

David's Advice For Election Day

2 Samuel 23:1-7

Sermon by Phil Kayser • 10/15/06

Intro:

There has been a long tradition of reading George Washington's Farewell Speech in the Congress once a year. Those were his last words to the nation as a president. Well that tradition was scrapped back in 1983 by members of Congress who argued that it was pretty silly to read an ancient speech that very few Congressmen listened to (and I might add – which very few congressmen believed). Usually the speech was read to an almost empty chamber. What they should have been asking instead is, "Why are our congressmen so out of touch with our constitution and our nation's roots that this speech seems foreign and silly and outdated?" There is no way you could read Washington's speech and not come to the conclusion that he would have thought that our modern leaders have betrayed our great republic. And perhaps these people don't like being reminded of that fact. There is a value in reading founding documents – like the declaration of Independence. It is a measuring point or a compass by which we can see how far we have traveled.

Well, that is one of the purposes for this speech of David. Verse 1 says, **Now these are the last words of David.** This was his Farewell Address. How would you like *these words* to be read every year in Congress? I don't think it would be very popular because it speaks of judgment and accountability to God. But this was a document that was intended to be read for all time. We will be seeing that it points forward to kings in the Messianic kingdom – to our time. And it was put into poetic form so as to make it easy to read and re-read this passage as a guiding document for all rulers to come. So let's listen to David's advice as we approach Election Day.

- I. Unashamedly Urge Our Nation To Be One Nation Under God (vs. 1-5)

A. God Raises Up Rulers (v. 1)

In verses 1-5 David advises us to unashamedly urge our nation to be one nation under God. You have maybe seen the lawsuit against Congress by Michael Newdow. The suit claims that the national motto, “In God we Trust” is unconstitutional. I think that is nonsense. But whatever you think of the Constitution, at least in *these first five verses* we see that for all time, nations must be willing to covenant with God in this way.

First, we find that *God* raises up rulers. Who put David on the throne? Verse 1 says that God did: **Thus says David the son of Jesse; thus says the man raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet Psalmist of Israel.** Whatever else David was, He was anointed by God and raised up on high by God. God appointed him to rule. That’s why David was accountable to God. And you might say, “Yeah, that’s fine for David, but we don’t live in Bible times. We don’t have a Samuel walking around anointing people.” But it’s important to realize that later kings who were appointed by God didn’t have the direct speech of God either; they didn’t have a Samuel either, but they were still considered appointed. I want you to turn with me to Romans 13 where Paul says that God appoints every ruler. If the Democrats gain control of the house and louse up the country you need to remember that God appointed them to win for some purpose. The same is true if the Republicans further louse of the country. Romans 13 says,

Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority *except from God*, and the authorities that exist are *appointed by God*. [That means that God appointed Nero. Isn’t that interesting? He didn’t have to have a vision. He was still appointed by God and accountable to God. God was his boss. Going on] **Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the *ordinance of God*, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. For *he is God’s minister* to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for *he is God’s minister*, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil. Therefore you must be subject, not only because of wrath but also for conscience sake.**

Do you see what he is saying? Whether you have a David, a Hezekiah, a Nebuchadnezzar, a Herod or a Nero, he is appointed by God and therefore has the responsibility to minister to God; a responsibility to be a terror to evil rather than to good. But I especially find interesting that term “minister.” There are two words for minister. The one in verse 4 simply

means servant. But the one in verse 6 is a religious term. It is the Greek word we get liturgy from. I am a minister of God within the church. Well, Paul applies the same term that I wear - minister - to the Governor of Nebraska, to President Bush and the Supreme Court. God expects them to mix religion with politics or they will be in trouble with him. If they abandon their role as minister to God they have abandoned the reason for their appointment.

And the First Amendment was never intended to take away from this truth. It was intended to limit the influence of Congress, not to limit the influence of religion or God or the church upon Congress. For example, long after the States ratified the Constitution, you find language like this in various State constitutions. Delaware required the following oath of office after ratification of the first amendment “I...do profess faith in God the Father, and in Jesus Christ His only Son, and in the Holy Ghost, one God, blessed for evermore; I do acknowledge the holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be given by divine inspiration.” (till 1792). I’d like to see the ACLU talk about that. Maryland’s Constitution of 1851 required of public officials “a declaration of a belief in the Christian religion.” You couldn’t even be in office if you held to the ACLU’s position. In 1876 (almost a hundred years after ratification) the North Carolina Constitution stated, “That no person who shall deny the being of God or the truth of the Protestant religion, or the divine authority of the Old or New Testaments, or who shall hold religious principles incompatible with the freedom and safety of the State, shall be capable of holding any office or place of trust or profit in the civil department within this State.” Pennsylvania and other states had similar requirements. Can you see how ludicrous the modern interpretation of the First Amendment really is?

