

## From Glorious Beginnings: A Nation in Crisis

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“What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun.”

~ Ecclesiastes 1:9 (NIV)<sup>1</sup> ~

Since the beginning of civilization, nations were formed with great expectations and filled with hope. Some began with lofty ideals of peace, justice, liberty, freedom, equality, and others were built to pursue power, wealth, and position. However, none of them were formed outside of God’s will, whether of His permissive will or His perfect will. And if history has taught us anything it is that nations eventually fall into the depths of ruin and destruction because of man’s sin nature. History seems to repeat itself. Such is the inevitability in a fallen world. Praise God – our Sovereign has not left us without hope, but rather with gracious, countless invitations of eternal rescue!

“You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and *how* I bore you on eagles’ wings, and brought you to Myself. Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.”

~ Exodus 19:4-6a ~

The Israelites had a glorious beginning. They were the “chosen people of God” (Deu 7:6). They had a covenant with God. They were given *the* Law. God delivered them from the hands of their enemies and led them to a land of milk and honey (Exo 3:8; Lev 20:24). God sent them prophets and priests and gave them judges and kings. He promised them a glorious future if they kept His laws (Deu 6:1-3). But God also warned them: “if you do not obey the LORD your God, to observe to do all His commandments and His statutes with which I charge you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you” (Deu 28:15). Throughout Old Testament history the nation of Israel experienced a repetitive cycle of *disobedience – judgement – repentance – rescue*.

“So it shall be when all of these things have come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you call *them* to mind in all nations where the LORD your God has banished you, and you return to the LORD your God and obey Him with all your heart and soul according to all that I command you today, you and your sons, then the LORD your God will restore you from captivity, and have compassion on you, and will gather you again from all the peoples where the LORD your God has scattered you.”

~ Deuteronomy 30:1-3 ~

The apostle Paul said, “Now these things happened as examples for us, so that we would not crave evil things as they also craved” (1 Corinthians 10:6). The story of the

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<sup>1</sup> All scripture references are NASB95 unless otherwise noted

rise and fall of Israel provides a sobering example of what can happen to a nation that abandons God. A nation that slides into the pit of immorality. A nation that abandons biblical standards, laws, and truths. A nation that continually drifts further away from its Judeo-Christian founding.

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*“The propitious smiles of heaven can never be expected on a nation that disregards the eternal rules of order and right which heaven itself has ordained.” – George Washington*

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The Pilgrims who founded this country had the same hope and aspirations as the early Israelites. They brought with them to the new world their reformed Christianity heavily influenced by Puritans, Brownists, and Calvinistic ideals. They left England to escape religious persecution and to establish a new society. Their theology emphasized the authority of the Bible. Their Christianity played a vital role in shaping the moral landscape of the early colonies. Carol Swain, professor of political science and law at Vanderbilt University, emphasized that the political paradigm of the Pilgrims was grounded in their religious beliefs; namely, that, people must have a set of laws and guidelines. Otherwise, one becomes barbaric, which is what the Pilgrims were trying to avoid. The Pilgrims viewed their congregation as “the new Israel” and their destination as the new “Promised Land,” Swain explained, “and they were acutely aware of the punishments that Israel received when straying from God’s laws. For the Pilgrims, God was the ultimate lawmaker, and their mission was to fulfill His laws and succeed where Israel had failed.”<sup>2</sup>

Laws in the colonies and later during the founding of our nation were heavily influenced by God’s Law and precepts as given in the Bible. I don’t think anyone can legitimately deny that our Declaration of Independence, Bill of Rights, and Constitution are explicitly based on scripture. Included in those laws were moral imperatives that remain applicable today despite all man’s efforts to dilute, pervert and ignore. What the Pilgrims tried to achieve and what our founding fathers ratified has now become a distant, failed attempt to hold us to solid, Biblical standards. And like many other nations before us we are now on a path to our demise. What our forefathers feared has become a reality. Moral decay is on the fast track.

The apostle Paul put it this way in his letter to the Romans (3:10-12): “THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE; THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS, THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD; ALL HAVE TURNED ASIDE, TOGETHER THEY HAVE BECOME USELESS; THERE IS NONE WHO DOES GOOD, THERE IS NOT EVEN ONE.” What an indictment! In chapter 1 of the same letter, Paul accurately and candidly describes the true condition

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<sup>2</sup> November 18, 2020, commentary on American History, The Heritage Foundation: *How Mayflower Compact Influenced the American Concept of the Rule of Law*

of unredeemed man and the resulting circumstances of the world we occupy. Again, “there is nothing new under the sun.”

So, is our nation in crisis? I think we can all agree that we face many challenges, not the least of which is rampant lawlessness. It seems that our nation is spiraling into a moral abyss with little regard for the moral standards set forth in the Bible. But can we really stop it? Can we really do anything about it? Do we blame the “nation” and point fingers? Do we need new laws? Do we need bigger government?

It depends...

Is the objective a more moral society – our own land of “milk and honey,” or as we hear some folks lament, “I yearn for the good ole days” (e.g., Andy Griffith’s fictional Mayberry)? Or is our objective something entirely different? As followers of Christ, we must remember that we are but aliens in a world that is not ultimately our home. I would argue that our objective is two-fold: 1) Evangelize the lost; and 2) Disciple the saved. Only two things last into eternity, God’s Word, and souls; therefore, we should invest the resources God has provided into people. A more moral nation may well be a byproduct, but that is not our ultimate purpose.

No matter what the issues or problems in our nation or any other country it seems to me there is a universal problem. We reject God. We lack faith. We don’t want a “trust” relationship with God. In pursuit of autonomy, people do not believe in the God of the Bible.

So, what are we to do? I’ll offer these wise words from Dr. Jim Dennison<sup>3</sup>:

**One:** Make Christ our personal king each day so fully that our lives display his glory and draw others to him. It should be our humble aspiration to be able to say to our fellow Americans what Paul said of himself: “Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ” (1 Corinthians 11:1).

**Two:** Intercede fervently for the Holy Spirit to advance spiritual awakening across our nation in humility and repentance so that God will “hear from heaven and will forgive [our] sin and will heal [our] land” (2 Chronicles 7:14; cf. Psalm 85:6; Habakkuk 3:2).

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<sup>3</sup> Dennison Forum, The Daily Article | July 3, 2025