

Irreparable Damage

Bill Brinkworth

After King Solomon's death (I & II Kings), the kings that succeeded him were often less than desirable. Bad leadership has always been a problem for any country, including Israel. With early Israel as an example, we can see that godly leadership is rare.

Of the six kings that wanted to lead their country in the direction God commanded, Josiah (II Kings 22-23) was the most determined to please God and have Him bless his country. He halted many sins from his nation (II Kings 23:7,24).

After all the "good" this king brought about in Israel, I expected to read that God was going to spare the country His due wrath. However, God did not stay His hand of vengeance on the land, all because of the great wickedness of a previous king, King Manasseh (II Kings 21). *"Notwithstanding the LORD turned **not** from the fierceness of his great wrath, ... because of all the provocations that Manasseh had provoked him withal."* II Kings 23:26

Horrified, I related that time in history to what is happening in so many countries today. Leaders, like the wicked King Manasseh, are also ignoring God's law. They are allowing false worship to continue, in many ways, even giving it preferential treatment. There is no effort to turn to God. Abominations that

are forbidden by God are allowed and encouraged to continue. God is mocked, ignored, or forgotten.

Even more frightening is that if a godly leader did take the reins of a country and do all he could to turn the country to God and even have results, it might be too late! Irreparable damage may have been done that has angered a Holy God! The sins of past leaders may have angered God so much, that no matter what moral and biblical changes are made, it may be too late!

What can one do when God is so angered at what was done by previous leaders and the people? There is nothing that can be done if it is anything like what happened before King Josiah's reign. A nation will reap what was sown by wicked rulers. Only God can turn His wrath away. We certainly cannot make Him.

If a nation finds itself in the hopeless situation Israel faced in II Kings 23, individuals still must not give up and succumb to what everyone else is doing. Christians must still stand for right and live righteously and do all they can to change what is going on around them. Although nations may crumble, individuals must still determine in their heart to do what is right according to God's Word. We must do right, no matter what happens around us. *"So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."* Rom. 14:12 Also: Eph. 6:13.

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For Better or For Worse!

Bill Brinkworth

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."



Eph. 6:12

Since the first man and woman were in the Garden where God placed them, there has always been a battle between good and evil. Sometimes the battle is personal; sometimes, it is on a much bigger scale, as when it involves large groups of people or even nations.

None of the combatants in any of the battles have been totally righteous and without sin. Rarely has a country ever had a leader that was 100% sold out to God and obedient to His commandments. All the leaders were just like us — sinners. In most of the confrontations, there was usually one side more

unrighteous than the other. The upcoming election in America is no exception.

Proverbs 28 points out many of the opposing philosophies in personal struggles and the clashing of governing forces. Many of the battles are spiritual battles involving:

Guilt vs. Confidence. A person that is living by his own rules, principles, and opinions will not have total peace. They often make wrong decisions and see situations, obstacles, and people

Continued on Page 2

For Whom Should a Christian Vote?

Bill Brinkworth

"For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." Jude 1:4

When one is saved, he should be for what God is for and against

Continued on Page 3

For Better or For Worse!

Continued from Page 1

differently. Many times, they have their agenda, and it may not be for the benefit of most people. There is often guilt and a lack of confidence in what they are doing. However, one that has some grounding in biblical morality, and knows what is right in God's eyes, will stand up often against overwhelming odds that he discerns as unrighteousness.

(Read: Prov. 28:1)

Immorality vs. Morality. Even though many think biblical commandments no longer apply to "modern" man, they do! There will usually be many that feel comfortable doing wrong, and if they have their will and way, they will bring a country to destruction. Sin NEVER prospers anyone! However, the bold stand of the few that understand biblical principles, live by them, and boldly proclaim them can preserve a nation from being destroyed. There will often be a struggle between the two groups. (Read Prov. 28:2,4)

Spiritually blinded vs. Spiritually discerning. Those following their own rules and ways think they know what they are doing, but they are just "shooting in the dark." Their ways usually fail and hurt many. Those that wholly follow and obey God's commandment, found in His Word, will make more righteous decisions because God is never wrong! (Read: *Prov. 28:5:6, 9, 10*)

Shame vs. Rejoicing. When the wicked rule and reign, there is

shame, uncertainty, and failure. However, when righteous principles are honored, there is peace among the people, and the people are happier. (Read Prov. 28:7,12, 13,18)

Easy Money vs. Hard Work. Often to gather votes or popularity, many are offered free handouts as an incentive. However, according to the Bible, hard work gives more rewards than a temporary bribe. (Read Prov. 28:19, 20)

There never will be a perfect governing force when sinful people are in charge. Even the godliest biblical leaders sinned and made mistakes. Today's government will never be any different. Government will never be perfect until Jesus rules man during the Millennial Reign. Meantime, in countries where people can pick their leaders, it will always be a choice between evil and not so evil. If you have an opportunity to vote for a leader, make sure that it is for the one who adheres most closely to godly principles. God's ways always work; man's do not! Do not shirk your responsibility to vote!

"By not voting, you are allowing the votes of those without biblical guidelines to determine who your nation's leaders are." — B.B.

For Whom Should a ...

Continued from Page 1

what God opposes. He should be as Christ-like as possible.

With this in mind, if Christ were voting, how would He vote? He would surely vote against those standing against biblical principles and vote for those standing for godly principles.

Since no candidates make 100% of their decisions based on biblical guidelines, our vote should be for one that is the closest to using these guidelines. There are several areas a nominee's philosophy, life, and standards that can be examined before casting a vote for them. Here are several:

✿ What is their personal life like? If the nominee's life includes acts of adultery, drunkenness, filthy language, dishonesty, lack of attending church, and other signs of wanton ungodly living, how can he be expected to make decisions based on biblical principles and standards?

✿ Where does he verbally stand on the things of God? If he is involved in a church or religion that does not concur with what the Bible teaches, he cannot be expected to make biblically correct decisions.

✿ What is the value of the nominee's word? Does his word mean anything?

✿ Is the politician more interested in being elected than leading the country in a moral,

Bible-principled direction?

✿ Where does he stand on abortion? Any official that has such an esteem for the taking of innocent lives should not be a person anyone would want voting on issues dealing with euthanasia, healthcare to those that are older, abortion, special needs folks, etc.

✿ Where does he stand on rewarding citizens for not working and getting government support? God wants us not to be slothful, but to be workers.

✿ Does he believe that each person should learn the consequences of their wrong decisions, or do they think that other people (government's money) should help finance their mistakes?

✿ Where do the politicians stand on punishing crime. Are they for things God is for and against the things He is against?

✿ Who are their associates? If one's associates have godless lifestyles and are living immorally, one can assume that kind of lifestyle does not bother the politician, and they would never cast a vote condemning it.

✿ Where do they stand on drugs, alcohol, and other abuses?

What does the nominee's life show onlookers? If you voted for the want-to-be-leader, would you be picking a choice that abides as close to godly principles as the choice allows? Would Jesus consider voting for that nominee?