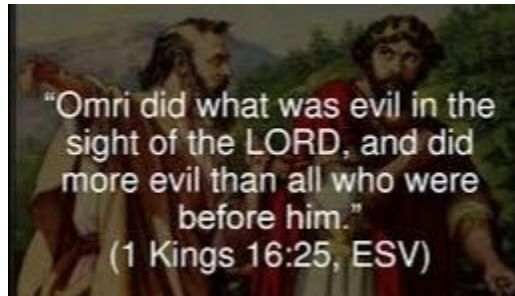


Dear Friends and Family,

Have you ever taken the time to peruse through the Old Testament books of I & II Kings? The book introduces immediate trouble in the kingdom- and this kingdom was King David's, of the royal line of Christ himself. Yet, David's kingdom was full of unrest, as his own sons sought to usurp him. By verse 5, we see the first plan of many being hatched as David's own son proclaims, "I will be king!" (1 Kings 1:5)



As I & II Kings progress, we learn these books are aptly named, for they chronicle the rising and falling of many kings. Many are evil, few are good.

- “Jehorama son of Ahab became king of Israel, and he reigned in Samaria twelve years. And **he did evil in the sight of the LORD**” (II Kings 3:1-2)
- “Ahaziah walked in the ways of the house of Ahab and **did evil in the sight of the LORD**” (II Kings 8:27)
- “Omri became King...But Omri **did evil in the sight of the LORD** and acted more wickedly than all who were before him.” (1 Kings 16:25)

We see the rise and fall of the nation of Israel, sinning, repenting, sinning, sinning, repenting, kind-of-repenting, sinning again. God used the evil kings to judge the Israelites, bringing hardship upon them, and God’s anger often burned against the nation. Idols were knocked down, then recreated, then reduced, then built up.



Yet in these dark times, God raised up Prophets. This is where we meet Elijah and then later Elisha. Elijah, the mighty Old Testament prophet who boldly spoke against the sins of the rulers, the sins of Jezebel, and against the sins of the people, did not taste death. Instead, as he walked with Elisha, “suddenly a chariot of fire with horses of fire appeared and separated the two of them, and Elijah went up into heaven in a whirlwind” (II Kings 2:11).



Elijah, as he converses with Jesus and Moses about 2,000 years later, is recognized by Peter on the Mount of Transfiguration. (Mark 9:2-4). Peter is so thrilled that Elijah is in his presence that he offers to build shelters for them so they can get comfortable and catch up on what's been happening the last 2000 years or so. Have you ever wondered how Peter knew it was Elijah? (It wasn't because of selfies.)



"Colleges and universities across America responded to the shocking general election victory of President-elect Donald Trump in the only way they know how: by creating "safe spaces" for distressed students."

So what is the point of all this? Church, we must take heart! We cannot be overcome by the circumstances of our city, our state, our nation, or even the world! We can grieve, we can be angry, we can take positive action to make a difference for Christ. But we must know that our peace will NEVER come from our circumstances. Four years ago, after the 2016 election, many colleges were advertising "Safe Spaces" for students to grieve over the loss of Clinton to Trump. My friends, Jesus is our "Safe Space".

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid" John 14:27.

We will never find the peace we are looking for in the environment around us. II Kings records that even the wisest King to ever live, King Solomon, dealt with unrest in his kingdom, from his own kin! May we not be surprised by the state of the world, but instead inspired to DO something about it! May we rise up as the body of Christ and seek to save the lost. May we join together in prayer like 2 Chronicles 7:14.

May we remember the verse right before John 14:27, which comforts us that we will not be alone! *"But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have told you."* John 14:26.

We have peace because the Holy Spirit teaches us and reminds us of EVERYTHING Jesus tells us! May you seek and find the face of God in all seasons, as Paul reminds us:

"I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all this through him who gives me strength." Philippians 4:11-13

I challenge you to surround yourself with Scripture. If you have fallen away from church because of these challenging past months, start going again. Or attend online! Or watch previous sermons! Saturate your soul with God's words. How

can the Holy Spirit teach you what Christ says if you don't read what Christ is telling you? Take time to study God's word. Make a goal to spend at least as much time reading your Bible as you do on Facebook/ Instagram/ Snapchat/ News/ TV.

Give your heart to the LORD. Surrender your fears, your time, your worries and concerns to Him and place them at His feet. The LORD God is on His throne!

“For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 8:38-39.

Finally, as a reminder, our battle is not of flesh and blood but of principalities largely unseen. For a GREAT reminder of this, take a moment and read about Elisha's answer to prayer in II Kings 6. You will not be disappointed.

I am praying for you, for our church family, for our neighbors, our community, and our world.

Blessings,

Pastor Matt

To read an archive of past Pastor's Point of View devotionals please visit <https://mplong.wordpress.com/pastors-point-of-view/>

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Dr. Matthew Long

Senior Pastor

[FBC of Havelock](#)

*Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us **RUN** with endurance the race that is set before us -- Hebrews 12:1*



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