

The Purpose of God's Word for a Nation

We will focus on passages in the book of Proverbs about a nation and a group of people. We will see the purpose with which God directs His word to a nation, and then we will also see the importance of it in our personal lives.

“Righteousness exalts a nation,
But sin *is* a reproach to *any* people.” (Proverbs 14:34)

“Where *there is* no revelation, the people cast off restraint;
But happy *is* he who keeps the law.” (Proverbs 29:18)

These passages talk of a nation and a group of people. They say that a revelation of God and righteousness are important. Sadly, we see that these attributes are lacking in many places worldwide today. I am talking of nations, not of individuals. We obviously know that there are persons who desire to seek God and His righteousness. There is also a sort of righteousness established upon the nations, due to the law and their governing system, but we see that with time, even the law has changed and slowly gets away from the principles of God's word. Still, God says what is best and what is a blessing for a nation. That is His righteousness. Sin is a reproach to people, and there are consequences that come with time. Reproach and destruction come with time upon those who embrace it. God wants to protect us from it. He didn't create us to sin, and abiding in sin is just proof that we are far from Him. We are not meant to live in such a way. That's why we decline when we are far from Him.

In the books of the major prophets in the Bible, God was sending His messages to the rulers of the nation of Israel through His prophets.

“For behold, I have made you this day
A fortified city and an iron pillar,
And bronze walls against the whole land—
Against the kings of Judah,

Against its princes,
Against its priests,
And against the people of the land.” (Jeremiah 1:18)

This passage talks of when God called the young prophet Jeremiah to prophecy to His nation. He had to declare to them their sinful condition and the truth of God. Notice that God gave him, in a way, a “list” of people he had to face, and it starts with the major rulers of the nation and ends up with the people.

This is an important fact because rulers such as kings, princes, and priests could influence and guide the people in a negative or a positive way. Often, the rest of the nation depended on them. The development of the country, the culture, and the upbringing of the children depended on what the rulers were deciding and the way they were living. Whenever the kings of Israel and its priests were living in the right way and following God, the rest of the nation generally also did that, and whenever they were going astray, the rest followed their example. Obviously, it all depends on a person’s personal choice, and we know that even with a good environment, a person could still choose the opposite. Still, it is important if the rulers of a country have godly values. This is also what could happen today, and we see it happening. If a ruler of a country supports what is right in front of God and follows His values, applying them to the laws and regulations of his country, there is more opportunity for a person to learn about and follow God and His principles. If this is applied to the educational system, young people will have that opportunity. Of course, they will decide how to live their lives and which path to take, but they will have at least the chance to do it.

This is also the reason why the positive influence of a father is essential for a family. God created the family with a purpose. When creating the man and the woman, He meant for them to be united as a family and not separated. This is done with the purpose of raising children and leaving something valuable to the next generation. A father in a family needs to represent figuratively the character of God such as faithfulness, love, care, and righteousness. In this way, he will let them know that there is a Father in heaven. He is the head of the family, and he needs to exercise a good and godly influence upon his children, helped and assisted by his spouse, who also needs to do that. The same as in a nation, the positive influence is important for a family. A head of a family mustn’t just provide

economically for his family but also spiritually with a good example. That's a great and important responsibility that we can carry out with the help of God.

I need to be grateful that there are God-fearing men who have been established as authorities in the Christian community I belong to. Because it could've happened that other persons were established as church leaders. Then, even though they are apparently Christians, their priorities will be different, and God's word will not be exalted as it is supposed. The head and the leadership of institutions, groups, and families are important. We know that we live in a fallen into sin world and that the devil is also called a prince of this world ([John 14:30](#)), but we need to make an effort to bring a godly influence in our families, workplaces, and environments. This is the desire of the believers – to bring God's kingdom upon the earth and that His will could be done here as in heaven. We know it will not happen upon all the world, but we are called to pray for that and desire it ([Matthew 6:10](#)). That's why the devil wants mostly to attack the head of a family, church, or any other place or group of people who can glorify God. This is the reason why, in the last days, he plans to literally rule upon all the earth, influencing the authorities and the laws by establishing his antichrist system completely and coming into a human form ([2 Thessalonians 2:3-12](#)). We already see that some laws have changed, and they are no longer based on God's principles of what good and evil are.

