

Exercise Thyself

I once read an observation concerning evil, which said (in essence), “if you do not fight evil, then you command it to be done” (author unknown). Individuals speak of the decaying nature of our society, but fail to see their part in its progress by fueling the fire: “Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people” (Proverbs 14:34). We want to blame the rich for creating the poor, as if making the rich poor would make the poor rich. Under the law of Moses, it was said, “For the poor will never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt surely open thy hand unto thy brother, to thy needy, and to thy poor, in thy land” (Deuteronomy 15:11), and likewise, Jesus said, “For ye have the poor always with you” (Matthew 26:11). There are plenty of people to blame for the condition of our nation, and the first in line is the man who lives behind my eyes.

Contemplating upon this issue, I was brought to remembrance concerning two kings of the Jews: one evil, Ahab; one good, Jehoshaphat. During their reign, “it came to pass...that Jehoshaphat the king of Judah came down to the king of Israel. And the king of Israel said unto his servants, Know ye that Ramoth-gilead is ours, and we are still, and take it not out of the hand of the king of Syria? And he said unto Jehoshaphat, Wilt thou go with me to battle to Ramoth-gilead? And Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, I am as thou art, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses.”

“And Jehoshaphat said unto the king of Israel, Inquire first, I pray thee, for the word of Jehovah. Then the king of Israel gathered the prophets together, about four hundred men, and said unto them, Shall I go against Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And they said, Go up; for the Lord will deliver it into the hand of the king. But Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of Jehovah besides, that we may inquire of him? And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, there is yet one man by whom we may inquire of Jehovah, Micaiah the son of Imlah: but I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil. And Jehoshaphat said, Let not the king say so. Then the king of Israel called an officer, and said, Fetch quickly Micaiah the son of Imlah. And when he was come to the king...he said, I saw all Israel scattered upon the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd: and Jehovah said, These have no master; let them return every man to his house in peace. And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, Did I not tell thee that he would not prophesy good concerning me, but evil?”

Micaiah was ultimately imprisoned, but before he was taken away, Micaiah said to Ahab, "If thou return at all in peace, Jehovah hath not spoken by me. And he said, Hear, ye peoples, all of you" (1 Kings 22:2-28).

Four hundred to one, those were the odds Micaiah faced. The "one" however, spoke with the wisdom of God. Give me one man with wisdom over four hundred that have a stake in the matter, for "The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of wisdom; And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding" (Proverbs 9:10).

Where does your wisdom reside? To whom do you look for answers concerning this life, and that which is to come? Our rulers, our people, our nation desire hope but see only destruction! Why? Because their trust is in man and not God. How long shall we provoke the patience of our Creator?

Remember the words of the apostle Paul, who said, "but we preach Christ crucified, unto Jews a stumblingblock, and unto Gentiles foolishness; but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For behold your calling, brethren, that not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, [are called]: but God chose the foolish things of the world, that he might put to shame them that are wise; and God chose the weak things of the world, that he might put to shame the things that are strong" (1 Corinthians 1:23-27).