This is the kind of heritage that we as Christians have given up when we have been unwilling to call upon elected officials to acknowledge God. It will be interesting to see where this court case goes, because Jay Sekulow says that they are willing to take it to the Supreme Court.

B. God Speaks To Rulers (vs. 2-3a)

Now back to our passage. How does the ruler know how to fulfill Paul’s mandate that they be a terror to evil and reward good? How do they know what is good and what is evil? Should we just let them figure that out for themselves? Many of our rulers say that protecting abortion rights is good. They are doing what Isaiah bawls the rulers out for: they are calling light darkness and darkness light; good evil and evil good. David says that it is not enough to acknowledge that God has appointed public officials, but they must also listen to God. That makes sense, doesn’t it? And God does

indeed speak to rulers through the Scripture. Look at verses 2-3. **The Spirit of the LORD spoke by me, and His word was on my tongue. The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spoke to me.** Now it is true - David had the privilege of having a direct channel to God at times. But God speaks just as surely through the Scriptures. The phrase, “Hear what the Spirit says,” is used before a quotation of Scripture. Nor was it just Israelite kings that needed to listen to God’s wisdom. In Proverbs 8:15-16 personified Wisdom is speaking and says, **By me kings reign, and rulers decree justice. By me princes rule, and nobles, all the judges of the earth.** Not just Jewish judges – all the judges of the earth. If those we elect into office are to rule effectively, they must listen to God.

And so Deuteronomy¹⁷ says that every king was to be familiar with the Bible. In fact, let me read you that section, because this says that reading Scripture regularly is a precondition to ruling in the fear of God. It’s a precondition to point E. Deuteronomy 17:18-20 say, **Also it shall be, when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write for himself a copy of this law in a book...And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God and be careful to observe all the words of this law and these statutes, and that his heart may not be lifted above his brethren, that he may not turn aside from the commandment to the right hand or to the left, and that he may prolong his days in his kingdom...** Can you imagine how long it would take to write out the first five books of the Bible? You might think that a king would be too busy to do that. “Let a scribe do it.” But God said, “No. It’s not enough to have scribes aware of the Scriptures. I want the ruler to be thoroughly conversant in the Bible. He needs to listen to me as he rules.” A ruler needs to be immersed in the Scriptures every day of his life.

C. God Is The Only Security (“Rock”) Of A Nation (v. 3a)

Thirdly, God is the only security for our nation. It’s not the military, or a balanced trade agreement, or good treaties. It is God. In verse 3 David says, **the Rock of Israel spoke to me.** A Rock was a natural fortress as well as a strong foundation. In the Scripture it speaks of security and stability. And God is not just a Rock for Israel. The book of Daniel is proof that God became of Rock of security to Nebuchadnezzar when He put his faith in God. Psalm 33:12 says, **Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord.** Benjamin Franklin warned Congress that their only security was to trust God. It is a shame when a deist like Benjamin Franklin has to rebuke us into trusting God as a nation. Our modern politicians are far more embarrassed of the Scriptures than he was. And Franklin’s words were right on. He said,

“In the beginning of the contest with Britain, when we were sensible of danger, we had daily prayers in this room for Divine protection. Our prayers, Sir, were heard - and they were graciously answered. All of us who were engaged in the struggle must have observed frequent instances of a superintending Providence in our favor... and have we now forgotten that powerful Friend? Or do we imagine we no longer need its assistance? I have lived, Sir, a long time, and the longer I live the more convincing proofs I see of this truth, that God governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow can not fall to the ground without His notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without His aid?” We have been assured, Sir, in the sacred writings, that ‘except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it’ [Ps. 127:1]. I firmly believe this and I also believe that, without His concurring aid, we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel....”¹ God is the only security for our nation.

