

Day Thirty

And Jehoshaphat was afraid and turned his attention to seek the LORD; and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. So Judah gathered together to seek help from the LORD; they even came from all the cities of Judah to seek the LORD. Then Jehoshaphat stood in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the LORD before the new court, and he said, "O LORD, the God of our fathers, art Thou not God in the heavens? And art Thou not ruler over all the kingdoms of the nations? Power and might are in Thy hand so that no one can stand against Thee. And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell down before the LORD, worshipping the LORD.

-2 Chronicles 20:3-6,18

National Days of Prayer

In the depths of the Civil War in the United States, Abraham Lincoln declared a "day for National prayer and humiliation". Lincoln will go on to say, "All this being done, in sincerity and truth, let us then rest humbly in the hope authorized by the Divine teachings, that the united cry of the Nation will be heard on high, and answered with blessings, no less than the pardon of our national sins, and the restoration of our now divided and suffering Country, to its former happy condition of unity and peace."

John Adams also declared such a day in his presidency in 1789. Harry Truman signed a bill declaring that each president should designate a Day of Prayer annually. The United States proclaimed that the first Thursday in May to be an annual National Day of Prayer.

Such cases are not without controversy. Lawsuits are pending even today against any such attempts to include God in the language of our nation's affairs. There are Christians who refuse to take part in such activities citing their consciences will not allow them to have union with those whom they do not share like minded doctrinal beliefs.

While some may find offense at such activities, we must remember that it is God who at the head of all governments, and as such it is good that nations seek Him to guide them in their affairs.

Daniel declared this to be true: "*It is He who changes the times and the epochs; He removes kings and establishes kings; He gives wisdom to wise men And knowledge to men of understanding.* -Daniel 2:21 Mary, the mother of Jesus declares this as well in her song. "*He has done mighty deeds with His arm; He has scattered those who were proud in the thoughts of their heart. He has brought down rulers from their thrones, And has exalted those who were humble.* -Luke 1:51-52

The Psalmist declares by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, "*Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, The people whom He has chosen for His own inheritance.* -Psalms 33:12 He goes on to say; "*The king is not saved by a mighty army; A warrior is not delivered by great strength. A horse is a false hope for victory; Nor does it deliver anyone by its great strength. Behold, the eye of the LORD is on those who fear Him, On those who hope for His lovingkindness, To deliver their soul from death And to keep them alive in famine.* -Psalms 33:16-19.

While it is a dangerous proposition for a nation to go to war in the 'name of God', and we must be careful to proclaim that a nation is divinely guided to do so. Still, we must admit that a nation that seeks God's guidance in its affairs will be wise indeed. As Paul instructed Timothy to tell others, "*First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, for kings and all who are in authority, in order that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior,* -1 Timothy 2:1-3. It is good for us to pray for our nation and even encourage our leaders to seek God's help to guide them.

Remember God's reaction at the repentance of Nineveh; "*When God saw their deeds, that they turned from their wicked way, then God relented concerning the calamity which He had declared He would bring upon them. And He did not do it.* -Jonah 3:10. It is in God's hands to raise up or cast down nations as it pleases Him in His will.

Prayerful Thoughts: Our Father, it is in Thee to lift up nations for Thy will, hear the prayers of humble nations that seek Thee.