

26<sup>th</sup> July 2022

# Straight

**“A circle is a round straight line with a hole in the middle.”**

Mark Twain (quoting a schoolchild), *English as She is Taught*

Planning to buy a new pair of running shoes, I made an appointment at a specialist outlet in town for advice. One part of that was to examine my running style, to see what kind of footwear was suitable. The “examination” consisted of me running for a few minutes on a treadmill, with my feet being filmed from behind. The part of your foot that hits the ground first, the angle of impact, variations between one foot and the other, were all carefully noted. And the result? “You have a slight pronation on your left foot,” I was told. Pronation? I looked it up ...

## **Pronation**

*Rotation of the medial bones in the midtarsal region of the foot inward and downward so that in walking the foot tends to come down on its inner margin.*

That can be corrected, of course, with the right kind of running shoes. And, though considerably lighter in the wallet, my pronation appears to be sorted, and I’m now running straight again.

Back in the Old Testament, in God’s dealing with his wayward people – again and again, it seems – he was constantly calling them to get themselves straight. “Pronation”, not in running, but in morals, religious practices, relationships, compassion. They were rotated this way and that, usually for their own pleasure. Long term, that wasn’t healthy. This call for straightness is more than adequately illustrated in this visual image from the book of the prophet, Amos.

*This is what he showed me: The Lord was standing by a wall that had been built true to plumb, with a plumb line in his hand. And the Lord asked me, ‘What do you see, Amos?’ A plumb line, I replied. Then the Lord said, ‘Look, I am setting a plumb line among by people ...’”*

I’ll give you the straightness, God says. That will be your guide. Follow the plumb line, and you’ll not go far wrong.

Pronation? Off-kilter? Coming down wrongly? Why would we continue like that when specialist advice is on hand, and we can be helped to run straight again?

## **A prayer for today**

*Lord, can I be straight with you today the way you are straight with me? Amen*