D. A Ruler Is Accountable To God For Justice (v. 3b)

But David goes on to say in verse 3, **He who rules over men must be just.** The ancient church father, Augustine, said, “Without justice, what are states but great bands of robbers?” Let me repeat that, because I think it is a profound statement on civics. Augustine said, “Without justice, what are states but great bands of robbers?” Do you feel robbed by the state? I sure do. But Augustine’s point was that if God does not limit government with Biblical principles of justice, then there is no limit to the tyranny the state can engage in. Ultimately, only Christ, the King of Kings is just, but it is by His grace that He enables rulers to rule in justice. Isaiah 42 prophecies of Christ saying, **Behold! My Servant whom I uphold, My Elect One in whom My soul delights! I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles.... He will bring forth justice for truth. He will not fail nor be discouraged, till He has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands shall wait for His law.** The mention of discouragement shows that there is opposition to Christ’s justice, but gradually over time Christ will establish justice in the nations of the earth. And it has to come from His grace or it won’t happen. Our view of transforming society is that change needs to happen at every level – especially at the grass roots.

Our founding fathers said that this republic would stand only so long as the people are a moral people. The following words are inscribed on the Department of Justice Building in Washington, D.C.: “Justice in the life and conduct of the state is possible only as first it resides in the hearts and souls

¹p. 212 of God & Politics.

of the citizens.” Brothers and sisters – we have a lot of work before us because we do not have justice in the state of Nebraska and we do not have justice in our nation. The evil of homosexuality is called good; the evil of abortion is protected. Land is confiscated from farmers. The IRS and other agencies are unaccountable. We live in a topsy turvy world when it comes to justice. And the reason is that we have abandoned the law of God. Only God can define justice. New Jersey used to have on its official seal, “Righteousness exalteth a nation.” The rest of that verse says, **and sin is a reproach to any people.** Hawaii still has something similar on it’s official seal. The words are in Hawaiian, and are words attributed to King Kamehameha III. It says, “The life of the land is perpetuated by righteousness.”

E. A Ruler Must Rule In The Fear Of God (v. 3c)

Connected to justice is the fear of God. The third part of verse 3 says, **He who rules over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.** This is probably the fundamental problem in America – our nation has no fear of God. Rulers and judges have no fear of God. And even many Christians in office fear their constituents far more than they fear God’s opinion. Some of you have McGuffey’s Readers in your homes. We’ve got a copy in the church library. In his Fifth Eclectic Reader he says, "Erase all thought and fear of God from a community, and selfishness and sensuality would absorb the whole man." The two go hand in hand. A man without the fear of God can eventually fall into any sin. We see people going to Washington who oppose homosexuality, but by the time they have been there one term they are promoting homosexuality. Why? Because the fear of man will change your behavior depending upon which men you are with.

This is why Patrick Henry (perhaps the most consistent of debaters at the time of the Constitution – one of my heroes, an anti-federalist) said that Christianity and Biblical law are imperative. Let me quote him. He said, “It cannot be emphasized too strongly or too often that this great nation was founded, not by religionists, but by Christians... — It is when a people forget God that tyrants forge their chains. — A true patriot as well as a genuine leader must always take the higher ground of God’s law when confronted with the evils of man’s law. — Government is not the enemy, for it is ordained of God. The enemy to freedom is tyrannical government that presumes to take the place of God.” This really is the fundamental issue. Do rulers fear God? This is becoming my prayer request: Lord, make these men tremble at Your Word and fear Your name. Without the fear of the Lord we cannot sustain a godly republic. And I believe our republic was blessed

beyond measure because we had so many generations of men who feared God.

F. Blessing Comes To A Nation Under God (v. 4)

Look at the beautiful description of blessings promised in verse 4 to such kingdoms. **And he shall be like the light of the morning when the sun rises, a morning without clouds, like tender grass springing out of the earth, by clear shining after rain.** That is a poetic description of blessing and happiness that God will give when rulers rule in the fear of God and with justice. I fear that the blessings America has enjoyed for so long will soon run out unless the Lord brings our nation to repentance. Daniel Webster said in the early 1800s, “If we abide by the principles taught in the Bible, our country will go on prospering and to prosper; If we and our posterity shall be true to the Christian religion, if we and they shall live always in the fear of God and shall respect *His Commandments*...we may have the highest hopes of the future fortunes of our country;... “But if we and our posterity neglect religious instruction and authority; violate the rules of eternal justice, trifle with the injunctions of morality, and recklessly destroy the political constitution which holds us together, no man can tell how sudden a catastrophe may overwhelm us and bury all our glory in profound obscurity.” Pray that our nation will embrace not just the blessings, but also the whole package. We can only hold on to our blessings if we have the whole package.

