

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION
Psalms: Living By Faith In God
CI. Manifesto For An Upright Leader
(Psalm 101:1-8)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

The need for upright leadership at all levels and in all venues worldwide has never been as great as it is now:

(1) Upright leadership on the international level is greatly lacking: “The pattern of every American war since the end of World War II has been . . . to involve ourselves in military conflicts when we feel a surge of moral outrage at the evils of our enemies; we then begin to question ourselves when we see hideous pictures on our televisions; we then surrender or cut an ugly deal . . . And so our enemies grow stronger. They have no such Hamlet-like moral qualms. They push where there is mush . . . It turns out that the alternative to an America confident in its own moral role – and an America willing to stand with its allies – is a world of chaos. We are now living in that world.” (Ben Shapiro, “America is now in the business of losing wars,” Republican-American, April 15, 2024, p. 8A)

(2) Upright leadership in our federal government is greatly lacking: “We . . . have an open Southern border, high inflation and too much crime. We . . . have an incompetent and embarrassing president in the White House and a highly partisan Congress whose power is so evenly split nothing good can get done . . . (I)n addition to . . . a flood of illegal immigrants bankrupting our cities with their social welfare needs, we have a new crazy thing – squatters. The housing laws in cities” allow for “squatters . . . to move into people’s vacant homes and stay there while the legal owners must spend two months in court to get them evicted . . . Where are we going? What are we doing to solve our problems? . . . None of the awful stuff . . . is going to change anytime soon. The election this fall won’t fix things . . . (N)o matter who gets elected president, there’s likely to be riots in the streets . . . (W)hat – or who – is going to solve the problem of America’s heart? And soul.” (Michael Reagan, the son of President Ronald Reagan and president of the Reagan Legacy Foundation, “Who will save America’s soul?” Ibid., April 10, 2024, p. 7A)

(3) Upright leadership at the state level is greatly lacking: “Social media is filled with photos or reports of bears in pools or on swing sets and trampolines . . . (T)he bear population in Connecticut has grown exponentially over the past decade . . . Since 2020, (the Department of Environmental and Energy Protection) has received 12,000 reports of human-bear conflicts.” (Steve Bigham, “Bear populations expanding statewide, DEEP urges residents to curb birdfeeders,” Ibid., April 10, 2024, p. 1A) “DEEP Deputy Director Mason Trumble” noted that “his agency gets at least 30 calls a year regarding bears entering homes, which, in those cases, state policy requires the bear to be euthanized,” Ibid. One wonders when the state will address the bear issue before state residents start getting killed!

(4) Upright leadership in evangelical circles is increasingly lacking: So many personal failures have occurred by leaders in member organizations of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability in the realms of sexual abuse, financial misconduct, burnout, or simply dropping out of the ministry that the ECFA recently developed a new standard for its member organizations. It states: “Every organization shall proactively care for its leader and support the integrity of its leader in conformity with ECFA’s Policy for Excellence in Supporting Leadership integrity.” (Brittany Smith, “ECFA Announces New Leadership Standard,” March 27, 2024; ministrywatch.com)

Need: *So, we ask, “In view of the lack of upright leadership in many realms today, what is God’s solution?”*

- I. **Psalm 101:1-8 is a “manifesto of ethical standards of King David for himself (vv. 1-4) and for his administration (vv. 5-8),” what will be perfectly practiced only by the Messiah in His future kingdom (since David’s reign was marred by his personal sin). (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, ftn. to Psalm 101)**
- II. **That manifesto presents a standard of uprightness that a leader can heed for God’s blessing (as follows):**
 - A. In verse 1, David looked to God’s standard of righteousness as the model for his manifesto, asserting he would praise God for His “lovingkindness, loyal love” (*hesed*, Kittel, Bib. Heb., p. 1061; H. A. W., Theol. Wrdbk. of the O. T., 1980, v. I, p. 305-307) and His “justice” (*mishpat*, Ibid., Kittel; Ibid., H. A. W., v. II, p. 948-949).
 - B. Motivated by God’s righteous standard, David authored his manifesto of upright leadership in Psalm 101:2-4:
 1. In his **family** life, David would “give attention to” (*sakal*, B. D. B., A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 968) a “blameless” (*tamim*, Ibid., H. A. W., p. 974) path and walk “within” (*qereb*, Ibid., Kittel; Ibid., B. D. B., p. 899) his house among his family members with a heart of “integrity” (*tom*, Ibid., p. 1070), v. 2.
 2. In his **personal** life, David would not set any “matter” (*debar*, Ibid., Kittel; Ibid., B. D. B., p. 182-184) of “worthlessness” (*beliya’al*, Ibid., p. 116) before his eyes for his attention, and he would hate deeds that “deviate from (the right way)” (*set*, Ibid., Kittel; Ibid., B. D. B., p. 962) – they would not cling to him, v. 3.

