

DAYS OF WEeping AND MOURNING (2)

Sunday Evening, 18th September 2022

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Reading: Revelation 19:1-16. (Deuteronomy 34:8)

We have looked at the death of Moses, who had been leader for many years, and our Queen, passing away after many years on the throne. We have seen there is a place for mourning and that we are to have respect for authority. We have also seen there are virtues our Queen showed that our nation has not followed her in.

1. Expecting too much.

We can expect too much of people. This includes Queens, parents, teachers, Pastors, Government, and the NHS. If we look at the history of the monarchy, we will find much that is disappointing in terms of the behaviour of kings and queens in the past. It was often in reaction to bad rulers that some of the great gains, such as the Magna Carta, were achieved.

The Bible warns us against being too reliant upon rulers (See Psalm 62:9; Psalm 118:8-9; and Psalm 146:3-4). There were kings in the Bible where there was no benefit in trusting in them. The people of God sometimes made the mistake of trusting in Egypt or Assyria. The Lord declares that He does not value impressive-looking people (Psalm 147:10-11). Sometimes we have seen members of the Royal Family, receiving fine educations and meeting interesting people, but then behaving very foolishly.

From this we learn that we can make important people too big a part of our life. Only God should occupy that kind of place. We can make people into idols. They can be made into objects of veneration, adulation and 'do-no-wrong'. We can devour all the details of their lives and follow them too closely. When Princess Diana died, we saw the outpouring of grief in the nation. She had become an object of great interest, and adoration. She had stood out as someone who made it ok to feel hurt, to talk about these things publicly and to express herself as a 'victim'. Her loss was tragic, dying so young, and having shown herself searching for guidance from mystics and 'healers'. She had spoken about being, not the Queen of the country, but the 'queen of hearts', a leader of those who were feeling hurt and grief, and their representative. She was, in many ways, a remarkable woman but it was worrying how big a place she was filling in people's lives.

Likewise, people have, perhaps, trusted too much in Government and, especially, the NHS during the pandemic. We have to make sure that we are not placing too much hope in mere people and flawed public bodies and institutions. These things can become false gods.

2. Put your trust in God.

The real needs of the soul are not to be met by people, however elevated, but by God. His character proves that He is able to provide those supports and helps that we need. (See Psalm 18:1-3; Psalm 61:3-4; and Psalm 62:1, 5-6). We are to make Him our hope and our confidence. He is to be our all-in-all. We are to invest our trust in Him. He is the one who should rule our hearts and our affections. If we are looking for someone who is faithful, 'hard-working', upright, self-controlled, and wise, then God is these virtues to perfection.

His Son is the rock of our salvation. We build our eternal hopes on His identity and the works He did. We look to His blood to cleanse us of our sin. We hold Him to be the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords (Revelation 19:11-16). He actually is immortal and reigns forever. We are receiving a kingdom that does not change (Hebrews 12:28-29).

He loves each of His subjects with real personal knowledge and understanding of who we are. The Queen could only do so much. God is not limited. There is much in the world that is uncertain at this time. He can provide the stability we need in the 'storms of life'. We are able to 'keep calm and carry on'. He is able to assure us that He is with us forever.