G. Even Though The Ruler Is Imperfect (v. 5 NKJV)

But then comes a hint that David himself has not lived up to the description of a king just given here. Verse 5 says, **Although my house is not so with God, yet He has made with me an everlasting covenant.** If you have an ESV, you will notice that it says, “For does not my house stand so with God?” It is the very opposite meaning of what I have read. And I might say, it is the very opposite of what David says and what God says in 2 Samuel 7 when God made this covenant with David. God spoke of chastening David’s house with a rod of men and blows of the sons of men, and David says, **“Who am I, O LORD God? And what is my house, that You have brought me this far?”** He realized that his house had not lived up to these expectations. In that chapter it speaks of God’s mercy on David’s house. So David is not saying that he was blessed because he was so good. That is the way three versions translate it. That’s the implication of the ESV. He is saying the opposite. He is saying that God has blessed him and made a covenant with him despite the fact that he has loused up several times. Let me read four translations to this effect. The NKJV says, **Although my**

house is not so with God, yet He has made with me an everlasting covenant. The ASV says, **Verily my house is not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant.** The W.E.B. translation says, **Most assuredly my house is not so with God; yet he has made with me an everlasting covenant.** Knox paraphrases this rather loosely, **What worth has my kindred in God's sight that He should make an everlasting covenant with me?**

Now what difference does it make how we translate that? Well, to me this is a statement that we can take tremendous comfort in as we pray for our nation. God's mercy rests upon kings and nations who submit themselves to His rule. It is mercy, not what we deserve. We have sex scandals in Washington, but so did David. We have Chappaquiddicks in Washington, but so did David. We have lies and deceit in Washington, but so did David. We have oppression in government, abuse of spending, over taxation, but so did Solomon David's son. God recognizes that even in government we are not perfect and the only way He can bless governments is through the mercies of Jesus, who alone is perfect as King of Kings and Lord of lords. Everything in life needs to be seen through the eyes of Christ – including civil government.

Don't think that things are hopeless today for our nation. The Davidic covenant that David speaks of here brought tremendous encouragement to the Reformers because it means that God can rule and God can bless nations even in the midst of evil. What God is interested in is our covenantal relationship with Christ. Are we as a nation willing to covenant with Him; willing to have Him rule over us? This is why this court case over the national motto: "In God We Trust" is an important one. And this is what I want to focus on right now. What does the covenant of David mean to America? What kind of guidance and comfort can we derive from that covenant as we pray for mercy for our nation? What does David mean here when he says that this covenant is an everlasting covenant? or that the covenant is all my salvation and all my desire? or that God will make that covenant increase more and more? In a nutshell I believe that this was ultimately pointing to Jesus, as Lord of Lords and King of kings. And progressively His kingdom will be submitted to by more and more kings who will be faithful. Christ quotes this passage and applies it to Himself.

H. Because A Nation's Security Rests In The Christ of the Covenant. He Brings "Salvation" (v. 5b)

1. This Covenant Was Made First And Foremost With Christ The King Of Kings (1 Chron. 17:11-14; 2 Sam.

7:12-14 with Heb. 1:5; Psalm 45 with Heb. 1:8-9; Is. 55:3-5 with Acts 13:35)

Well, if you will turn with me to 2 Samuel 7:1-17 I want to read that covenant that this passage refers to. There are two parts to the covenant. The first part deals with God's promise to establish a church to the end of time and the second part is that God would establish righteous civil governments to the end of time. It's a very significant passage. First comes the church.

Now it came to pass when the king was dwelling in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies all around, that the king said to Nathan the prophet, "See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells inside tent curtains." Then Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that is in your heart, for the LORD is with you." But it happened that night that the word of the LORD came to Nathan, saying, "Go and tell My servant David, 'Thus says the LORD: "Would you build a house for Me to dwell in? For I have not dwelt in a house since the time that I brought the children of Israel up from Egypt, even to this day, but have moved about in a tent and in a tabernacle. [In other words God is saying, "I don't really need a house.]" In all the places where I have walked with all the children of Israel, have I ever spoken a word to anyone from the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd My people Israel, saying, 'Why have you not built Me a house of cedar?'" Now therefore, thus shall you say to My servant David, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts: "I took you from the sheepfold, from following the sheep, to be ruler over My people, over Israel. And I have been with you wherever you have gone, and have cut off all your enemies from before you, and have made you a great name, like the name of the great men who are on the earth. Moreover I will appoint a place for My people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own and move no more; nor shall the sons of wickedness oppress them anymore, as previously, since the time that I commanded judges to be over My people Israel, and have caused you to rest from all your enemies. Also the LORD tells you that He will make you a house.

