he instructs sinners in his ways.  
9 He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way.