

GROWING IN GOD

PODCAST



GIG127 – God Deals with National Leaders

Welcome to the podcast, and thank you so much for joining us. I really appreciate you being here and being a part. As always, I would like to ask, if you would, and if you enjoy this, to share it with those that you relate to on the Internet, and maybe encourage them to listen to one of the shows and see if it is a blessing for them. Also, you could give a five-star rating to the show. All of that really helps to spread the word and get people involved with what we are doing here at Hargrave ministries. And again, as I said, we really appreciate your help and your support in every way.

We are going to talk today about God dealing with national leaders. I know many times it seems as though you watch the news, you watch stories that are going on, and it just feels like sometimes those in leadership positions get away with just anything; and possibly they are at this point. But I want there to be an understanding on our part, as believers, as Christians, as those in the Jewish community, that there are so many things that God is doing right now; and I don't know that we should not feel as though God's hand is on the leadership of the nations. There should definitely be a sense we have that He is in control of those who get into leadership positions, and are in leadership positions. I think there needs to be more of a faith in our hearts, more of a trust in our spirits, that God really is in charge, and that He is in the midst right now of carrying out His will in these last days to accomplish His purposes and bring about His Kingdom. If we lose that positioning in our spirits and in our faith, I think it detracts from what we are supposed to be as those praying for the will of God to come on this earth. One of our greatest commissions, as far as I am concerned, is the prayer that Christ gave us: "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on this earth, as it is in heaven." I do not think that is an insipid prayer. I think it is a demand of our spirits of faith to see that nothing is able to thwart His will or His purposes that He is in the process of bringing about on this earth, to match up with the Kingdom as He is getting ready to manifest it out of heaven. So this issue about national leaders, I think, is one that we need to have a great deal of faith about.

One of the concerns I have is just the sense of criticism and judgment that you feel from people; maybe the sense of blame for everything that goes on seems to be put upon those who are in leadership. I do not think God wants us in that position. Romans 14:10-12 says, "But you, why do you judge your brother? Or you again, why do you regard your brother with contempt? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. For it is written, 'As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall give praise to God.' So then each one of us will give an account of himself to God." That needs to be deeply rooted within our faith, that God really is working with people, both in and out of leadership; but especially those who have the responsibility before Him, because the Scripture says, "No authority exists other than what is given by God." We need to have this sense that God has given authority, does give authority, and is involved in the leadership of the nations in ways that we cannot see or necessarily imagine; and that each one is going to stand before God and give an account for themselves and for their actions. Therefore, I think we put ourselves in a place of spiritual weakness when we find ourselves blaming and judging those who are in the place of authority. Instead, the Scripture encourages us to pray for those who are in authority, and I think we should. I think we should

pray for them in every way, including the fact that they must give an account before God. So as we look at these times of the end, for me, I recognize from the Scriptures that it really is in these days that God is calling to account the nations. It happens on a national level, in a way; and when He speaks about the nations, obviously He is including in that the rulers, the leaders of the nations, and the peoples of the nations. So, those very distinct groups are accounted for in what God does.

In Joel 3:12-14, it says, "Let the nations be aroused and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat, for there I will sit to judge all the surrounding nations. Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, tread, for the wine press is full; the vats overflow, for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision." I just know there is a sense that the valley of decision is right upon us, and that the day of the Lord is very near. And that is, again, why I encourage us to have this understanding and this feeling in our hearts, that we really are in a time when things are not just getting by, and God is not missing what is going on in the earth. He is very aware of the wickedness. He is very aware of the situations on national levels between the nations, and the nations with Him, and how they have related to Him, and what they have done to Him and to His people. And so, we must contend in our intercession that God is at this time bringing the nations to this time of decision and accounting, and believe for that, and be in prayer for it; be prophesying that it is the day of the Lord, and it has come to the valley of decision. Those who are in the process of decision are going to make those decisions; and in that process, it is going to turn loose God's ability to act.