Now before we read the rest of the passage that deals with politics, let's read just one verse that speaks of the house that God built. David built a physical house for God. But here it says that God [not David, but that *God*] will build a house for David. This is the very opposite of what David was talking

about. Keep your fingers in this passage and turn to Acts 15. It says in this passage that the house God was going to build for David was the church. Look at verses 14-17:

Simon has declared how God at the first visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name. And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written: “After this I will return and will rebuild the tabernacle of David which has fallen down. I will rebuild its ruins, and I will set it up, so that the rest of mankind may seek the LORD, even all the Gentiles who are called by My name, says the LORD who does all these things.

What James is saying here is that the house that God was to build in the Davidic covenant is the church of which we are a part. And because God is building it, we have security and comfort. I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And this comes first in the Davidic covenant because the building of the church is primary.

Though the New Testament speaks a great deal about politics, the priority is to build the church. It is only as men are saved and discipled in the church that they will be able to rule as David says they ought to. Only as there is revival in the hearts of men will societies be changed. And the Reformers therefore made the reformation of the church take precedence over the Reformation of the state, even though both were important to them.. Witherspoon, one of the signers of the Declaration, said that our republic will stand only so long as there is a moral people. You look at the church today and you can see why our government is in a mess. It is because the church is in a mess. We are carnal. We don't know the law of God and most probably don't want to know. How can we expect God to transform our society when we Christians are not being transformed? If we are to succeed in bringing our government to Christ, then we must first succeed in winning the people to Christ, and bringing Reformation to the Church.

Now let's go back to 2 Samuel 7 and see that God's promise to bring justice in the governments of this world is just as sure and certain as His promise to build the church. Another way of saying it is this, “Since Christ has promised to succeed with the church, He will therefore succeed with Reforming the state as well.” As nations become discipled, the governments of those nations will submit to Jesus. In verse 12 he begins a new section:

When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. If he commits iniquity, I will

chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men. But My mercy shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I removed from before you. And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever.”””

How was David’s throne established forever? The New Testament quotes this passage and says that it was fulfilled in Christ. Here he is clearly talking about sinful kings because he talks about chastening them. But Hebrews 1 makes it clear that these sinful kings had God’s mercy only because Jesus is the ultimate fulfillment; the one who even now sits upon the throne of David. Look with me at the prophecy of Christ in Isaiah 55:3-5.

Incline your ear, and come to Me. Hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you - the sure mercies of David. [Speaking of Christ, the second David, it says] Indeed I have given him as a witness to the people, a leader and commander for the people. Surely you shall call a nation you do not know, and nations who do not know you shall run to you, because of the LORD your God, and the Holy One of Israel; for He has glorified you.”

The sure mercies of David, the covenant of David was made ultimately to Christ, and through Christ to Israel and to the Gentile nations. He will be a commander and leader not just to Israel but also to many nations. And so it is not by accident that the New Testament calls Jesus Christ presently the King of kings and Lord of lords. His rule affects politics. In Psalm 2 the Father says to Christ, **Ask of Me, and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Your possession.** And this is not just in terms of building the church. Acts 2 applies it to the state. The same Psalm tells rulers, **Now therefore, be wise, O kings; be instructed, you judges of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and you perish in the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him.** Those are the options held out to America in 2 Samuel 23:1-7. America can return to its foundations and be blessed, or it can continue its rebellion against the Son and perish.

2. And It Was Made With Israelite Kings Through Christ (2 Sam. 7:4-17; 1 Chron. 17:3-14)
3. And Now The Covenant Of David Can Benefit Gentile Nations Through Christ (Is. 55:3-5)

II. The Only Other Option Is To Acknowledge That Our Nation Stands In Rebellion Against God (vs. 6-7)

A. Is Your Vote Promoting The “Sons Of Rebellion”? (v. 6)

I hope this brings concern to you. David says in our passage that there can be no neutrality. We are either for Christ or against Him. Certainly He is a merciful King, and has blessed our nation richly despite our repeated sins against Him. But there comes a time when He says, “Enough is enough.” Look at 2 Samuel 23:6-7: **But the sons of rebellion shall all be as thorns thrust away**, It is not enough for you to vote for the person who has the best economic plan, or who can debate the best, or who has the best plan for some pet project that you like. If you are voting for a man who is a rebel against Christ’s kingdom and who is determined to destroy Christ’s laws, you are inviting judgment for our nation.

