

The Power of the Statesman Kneeling Before God

God tells us in His instruction book:

As I live, says the Lord, every knee will bow to Me, and every tongue will give praise to God. (Romans 14:11)

How does this relate to the Statesman? And what responsibility does this have for the Statesman to model this before our people?

Solomon, as a God-fearing young ruler, publicly knelt before God as he led his people in dedicating the temple (1 Kings 8:54).

Daniel, who served the Babylonian Kings Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, and Darius, and the Persian King Cyrus, regularly knelt before God (Daniel 6:10).

President Lincoln, in the midst of the insurmountable challenges he faced, expressed:

I have been driven many times to my knees, by the overwhelming conviction that I had absolutely no other place to go.

Is there a lesson we can learn from this? Kneeling before a person is a sign of respect and admiration. It may also have the added significance of imploring that person for help as expressed by Lincoln.

Kneeling before God certainly acknowledges His existence and that He is greater than us. It also conveys our sense that we are dependent upon Him. In the case of Lincoln, all of these were represented. How should we react to this act by Lincoln? Should we lessen our respect for Lincoln as he expressed his inadequacy before God and need for help from a being he could not see with physical eyes? Or should we do the opposite and admire him for an action that we may not previously have recognized as the action of a Statesman?

Along the way in my journey, I had the privilege on several occasions of meeting with the President of one of our most influential nations. On each occasion, because of his stature, there were always numerous people around. On one especially memorable occasion, he took me away from the crowd and into a private room, closed the door, and I followed him in getting down on our knees to pray together. Although his stature was great in the international community, he humbled himself before our Lord. In fact, this increased my respect for him all the more. It also caused me to ask whether, in fact, his stature within the world community was not due to the way he humbled himself before his Creator.

On another occasion, in meeting with the President of a greatly troubled nation, I shared Lincoln's testimony during his extremely difficult time, as quoted above. Later, at the end of our meeting, when I asked if I might pray for him, he responded "Let us do like Lincoln did and get down on our knees" and he led his delegation of 7 or 8 people as we all got down on our knees to pray.

From the Bible passage we began with, we know we are moving toward a time when every knee will bow before our Father. In parallel, God gave promises to ancient Israel as a model for the blessings He desires to bestow on all nations. As God was promising unbelievable blessings for Israel before it came into existence, He also promised those

blessings to other nations that would embrace the obedience He intended for Israel to model:

I will make you into a great nation, I will bless you, I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.... all the peoples on earth will be blessed through you. (Genesis 12:2-3)

Sadly, neither ancient Israel nor any nation since has received the full extent of those intended blessings because of a lack of obedience. Seemingly, an essential ingredient to receiving that blessing is us kneeling before our Lord, from the greatest to the lowest of us.

There are two aspects of our kneeling before God. As a private matter, when we kneel before God, we are acknowledging that we are a steward entrusted with the care of our people and that we have limited power, depending upon our Maker for what we are lacking in power and ability.

Secondly, the common people, who are the backbone of our nations, are often closer to life or death survival than those in the leadership. Allowing ourselves to be seen expressing our dependence upon our Maker can be expected to be an encouragement to them.

As the psalmist expressed:

Come, let us worship and bow down, Let us kneel before the LORD our Maker. (Psalm 95:6)

Let us begin by expressing our dependence upon our Maker who is also our Lord. As we express our dependence upon God, He has promised to add His dimension on our behalf. As one who truly cares about the well-being of our people, can we do anything else?

Let us kneel before the Lord our God!