

GROWING IN GOD

PODCAST



GIG117 – These Political Times

Hello, and welcome to our podcast. In this podcast today, I want to talk about these political times that we are in. We have just experienced midterm elections, at least in the United States. I know other countries are also engaged in elections, and I know there is a lot transpiring around politics in this day that we are living in. I believe that our ability to really be able to look at it properly through a biblical, scriptural worldview is important for us as Christians, as Jewish believers. I think we need to be able to in some ways honestly evaluate and look openly at these things. When you get into things like politics, people have a lot of conditionings and a lot of presets that they are driven by; sometimes we just need to be able to set those aside and maybe look clearly through a biblical lens at possibilities that are transpiring.

One thing about politics, I think, especially in this country of America – it is important that people vote their conscience. And when I say that, I think you should vote your faith, which means you should be praying over it. You do not need me to tell you how to vote, but I do think you need the Holy Spirit to tell you how to vote. As believers, I think there is a reality to being led by the Holy Spirit in our politics, and we do not set our politics aside when it comes to the direction that the nation is going, the laws that are being passed, things that are being done. So to me, our faith is our root. It is our foundation. We are to walk as He walked, as Christ walked. As Yeshua walked in this earth, we are to walk in a way that is pleasing to the Father. He said, “I am not able to do anything of Myself, but that which the Father tells Me to do.” He always said those things that He heard the Father say, and He did those things that He saw the Father do. I think we should walk likewise. And I do think that includes politics, and for that matter, every other aspect of our lives. So to me, there is not a place where we set our faith aside and differentiate it from our lives. I know that, governmentally, we have a separation in this country of church and state; but that does not mean that you leave your faith out of your decisions and your conscience, and what you feel should be done, and the way you feel things should be done. That is the foundation of who you are as a person, and it does affect every part of your life. So I think that is what we want to drill down into and spend some more time unpacking in this podcast. It is this idea that we do walk by faith, and that they that are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God. We should seek to be led by His Holy Spirit the best we can in every aspect of our faith, and in all of the building blocks that go along with the areas that make up our society.

I want to talk about a story in First Samuel, in chapter eight. We hear so much today, especially from believers and about believers, that people are concerned with the direction we are going in, at least in the United States of America; and I know in other countries too. I am probably more familiar with Brazil than some other countries outside of the U.S. And in talking to many from Brazil, I know that there is a similar concern about the direction of the country, the direction of the politicians, the direction of the laws and societal norms and mores and how things are going. I know that really is true in this country – there is a lot of conflict and controversy about some of those things, and the laws that are related to them. In the United States, we have just had the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* in the Supreme Court. To many, that is a definite moral standing that is very much foundational to their religion and their belief in

the Bible. So we find that it is difficult in any setting to really separate politics from our faith and our spiritual beliefs, or beliefs in general; because even if you are an atheist, you have beliefs about these things, and those beliefs become the foundation of how you think and how you vote, and where you think the country is and where you think the country should be going.

What we see transpiring is almost a conflict in our society that really is playing itself out in culture. We have heard the term over the last many years of a “culture war,” and many feel we are in a cultural war. But whether that is true or not, I think it is trying to define where people are in their relationship with God. And again, I am looking through a very biblical lens, or biblical worldview, that the issue really is the heart and belief system that people are holding in today's world. And many of those beliefs are very different than they were fifty years ago, seventy years ago, just for society as a whole; and that, to me, is what I think we need to focus more on.

I said this in a previous podcast, that when we talk about the United States of America – and I know that there are other countries that are run through a democratic process – the very heart of a democratic process is the fact that the people determine the way things should be done, who should be in leadership, how the laws should be formed. In the United States, we have the terminology from our Constitution of “We the People.” It is a very true belief, as well as a functional reality, that We the People determine what happens. So when you look at changes that seem to be transpiring over the society, whether you want to call it a war of morals – or if you want to call it a changing of societal norms, or if you want to put it more in political terminologies – where we see these changes transpiring, we are really needing to back that up to its nexus, which is the people who are making those decisions. And at least in this country, We the People make the decisions. Now, you may not like those decisions; you may feel like they are not Christian, or they are not biblical; but I believe what is important is to study very carefully the reality that We the People are still the driving force in this nation. Whoever We the People become, we will determine what happens. We have determined the course of this nation over the last two hundred thirty-plus years that we have had this Constitution that we have, and we will continue as We the People to determine what transpires from this time on. So, if we are seeing changes, I think we need to come back to putting it a little bit under a microscope and saying, “If something is changing, maybe it really is We the People.”

