

Post-election Realities

Commentary for November 15, 2008 — Man Still Proposes, God Still Disposes

The election for President of the United States took place on November 4, 2008. Now that the election is over and Barak Obama is the President Elect, it is useful to remember some important points. As Geopolitical writer George Friedman wrote:

“It has long been said that presidential candidates make promises but do what they want if elected. In foreign policy, presidential candidates make promises and, if elected, do what they must to get re-elected.”

• Foreign Policy and the President's Irrelevance¹

This difficulty no doubt will affect the new President of the United States. It is reality and not criticism to point out that every leader is limited by circumstances. This has been the case for all people who have achieved high office. In fact, it has been true for every politician, leader, and ruler throughout history. Everyone moves according to God's whims whether they realize it or not. No one is sovereign except God.

Presidential candidates make promises but they do what God wants them to do, while it appears that **“they do what they want if elected”** and **“do what they must to get re-elected.”** After being elected every politician begins to disappoint supporters. Politicians are human beings who most often act in their own self interest. The best interests of their constituents are all too often secondary. Most leaders realize this and accept it (especially when they directly benefit). (They do so just as I would do and you would do the same.) It is the way God made us — and all the while God is moving events in the direction He wants them to go.

Limited Sovereignty of Rulers

Look at the biblical record in regard to the limitations of rulers. Remember Pharaoh in the time of Moses? He wanted to let Israel go, but God **“hardened Pharaoh's heart”** (Exodus 7:13, 8:15, 9:12, 10:1, 20, 27, 11:10, 14:8, for example). Pharaoh was not sovereign.

King David was elected also, although he was elected by one vote. God Himself chose David to be King of Israel. King David proposed to build a permanent Temple to YHWH. God told him no. He refused David's heartfelt desire and told him that a son of David would construct the Temple in Jerusalem. David's son, King Solomon also had great power but not total sovereignty over any matters of life. He at least was wise enough to understand that fact. Read the book of Ecclesiastes.²

Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar was God's servant to be “king of the world” and the **“head of gold.”** He became arrogant in the power that God gave him. When he began to think too highly of himself God made Nebuchadnezzar eat grass like a cow. Read all of Daniel chapter 4 to see how God made an example of Nebuchadnezzar. He was not sovereign even in his own realm. God rules, as Nebuchadnezzar stated repeatedly in Daniel 4:17, 25, 32.

Not Even Christ Is Absolutely Sovereign

Only God the Father is an absolute ruler. Jesus Christ is not totally sovereign or independent in His actions. He is indeed sovereign and independent insofar as God the Father gives Christ the

1. “Geopolitical Intelligence Report,” February 5, 2008.

2. See Dr. Martin's analysis of this fascinating writing by Solomon: [“The Book of Ecclesiastes.”](#)

power and authority to act. In fact, we can know for certain that Christ will return to God the Father the complete power and authority of the Kingdom of God when Christ's great works of love and majesty and humility are fulfilled in the future aeons:

"But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then comes the end [the *telos*], when he [Christ] shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.

For he must reign, till he has put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he has put all things under his feet. But when he says all things are put under him, it is manifest that he [God the Father] is excepted, which did put all things under him [Christ]. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God [the Father] may be all in all."

• 1 Corinthians 15:20–28 KJV

When the King James Version says **"he shall have put down all rule and authority and power"** it does not mean that those things were suppressed. It means in the Greek that Christ (1) **"brought to an end,"** New English Translation; (2) **"abolished,"** New American Standard Version; (3) **"destroying,"** Revised Standard Version; (4) **"made useless,"** Young's Literal Translation, all rule, authority, and power. The "end," the *telos* in Greek relates directly to the destruction of death itself and the resurrection of all in Christ. Even Christ has limitations.

All power is derived from God the Father, through Christ, with the ultimate object of creation, being stated in 1 Corinthians 15:28, **"that God may be all in all."** I love the straightforward and literal translation rendering by the Concordant Version:

"Yet now Christ has been roused from among the dead, the Firstfruit of those who are reposing. For since, in fact, through a man came death, through a Man, also, comes the resurrection of the dead.

For even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be vivified. Yet each in his own class: [1] the Firstfruit, Christ; [2] thereupon those who are Christ's in His presence; [3] thereafter the consummation,

whenever He may be giving up the kingdom to His God and Father, whenever He should be nullifying all sovereignty and all authority and power.

For He must be reigning until He should be placing all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy is being abolished: death. For He subjects all under His feet.

Now whenever He may be saying that all is subject, it is evident that it is outside of Him Who subjects all to Him.

Now, whenever all may be subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also shall be subjected to Him Who subjects all to Him, that God may be All in all."

• 1 Corinthians 15:24–28 CV

It is clear that President-elect Obama understands how to pursue power. He worked incredibly hard to win the election. Nevertheless, God put Obama in that position of power. And God can take him out of that position any time He wishes, for any reason. We should pray that while he is President of the United States that Barak Obama understands and exercises political power with the same sagacity that he used to obtain that powerful position. We should pray that President Obama understands that the power he has received is from God and it is limited. Whatever the case, pray for President Obama (1 Timothy 2: 1–2).

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