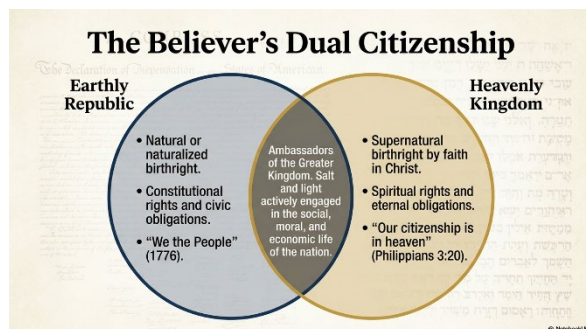


Scripture Text: “**Righteousness exalts** a nation, but **sin** is a **reproach** to any people.” Proverbs 14:34

Two hundred fifty years ago, the United States _____ independence from Great Britain and soon took its place among the nations of the world. What made America unique was the conviction that our _____ do not come from government, a king, or human generosity, but from _____ Himself. The Declaration of Independence affirms the right to “life, _____, and the pursuit of happiness,” and Abraham Lincoln later captured the heart of American republicanism when he said: “No man is good enough to govern another man without that other’s consent. I say this is the leading principle—the sheet anchor of American republicanism. ‘No man is born with a saddle on his back, nor any bootied and spurred to ride him.’”

We should be eternally _____ that God, by His grace, has allowed us to live in this country at such a time this with the government we have, flawed as it may be. And it is a wonderful thing that yesterday was July 4, the _____ anniversary of our Declaration of Independence! It gives us an opportunity to do something that perhaps we don’t do enough. It allows us the opportunity to _____ our nation and our relation to it as believers in the Word of God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

As _____ of a representative Republic, we have, as we have seen, certain constitutional _____ and obligations, and as citizens of a Heavenly Kingdom we also have certain _____ rights and obligations. Do you think that I am making something out of nothing? Well,



the apostle _____, as a citizen of Rome, was never shy about invoking the full _____ and benefits of his Roman citizenship. He urged men to _____ their taxes, _____ the Roman laws, and to _____ for the king. But Paul also believed that he was a part of a greater kingdom. “For _____ citizenship is in _____, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,” Philippians 3:20 “”He has delivered us from the power of darkness and

conveyed us into the _____ of the Son of His love,” Colossians 1:13

As _____ of the heavenly Kingdom, it is our _____ to live our lives in such a way as to accurately _____ the true nature of that great Kingdom to which we all belong by faith in Christ. Therefore, we, as believers in Jesus Christ, indwelt by the Holy Spirit of God, are salt and light holding back the corruption of this world and our nation. We have the privilege to _____ be engaged in the social, political, moral, and economic life of our nation as _____ citizens and loyal representatives, _____ of that greater Kingdom to which we are a part by faith.

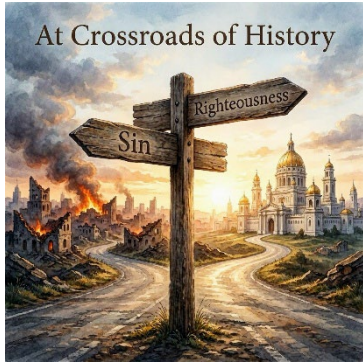
This morning, we come to a text of Scripture that has a double edge. It speaks of _____ and _____. It speaks of wonderful joy and woeful sorrow. It speaks of spiritual delight and sensual degradation. Our text speaks of _____, choices, and consequences. While it was written by a

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Hebrew sage in ancient times, it is applicable to any _____ in any dispensation by its own statement. It is a transdispensational principle. It is God's warranty and warning to _____ nation and _____ peoples.

Our text this morning is a signpost on the road of _____, pointing in one direction to the blessings



of God and in the other to destruction and the _____ heap of history! Great empires have come to this crossroads, not once, but in each generation. Sometimes they have gone the _____ way and have been blessed of the Lord, as did the United Kingdom and the United States at various times in their history, and sometimes these governments have gone the _____ way and have fallen under God's curse as did Egypt, the Hittites, the Philistines, the Assyrians, the Romans, the Spanish, the French, the Germans, and sadly, the United Kingdom. Many commentators believe that

the United States has really reached that _____ once again, and perhaps for the _____ time before destruction comes. It is therefore important and even essential that we pause to _____ the question that is suggested by our text: "Righteousness exalts a nation, But sin is a reproach to any people." Which _____, America? Which way will we go?"

