

A Pre-Election Sermon

1 Kings 19:15-17; Romans 1:32

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Elijah deserted his post as God's appointed prophet because Jezebel had issued a death threat against him. He fell into fearful discouragement, wanting God to take his life. The Lord came to this struggling prophet to restore him by way of the still small voice of the gospel that was heard over the loud crashing destruction of the wind, earthquake, and fire. The gospel of Jesus Christ does not pretend as if Elijah was faultless or sinless, but rather shows him (and us) that he stands condemned before an absolutely holy God in the wind, earthquake, and fire. The only hope for Elijah (and us) is the Lord Jesus who comes in a still small voice declaring that He has borne the holy wrath of God (the wind, earthquake, and fire) for everyone who will place their trust alone in Him alone.

But the Lord did not leave Elijah in that dark cave to do nothing more for the Lord—to become an inactive servant of the Lord. No, the Lord recommissions Elijah with further work that he is to do in promoting God's kingdom. Such dark times that we all face are not the end of our usefulness, but are the means God uses to teach us in the School of Christ where our pride, fear, and walking by sight (rather than by faith) will lead us (so that we can also be an encouragement to other brothers and sisters who are in their own dark cave of discouragement). A fall is not the end of your usefulness (where there is true repentance, forgiveness, and new obedience), but only the means Jesus uses to grow you in looking to Him (the Author and Finisher of your faith).

Elijah is mercifully recommissioned by the Lord to anoint two kings and a prophet, who will become God's anointed scourges upon Ahab, Jezebel, and Israel for turning from His mercy and power displayed on Mt. Carmel. God wanted Israel of old to know there were consequences to ignoring, forgetting, and rejecting His mercy. Two kings and a prophet would become God's appointed agents to bring His judgment upon Israel.

We will consider today the two kings (Hazeal and Jehu) as God's appointed scourge upon Israel. Next Lord's Day (God willing), we will consider the prophet, Elisha (Elijah's successor). The main points from our text are: (1) The Appointment of Two Kings to Be God's Scourge (1 Kings 19:15-17); (2) An Application to the Upcoming Election.

I. The Appointment of Two Kings to Be God's Scourge (1 Kings 19:15-17).

A. Your fall into great discouragement or into some sin is not the end forever of your usefulness in Christ's kingdom.

1. Yes, the fall of a minister into certain grievous sins may bring about the end of his ministry, or the fall of a husband/wife into adultery may bring about the end of a marriage, or the fall of an employer/employee may bring about the end of a job, and be that as it may, it doesn't mean that God is now through with you, or that He now has no further use for you, or that now your Christian life after repentance, forgiveness, and renewal is one of inactivity or solitude. God doesn't restore His saints to be forever discarded, but rather to be His witnesses in declaring the grief and sorrow of sin, but also in declaring the gospel of Christ's restoring love. There is nothing worse for one who is mired in the pit of despair than to stay in bed, than to be inactive, than to retreat from all work and service (even when it is the last thing one may feel like doing). Inactivity will only give the enemy greater opportunities to fill the mind with poisonous and ruinous thoughts about God, about oneself, and about others who may be blamed for the great discouragement.

2. Dear ones, we find such comfort (not joy) in the fall of Job, Samson, David, Elijah, and Peter because we see in each case that God was not finished with His servants that fell, and we are likewise

encouraged to look in hope that the Lord is not finished with us when we fall (even when the consequences of our repentant and forgiven sin follow us the rest of our days, like with Samson and David).

B. The Lord not only restored Elijah by the still small voice of the gospel, but then he gave Elijah work to do—a renewed commission in serving God. And in spite of Elijah’s fall, he arose by the love, mercy, and grace of God to do the work that God appointed for him to do until the Lord called him home in the fiery chariot. Let us consider the work the Lord appointed here for Elijah to do in regard to two kings: Hazael and Jehu. Both of these kings would become a scourge that the Lord would use against Israel in response to Elijah’s plea (1 Kings 19:10,14).

