

## **Nothing has Changed I**

Solomon said, “That which hath been is that which shall be; and that which hath been done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun” (Eccl. 1:9).

When considering the condition of the land within which life is experienced, a common thought process has to do with the decline in moral stability. From the standpoint of a daily traveler, the nation is showing a decline in morals and ethics. As such, the thought process in some cases is followed by “What is the Lord going to do about it?” As Solomon so decisively stated, “That which has been is that which shall be” (Ibid.), he gives an indication that a cycle of events will continue as long as man and world continue to exist.

There is a great deal of rhetoric circling society regarding the moral and ethical values of the leadership of the nation: some love it, others not so much [It would do Christians well to remember the admonition of the Lord to Israel, saying, “Thou shalt not revile God, nor curse a ruler of thy people” (Exod. 22:28), and Solomon’s warning, “Revile not the king, no, not in thy thought; and revile not the rich in thy bedchamber: for a bird of the heavens shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter” (Eccl. 10:20)]. Think on the things that come from above: Jude, concerning the conduct of Michael the archangel, said, “Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing judgment, but said, The Lord rebuke thee” (Jude vs. 9).

Concerning the continued actions of leadership, history records the life of Augustus Caesar: “In his early career Augustus had proven himself able, adroit, unscrupulous, cold-blooded. He had shrunk from no cruelty and had been moved by no passion. But absolute power, which often drives small men to frenzy, warmed this cold, unlovely schemer into something akin to greatness” (Ancient History, pg. 406-409). Even though Augustus was strapped with these negative characteristics, it is also recorded, “With unlimited patience, skill, and efficiency, he overhauled every aspect of Roman life and brought durable peace and prosperity to the Greco-Roman world... Augustus also amended divorce laws to make them much stricter. Prior to this, divorce had been fairly free and easy. In addition, after Augustus' reforms, adultery became a civil crime instead of a personal crime under the Lex Julia de adulteriis coercendis. In other words, it became a crime against the state, which meant that the state (not just the husband) could take an adulterer to court if there was evidence of adultery” (Encyclopedia Britannica). Thus, Augustus did address some issues contributing to the moral decay of Rome.

However, two emperors later, it is said of Caligula, “This prince had been a promising youth, but, crazed by power, he became a capricious madman, with gleams of ferocious humor. “Would that the Romans had all one neck! he exclaimed, wishing that he might behead them all at one stroke. His deeds were a series of crimes and extravagant follies. The wild-beast fights of the amphitheater and the gladiatorial shows fascinated him strangely...After four years, he was murdered by his guard” (Ancient History, pg. 406-409).

In our next post? Consider the condition of the populous. Were they any better? Ross