Our Outline

- I. THE DIAMETRIC _____
- II. THE DYNAMIC _____
- III. THE DRAMATIC _____

"Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people." Proverbs 14:34

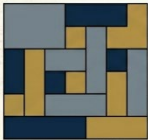
I. The Diametric Contrast: Diametric refers to _____ opposites. If I stood on the south pole of this planet, for you to be my polar _____ you would have to stand on its north pole. To be a polar opposite in _____, I would have to be on the ultra-right _____, and you would have to be on the ultra-left _____. It is expressed in Hebrew poetry.

The Mechanics of Hebrew Poetry



Western Poetry (Poetry of Sound)

- Focuses on phonetic rhythm and repeating sounds.
- Example: "Mary had a little lamb / fleece was white as snow"



Hebrew Poetry (Poetry of Ideas)

- Focuses on the positioning of ideas in relation to one another to create tension, depth, and structural meaning.
- Binocular Vision: Two slightly different views of the same object that, through their convergence, produce profound depth.

Now Hebrew _____, like the passage in our text, is designed around the positioning of ideas in relation to each other. It is _____ a poetry of _____ but a poetry of ideas. Sometimes Hebrew poetry is based on two identical _____, for example:

"The **heavens declare the glory of God**; And the **firmament shows His handiwork**." Psalm 19:1

Each important _____ in the _____ sentence of the verse has another that corresponds with it in the _____ sentence of the poem. These are two beautifully crafted sentences which _____

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each other in exact detail. This is referred to as _____ parallelism and is a feature of Hebrew poetry.

However, you will note that our text is made up of exactly _____ ideas that are diametrically _____ to each other: “**Righteousness exalts a nation, But sin is a reproach to any people.**” Righteousness and _____ are exactly the opposite of each other. Exaltation and reproach are _____ the opposite of each other. And even _____ and people are diametrically different thoughts. We shall explore how _____ they are from each other later in the message but for now we’re observing that they are exactly _____ of each other. This is called antithetical parallelism. And I would like to make one point that needs to be made. There are only _____ ways in this world. There is God’s way which is right, _____, safe, and blessed. Then, there is man’s way. Man’s way is always _____. Man’s way is always dangerous. Man’s way is even deadly. Man’s way, instead of a blessing, is a curse. For the Scripture reminds us: “There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.” Proverbs 14:12 What we need to _____ is simply this: there is a diametric contrast in _____ in our country, in our homes, and in our own personal lives. It is up to us to make the right _____. We can either go God’s _____ to heaven or man’s way to _____. I do not mean to be impertinent, but which way are you going?

II. The Dynamic Conflict: The second idea that I find present in our text is that these _____ forces, righteousness and _____, are present in our nation and in ourselves. And they are hard at war with each other. There is a battle going on in our nation’s capital and in our own homes and hearts. It is a dynamic conflict over which way we will go as a nation and as individual people. And the two choices are “righteousness” and “_____.”



Righteousness, in the original _____, comes from a word, tsedakah (צֶדֶק), which has a great depth of meaning. It refers to covenant _____ to God; being straight, upright, _____, even, or right. It speaks of weights that are _____ so that if you are selling to a poor man or a rich man, you give each an even full measure.

This word means to be “conformed to a _____.” What is that standard? God is the standard. The word righteous is actually one of the _____ and attributes of God. Jeremiah 23:6 says: “In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell safely; Now this is His name by which He will be _____: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.”

Well, the real _____ is the character of God as _____ in His Word. The Bible clearly says: “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” You might answer, “I am a good moral person. I try my best to keep the Ten Commandments.” The _____ Commandments are merely an expression of the nature and character of our God. They formed the basis of our Judeo-Christian _____. This is the society that our founding _____ firmly believed in. But no one _____ will meet those

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standards or even _____ to mention God and His Word in our society. What does man really _____?



The answer is found in the other word in this verse: “_____.” (Hebrew :חטאת ḥaṭāṭ) Sin is multifaceted. It has many names and many definitions. It means to be _____, to be off the mark, to _____ over the line, to be _____, and to go in the wrong direction. It truly means going in the _____ direction from the nature and character of God. This is the _____ for our society today:

The truth is that there is a _____ and dynamic conflict taking place in our society today, and both _____ are well represented in our nation and by our people. _____ way will we go?

III. The _____ Consequences: “Righteousness exalts a nation, But sin is a reproach to any people.” Allow me to close this message with a brief look at the consequences of our choices as a nation,

as the church, or even as individuals. If we choose for God and go God’s way there will be certain results. Likewise, if we choose man’s way, there will be clear and undeniable consequences. These are clearly spelled out for us in this verse.