Also, a “twisted, perverse” (*iqqesh*, Ibid., p. 786) heart would be far from him and he would **not** “accept, acknowledge” (*yada*’, Ibid., Kittel, p. 1062; Ibid., B. D. B., p. 393-395) men who were evil, Psalm 101:4.

- C. In his **public rule** as **king**, David would administer God’s righteous standard over all of his subjects, v. 5-8:
1. David would “exterminate, annihilate” (*samat*, Ibid., p. 856) whoever secretly slandered his neighbor [since slander in a royal administration often led to the unjust assassination of innocent officials, H. C. Leupold, *Expos. of the Psalms*, 1974, p. 704]; he would also not “bear, tolerate” (*yakol*, Ibid., Kittel; Ibid., B. D. B., p. 407-408) whoever had haughty eyes and a proud heart, Psalm 101:5.
 2. In contrast, David would look for the “faithful (ones)” (*ne’emanim*, Niphal ptc. from *‘aman*, “confirm, support,” Ibid., p. 52-53) in the land to dwell with him in his administration, and he whose life was “blameless” (*tamim* again, cf. v. 2) would be one who would minister to David as king, Psalm 101:6.
 3. David’s public reign would apply this righteous standard to all levels of Israel’s society, Psalm 101:7-8:
 - a. In the **royal palace** with **elites**, David would not allow anyone to remain there who practiced “deceit, treachery” (*remiyah*, Ibid., Kittel; Ibid., B. D. B., p. 941), and no one who spoke “deception, falsehood” (*sheker*, Ibid., p. 1055) would stand in his presence as king, Psalm 101:7.
 - b. In the **land of Israel** with **the common people**, each (early) morning [when the king led court trials, Ibid., Leupold, p. 705] David would “exterminate, annihilate” (*samat* again, cf. v. 5) all of the “wicked (who threaten community welfare)” (*rasha*’, Ibid., Kittel; Ibid., H. A. W., v. II, p. 863-864) in the land, v. 8a.
 - c. In the **city of Jerusalem** with **middle management officials**, David would “cut off, destroy” (*karat*, Ibid., p. 503-504) every worker of “deceptive trouble” (*‘awen*, Ibid., Kittel; Ibid., H. A. W., v. I, p. 23-24), v. 8b.

III. Applied to our era, even a common man of understanding and knowledge who heeds Psalm 101 is useful to God in countering the vacuum of responsible leaders, and he serves to prolong his nation’s stability:

- A. Proverbs 28:2 translated from the Hebrew text states: “With the transgression of a land, it has many rulers, but with a “man of low degree” (*‘adam*, R. B. Girdlestone, *Syns. of the O. T.*, 1973, p. 49) of understanding and knowledge, so, thus (*ken*, i. e., even with *this* arrangement) the land will continue long (in stability).”
- B. Proverbs 28:4 translated from the Hebrew text states: “Those who forsake the Law (a summary term for all of Scripture) praise the wicked (who threaten community welfare, cf. “II, C, 3, c” above), but those who keep the Law (Scripture) are at strife with (against) them.”

Lesson: *If a believer at any level in society applies David’s manifesto for upright leadership in his personal, family, and public realm of oversight in any institution, God will use him to counter the chaotic, rebellious, wickedly threatening upheaval of the godless and eventually influence the world with blessed stability. (cf. Psalm 128:1-6)*

Application: *(1) May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God’s gift of eternal life, John 3:16; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11. (2) May we then apply David’s manifesto of godly leadership by relying on the enablement of the Holy Spirit where we live to be used of God to be a great influence for stability.*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message and provide additional guidance . . .)

We need to modify the application of Psalm 101:1-8 for our use today, for what David could and would do as a king in his dispensation of the Mosaic Law differs greatly at points (like performing capital punishment!) from what we can do due to the different secular laws and dispensation of the Church under which we live today. Thus, we modify the application of Psalm 101:1-8 to provide a **practical** “manifesto” of upright leaders for **us today** as follows:

- (1) In our **family** lives, we must focus on living blamelessly, full of honest integrity with each family member.
- (2) In our **personal** lives, we must avoid focusing on worthless matters or things that tempt us to swerve away from what is righteous. We should avoid becoming morally twisted or perverted in thought and action and avoid honoring or having fellowship with evil people who can negatively influence our thinking and actions.
- (3) If we are in an **oversight** position in an institution, be it a marriage, a family, a business, a church, a government agency, etc., we must not tolerate slander that can unfairly ruin an innocent member of the institution’s relationship with others, and hence unjustly hurt not only the victim, but also the welfare of the whole institution. We must not tolerate haughtiness, but look for faithful, reliable people to be a contributing part of the institution. We need to avoid deceivers, deceptive troublemakers and people whose actions or whose thinking are wicked in the sense that they threaten the welfare of the communal functions of the institution that we oversee.

May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God’s gift of eternal life. May we then apply David’s manifesto of godly leadership by relying on the Holy Spirit where we live to be used of God to be an influence for godly stability in a needy world.