**Bible Lesson: Presidents Day**

Presidents Day encompasses the birthdays of arguably, our two greatest presidents: Washington (02/22) and Lincoln (02/12). The day is celebrated on the third Monday of the month, falling in-between these two birth dates, though the original federal holiday celebrated only Washington. Now we honor all the presidents who have served in the USA.

It appears that the office of the presidency doesn’t get the same level of respect that it used to; it has become a partisan situation, where some people in the opposing party do not respect the person in office. Whether you voted for the current president or not, the office of the presidency deserves all due respect, particularly on this day when we venerate those who have led our country through disasters, wars, and social unrest.

Leaders in all three branches of government, executive, legislative, and judicial, must swear allegiance to the USA and must swear to uphold our Constitution and Bill of Rights. They used to make this oath on the Bible but that is optional now. Too often leaders do not honor that oath of office. The government was set up to have checks and balances among the three branches. We have seen the judiciary getting involved in law making which is the job of the legislature; we have seen the president circumventing the legislature as well, trying to impose regulations by executive fiat. Perhaps this is because the legislature is too busy to pass laws while they focus on investigating their opponents; the laws they do pass are spending bills that are so filled with pork that nobody knows where the money goes and nobody keeps track of it either. The lines are blurred between the three branches and this opens us up to all kinds of vulnerabilities, not the least of which is tyranny. Elections are the only recourse open to the citizenry to reset the government. Those who do not vote are shunning their civic duty. Too bad some people refuse to submit to God; if they did, He would select our leaders.

God picked the leaders of Israel and had them anointed by the prophets indicating His choices. If God would intervene here, we wouldn’t be in this mess we’re in now. I pray that He will lend His hand in all future elections. Leaders whom God chose pledged allegiance to Him and the nation of Israel; God removed them from office when they did not measure up to the standards He set for them (like He did with King Saul: 1 SA 28:1–17).

* EXO 18:21–22 ~ Moses’s father-in-law advised him, “Select capable men who fear God, who are trustworthy, and who hate dishonest gain; appoint them as governors over thousands, hundreds, and tens. Have them serve as judges for the simple cases, so that you can decide the difficult cases.”
* DEU 17:14–17 ~ After you have entered the land which the Lord has given you, and you possess it and live there, you will say, “Let us elect a king to rule over us like the other nations.” You must let the Lord choose your king from among you; do not select a stranger who is not your brother. The king should not be intent on collecting wealth, cattle, or wives, for that might cause him to turn from God.
* 2 SA 23:3 ~ God, the Rock of Israel, spoke saying, “Whoever rules others must be just, ruling in the fear of God.”
* NEH 9—10 ~ Nehemiah spoke a great prayer of worship and thanksgiving to God for bringing the Israelites back home. A written agreement was prepared binding the people in obedience to God and His rules. The leaders and priests affixed their seal to this agreement, and all the people swore an oath of allegiance to the Lord.
* JOB 34:17 ~ Shall someone who hates what is right govern others? Can a just person be condemned?

If leaders would get back to being godly, placing God and country before partisan politics, we would thrive again as a nation. Until they do, this country will continue down the wrong path which leads to destruction. The best way to ensure this doesn’t happen is elect people that know the Bible and revere God. The following should be included in the oath of office.

* PSA 119 (abridged and paraphrased) ~ Blessed are they who walk in the ways of the Lord, who seek Him, and who keep His commandments. God has laid down His precepts and they are to be obeyed completely. Oh, that my ways were steadfast in obeying your decrees, Lord. I will praise you as I learn your righteous ways and obey your regulations. How can anyone keep his or her ways pure, but by living according to God’s demands? Never let me stray from your commands, Lord. I will meditate upon your precepts; I will delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your Word. Open my eyes so I may see clearly the wonders of your Law. Teach me your ways and help me to understand your teaching and the meaning of your precepts. Turn me away from worthless things and preserve my life. May your unfailing love always be a comfort to me. I will walk in freedom, for I seek your wisdom and speak of your decrees. I know that your laws are righteous. Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. If your Law had not been my delight, I would have perished in my affliction. Look upon my suffering and deliver me, for I have not forgotten your Law. How I love your Law; I meditate upon this night and day. I wait for your salvation, Lord, as I follow in your footsteps.