I want to give two examples out of the Scriptures of leaders: one, a king of Israel, and the other, a Gentile ruler. I want to use the examples of these two leaders that show how carefully God was monitoring them, monitoring their leadership, monitoring their actions, and then calling them to account for what they were doing and how they were doing it. The first is in First Samuel chapter 16, starting at verse 14. This is the story of Saul. Now preceding this, we know that Saul had been very disobedient to what he was directed by the Lord to do through Samuel the prophet. He had offered the sacrifices when Samuel seemed to be late and not showing up on the scene. He also had not acted correctly when he won the battle, and he was supposed to see that everyone and everything was destroyed. Instead, you know, he kept Agag the king, and he kept some of the sheep and things like this, and he took it for booty for those who had won. And so, we finally get to a point where God is done with Saul's disobedience, and He deals with it. That is what we find taking place in First Samuel 16.

At verses 14-16, it says, "Now the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord terrorized him. Saul's servants then said to him, 'Behold now, an evil spirit from God is terrorizing you. Let our lord now command your servants who are before you. Let them seek a man who is a skillful player on the harp; and it shall come about when the evil spirit from God is on you, that he shall play the harp with his hand, and you will be well.'" And we know this is where David is brought in to be the one playing the music to chase off the evil spirit. But it is interesting that the servants themselves recognize that this is something of God's doing to Saul, because of the fact that Saul was disobedient. You say, "I don't understand how the Lord could bring an evil spirit." Well, you know, when the Spirit of the Lord departs, that is what is left – the wickedness that surrounds us. It is like we have a protection from God from the things that would torment us; and when God removes that protection and removes His Presence, then we are left with that which satan brings, because it is his desire to possess and to destroy. And so it is not that God has to bring some special spirit on the scene to torment Saul; there are many spirits ready to take over. And that is literally what happens – as the Spirit of God departs Saul, then he is left without the protection of God, and he is left without the anointing from God that he originally had. God had anointed him as king. Now that anointing is gone, and the spiritual covering and

protection is gone, and he is left vulnerable to spirit possession. That is exactly what takes place, and we see the results of it. Saul does become tormented; he acts like a crazy, possessed man. And we have seen that in history with national leaders, that there are those who have obviously been driven by demonic spirits, have obviously been possessed; and all we can see from the Scriptures is that they have come to a place, like Saul, where God is no longer with them or protecting them, and now they are driven by demonic forces. That has happened, and it will happen. It was part of the judgment on Saul that he found himself tormented by these spirits, and used by these spirits. If you recall, there was the moment when he grabbed the spear and threw it at David and tried to kill him; he spent a great amount of time and effort pursuing David to destroy him. And we will see that. There will be leaders who are in the process of being dealt with by God, that God has abandoned and left over to be possessed, and we will see them moving in very destructive ways in this generation in which we live.

But it is not necessarily just an individual, and they are not getting away with something. We should not relate to it that way. We should understand, when we see these things transpiring among leadership in and among the nations, whether they be kings or presidents, that this is part and parcel of God dealing, as He said He would in Joel. He is bringing the nations, and the leaders of those nations, and the peoples of those nations, to a place of decision, to a place of judgment, in the day of the Lord. And those days of the Lord are upon us; therefore, we are going to witness this type of reality taking place around us. It is not necessarily pleasant, but it is what transpired with Saul. God withdrew from him, and God will withdraw His protection and His anointing and His Presence from people who are rebellious and not giving Him the glory and following His will.

