

# American Decency Association

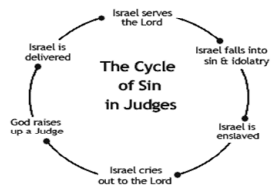
PO Box 202, Fremont, MI 49412 231-924-4050 www.americandecency.org

Encouraging Christians to guard their hearts

November 2014

## God's Microphone: Pain in Politics

By: Chris Johnson



I think that too often as Christians we can give too much credit to our leaders for the effect that they have on our nation. It's easy to fall into the trap of believing that if we only had a different president, or better representatives, or a Supreme Court Justice that cared about the rule of law, the United States would be filled to the brim with milk and honey and we could pave our streets with gold. With the right leadership, abortion would be illegal and the fight against "gay marriage" would be over. I know that I have fallen into that mindset, especially with elections looming and with the amount of emotional capital that I have invested in certain candidates.

And certainly, our leaders have the ability to make huge differences, for better

or worse, in our daily lives. That's why voting is so important - not just so that the country can be run the way it should be, but for the good of our neighbors. It is also for that reason, I think, that we can often stand to be reminded that God is sometimes using those poor, or downright awful, leaders - and the chaos that comes with them - to bring His people back to Himself.

I stumbled across a blatant example of this recently in Isaiah 3:4, where the prophet is proclaiming judgment on Judah and Jerusalem, "I will make boys their princes, and infants shall rule over them," or as the note in my Reformation Study Bible explains, "The nation will be ruled by people without experience and unable to govern wisely." Hmmm.

Of course, that is only one example. The whole book of Judges is about this very topic. If you've spent some time in the church, surely you've heard of the "cycle" of judges.

Israel rebels, God sends an

oppressor (or an evil ruler), Israel repents, God sends a judge to save them, Israel serves God for a while and then rebels again; same story, over and over.

Of course, the United States can hardly be equated with God's chosen nation in the Old Testament, because Isaiah gives us an example of another gentile nation which God draws to Himself using hardship.

For the sake of space, I will condense the relevant text, which is found in Isaiah 19:16-25: *"In that day the Egyptians will... tremble with fear before the hand that the Lord of hosts shakes over them.... And the Lord will strike Egypt, striking and healing, and they will return to the Lord, and he will listen to their pleas for mercy and heal them."*

The Lord strikes Egypt, they turn to Him, and he heals them.

It has been interesting, as I've been reading through Isaiah, to read C.S. Lewis'

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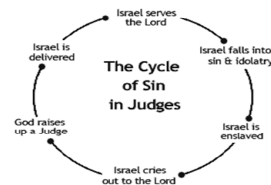
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The Problem of Pain along with it. I have thus had the opportunity to read about the destructive and violent judgment of Israel and her neighboring countries alongside passages like this from Lewis, ***“God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pain: it is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world.”***

A little later he says, ***“No doubt Pain as God’s megaphone is a terrible instrument; it may lead to final and unrepented rebellion. But it gives the only opportunity the bad man can have for amendment. It removes the veil; it plants the flag of truth within the fortress of a rebel soul.”***

***...Everyone has noticed how hard it is to turn our thoughts to God when everything is going well with us. We ‘have all we want’ is a terrible saying when ‘all’***

***does not include God.”***

One more interesting passage from Isaiah will help me make my point. In which God replaces Hezekiah’s apparently evil-steward, Shebna, or, in His words, He whirl[s] him around and around, and throw[s him] into a wide land.” Shebna is replaced with Eliakim who is a “father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem”; he receives the “key of David” and becomes “a throne of honor to his father’s house” and a “peg in a secure place.”

Then what happens? “The peg that was fastened in the secure place will give way, and it will be cut down and fall, and the load that was on it will be cut off, for the LORD has spoken.”

In this passage, God removes a wicked leader with a great leader, but even so Israel is destined for judgment before they are restored to God.

When we throw around the phrase that Christians so often do, “God is in control,” how firmly do we believe that? When we elect the representatives we deserve rather than those we campaign for, do

we despair or do we realize that God knows what’s best for us? Do we look with hope for the future? Do we wonder what lesson it is that God would have us learn and seek to learn it? Do we understand the call for repentance that God is shouting through his megaphone?

What then do we have to repent of? Will we shout reflexively ‘abortion’ and ‘homosexuality’ and leave it at that? Or will we search the scriptures for what it means to live a Godly life and realize that we fall so far short of it ourselves.

Let us recognize with G.K Chesterton that when faced with the question, “what is wrong with the world?” the correct answer is, “Dear Sirs, I am.”

So absolutely, it is our Christian and civic duty to “seek the good of the city where you have been exiled,” with our votes.

But remember that in the end, the Christian is not primarily called to be a campaigner, but ***“to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with your God.”***



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