1. **Hazael** (2 Kings 8:7-15).

a. Hazael was the chief officer to King Ben-hadad of Syria. Hazael would come to the throne of Syria by means of murdering King Ben-hadad, and God would use him to be a persistent scourge in attacking Israel for Israel’s rejection of God’s manifest declaration to them that He alone was God—not Baal.

b. What is interesting about God’s appointed work here for Elijah to do is that it was not Elijah who actually went to Damascus of Syria to announce to Hazael that he would be king (but Elisha, his successor, after Elijah’s translation into heaven).

c. Did Elijah fail to do the will of the Lord in going to anoint Hazael? No! The Lord authorized Elijah to do so in 1 Kings 19:15, but withheld Elijah from doing so and gave that responsibility to Elisha to fulfill. Why the change here? It was not a change in God’s eternal purpose which is forever fixed and unalterable (Isaiah 46:9-10; Malachi 3:6). This seeming change was actually God’s response of mercy to the humbling of Ahab (1 Kings 21:25-29; Jeremiah 18:7-8). This so-called “change” was God working out His eternal decree in time. Ahab’s humiliation (not true repentance) did not catch God by surprise, but rather was revealed in this way to show so graphically in human terms the underserved mercy of the Lord. What this reveals is the mercy of the Lord even to the Ahab’s of the world in delaying His righteous judgment and His call to repent (Romans 2:4).

2. **Jehu** (2 Kings 9:1-10).

a. Jehu was captain of the armies of Israel under King Joram, the son of Ahab and Jezebel (who had both died violent deaths in fulfillment of God’s prophesies). Once again it was not Elijah that anointed Jehu, but one of the prophets that was sent by Elisha to do so.

b. The same truths given above apply here as well in regard to the command given to Elijah, but realized through Elisha. There was no change in God’s eternal purpose, though the Lord withheld Elijah from doing so and gave that commission to Elisha. God was once again showing His mercy to an undeserving Ahab in awaiting his death before destroying his posterity through Jehu.

C. Does the fact that God appointed Hazael to be king of Syria and Jehu to be king of Israel reveal God’s approval of them as being “the ministers of God to thee for good” (Romans 13:4)?

1. Hazael and Jehu were appointed by the Lord to bring judgment upon the land of Israel and upon the descendants of Ahab and Jezebel. Hazael came to power by murdering King Ben-hadad and his rule would be characterized by ripping open the wombs of mothers and murdering those babies. Jehu followed in the idolatrous paths of Jeroboam contrary to God’s Moral Law revealed through Moses, 2 Kings 10:31; Hosea 8:4). These were not righteous kings and yet God appointed them—not by his moral will, but in His providential will. But why did the Lord appoint them? Did He do so because they were His faithful ministers? No! He did so in order use them to bring judgment upon a covenant-breaking nation—Israel (Isaiah 10:5-7; Jeremiah 25:9).

2. All ungodly rulers and immoral governments are appointed in God’s providential will, but not approved by His moral will (Proverbs 21:1). God’s providence appoints, rules over, and uses all manner

of evil—Job, Joseph, Shadrach, Meshach, Abed-nego, Daniel etc. And yet God does not morally approve of these wicked rulers and their government, for their will and laws are contrary to the Moral Law of God (Ten Commandments). Thus, God’s providential appointment of Hazael and Jehu was not His moral approval at all of their reign as rulers. The question arises, “If God commanded Hazael and Jehu to be anointed as kings (though violators of God’s Moral Law, then can I not vote for candidates in the upcoming election who do the same?”

II. An Application to the Upcoming Election.

A. Should we vote for various candidates running for public office? Does God morally approve of these candidates? Let me briefly outline for you why I believe Christians should not vote for candidates at the present time who are running for public office (according to Scripture).

1. **First, it is evil to do what is contrary to God’s Moral Law according to 1 John 3:4** (e.g. murdering the unborn).

