

The Potential Ichabod of America: Inversion of Thought; Israel's Recovery of the Glory; the Believer & Historical Downtrends; Cicero's Cogent Forewarning

- d. So that the human viewpoint of a flawed theology, functioning in a fallen environment, can maintain its credibility, government, medicine, and psychology must remain inviolate and their practitioners must achieve perfection.
 - e. Being human, this is impossible but it explains why politicians must have an impeccable résumé to run for and maintain office, why physicians must be sued for malpractice, and why psychologists must never allow the individual to be held responsible for his decisions.
 - f. Further, all these categories must be able to solve all man's problems, to do so on request, and without delay.
- 34- This inversion of thought has dimmed the glory of America – the city set on a hill is becoming obscure. She has rejected the foundational principles for a client nation which were incorporated into the Constitution and the culture.
- 35- Nevertheless, the loss of our national glory enables us to reflect upon the many manifestations of its former glory and encourages us about the prospect of its restored glory.
- 36- The Word of God, honored for two centuries in this country, has resulted in great weight being assigned to it. This is weight used in the positive sense of the Hebrew word *kavoth*. It is manifest by the greatest prosperity in history associated with the greatest responsibilities ever assigned to a client nation.
- 37- Just as there was a "glory of Israel" so also there is a "glory of America." Just as Israel lost its glory so also the United States is in the process of losing its glory.
- 38- Israel restored the glory of God and regained its national glory by simply returning to the spiritual life of its dispensation. We noted one of several examples in:
- 1 Samuel 7:3** - Then Samuel spoke to all the house of Israel, saying, "If you return to the Lord with all your heart, remove the foreign gods and the Ashtoroth from among you and direct your hearts to the Lord and serve Him alone; and He will deliver you from the hand of the Philistines.
- v. 4** - So the sons of Israel removed the Baals and the Ashtoroth and served the Lord alone.
- 39- If the glory of God is to remain in America and if the faded glory of client nation America is to be refreshed then we must continue our advance and invite others to join us in that pursuit.
- Philippians 2:14** - Do all things without grumbling or disputing [do not assume a defeatist attitude or display fear or anxiety regarding the affairs of the devil's world];

v. 15 - that you may prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked [σκολιός, *skolios*: “ethical and social misconduct which is rooted in ungodliness and unbelief”¹] and perverse [διαστρέφω, *diastrepho*: “to twist; to confuse”] generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world,

v. 16 - holding fast the word of life ...

- 40- The word “crooked” is **σκολιός, *skolios*** which is defined by Gerhard Friedrich in the *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (7:717) as “ethical and social misconduct which is rooted in ungodliness and unbelief.”
- 41- Aristotle in his *Nicomachean* / Ni-COM-a-CHE-an / *Ethics* used the Greek word **διαστρέφω / *diastrepho*** /, translated “perverse,” to describe a “deficiency in inner attitude that leads to confusion and illusion regarding the starting-point of action (TDNT, 7:717).”
- In Stoic ethics **διαστροφή / *diastrophe*** / is a technical term for the moral corruption of the empirical man. The nature of man is “twisted” by bad teaching and example and by environmental influences of all kinds.² (p. 717)
- Christians should bring light into the world. The whole human race needs the light because it is corrupt.³ (p. 407).
- 42- We have an obligation to display, demonstrate, and disclose the light of the Word of God to the citizens of the devil’s world who, because of their unbelief, have acquired attitudes that sponsor ethical and social behaviors contrary to divine standards resulting in moral corruption and confusion. We are the “lights of the world holding fast the word of life.”
- 43- If successful, we can avert the fate that befell Rome, a prospect foreseen by Cicero in his *Republic*:

¹ Gerhard Friedrich, ed., “σκολιός,” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, trans., and ed. (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1971), 7:407.

² Friedrich, “διαστρέφω,” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 7:717.

³ Friedrich, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 7:407.

Neither men alone ... nor customs alone ... could ever have been sufficient to found or to preserve so long a commonwealth whose dominion extends so far and wide. Thus, before our own time, the customs of our ancestors produced excellent men, and eminent men preserved our ancient customs and the institutions of their forefathers. But though the republic, when it came to us, was like a beautiful painting, whose colors, however, were already fading with age, our own time not only has neglected to freshen it by renewing the original colors, but has not even taken the trouble to preserve its configuration and, so to speak, its general outlines. For what is now left of the ancient customs on which the commonwealth of Rome was founded firm? They have been so completely buried in oblivion that they are not only no longer practiced, but are already unknown. And what shall I say of the men? For the loss of our customs is due to our lack of men, and for this great evil we must not only give an account, but must even defend ourselves in every way possible, as if we were accused of a capital crime. For it is through our own faults, not by any accident, that we retain only the form of the commonwealth, but have long since lost its substance.⁴ (pp. 245; 247)

- 44- "Substance" is one of the English words that describe the glory of a client nation. If we are to brighten the colors of our national portrait then its people must discover the saving grace of Jesus Christ and the power of the Word of God. If a few join us in the pursuit of truth then order can be restored to our commonwealth and Jesus Christ will lower His wall of protective fire once again.
- 45- Both Israel and America have enjoyed periods of substance: wealth, prosperity, and greatness. Both have built structures of extreme beauty and glamour. Both have developed military organizations that have been victorious in battle in defense of liberty. Both have enjoyed the talents, abilities, and production of an intelligent and energetic people. Both have benefited from the riches of free enterprise.
- 46- All of the various factors that make up a nation's glory come from the possession of assets and virtues. These are transformed into visible manifestations of a nation's corporate soul which manifests its dependence upon and confidence in the God of this universe.
- 47- Great weight, substance, and responsibility fall upon such a nation. But the greatest weight, substance, and responsibility belong to the Creator of all things, our Lord Jesus Christ.
- 48- The glory of God comes from the fact that He is the Creator. He takes responsibility of all that is His, referred to in Scripture by the phrase **τὰ πάντα / ta panta** /: all things.

⁴ Cicero, *De Re Publica*, trans. Clinton Walker Keyes, Loeb Classical Library 16 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), 245; 247.