

Turn ye again

This article is from the "Edifying the Body" section of the Church of God Big Sandy's Web site, churchofgodbigandy.com. It was posted for the weekend of July 24–25, 2010.

By Lenny Cacchio

LEE'S SUMMIT, Mo.—"Turn ye again now every one from his evil way, and from the evil of your doings, and dwell in the land that the LORD hath given unto you and to your fathers for ever and ever" (Jeremiah 25:5, KJV).

If you are inclined to blame political leadership for all the wrong in our country, you need to rethink your inclination. Sometimes political leadership is nothing more than a reflection of the people it represents, and that is especially true in a representative republic such as ours.

In the last chapter of 2 Samuel, King David makes an appalling mistake. At the time, he is a powerful figure in the Middle East. He has conquered lands as far away as present-day Iraq and beyond. He has friendly relations with the Lebanese to the north and the Egyptians to the south. His nation's enemies are at his feet, and there is no national security interest for any further conquests.

But, instead of glorifying God for his fortune and fame, he is moved to take a census of his troops in a possible precursor to more warfare.

This seems mighty stupid for a man who has everything, but, according to the text, stupidity wasn't the issue. In 2 Samuel 24:1 we see that he was more likely just a bit player in this display of hubris. Instead, it was the sins of the people that led God to take away David's sound judgment: "The anger of the LORD was roused against Israel, and he moved David against them."

According to this, God was angry with the entire nation, and therefore, in order to move the nation back to Him, He moved David to make a stupid decision.

The point is this. We can rail against ineptitude in our elected officials, but they might lack wisdom in judgment because the people of our nation don't want leaders who have the fortitude to make tough, principled decisions. As in the words of Isaiah: "This is a rebellious people, lying children, children who will not hear the law of the LORD; who say to the seers, 'Do not see,' and to the prophets, 'Do not prophesy to us right things; speak to us smooth things, prophesy deceits' " (Isaiah 30:9-10).

Don't tell us that we can no longer live beyond our means. Don't tell us that pet spending projects and earmarks for my state are killing us. Don't tell us that we need to sacrifice in order to successfully prosecute a war.

Rather, tell us we need to spend more, and borrow more, and receive more benefits. Tell us that it's okay to bust up families because the kids of such unions are resilient and probably better off anyway. Tell us that pornography is a victimless crime in spite of evidence that it is as destructive an addiction as any.

In short, if it feels good do it. Whatever floats your boat. You are free to do anything you want, but let's not bring God into the equation, and, frankly, I really don't give a hoot what happens to anybody else as long as my team wins the game this weekend and the pizza-delivery truck can make it to my neighborhood.

It might be that the culmination of decades of moral and cultural decline is finally presenting its harvest to us and that the wind that was sown by the atrophy of the old ways has become the whirlwind we see before us.

It just might be that the poor judgment we see in our leaders is not their fault but our own. It just might be that turning back to the ideals to which we once aspired, but admittedly never quite attained, will once again lead us to choose leaders who have the wisdom and foresight that comes from the Father of lights.

Or, in the words of Shakespeare's Cassius to Brutus: "The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars, but in ourselves."