

The Role of the Statesman in the Midst of National Crisis

The Statesman must help the people answer the question “Where is God in the Midst of National Uncertainty or Crisis?” Not only must the Statesman be able to answer this question for the people, but the Statesman must be able to answer this for his or her own self.

Mankind is most comfortable when there is a peaceful environment and an absence of crisis. Our Creator has designed us with this need. There are at this moment many sources of uncertainty in our nations.

Thus, the significance of what Jesus said:

Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Your heart must not be troubled or fearful (John 14:27).

We as humans have a need for peace. As a result, we have a need to be close to God.

And there is no rock like our God (1 Samuel 2:2).

Trust in Him at all times, you people... God is our refuge (Psalm 62:8).

For most people, He is a source of great assurance for us. And He has promised to be close by, to give us His security and even to protect us. Listen to these truths expressed by those who knew God:

You are near, LORD (Psalm 119:151).

The LORD is near all who call out to Him, all who call out to Him with integrity (Psalm 145:18).

The intended closeness is a constant reminder in His instruction book:

For what great nation is there that has a god near to it as the LORD our God is to us whenever we call to Him? (Deuteronomy 4:7)

The LORD is near the brokenhearted; He saves those crushed (Psalm 34:18).

What an amazing reality that the God of the Universe would provide this need that we have — that He would desire to have this closeness with us and provide us with this comfort.

There is the clear idea of an intimate relationship between God and man. The idea of distance between us and God is contrary to our Creator’s intent. Hence, the question needs to be asked: “When God seems further away, who actually moved? Is it God, or is it us?” In reality, it is us.

Stepping away from God is an act of disobedience. As we have been told:

But your iniquities have built barriers between you and your God, and your sins have made Him hide His face from you so that He does not listen (Isaiah 59:2).

They seek Me day after day and delight to know My ways, like a nation that does what is right and does not abandon the justice of their God. They ask Me for righteous judgments; they delight in the nearness of God (Isaiah 58:2).

At times like this, it is worth considering what God said through the Apostle Paul to First Century Athenians who worshipped multiple gods, but not the one true God:

From one man He has made every nationality to live over the whole earth and has determined their appointed times and the boundaries of where they live. He did this so they might seek God, and perhaps they might reach out and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us (Acts 17:26-27).

How refreshing it is to be reminded that He is close at hand and will respond to us if only we will reach out to Him:

Be still and know that I am God (Psalm 46:10).

Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, sinners, and purify your hearts, double-minded people! (James 4:8).

One translation of this latter passage expresses it this way:

Come close to God, and God will come close to you. Wash your hands, you sinners; purify your hearts, for your loyalty is divided between God and the world.

When we seek God with all of our hearts and draw near to Him, we will feel His presence once again.

What is our responsibility as their leaders?

We must do everything we can to encourage this closeness for our people to the One who desires this intimate relationship with them.

King David encouraged his people to draw close to God with words such as these:

The righteous one rejoices in the LORD and takes refuge in Him (Psalm 64:10).

Abraham Lincoln, as President, challenged his people:

It is fit and becoming in all people, at all times, to acknowledge and revere the Supreme Government of God; to bow in humble submission to His chastisement; to confess and deplore their sins and transgressions in the full conviction that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; and to pray, with all fervency and contrition, for the pardon of their past offenses....

Secondly, we must cautiously and purposely govern with the goal of providing for the governed:

a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity (1 Timothy 2:2).

This is our responsibility before God. We have a stewardship, and He will hold us accountable.

Thirdly, we also are human beings with the same needs as all human beings. In the midst of the uncertainty challenging our nations, we need to be able to experience the peace that closeness to God that He provides.

WHAT AM I DOING TO ENSURE THAT I REMAIN CLOSE TO MY MAKER AND EXPERIENCE HIS PEACE EVERY DAY?

As we pause to celebrate coming of Jesus, let us see this event for what it is: God coming so near to us that we could see Him and touch Him.