

The Lakeview Lamp

“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” - Psalm 119:105

June 22, 2007

The Rationale for Evaluating Political Leaders

Wayne Jackson

By what standard should one evaluate a political leader? Does the Bible shed any light on this question?

Jeroboam II was the 13th ruler of the northern kingdom of Israel. He reigned for some forty-one years (793-753 B.C.) – during those days when both Jonah and Amos were doing their prophetic work. His reign was one of the most prosperous in the 250-year history of northern Israel. He successfully conducted wars against Syria, and he re-captured territory that Israel had not possessed since the days of David.

During this era, Israel was very stable economically. Trade routes developed and wealth poured into the nation. The upper classes especially prospered, with certain families growing very wealthy in the acquisition of both land and money.

In view of his remarkable success as a political leader, one would think that Jeroboam’s considerable abilities would have been heralded enthusiastically in the Old Testament record. But such was not the case. As able as the ruler was in regal affairs, the Bible largely ignores his administration. The writer of **2nd Kings** records Jeroboam’s entire regime – forty-one long years – in just *seven* verses (**2 Kings 14:23-29**). And this is his brief epitaph – *“he did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah.”*

This account, as well as numerous others of similar import, clearly reveal the fact that the Lord does not evaluate political administrations in the same way that men do. Of a politician who has built roads, increased revenues, expanded boundaries, and created better living conditions, most would say – “He was a great leader!” However, it is not riches that make a great nation, it is righteousness (**Proverbs 14:34**). It is not fortune, but faith. It is not smooth highways, but spiritual homes!

It is interesting to reflect upon how Americans generally evaluate national leaders today. It is superficial in the extreme. We want to know this. Can he lower taxes? Not, can he reduce moral corruption? Will he generate jobs? – rather than whether he will attempt to initiate a regeneration of the nation's ethical policies. Can we expect a higher standard of economic living? – irrespective a lower, sleazier level of laws that accommodate debauched lives.

What each citizen needs to be asking about potential leaders are inquiries of this substance. Does he acknowledge God as the sovereign over the nation? Does he seek to help the innocent and down-trodden find a fair level of justice? Does he value the sacredness of human life, of humanity as being in the “image” of the Creator (**Genesis 9:6**)? Does he act on principle, or is his approach the way of political pragmatism? Will he labor for the stability of the human family (the *divine* arrangement), or will he cater to special interest groups who craft their own values from the perversity of their self-indulgent lifestyles?

Any individual who is swayed more by economic stability than moral stability has revealed a library of information relative to the content of his own character. Such folks are oblivious to the truth that prosperity is the result of *goodness*, not evil.



Preacher's point – With an election coming up in a few months, and the candidates for office being narrowed, many of us are evaluating potential leaders. May this article help us all do so with the proper perspective. Remember, "*Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people*" (**Proverbs 14:34**).

You and the Bible

Leroy Brownlow, titled

Do not read anything into the Good Book, if you wish to get anything out of it – just take it straight. Instead of trying to alter your Bible to fit you, change yourself to fit it; otherwise you will have religion's conformity in reverse. What you think of the Bible does not affect it – just you. If it appears too deep, you surely need the exercise it affords to think deeper. If it looks too exacting, you definitely require its influence to keep from straying. And if it seems dry, it might be that you have allowed too much dust to accumulate on it.

"My heart is steadfast, O God; I will sing, I will sing praises, even with my soul." – **Psalm 108:1**

News and Notes

The **meal list for the upcoming meeting** is posted in the back. Both lunch and supper times need to be taken, so please do your part and sign up soon. Both J.R. and his wife Sue will be here and need meals.

Mary Burnett remains on Hospice care, with up and down days.

Connie Cobern did not have a good week after battling pneumonia.

Metty Fain remains in Highland Manor Nursing Home; Room B2; 215 Highland Circle Dr; Portland, TN 37148.

Estelle Hayes fell two weeks ago and is now having problems with her knee.

Macy Nicholson has an intestinal virus with ulcers in her mouth. **Jennifer** is home with her.

Fran Pickens is back at Connie's house and is now alternating time between there and another daughter's house.

Cotton and Nancy Read are both still not doing well. He continues to have problems breathing, and she continues to have problems with her eyes.

Joyce Werner still has a rash but overall is doing better. She goes back to the doctor tomorrow.

Out of town, Visiting: **Bonnie Brown.**

New Reports from men we support: **Allen Malone** (Vietnam), **Bob Nichols** (Japan).

Lakeview church of Christ

132 New Shackle Island Road

P.O. Box 514

Hendersonville TN 37077

Building: 615-824-1376

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Troy Nicholson

troyjenn@bellsouth.net

"Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks" (1 Thes 5:16-18).