I want to look at First Samuel, the eighth chapter, and I am going to start reading from verses 1-5. “And it came about when Samuel was old that he appointed his sons judges over Israel. Now the name of his firstborn was Joel, and the name of his second, Abijah; they were judging in Beersheba. His sons, however, did not walk in his ways, but turned aside after dishonest gain and took bribes and perverted justice. Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah; and they said to him, ‘Behold, you have grown old, and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now appoint a king for us to judge us like all the nations.’” What we are seeing here is a huge transition in the nation of Israel. The nation of Israel has really been under the leadership of Samuel the prophet. So, theoretically, the way Israel was being directed or led from its governmental top was by Samuel, who was a prophet, who was hearing the voice of the Lord; he was then speaking to the people what God wanted, and telling the people what God was saying, and they then were following the voice of the Lord as the direction of the nation. Now, we see this tremendous change happening: Samuel is now appointing his sons, but his sons do not think like Samuel; they are not prophets like Samuel was, maybe they do not hold the same beliefs, whatever. They are taking bribes, they are perverting justice, different things are taking place. And so the elders of Israel, those who are leading in a way that is apparently representing We the People, are coming to Samuel, saying, “This is not working. Your sons are not able to lead as you led, and

so we want a different solution, knowing that you, at some point, are not going to be with us anymore, and there has to be an ongoing reality of leadership.”

I think we could apply this to the United States of America. We see that the generation from the Second World War, and the generations that have been in charge, are now in the process of dying out, and are no longer going to be the ones that are ruling over the nation and governing. We have slowly but surely seen a transition like the sons of Samuel, where it is maybe different morals, different ways of leadership that are not necessarily based upon the Word of the Lord, whether that be the Scriptures, or prayer, or whatever. And to compare, we do have to go back to the beginning of this country – it was very much formed by those who were seeking, to the best of their ability, to lead according to what they saw from and through biblical principles. Now I know that many believe that the United States is a country of destiny, and has a covenant from God, or with God, as did Israel. I do not know that I can really agree with that. I do agree that when the nation was founded, it was founded by individuals who in their own heart were making a covenant with God, and were giving themselves to walk in certain ways that they believed would please God and bring the blessing of God upon this nation, and to form the nation and its laws and its governance based upon principles that they saw in the Scriptures. So we have something along the lines of what you had with Samuel. It was Samuel's choice that he as a prophet lead the nation. It was not necessarily the form of leadership that we would see come about in the nation through the laws of Moses, and how all of that was set up; that was set up to be directed through the High Priest and the priesthood. Samuel was doing something a little different. He was a timeframe that was a little different than the establishment of the Law under Moses at Mount Sinai. But it gives an illustration similar to us: it was Samuel's faith, it was Samuel's agreement with God, to provide a leadership that was based on the Lord's will and the Lord's Word. So, as others came up and grew, namely his sons, and they did not follow those same principles, we see a different type of leadership transpiring in Israel. And it is this that we are experiencing. In today's reality, we see people who are not necessarily wanting to follow the same mores, the same Judeo-Christian values, that have led this country; the same ways in which the leadership formed the Constitution and formed the government in the beginning, basing it on scriptural principles, is not necessarily what we see transpiring today. And that may be difficult for the church or for people that are believers to understand. But I think we have to recognize the reality of what is going on around us, just like Samuel had to recognize the reality of how his sons were beginning to lead. And we see then the results of this change.

There are a lot of people who are unhappy with the direction that things are going, and I think that is where people are not really sure where to go with it. Do we just get involved in politics? Do we run for office? Do we try to influence the politicians once they are in office? How exactly do we, as believers, really begin to relate to all of this that is transpiring? Number one, we do need to be praying about this, and looking to the Lord about it. But what I am proposing in this podcast is that we back up a little bit further in the way we are relating to the instrument of change; that is necessary for us in this timeframe. And I want to use the story about Samuel and his sons, and about Israel, as an example. So, the elders come to Samuel, and they say, in verses 6-9, “Give us a king to judge us.’ And Samuel prayed to the Lord. The Lord said to Samuel, ‘Listen to the voice of the people in regard to all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me from being king over them. Like all the deeds which they have done since the day that I brought them up from Egypt even to this day—in that they have forsaken Me and served other gods—so they are doing to you also. Now then, listen to their voice; however, you shall solemnly warn them and tell them of the procedure of the king who will reign over them.’”