Another example is Nebuchadnezzar, which we find in Daniel the fourth chapter. I will start reading from verse 30. This is an example of a Gentile ruler, so we are covering both Gentile rulers and rulers of Israel. It does not matter – God is dealing with national leaders. He does deal, He does engage in what is taking place in the world around us, and we need to really understand that and really be in prayer about it. So, at verses 30-37, it says, “The king reflected and said, ‘Is this not Babylon the great, which I myself have built as a royal residence by the might of my power and for the glory of my majesty?’ While the word was in the king's mouth, a voice came from heaven, saying, ‘King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is declared: sovereignty has been removed from you, and you will be driven away from mankind, and your dwelling place will be with the beasts of the field. You will be given grass to eat like cattle, and seven periods of time will pass over you until you recognize that the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind and bestows it on whomever He wishes.’ Immediately the word concerning Nebuchadnezzar was fulfilled; and he was driven away from mankind and began eating grass like cattle, and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven until his hair had grown like eagle's feathers and his nails like bird's claws.

“But at the end of that period, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever; for His dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom endures from generation to generation. All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, but He does according to His will in the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth; and no one can ward off His hand or say to Him, ‘What have you done?’ At that time my reason returned to me. And my majesty and splendor were restored to me for the glory of my kingdom, and my counselors and my nobles began seeking me out; so I was reestablished in my sovereignty, and surpassing greatness was added to me. Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise, exalt and honor the King of heaven, for all His works are true and His ways just, and He is able to humble those who walk in pride.” This is such a great illustration of what Joel is talking about. In these end days, God will bring judgment. He is sorting out everyone, including the leaders of the nations, the

sovereigns of the nations, and they may be in the valley of decision. It looks like at some point Nebuchadnezzar made the right decision; he gave praise and honor and glory to God, and he realized that he was nothing more than a mere animal, if it were not for the power of God and the blessing of God to bring to him sovereignty and rulership over Babylon – which was, at the time, the greatest of nations. In the vision, it was the head of gold, representing even the Kingdom of God in the illustration of the vision.

Here we have two situations of rulers. One, which is Saul, was driven crazy and tormented by demons until he was brought to his death in war, while he was still determined to destroy David and pursue him. We have also Nebuchadnezzar, who was really made insane, and stayed that way for this period of time until reason came back to him and he was humbled in his heart, and gave himself to the power and the worship of God, and to the recognition that He is the one who is sovereign; He is the one who is the Almighty; He is the God of all heaven and its hosts, not Nebuchadnezzar.

So here we have an illustration that I want to be so alive to us as believers. God is not detached from what is going on in the world right now. Yet many times it feels that way; and like I said, you can get a sense when you watch leaders and rulers that it seems like they can get away with anything, and do anything they want, and there is no price to be paid, there is no consequence for their actions or their thinking. Some of them you may look at and say, “I think they are like Nebuchadnezzar – they are already crazy, because what they are doing is insane, and it just is not normal.” And that may be the case, that you are really observing something taking place in one individual who is in the midst of God's dealings on their life.

I want to conclude this podcast with a recognition in our hearts, as believers, that ours is a place of prayer and intercession. We live knowing that we are in the last days. We are in the days that Joel spoke of, when God is calling the nations into the Valley of Jehoshaphat, and He is bringing all of the nations to a place of judgment, to a place of decision. A decision has to be made. And there will be decisions that may surprise us in what people end up choosing – because they may, as Nebuchadnezzar, end up really giving glory to God and recognizing Him as the King of kings and the Lord of lords, instead of themselves. But however it is, God is bringing us in this end time, both rulers and peoples of the nations alike, to a time of decision, to a time of recognizing that we must walk with Him. It is all about us giving our lives to Him. And as the Scripture says, “Every knee shall bow, and every tongue will give praise to God.” No one, no one, that is in the earth in this day, is going to be able to protect themselves or find a way around the reality of what God is doing, of bringing all of mankind at this time to a decision. The decision is about Him, and about serving Him, and how we relate to Him as individuals. And as the Scripture says in Romans, we will all stand before Him, and He will be the One who judges and determines the consequences of the decisions that we have made. We believe for that, and we bless this as just a quick podcast to give us direction and some ways to think about the things that we may see going on around us in these days.

I bless this to you in the name of the Lord. Amen.