We all know that there are same-sex marriages are legalized in many countries in the world. I am not against people from the LGBTQ community, and I am not saying they are the worst sinners. We know that all people have sinned, and we will all have to pay for our sins unless we accept Jesus' sacrifice. What I do stand behind is that those issues need to be treated in the right way, declaring to those who practice them that it is a sin and they have an opportunity to repent, same as all other people. There shouldn't be any discrimination or mistreatment toward them because what makes anyone else a better person if we all have sinned? Still, we all are given an opportunity to repent.

The enemy wants to eradicate the good influence in this world. Christians are called to be a light that shines in the darkness in this world and a salt ([Matthew 5:13-16](#)). At times, the people who are exposed to the good and godly influence might not appreciate it and think it is a burden to them, but this happens because

they naturally don't accept what comes from God. When some of us are exposed to godly principles and a way of living, we might think that they take our freedom away, but what is seen and understood as freedom is actually suppressing us. God knows how we are supposed to live because He created us, and that's why He created His laws and a worldview of how things need to be done. We don't accept it at first because we don't have His Spirit living in us. When we accept Him, we begin to follow and enjoy what comes from Him. We even start to reject sin. This happens in a natural way. When we convert with a heart to Christianity, we begin seeing that what we call freedom, which is life engaging in sin, is harming us. Our eyes are open to this truth. I am saying that this happens when we convert with heart because it is not a matter of converting mentally only.

People become addicted to sin. Not only to substances but to sin in itself. It starts controlling them. That's why the bible uses expressions such as "slaves of sin" ([John 8:34](#), [Romans 6:17](#)). We enjoy it because we don't know Christ, and sin interacts with our natural desires, and those desires begin to control us. We can take, as an example, the desire we have to be with the opposite sex. God placed it in us so that we can enjoy a relationship and create a family. The problem is when we lack God and His guidance in our lives. Then, we start to be guided by our desires, and instead of pursuing a sound relationship with someone, we could go with the wrong person in the wrong situation and have disorderly relationships, which the Bible calls adultery. This is because we don't have God's standards and guidance living in us. When we accept Him, His nature becomes our nature, and we begin desiring what is good. In this fact, we see that what the Bible states is true when saying that those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on what is spiritual and those who live according to the flesh – to what the flesh desires. A believer might still be attracted to sin and fall, but he will try as much as he can to get rid of it and to cleanse himself through the blood of Christ by asking Him for forgiveness. He feels displeased when he sins and pursues perfection. Perfection is something we will achieve in heaven, but whoever is born again desires it. So, sin is not sinful because of the act in itself only but because it is something done out of order. When we don't know Christ, we don't have the right perception of right and wrong, and we try to fill our lives with what is wrong.

Obviously, it is not enough that a person is exposed to a good influence and that Christian parents have brought him up. He needs to decide by himself. Still, it is important that people hear the good news.

Let's see some passages in the book of Jeremiah that talk of the decline of the nation of Israel, which came as a result of not holding onto God's word and not exalting it.

"Saying to a tree, 'You *are* my father,'
And to a stone, 'You gave birth to me.'
For they have turned *their* back to Me, and not *their* face.
But in the time of their trouble
They will say, 'Arise and save us.'" (Jeremiah 2:27)

"For My people *are* foolish,
They have not known Me.
They *are* silly children,
And they have no understanding.
They *are* wise to do evil,
But to do good they have no knowledge." (Jeremiah 4:22)

In the first of these passages, we see that God told them that they had turned their back on Him and not their face. What does that mean? We might sin sometimes and turn our faces from the Lord. I am not saying that this is fine, but it could happen. Still, they had turned completely from Him. They had turned their backs to Him. That means that they were set off in the wrong direction. They had delved deep into sin. We see it by what the second passage tells us. It says that they were wise to do evil but not to do good. They had no knowledge of that. This is what happens when the word of God is not exalted, and it lacks. That's why we must ensure it is always present in our families and communities.

A wild donkey used to the wilderness,
That sniffs at the wind in her desire;
In her time of mating, who can turn her away?
All those who seek her will not weary themselves;
In her month they will find her.

²⁵ Withhold your foot from being unshod, and your throat from thirst.

But you said, 'There is no hope.

No! For I have loved aliens, and after them I will go.' (Jeremiah 2:24, 25)

"Why do you beautify your way to seek love?

