

David Limbaugh: Column: Mark Levin: A Modern-Day Constitutional Prophet

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When Mark Levin decided to write his book "The Liberty Amendments" to advocate a convention to propose a series of amendments to the U.S. Constitution, he may not have realized how quickly and deeply his profound idea would resonate. But throughout the nation, people are inclining their ears.

The first obstacle Levin faced was the widespread misconception that he is calling for a constitutional convention that could be hijacked by enemies of our founding principles and converted into a forum to hammer the final nails into our constitutional republic by fundamentally and radically changing our founding document.

In fact, Levin's proposal couldn't be more at odds with that misperception. He is, first and foremost, a constitutionalist. His goal is neither to eradicate nor to substantially change the Framers' blueprint for government. It's to restore it with specific, defined amendments intended to re-establish the proper balance between the power of the government and the liberty of its citizens, with due emphasis on the latter.

Levin is not arrogantly presuming to improve on the ineffable work of the Framers in crafting "the most wonderful work ever struck off at a given time by the brain and purpose of man" but humbly calling on his fellow patriots to recognize that we have strayed from the principles they enshrined in the Constitution and join him in his effort to advance the necessary correctives.

The Framers didn't meet in Philadelphia in the 18th century with the burning desire to pass super-legislation to codify an ideological political agenda to establish fundamental rights in health care or education, and they certainly didn't want to guarantee, by law, certain economic outcomes.

They met ostensibly to amend the Articles of Confederation and ended up scrapping it entirely and replacing it with our Constitution.

They were determined to design a system of government that would maximize individual liberties. That would require establishing a government strong enough to protect citizens from domestic and foreign threats but no stronger than that, for they knew that historically, unchecked, tyrannical governments had been the enemies of freedom.

Their challenge was to find that optimal balance between the power of government and individual liberties, so they created a system that divides and diffuses power between the national and state governments (through a system of federalism) and between coequal, competing branches of the federal government (the separation of powers), which hold one another in check.

It was not the affirmative granting of rights that would establish liberties -- many meaningless constitutions have paid lip service to that endeavor -- but the imposition of defined, specific and enforceable limitations on the federal government.

We must not lose sight of the fact that their overarching concern was liberty, an idea that gets little attention today -- apart from conservatives, constitutionalists and tea party patriots.

What constitutionalists understand is that upholding the integrity of the Constitution and its designed system of limited government is essential to preserving our liberties, and usurpations of power by all three branches of government and by an out-of-control, unaccountable administrative bureaucracy have imperiled them. Constitutionalists abhor abuses of power by any and all branches, irrespective of the substantive political agenda being served by such usurpations.

When King Josiah found a copy of the Jewish law in the Temple, which was being restored in 621 B.C., he was mortified by the extent to which the nation had departed from its teachings. He called for rededication to the law and a revival of its presence in the lives of the people.

Mark Levin is a modern-day constitutional prophet whose purpose is not to revamp the Constitution. It is to revive it and refurbish it -- to restore the cracks in its foundation caused by lawless officials through the years who were more interested in guaranteeing outcomes than they were liberty.

The goal of every one of Mark's proposed amendments is to restore the delicate balances the Framers originally designed; it is to restate and revivify the system of limited government they established by replacing bricks in specific places in our constitutional foundation -- bricks that statisticians have forcibly dislodged over time.

The sagacious and prescient Framers knew that no matter how well they crafted the Constitution, no matter what kind of protections it included, it would always be vulnerable to the abuses of lawless men who simply refuse to honor its provisions. They also understood that experience would enlighten their successors as to possible pitfalls and weaknesses in the framework that could be breached by such scofflaws over time, so they provided specific methods for amending the Constitution to shore up those trouble spots -- always keeping in mind that preserving liberty was the greatest imperative.

Today's statisticians have no regard for the Constitution or rule of law and have severely weakened it in many places, and as a result, our liberty, our prosperity and our very nation are in decline and in grave jeopardy.

Mark Levin is calling on us to take corrective steps -- through a process anticipated and expressly sanctioned by the Framers, no less -- to restore our system and reinvigorate our liberties. Let's pray his effort becomes an inexorable movement that sweeps the nation like the Great Awakening.

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