B. Why Is It That “They cannot be taken with hands”? (v. 6b)

1. Scripture Indicates That They Came Into Power By The Spiritual Warfare Of Satan. Satan is very interested in controlling rulers (cf. Job 9:24; Dan. 10:13,20-21; Eph. 6:12; Rev. 20:3; Zech. 13:2; Psalm 109:6; Ps. 33:12; Ps. 2; 1 Tim. 2:1-4; Acts 12:20-24)
2. Thus The Only Way To Remove Them Is By Spiritual Warfare (cf. Psalm 2; Eph. 6:12)
 - a. This May Mean Their Salvation Through Christ (see Ps. 2:8,10,11,12; Is. 55:3-5)
 - b. Or It May Mean Their Judgment By Christ (see Ps. 2:4,5,9,12)
3. “Hands” are involved (warfare, voting, etc), but unless God blesses our efforts, our efforts are vain.

But I think that far more important than merely voting is that we recognize the spiritual conflict that goes on behind the scenes. Psalm 2 speaks of a conspiracy, and Satan has always worked hard at making nations throw off the bonds of Christ. Without spiritual warfare there is no other option than judgment. David says **But the sons of rebellion shall all be as thorns thrust away, because they cannot be taken with hands**. If we are going to take the government away from the rebels, it won’t be with votes alone; it won’t be by revolution; it won’t be by our hands. It can only be by God’s Mercy or God’s Judgment. Here he speaks of the judgment. **But the man who touches them must be armed with iron and the shaft of a spear, and they shall be utterly burned with fire in their place**. In other words, once kings turn rebels, it is very rare that they turn good. Only

judgment removes them. That could well happen to us. We could get nuked. We have certainly had wars in our nation that served as judgments.

But judgment by the sword is not a foregone conclusion. Remember David's statement" **Although my house is not so with God, yet He has made with me an everlasting covenant.** King Josiah, Hezekiah and others turned from the paganism of their parents and returned to the Davidic covenant spoken of in verse 5; God's covenant over politicians. Nebuchadnezzar is another example. The Davidic covenant gives a basis for mercy in the face of political rebellion.

We may grow hopelessly depressed as we look at the state of affairs in America. But remember that politics is not your Savior. God is. And there have been several times in past history when things have looked as bad or worse. Things were really worse than this in England prior to the time that God raised up Wesley and Whitfield. And many historians have said that the revival brought through these two men was the only thing that averted a bloody revolution like France had. Their efforts transformed men, and through those men transformed society. That is why 2 Chronicles 7 says it is the church that is key to averting God's judgment upon a government. **If My people who are called by My name [that's the church] will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.**

We are in a time of crisis, and the only hope for our nation is another Reformation such as we have never seen. A Reformation of church and a Reformation of culture. It should not surprise us that our nation has abandoned the republican teachings of its founder, John Calvin, when the church has abandoned the Reformation. (Calvin lived long before America, but many scholars have said that he is the virtual founder of America because of the profound impact that his theology had on America – at the time of the Constitution, America was over 76% Reformed.) The church in America has become salt that has lost its flavor. And what does Christ say happens to a church in such circumstances? He says that such salt is not even fit for the dung heap. A dung heap can at least be used for fertilizer. But Matthew 5 says that believers who have lost their saltiness are only fit to be cast out and trampled underfoot of men. That's what verses 6-7 are talking about here.

There is hope, but it lies in the Reformation of the Church and our return to prayer. The passages I have given in your outline show that this is a spiritual conflict that must take prayer seriously. It is appropriate to fast and to humble ourselves. We must be bold in seeking to promote God's laws

as the foundation of his nation. We have a video set that is awesome in doing that. You could use it to stir up discussion and further think. We should be involved and vote. And we should consider running for government ourselves. There is no reason why some of you could not win local elections if God called you to run. But let us seek to do what we can. Amen.

C. Every Nation That Has Persisted In Rebellion Against Christ
Has Suffered The Ravages Of Christ's Rod Of Iron (vs. 6-7)

Conclusions:

1. Pray, pray, pray for these coming elections
2. Humble yourself before God
3. Educate yourself and others about the importance of Biblical politics
4. Be involved in evangelism and pray for the salvation of our country's citizens.
5. Pray that professing believers across our nation
 - a. would stop believing the myth of the "Wall of Separation." The separation of God and state is destroying America.
 - b. would come to realize that "righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people" (Prov. 14:34)
 - c. would get involved in spiritual warfare as it affects politics
 - d. would vote
 - e. would consider running for government themselves if they meet the qualifications.