So, Samuel goes to the Lord and he prays over this idea that the elders of Israel are requesting a new form of government. They want something different than what they have had. Obviously, they do not want Samuel's sons to rule over them. But they want something different than what they have experienced with Samuel; they want a king like all the other nations that they have experienced and see living around them – that is what they want. So God says, “Samuel, listen to what they want and give them the king, because they are not rejecting you, they are rejecting Me.” And I think this is a question that we, as believers, have to ask – not only in the United States of America but in other nations, like Brazil, other places where God has been a central focus in the country through many years, and we now see changes occurring like those that are occurring around us. We say, “How do we think about these changes?” “What do we do about these changes?” And whether we like this answer or not, God did answer Samuel. He said, “Look, Samuel, listen to the people. Give them what they want.” And I encourage us, as believers, to really stand back and look at this carefully. Number one, we should vote. We should be involved in the process as our democracy allows us to be involved in that process, and the freedom that our democracy gives for us to be allowed in that process. I think we should exercise those freedoms and exercise those rights, all of those rights – including the right to voice our thoughts and opinions, and to seek change where we think change should be made. But I think that there is something else that may be playing out here that we need to look at very carefully. Because I think that in this country, we are at a place where for years now we have been in a process; I would say that this process has been transpiring really through much of my lifetime, so, say, for the last fifty to seventy years, we have seen a progression of change that has taken place in this country. And we may be now at a time when God is saying, “Hey, I am going to give these people what they want” – because it may be the only way that we learn. I think this is what God was talking to Samuel about: “The only way people are going to learn to go back to what I directed them – in coming out of Egypt; through Moses, at Mount Sinai, with the giving of the Law; the establishment of the process of worship of Me with the Temple; and the establishment of rights and laws and governance – is for them to see and experience something else.” And we may be at the end of the great American trial, and it may be a time when something else takes place.

I know we have a lot of people clamoring for a socialistic form of government. We have some of our people in leadership, elected officials in leadership, that are calling for that. In past votes, we have seen some of those leaders get tremendous support from the people. And we may be at a time when things change in this country, and we as Christians may have to face this time. Again, I am not saying that we should not speak up, that we should not address it; I think we should. But I also think we should recognize the foundation of where it is coming from. We may be at a time when people, We the People, are calling for something different than what we have ever seen before in our form of government. Certainly, to have some like ones who ran in the last election become elected officials with the intent to transform us into a socialistic form of government – that would be a radical change from what we have known. It may be a change that at some point comes to this country because God is no longer holding it back.

I think God has blessed us because of the foundation that we have had, and the love for Him and His Word that we have had, and a desire to follow Him, with a majority of We the People having that heart and determination. But that may not be the case anymore. And we as Christian believers must recognize that if we find ourselves being in tremendous changes, those changes, like they were under Samuel, may be being allowed by God. And so, I would encourage us not to look for another civil war in this country, or going to war with one another. I think the true war that exists is a war for the hearts of We the

People. And I believe that any other attempt at another solution is not going to be effective, whether that is trying to be very involved or more involved in government, or in trying to get Christians into political positions. I think in some ways that can go awry. I think we need to be a Christian voice to this nation, if we are Christian believers. I think we need to speak our faith, speak our teaching, speak the Scriptures, speak those things that we believe in; speak the Judeo-Christian mores that have been a part of this nation for these many years. And we need to say, "Hey, this is the answer. This is where we need to go. This is what will bring the blessing of God." Because at some point, I do not care who is in office – if we do not have the blessings of God on this nation any longer, as we have had in the past, then those governmental offices are not really going to be the force that brings change which is necessary. That change has to come from the heart of We the People.

I think this is what we were experiencing now through this story with Samuel. We see God saying, "Listen, do what the people want." Now that is a scary thought to me. If I look at society today with its new age morals, and with woke thinking, and all that is going on in education as well as government and the legal system, that is a scary prospect, I recognize. But I do not know that we are not coming to a moment when God is done enforcing His blessing and His covering on this country, if We the People seriously no longer want it. And I think that we have Israel as an example. We see what did transpire through Israel. There was a time when God did remove His covering, and He allowed them to be taken down as a nation, and He allowed them to be scattered among the nations and taken into the Diaspora. Now, His promise to Israel has always been one of restoration, that at some point they will return and they will seek Him with all their hearts and He will be found of them; and He will make a new covenant with them and give them a new heart and a new spirit, and everything will change. But again, the change comes from the heart of the people. It is a change from within the individual believer in Israel that then motivates or initiates a national change that transpires. And I am just putting this out for us to pray about: in this country, we may be seeing something transpire as it did for Israel, where God is saying, "Give the people what they want. And if what they want is to follow other gods, if what they want is to sin against My Word, if what they want is to go another direction and they want to come out from under My protection and My covering and My blessings that have been leading and guiding up to this point – then the truth is, they are not rejecting a form of government, they are rejecting God." And I think this has really been the heart of what has been the concern about America – are we rejecting God? It is not, "Are we rejecting the Republic, or the democracy." It is, "Are we rejecting God?" We certainly ask for Him to be removed from our schools, from our halls of justice, from different aspects of our government, from our lives in many, many ways. And at some point, does God just say, "Fine, give them what they want"?

