

# Who Holds the Hand of the Statesman?

The Statesman stands out in his vision. As analysts have pointed out:

*The great difference between the real statesman and the pretender is that the one sees into the future, while the other regards only the present; the one lives by the day, and acts on expediency; the other acts on enduring principles and for immortality (Edmund Burke).*

*A politician thinks of the next election, a statesman of the next generation. A politician looks for the success of his party; a statesman for that of his country. The statesman wishes to steer, while the politician is satisfied to drift (James Freeman Clarke).*

The Statesman is the rare individual who does not think like everyone else does. The Statesman stands out against the majority who are politicians. Considering how rare they are, to whom can the Statesman turn for advice and guidance with confidence? There may be no human to whom the Statesman can turn with confidence that they will give him the help that he seeks in support of his vision.

We all need someone we can trust, from whom we can seek wise counsel as a check on our human wisdom to ensure that there is no human error in our plans. We all need someone we can trust to literally hold us by the hand, someone we can trust to guide us and support us. Because the Statesman is often operating in a direction diametrically opposed to the norm, on whom can he count for support? Statesmen are human beings largely travelling into uncharted territory. As a human being, when is a time when you felt fully secure? I sincerely hope this takes you back to childhood, when a loving parent held you by the hand. As an adult, how can we capture that same sense of security? As we consider this issue, let us consider the truly helpless in our societies. When no human is available to help them, the One they must reach out to is the same One the Statesman must reach out to – Almighty God Himself. Clearly, in order to do this, we must gain confidence in His ability to meet our needs.

Although the context is different, God made clear His basic principle when He said to one He addressed as “My servant”:

*I am the LORD, I have called You for a righteous purpose, and I will hold You by your hand. I will keep You and appoint you... (Isaiah 42:6).*

Although this is part of a passage that points to Jesus, it has wider application that, I submit, applies to all of us. And God clarified, seemingly to a broader audience that He addresses as His servants:

*Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be afraid, for I am your God. I will strengthen you; I will help you; I will hold on to you with My righteous right hand (Isaiah 41:10).*

“I will hold on to you with My righteous right hand.” – This is God’s way of supporting those humans who are His instruments. Applying this to the Statesman, God said of King David, whom He referred to as “My servant”:

*My hand will always be with him, and My arm will strengthen him (Psalm 89:21).*

I believe this is what made David, perhaps one of the great Statesman of all time, and can help us to be a Statesman. Listen to the ways King David expressed this understanding of God holding him by the hand throughout his life:

*I follow close to You; Your right hand holds on to me (Psalm 63:8).*

*Your right hand upholds me (Psalm 18:35).*

*You will extend Your hand; Your right hand will save me (Psalm 138:7).*

*Your right hand will hold on to me (Psalm 139:10).*

It was his continual understanding that God was holding him by the hand, as hopefully your father did for you as a child. Let us attempt to glean truths from the promises we began with in Isaiah's writings:

*I am the LORD, I have called You for a righteous purpose, and I will hold You by your hand. I will keep You and appoint you... (Isaiah 42:6).*

*Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be afraid, for I am your God. I will strengthen you; I will help you; I will hold on to you with My righteous right hand (Isaiah 41:10).*

First, there is the promise: that He will "hold us by the hand". There is an interesting choice of words here. The reality is that when we are held securely by the hand, we still may stumble. This is not a promise that we would never face obstacles or never trip over them, but that we will not and cannot fall. When we stumble, we cling even more tightly to the hand that is holding us, and this is what God intends. Just to clarify, when we place our hand in God's hand and we stumble, it is possible to fall, but only if we let go of God's hand – if we intuitively attempt to right ourselves and, in the process, let go of God's hand to regain our balance. But it is at times like this that we must cling all the more tightly to Him.

Then, observe the purpose: "a righteous purpose". From this, we learn that the endeavour God supports in holding us by the hand is "a righteous purpose." We recognize that the only purpose we can be sure is a righteous purpose is the one He directs us to take. As we undertake that "righteous purpose", note what He provides: "I will strengthen you; I will help you".

What does it mean to allow God to hold us by the hand? What does it mean to hold God by the hand? We have seen King David's expressions as Statesman, where he emphasizes to God "*I follow close to You*". President Abraham Lincoln expressed it in a similar way:

*I have been driven many times upon my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I had nowhere else to go. My own wisdom and that of all about me seemed insufficient for that day.*

This is Lincoln, as Statesman, describing God holding him by the hand and his holding onto God's hand. We were designed by our Creator to need Him and, in the process, to grow more deeply into an intimate dependence upon Him. One reminder is the prayer of the psalmist:

*Open my eyes so that I may contemplate wonderful things from Your instruction. I am a stranger on earth; do not hide Your commands from me (Psalm 119:18-19).*

I submit that this must be the mindset for the Statesman allowing God to hold him by the hand.

**Application to the Statesman:** Do I recognize my own need to have someone I can trust and I know will hold me by the hand? Do I trust the Creator of my life and this world to play that role in my life? Clearly, He wants to hold my hand. Am I willing to hold His? What steps would I have to take to do this?

Let us each actively work to tighten our grip on our Creator's hand through increasing our knowledge of Him through His instruction and strengthening our trust in Him.