Therefore you have also taught

The wicked women your ways." (Jeremiah 2:33)

These passages talk of spiritual adultery they were committing against the Lord and the way they were indulging and getting deep into sin (and stubbornly persevering into it). From the story, we see that the Lord was trying to correct them so that they could change their ways. He was doing that because He loved them. Still, when reading the whole story, we see that they were not willing to accept that correction, not acknowledging their wrongdoings and how great their sin was. Nonetheless, a part of His nation acknowledged the lesson He wanted to teach them and the way He wanted to work in their lives. Those people survived and were carried away captive to an exile in Babylon. When they were there, the Lord sent them a message with promises through a letter from the prophet Jeremiah, saying that he had good plans for them, a future, and hope (Jeremiah 29:11). They had to go through His correction and trials to learn to give up on sin. At times, the Lord uses trials to purify us and work in our lives.

"Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination?

No! They were not at all ashamed,

Nor did they know how to blush.

Therefore they shall fall among those who fall;

In the time of their punishment

They shall be cast down," says the Lord." (Jeremiah 8:12)

This passage still talks of their attitude. They were not ashamed when sinning. The usual attitude of a believer when sinning is that he is ashamed because of it. Not ashamed in front of other people only, but ashamed before the Lord. He doesn't want to displease His master. A sign of spiritual deterioration is when someone doesn't feel ashamed anymore when sinning. Such a person needs to be spiritually awakened, or he has never known the Lord. Yes, passages such as the one in Jeremiah 8:12 might sound harsh when talking of punishment and the way the Lord deals with sin, but they just express how wrong sin is and how it displeases Him. Of course, we all might sin, but here, it talks more about

persevering in it. What do we do when we sin? Do we run to the Lord to ask Him for forgiveness, or do we just take it as something normal, and we also take the grace as a normal occurrence? I am not saying that we need to condemn ourselves, but we need to feel displeased by sin.

Sometimes, our condition could be similar to the one described in [Jeremiah 2:27](#) of the nation of Israel saying that they were making idols for themselves and worshiping them, but in times of trouble, they were looking for God's help, saying: "Arise and save us.". It is necessary to look for God's help when we need it, but it shouldn't be only when we are in trouble. We should continue asking Him for help, but if we want our prayers to be answered, we need to ask Him to help us change our way as well and to put an effort into doing that. This is the reason why our prayers could not be answered at times. God is a good God and delivers us when we ask Him for that, but a time comes when He requires things and an attitude from us. Understanding His word all-heartedly and who He is will help us do that.

The problem with the nation of Israel at that time was that they had come to a condition not to acknowledge their sin anymore and were denying that they had sinned ([Jeremiah 2:5](#)). It wasn't that they were hiding it; they couldn't acknowledge it. Their hearts were numb to the guiltiness of sin. This happened because of the general decline of the nation and the wrong influence they had. That wasn't an excuse, anyway. They had to acknowledge they had sinned.

This is a condition we need to avoid in our lives and the lives of others. We cannot blame our rulers and governors only. Each of us has our own responsibility now that we know the truth. We need to bring a positive Christian influence to our communities, starting with our personal lives, then extending to our families, neighbors, workplaces, and communities. Ignorance is not always an excuse. The purpose of the enemy is to bring negative influences and keep people obscure to their condition in front of God. People often argue whether Christians should be involved in politics or not. This is a heated debate as many know that politics are corrupt, and many have been disappointed with them. Still, we are called to bring good influence into our society and to preach the gospel. This, in a way, proves that wherever a Christian could do that, even in politics, is for good. I would like my president or minister to be a Christian who strives for the values of the

kingdom and not for other purposes. Today, many people could be disappointed by governors and politicians, but we must strive to achieve something good for God's kingdom. Even if we aren't in a big influential position, we can have small beginnings, starting from our households and families for example. The Bible says that we need to be faithful with the least ([Luke 16:10](#)). Just imagine if everyone knowing the truth was doing that. Then, a greater wave of good influence can start.

Rachel Joy Scott, the student who was a believer and a victim of the Columbine shooting, said:

"I have this theory that if one person can go out of their way to show compassion then it will start a chain reaction of the same."

Finally, we will conclude with a verse in [2 Chronicles 7:14](#), talking to a nation.

"if My people who are called by My name 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." ([2 Chronicles 7:14](#))

This passage talks of a nation's repentance, but it also shows God's desire for each person – to repent and follow His ways.

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