

What Happened?

In recent years our nation was blessed with a drop in crime rates, especially violent crime. The crime rate in 2018 was far lower (about half) than violent crime rates in 1990. Numerous factors can be cited for the reason, but basically good law enforcement was the main reason. New York, in particular, benefited from basic, sound application of good administrative and enforcement policies. From simple, low level crime to serious offenses, the law was applied carefully and equitably.

Profoundly interesting is the current, 2020 rise in crime, especially the murder rate and destruction of property, arson, looting, etc. in several large cities. It is painfully obvious that several political leaders have chosen to *allow* a certain level of lawlessness, which seems to have led to even more lawlessness.

Is there a biblical parallel? Yes, indeed, and it is both clear and important. God gives us a clear picture of what happens when societal leaders ignore proper laws. In 1 Samuel, chapters two and three, we see that the sons of Eli were worthless men (1 Samuel 2:12) who were involved in various forms of wrong doing (both moral and legal). In chapter 3, verse 13, we find a revealing reality that was at the root of their misconduct, "...because his sons brought a curse on themselves and he did not rebuke them." Eli knew of their evil conduct and yet chose *not to rebuke them*. The message is clear: When bad conduct is not rebuked, things become worse. What happened? The leaders did not follow God's word.

We see the very same message in Exodus 32. Moses was on the mountain meeting with God when Aaron let the people get out of control, *in only 40 days!* God's word tells us where the actual responsibility was laid, "*Now when Moses saw that the people were out of control—for Aaron had let them **get out of control** to be a derision among their enemies— 26 then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, "Whoever is for the Lord, come to me!" What happened? The leaders did not follow God's word!*

God has designed human life such that leaders are tasked with the responsibility to **not** allow the people (population) to get, "out of control." When people are allowed, by lack of law-abiding leadership, to get out of control, they will turn against one another (verse 29).

Yet again, we see the God's plan works toward "peace on earth" and a properly functioning society. We pray that our leaders, religious, federal and local will wake up and see their proper role in creating and maintaining a society of peace and harmony.

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