“Righteousness exalts a nation...” What makes a nation _____? Is it the _____ of its territory? Is it the _____ of its army? Is it the stunning nature of its technology? Is it the _____ of its people?

These are all wonderful things. But they all describe _____ Germany and the communist Soviet Union at the outbreak of the second World War and no one with a sense of history could say that Nazi Germany and the communist Soviet Union were great nations in the _____ of God or the world for that matter.

National _____ is entirely dependent upon national _____.

If the nation is not godly, it is not great. “Righteousness exalts a nation.” It sets some people above their neighbors. It gives them _____ in the eyes of the people and the blessings from the hand of God. When a nation is righteous, its rulers will be people of _____ and integrity. When a nation is righteous, it will treat its neighbors with _____ and its people with kindness. God will be loved and respected by its people and its churches. Missionaries will leave its shores to take the message of the

_____ around the world. Its homes and families are strong, loving, and faithful.

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The Dynamic Conflict: God’s Standard vs. Modern Rebellion

God’s Decrees	Cultural Response
God says: “Worship Me. Have no gods before Me.”	Man says: “I will worship self, pleasure, fame, and fortune. God has no place.”
God says: “Respect holy things and maintain the sacredness of life.”	Man says: “Nothing is sacred. Euthanasia and abortion-on-demand are perfectly acceptable.”
God says: “Maintain marriage, tell the truth, stop coveting.”	Man says: “Shred marriage vows, speak half-truths, and cheat your neighbor to get ahead.”
Takeaway: Sin is not just “missing the mark”; it is an active, multifaceted, and deliberate movement in the opposite direction of God’s character.	

The Ripple Effect of Moral Choice





The _____ of America: And think of what is being done in the United States. _____ abounds. Iniquity increases. _____ is everywhere around us including our schools and places of worship. Immorality becomes a way of life. Marriage _____ are shredded. Profanity and impiety populate our entertainment and education. People become _____ and despicable. They are increased with goods and yet _____ satisfied. They lust for things of the flesh and are never satiated. They claim to be God-like, but live worse than _____. They profess to possess superior knowledge, yet they grow more _____ daily. They revel in freedom, yet their freedom makes them more slaves than any serf of the Middle Ages. (Romans 1:21-32)

We are at a _____ point in this generation. We will either go God's way or man's way. How we as a

society will go will largely be determined by what we do as _____. Righteousness begins in a _____ relationship with Jesus Christ. Sin is manifested by rejecting Christ! So, the question is, "Which way will you ____? What will you choose?"

The Secret of Greatness

"This is the secret of England's greatness."
— Queen Victoria, handing a Bible to a visiting prince.

The Path Forward

What the United States requires is a Holy Spirit revival to put:

- Conviction back into the pulpits.
- Conscience back into government.
- Decency and discipline back into schools.
- Integrity back into business.
- Shame back into sin.
- God back into our national consciousness.

The Ultimate Question: "Which way will you go? What will you choose?"

The State of the American Republic

The Heritage (The Foundation)

- Founded by men and women with a quenchless thirst for God.
- The Mayflower Compact (1620) covenanted a civil body politic "for the glory of God."
- Endowed with Holy Spirit revivals, global generosity, and immense blessing.

The Reproach (The Fracture)

- A society riddled with perversion, violence in schools, and the slaughter of the unborn.
- Humanism subverting courts, media, and government.
- Freedom mutated into a slavery of the flesh; possessing superior knowledge but growing more foolish daily.

The handwriting is on the wall.

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The Gospel: God's Plan for Salvation

GOD'S DIVINE PLAN



The Problem: Sin Separates Us from a Holy God
"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).



The Cost: The Penalty for Sin is Death
This means eternal separation from God (Romans 6:23).

One Mediator between God and Man – Christ!
1 Timothy 2:5;
Hebrews 9:5;
John 14:6

Christ

The Solution: Christ Died in Our Place
God demonstrated His love by sending Jesus to die for us while we were sinners (Romans 5:8).

HOW TO RECEIVE THE GIFT OF SALVATION



What Believing Is NOT
It is not being baptized, joining a church, confessing sins, or repenting.



What Believing IS
It is placing your trust and faith in Christ's death and resurrection for your salvation.



The Result: You Are Eternally Secure
When you believe, you pass from death to everlasting life and can know you are saved (John 5:24).

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