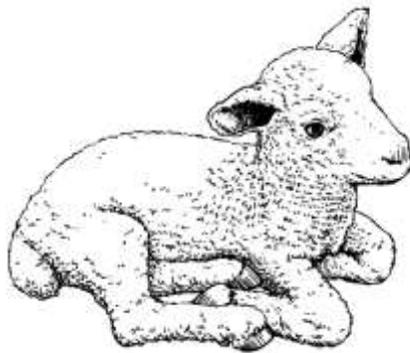


HOW SHOULD I VIEW POLITICAL CANDIDATES?

SELECTED SCRIPTURES IN THE BOOK OF PROVERBS



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GOD HAS ULTIMATE AUTHORITY OVER THE HEART OF THE KING

“The king's heart is *like* channels of water in the hand of the LORD; He turns it wherever He wishes” (Prov. 21:1). The plans of a king are in the hand of the Lord. Just like a farmer directs water to irrigate his farm, the Lord directs the heart of the king to do His will. Even though this mainly refers to godly kings, we see in the Bible where God even directed the hearts of ungodly kings, Pharaoh (Ex. 10:1-2), (Isa. 10:5-7), Cyrus (Isa. 45:1-6), Artaxerxes (Ezra 7:21; Neh. 2:1-8), Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 4:1-37).

GOD’S PEOPLE SHOULD TRUST IN HIM NOT THE KING

Many people will seek favor with those who are in political office, hoping to find justice (Prov. 29:26a) or even some special indulgence (Prov. 19:6). However, only God can exact justice that is right and fair (Prov. 29:26b) and only He can measure out true blessings (Prov. 10:22)

THE MAIN CONCERN OF GOD’S PEOPLE IN THE AREA OF POLITICS SHOULD BE RIGHTEOUSNESS

There are many things that God’s people should look for when it comes to the issue of politics, but the primary concern that should be upon their hearts is righteousness. There are two verses that make this absolutely clear. First; Proverbs 29:2, “When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn.” The righteous refer to those who have conformed to an ethical or moral standard. When these individuals are in authority the people rejoice; because they know that they are being governed by leaders who live by standards that call for accountability to the highest good. On the other hand, when the wicked rule the people mourn because they are being oppressed and treated unfairly. Second, Proverbs 14:34, “Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin *is* a reproach to any people.” When the righteous are in leadership, the nation is morally lifted up. But unrighteous leadership provides the landscape for sin to be present and this leads to disgrace and shame.

We have a motto in this country which says we should have a government “of the people, by the people and for the people.” Maybe we should change it to say “of the people, by the people and for righteousness.” The Bible says when the government is for righteousness it is also for the people because “the people rejoice.”

CHARACTERISTICS OF A RIGHTEOUS POLITICIAN IN THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

A Righteous Politician Loves and Protects the Citizens of the Nation.

“Love and faithfulness keep a king safe; through love his throne is made secure” (Prov. 20:28 NIV). A king who truly loves his citizens and faithfully rules over them will stay on the throne for a long time. The qualities of the king will be reflected in his people and they will want him to rule over them. Furthermore, the king who loves his people will do everything in his power to protect them.

A Righteous Politician Is Honest.

“Excellent speech becometh not a fool: much less do lying lips a prince” (Prov. 17:7). This verse contains two powerful truths. First, we don’t expect a fool to have excellent speech. Second, just like we don’t expect a fool to have excellent speech, we don’t expect a ruler to be a liar. When kings and princes lie, the subjects of the kingdom do not know what is going on. Conversely, when the king speaks the truth, he is loved by the people (Prov. 16:13).

A Righteous Politician Protects Those Who Are Wise.

“The king's favour *is* toward a wise servant: but his wrath is *against* him that causeth shame” (Prov. 14:35). The king is to be pleased with those who are living wisely and should do everything in his power to protect them.

A Righteous Politician Surrounds Himself with Wise Counselors.

A ruler who surrounds himself with the wicked counselors will be told a bunch of lies. On the other hand, when his counselors are righteousness he will exercise wisdom in his decision making (Prov. 25:5; 29:12)

A Righteous Politician Seeks Godly Wisdom.

“I wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions. The fear of the LORD *is* to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate. Counsel *is* mine, and sound wisdom: I *am* understanding; I have strength. By me kings reign, and princes decree justice. By me princes rule, and nobles, *even* all the judges of the earth

(Prov. 8:12-16).” Kings and princes reign with wisdom and by the fear of the Lord.

A Righteous Politician Is Contemplative.

God is sovereign and sometimes He conceals a matter for His glory, but it the glory of a king to carefully discern the will of God on a particular issue (Prov. 25:2).

A Righteous Politician Is Moral.

The following words were written by a king, they reflect the word that his mother spoke to him. “The words of king Lemuel, the prophecy that his mother taught him. What, my son? and what, the son of my womb? and what, the son of my vows? Give not thy strength unto women, nor thy ways to that which destroyeth kings” (Prov. 31:1-3). The gist of what she said was that involvement in immoral relationships leads to the destruction of kings.

A Righteous Politician Is Clear-Minded.

“*It is* not for kings, O Lemuel, *it is* not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink: Lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted. Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that be of heavy hearts. Let him drink, and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more.” (Prov. 31:4-7). Leaders should be rational and clear-minded. When their minds are not clear they are not able to interpret and administer the law justly.

A Righteous Politician Fights for the Cause of the Afflicted and Poor.

“Open thy mouth for the dumb in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction. Open thy mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy” (Prov. 31:8-9). Also, Proverbs 29:14 says the leader who pays special attention to the poor will reign for a long time.