

### PRIDE AND WISHFUL THINKING

What a response to a question posed by Queen Elizabeth to a group of eminent economists! “Your Majesty, it was a combination of ‘wishful thinking and hubris’”.

According to a recent news release, Her Majesty met with a professor from the renowned London School of Economics to demand answers pertaining to last year’s credit crunch. The question seemed relatively simple, “Why didn’t anyone anticipate what was coming?” The answer, more difficult.

A carefully worded response reads, in part: Even the collective wisdom of “many bright people, both in this country and internationally,” wasn’t sufficient to avert the fiasco that resulted. In summary, the experts replied, the country’s (and world’s) brightest minds failed to comprehend the consequences of failing to properly manage risky debts or to protect financial systems. That must have been a tough letter to write; after all, we humans aren’t comfortable admitting that our recklessness and pride can lead to such dire results – let alone having to report such an assessment to the one who also bears the title (among others) of *Defender of the Faith*.

I couldn’t help but think of King Saul when I read the news release this week. He started out so well...strikingly handsome yet modest, self-disciplined yet able to think on his feet and wise enough to realize his position of king came with as many or more responsibilities as privileges. Centuries later greed and pride possessed the hearts and heads of some in high economic places and they exhibited the same symptoms: inflated self confidence, wishful thinking and pride.

We’d all do well to heed Samuel’s challenge to Saul and the nation of Israel: “Do not turn aside for then you would go after empty things which cannot profit or deliver, for they are nothing.” 1 Samuel 12:21

Lord, keep us from sinful pride and destructive greed!