



Berean Christian Fellowship

DEVOTIONAL 217.0

February 22
2019

Government and Media Oppression: P2

“Why do You hide Your face and forget our affliction and our oppression?” (Ps. 44:24)

In terms of deeds, Elijah is the greatest prophet that ever lived. Yet, due to the culture and government’s oppression towards faithful people, Elijah was so weighed down and anxious that he feared for his life and fled into the wilderness soon after performing a great miracle that didn’t change anything for the better and actually resulted in a threat to his life.

He despaired because he thought he was the only follower of God left in Israel. Why did he think that? His only information was the oppressive news he heard every day—a constant stream of Jezebel’s ungodly labors in the land. Jezebel had replaced the worship of God with Baal worship, which permeated society with the works of the flesh—the fruit of the devil, which is oppression: *“immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these”* (Gal. 5:19b-21a). This oppression entered every aspect of the culture, down to the family and home—it was a “social media” of spiritual and physical depravity that suppressed the truth and filled the land with ungodliness.

Understandably, Elijah might have felt God had forgotten his oppression. He saw no one coming to his aid and only defeat at every turn. Yet, God, not Jezebel, was in control. Unbeknown to Elijah, God had reserved 7,000 people who had not worshiped Baal, and Elijah had no idea that he was on the cusp of anointing Hazael king over Aram, Jehu king over Israel, and Elisha as his own successor to do more than Elijah had done. Elijah did not know these things because his eyes and ears had taken in only what Jezebel wanted him to—oppression, defeat, affliction. And yet, hidden from sight, God was preparing a King through Elijah who would snuff out her legacy and eradicate Baal worship from the land.

This lesson has never been more apt than today, when governments around the world are becoming more oppressive to Believers and when the media (news, social media, tv, movies, etc) permeates our eyes and ears with the works of the flesh and parades its oppressive message that Christians are alone and marginalized. From what we are allowed to see and hear, things are going from bad to worse.

And like the harlotry and sorcery of Jezebel, the media today not only spreads immorality but it suppresses truth and shames and destroys people who stand against its oppression, so only oppressive voices can be heard. Jezebel’s tactic of using “fake” news against Naboth is not unlike the power-plays of today, when lies are increasingly used to destroy opponent’s lives—only, Jezebel didn’t stop at assassinating character—she riled up a lynch mob to kill Naboth. Sadly, we are not far from this in our own country, today. In our modern oppression, many can say with Elijah, *“I alone am left...It is enough; now, O Lord, take my life”* (1 Kings 19:10b; 4b). Like Elijah, we know about the world mostly what the world wants us to know, not all that actually is, but God knows all, and our faith is in Him.

In his oppression, Elijah did what we should do—he sought God. He sought the Lord on Mt. Sinai, the Mountain of God, *“a mountain that can be touched and to a blazing fire, and to darkness and gloom and whirlwind,”* but you and I, Believer, *“have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant”* (Hebrews 12:18; 22-24a).

Just as God’s purpose wasn’t thwarted, Elijah’s mission wasn’t over, and good things were around the corner, we too are on the cusp of good things, for while we live, God has good works for us to do—and Jesus is coming again to end all oppression. Even so, Amen.

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