So God says to Samuel, "Listen to their voice." Verse 9, "'Now then, listen to their voice; however, you shall solemnly warn them and tell them of the procedure of the king who will reign over them.'" And I think this is where we come in as believers. What is our leverage? What do we do, finding ourselves in this place? I think this is where we need to speak up in ways that we have not spoken up. I think we have been too much, too long, a silent majority that has maybe hidden our faith under the bushel basket. I think we need to show our faith. I think we need to speak our faith. I think we need to tell of the blessings that come when we live according to the principles that God has lined out for us, in following Yeshua as a Savior, as Messiah; retaining our Judeo-Christian values. These types of things need to be now shouted from the housetops to those who are making a decision to go in another direction, at least as a voice of warning.

You remember in the Scriptures where God said, "Listen, if you are the prophet and you see the army coming against the city, you have to shout from the walls, 'Hey, the enemy is coming, this is what is going to happen!' If you don't, you are guilty of their blood." I think we have to, as believers, shout what the results will be of the direction that we are going. We may not be able to change the direction that this country is choosing to go. But I think, even if we can't – I am not saying don't try – but even if we can't, I think we have to be the voice of warning that says, "Here is what is going to happen if we lose the blessing of God, and more so, if we lose His divine covering and protection." There has been a divine protection and immunity on the nation of America and other nations because of our faith and attempt to walk with Him to the best of our ability. If we lose that protection, I do not know what could happen. But the things that are possibilities seem like they are right at our doorstep right now; and all you have to do is watch the news to know what I am talking about. There are other nations that would love to destroy this country, to destroy America, destroy other democracies. We have existed because of the grace of God and the protection of God that is over us. And if we are going to lose that, I think we need to be a warning to the nations, to We the People, on what potential we are facing.

In verses 10-22, it goes on to say, "So Samuel spoke all the words of the Lord to the people who had asked of him a king. He said, 'This will be the procedure of the king who will reign over you: he will take your sons and place them for himself in his chariots and among his horseman and they will run before his chariots. He will appoint for himself commanders of thousands and of fifties, and some to do his plowing and to reap his harvest and to make his weapons of war and equipment for his chariots. He will also take your daughters for perfumers and cooks and bakers. He will take the best of your fields and your vineyards and your olive groves and give them to his servants. He will take a tenth of your seed and of your vineyards and give to his officers and to his servants. He will also take your male servants and your female servants and your best young men and your donkeys and use them for his work. He will take a tenth of your flocks, and you yourselves will become his servants. Then you will cry out in that day because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves, but the Lord will not answer you in that day.'" Why? He has departed. "Nevertheless, the people refused to listen to the voice of Samuel, and they said, 'No, but there shall be a king over us, that we also may be like all the nations, that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles.' Now after Samuel had heard all the words of the people, he repeated them in the Lord's hearing. The Lord said to Samuel, 'Listen to their voice and appoint them a king.' So Samuel said to the men of Israel, 'Go every man to his city.'"

I think we have to look as believers and say, are we potentially in a time that the Scriptures tell us has happened in the past, and could happen again? Are we in a time when God is going to allow We the People of the United States of America to choose a different style of governance, a different style of life, throwing off, quote unquote, the bondage of Judeo-Christian values, throwing off the blessings of having God as the God we serve, and choosing to serve other gods and other ways that we have not known, nor have we served before in this country? If we are facing that, all I can say to us as believers is, we need to rise up, and do what we can to be the voice of this nation; to be a voice to this nation, as Samuel was to Israel, and warn this nation of what happens to the nations when they do not serve God. And once again, we have the Scriptures to follow. We have the Scriptures to teach from, to show what happens to the nations that serve other gods and do not believe in the God who is the only God and the Creator of the universe, and in His Messiah, who will come to this earth and rule as the King of not only this nation, but of this earth itself.

It may be time for us to be a voice. And as that voice, we can believe for great revival to take place, and we can believe to turn the hearts of the children to the fathers, and the hearts of the fathers to the

children. We can believe to turn the hearts of a nation back to serving God because they see the error of their way. But they may have to taste the error of their way to understand the choices they are making. And I believe in some ways that is true. I believe this younger generation that surrounds us, and others who are calling for a socialistic form of government and some of the other immoral ways of life they are speaking of, they absolutely have no idea what they are asking for. But, they may find themselves in a time when they learn the difficult way, having experienced it.

Whatever is going to happen, can it turn before that takes place? Of course it can. Who knows whether God will relent and leave a blessing? But it is up to us as believers. I do not think we should be shouting to try to change the government, or looking for another civil war. We should be instead looking to impact and change the hearts of We the People into hearts that will serve the Lord our God with all of their heart. And I believe for this, as I know you do. Amen.