Leadership is a spiritual gift, and the requirement is to lead diligently (ROM 12:6–8). I yearn for the day this becomes reality. If our leaders veer from God’s instructions or from His Word of truth, we are obliged to obey God.

* 2 CH 30:12 ~ Also in Judah, the hand of God was on the people giving them unity of mind to carry out the orders of their leaders in accordance with the Word of the Lord.
* PRO 12:15,20 ~ The way of fools is true in their own eyes, but the one who listens to advice is wise. There is deceit in the hearts of those who plot evil, but to those promoting peace there is joy.
* ACT 5:22–29 ~ When the authorities commanded the apostles to stop preaching in the name of Jesus they replied, “We must obey God rather than men.”
* ROM 13:1–6 ~ Everyone is subject to the higher powers, for all power comes from God; that is, all powers that exist have been ordained by God. Anyone who resists these powers are resisting the ordinance of God, and those who resist God receive damnation as punishment. Those who do what is right have no fear of the authorities, only those who do wrong are afraid of them. Do what is right and the authorities will commend you. Governments are God’s servants; they are there to make sure you do what is right. But if you do what is evil, beware, for they do not carry a sword in vain, but to execute judgment on those who are evil. Submit to those who are in authority, not just because you will be punished if you don’t, but also as a matter of keeping a clear conscience. This is why you should pay your taxes, because the governments are God’s servants who work fulltime in governing.
* 1 TI 2:1–2,8 ~ I (Paul) urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgiving be made to God for all people, for leaders, and for all who are in authority, so that we can lead an honest and peaceful life of godliness and truth. People should pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without being doubtful or angry.
* TIT 3:1 ~ Be submissive to rulers and authority, be obedient, and be ready for honest work.
* HEB 13:17 ~ Obey those who rule over you, and submit yourselves to them; for they will be watching you and will give an account, and you want them to give a good report.
* 1 PE 2:13–14 ~ Submit to every ordinance of society for the Lord’s sake, whether to the king, or to his governors who are given the authority to punish evildoers and to commend those who do right.

In the Gettysburg address (1863) Lincoln closed by saying, “It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain, that this nation under God shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth.”

We the people are supposed to be in charge, not they the government. They neither heed the will of the people nor do they heed the will of God. They do things in accordance with their personal preferences, as if they were gods. These people love themselves and want the world.

* NUM 15:38–40 ~ God commanded Moses: Put tassels on your garments, so that when you see the tassels, you will remember my commandments and obey them, and so you do not corrupt yourselves by seeking after your own hearts and your own eyes. Then you will remember and obey, and you will be consecrated unto me.
* JOS 24:15,21–22 ~ Joshua announced, “If serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose who you will serve… As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.” The people said to Joshua, “We promise to serve the Lord.” Joshua replied, “You are witnesses before me and your countrymen that you have chosen the Lord, and have promised to serve him.” They responded, “Yes, we are witnesses.”
* 1 KI 3:9 ~ Solomon prayed to God, “Give your servant an understanding mind to govern your people and to discern between good and evil.”
* JOB 31:26–28 ~ If my heart was enticed by worldly things and celestial bodies, or if I was infatuated with myself, I would be guilty of denying God and worthy of His punishment.
* PSA 7:16 ~ His mischief will return upon his own head, and his violent dealing will come down upon his own skull.
* PSA 10:4 ~ The wicked through their pride do not seek God; He is never in their thoughts.
* 2 TH 2:3–4 ~ Beware of the son of perdition who exalts himself and proclaims to be God.

Dear Father, Lord of the universe, ruler over all peoples, nations, and governments, we love you, we praise you, we glorify your holy name. You are in charge and we are your subjects. Help our leaders to remember that they work for us, and are appointed by you to lead, and are therefore accountable to you and to us. Help us to be strong and to hold our leaders accountable to you first and then to we the people. Help this nation to return to one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all. Help this nation to elect a government that is by, of, and for the people. Help us to remove from office those who do not support these principles. Help us come together in unity of spirit governed by your Holy Spirit, so together we can save this republic. The majority of Americans want to keep our republic, but there are those that want to move us towards socialism and other ungodly directions. Help us to join together as one voice and declare that we are a God-fearing people, and we want to remain that way. In the name of Jesus, who is King of kings and Lord of lords, we pray, Amen.

By Andrew Barber (Posted: 02/01/2023)