2. **Second, if it is a sin to transgress God’s Moral Law, then it is likewise a sin to swear to do or uphold what is evil and contrary to God’s Law**—a further aggravation of sin to swear to do or uphold what is evil, Exodus 20:7; Romans 1:32; *Westminster Confession of Faith*, 22:4).

a. For example, if it is evil to engage in same sex “marriages”, then it is evil to swear to uphold them. Likewise, if it is evil to murder a child in the womb, then it is evil to swear to uphold a law that legally protects the murder of an unborn. If it is evil to practice a false religion, then it is evil to swear to uphold a law that protects the free exercise of false religion. If it is evil to replace the Law of God with the law of man as that which is supreme, then it is evil to swear to do so. In other words, whatever is evil to do is also evil (and even more so) to swear to do.

b. But the Constitution of the United States (Article VI) states that it and the laws of this nation and its treaties are the “supreme law of the land” (“supreme” means there is no higher law in governing in the United States). This is clearly contrary to God’s Moral Law (and an abomination to God Himself). It is to put God’s Law in subjection to man’s law (God in subjection to man). The First Amendment to the Constitution forbids Congress from establishing the one true religion of biblical Christianity as its alone official religion. The Constitution also forbids any scriptural tests to be administered to those who hold office (so that atheists, Satanists, or idolaters and blasphemers of every stripe might hold office from the lowest to the highest place in the civil government). Either the First Amendment is supreme or the First Commandment. The stated source of power and authority within the United States is not the God who instituted civil government (He was deliberately omitted), but is rather “We the people of the United States”. Jesus Christ was likewise deliberately omitted as well. Because same sex “marriages” (and so many other immoral practices) are legally protected by the Constitution and laws of this land and because abortion is legally protected by the Constitution and laws of this land, all who run for public office must swear to uphold all these violations of God’s Moral Law, for they are the supreme law of the land by which this nation is ruled.

c. Therefore, I submit if these and many more violations of God’s Law are evil, then how much more evil is it for those who run for public office to swear by their constitutional oaths to uphold, to enforce, and to rule according to these wicked laws? Man becomes God.

3. **Third, what is evil for a person to do, and what is evil for a person to swear to do or to uphold, is also evil to knowingly give a person the power to do the evil that he has sworn to do.** If it is evil to murder unborn children, then it is evil to swear to uphold abortion, and it is evil to give anyone the power to swear to uphold such an unlawful oath (the power to swear an unlawful oath to do that which is evil comes from voters). It makes those who grant that power to civil rulers accomplices in the evil acts (even laws that “restrict” abortion are wicked and not pro-life because they still legally promote the murder of unborn children). If it is evil for those who run for public office to swear to do what is evil in upholding these wicked

laws, then it is evil to give them the power to do so by voting for them. It is to be a partaker in the sins of others. It is an avoidable chain of responsibility that cannot be broken.

a. **Objection #1:** "All that is necessary for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing" (Edmund Burke?). If we do not vote, consider how much worse will be the evil that runs rampant. The Apostle Paul teaches that we should never do evil that good may come (Romans 3:8). Christians are not doing "nothing" to prevent evil and to promote righteousness when they fervently pray and fast for reformation and for peace (2 Chronicles 7:14; 1 Timothy 2:2—a Cyrus), when ministers faithfully preach the whole counsel of God—the gospel and the commandments, when parents faithfully train their children, and when Christians speak the truth in love to all who will hear (from the President down).

b. **Objection #2:** "We must vote for the lesser of two evils." Somehow I missed that principle in Scripture (Matthew 5:19). Is it a lesser evil to murder fewer babies by way of restricted abortions? It is still murder of the unborn whether more or fewer are murdered, to which we cannot by our vote give power for others to swear to uphold any such law.

c. **Objection #3:** "My candidate does not agree with that wicked law." But if your candidate wins that election, it is mandatory that your candidate swear with uplifted hand to uphold, defend, and protect the Constitution and the laws of the land that have legalized idolatry, false religion, blasphemy, covenant-breaking, Sabbath-breaking, abortion, and same-sex "marriages". Until the Triune God is exalted on high as the source of government, until God's Moral Law is the supreme law of the land, and until biblical Christianity is established upon Scripture and the Westminster Confession of Faith, and until the Solemn League and Covenant is renewed, all candidates will be swearing to uphold that which is evil and all voters will be empowering them to swear on their behalf that which is evil. I love my country, and I am thankful to the Lord for the measure of freedom we yet have in this country; but that love becomes idolatry when I do not love God above all (Proverbs 14:34).

B. May God open our eyes to see our part in empowering that which is evil and grant us repentance and forgiveness.

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