

# Prophecy vs. Policy

*How to Live God's Promises*

(preached 1/21/24)

*Are we living our lives according to the prophetic promises that God made in the Bible?*

OR DO WE FEEL THAT OUR DESTINIES ARE DECIDED BY THE LAWS OF GOVERNMENT?

*Which of those two do we believe to be more powerful and overriding?*

**Have a greater effect on our lives?**

*Do we have a confirmed prophetic promise God made to us individually that we're waiting to happen?*

**Something we heard ourselves or which was spoken over us?**

**Or do we just react and respond to our external circumstances and "let life happen to us"?**

The purpose of this new sermon series is for us, as the Church, to show that the prophecies made by the Lord take precedent over any man-made policy or external circumstance.

**It makes no difference if the policy is made by local government or the White House.**

**IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE IF THE CIRCUMSTANCE IS A PERSONAL ONE OR GLOBAL.**

**When God declares something it overrides, overarches, and overcomes everything else.**

First, I admit that I stole the sermon title directly from **MARIO MURILLO**. I was watching an interview with him not long ago, and he spoke of the importance of living according to prophecy and not policy.

What happened next is what's taken place with me lots of times: ***I suddenly stopped seeing and hearing the outside world as the Holy Spirit began speaking: "I want you to preach about that."***

He then does what I really love: **He starts pulling verses of Scripture together, linking them to each other (including stories in the Bible) and also linking them to my personal experiences.** It's glorious when He does that!

***In the Book of Isaiah, there's a point where ungodly men are attempting to tell everyone how they should live...sound familiar?*** That's what going on in our country and around the world today!

As we speak right now, the WEF elites are once more gathered in Davos, Switzerland trying to **make policy for the rest of us.** One of their speakers declared farming and fishing to be "ecocide" and said it needed to be eliminated. Another famous speaker you would recognize declared that fossil fuels were an existential threat and needed to be brought to zero. Yet another declared that the "old world order" was passing away and it was time for the "new order" to come in.

The famous declaration made by their leader, **KLAUS SCHWAB**, is that by 2030 all nations give up personal sovereignty and submit (willingly, of course) to the WEF. He claims that personal ownership is the root of all evil and that we must rent everything—I mean everything—from the government. **"You will own nothing, and you will be happy"** is his famous quote. This year he added that ***"[in his plan for the world] voting will become obsolete."***

**Now let's pause and take stock** so that we understand the sermon message and what the Lord is calling us to:

- We can see ourselves as victims and our lives being directed & manipulated by these powers who make unjust and unbiblical laws & policies.
- We can live lives of anger, frustration, and depression as a result.
- We can try and jump into the fray at THIS level, attempting to change laws and policies toward Godly righteousness.

# OR

- We can recognize that every generation of believers from Genesis to Revelation has faced the same thing and see how God encouraged them to believe and act.
- We can see that prophetic promises He declared clashed with laws, policies, and actions taken by man-made governments and wicked rulers.
- That even though said powers were greater than the Biblical characters—whether Abraham & Sarah, or John and Peter—and **whatever the Lord declared always took precedent over man-made policy.**
- Even when said policy was made by a man who may have been the most powerful on the planet!

**Back to Isaiah for a moment:** elite priests, prophets, and occult practitioners—who worked for the government [at that time] and were funded by taxpayers—were attempting to declare how everyone else should live. These were men in power and there was no separation of religion and state.

**God sends Isaiah in to do battle with them.** Was Isaiah nervous or wondering what to do or say? Was he in fear that he could be beaten, jailed, or even killed? IDK, but here is what God says to both Isaiah and the religious men trying to make policy:

**[Isa 42:9 ESV]** “Behold, the former things have come to pass, and new things I now declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them.”

In full context to other things God said in Isaiah’s book and what was happening, here is what we get:

- God has always gotten it right in the past, and He’s going to get it right in the future.
- Man predicts what’s going to happen, but God TELLS what’s going to happen.
- Man makes laws and policies according to their goals and predictions and expects everyone to believe and obey.
- ***God says to live according to what He says REGARDLESS of policy and how things look on the outside.***

In the same chapter of Isaiah, **God rebukes Israel for not listening to HIM.** He says they are deaf to His voice and blind to His presence. He points out that they’re living according to the words of government and their occultic lackeys who were the mainstream media of the time. The Lord said that His word would be exalted because it takes precedence over anything else spoken or written!

## **We're going through the Book of Daniel at Bible Study right**

**now**, and it's an amazing testimony of living according to God's prophecy vs. man-made policy. King Neb is the most powerful man on the planet and his empire, Babylon, rules the entire known world. There's no one with more money or a greater army than him. He rules supreme—no House or Senate he needs to go through. He has a short, murderous temper—anyone who doesn't do as he says is executed on the spot and he's greatly feared.

**HE BUILDS A MASSIVE IDOL OF HIMSELF** and makes an executive order that every nation and people his empire will bow down and worship it under penalty of being thrown alive into a fiery furnace, no exceptions. **POLICY.**

**Yet there are 3 God-fearing Jewish men who won't:** Daniel's 3 friends. There are plenty of prophecies in the OT of what happens when you choose to worship Yahweh vs another god or idol. God repeats these promises over and over. There's also prophecies of what happens when you turn away from God to other gods and idol and I wouldn't want to be on receiving end of one of those!

**The 3 Jewish friends of Daniel know these prophecies well**, so they refuse to worship the idol of King Neb. The King has a temper tantrum, orders the furnace heated 7 times hotter than normal, and commands they be thrown in! The guards who grab them to do so are killed by the heat, but the 3 God fearing men go into the furnace anyway...and come out unscathed. Why?

**THEY LIVED ACCORDING TO GOD'S PROPHECY VS. MAN'S POLICY.  
THAT'S CALLED Faith.**

- Policy commanded them to bow and worship the idol or else.
- God's prophecy said "worship Me only and it will go well with you." Not just well on the outside, but in the heart and mind.
- External circumstances were scary beyond anything I've experienced: tossed alive into a furnace!
- But the 3 faithful men didn't act according to their circumstances, they acted in line with God's prophetic promises.

**Mary and Joseph both had Gabriel** the angel appear to them who prophesied that they were going to have the Messiah as a son, that He would sit on the throne of David, and build an everlasting Kingdom.

**Every policy and external circumstance was against it—every one!**

- Mary was a virgin and hadn't been with Joseph or anyone. She understood biology! CIRCUMSTANCES.
- If she got pregnant before her and Joseph consummated it would be a major scandal, Joseph would be forced to divorce her, and she'd be labeled an adulteress for the rest of her life. CIRCUMSTANCES AND POLICY.
- Ceasar Augustus then issues a decree to go back to your homeland and be counted—just as Mary is late in her pregnancy! Any woman want to ride donkey, in the Winter, at 8-9 months?? POLICY & CIRCUMSTANCE.
- And then to find no room at the inn? Ugh! CIRCUMSTANCES.
- King Herod finds out and goes on a maniacal rampage, ordering the deaths of all male children under 2 to try and kill Jesus—POLICY.

**Yet Jesus survives despite all** because everything God prophetically promised about His life came true, despite man's efforts to stop it. These efforts to stop Christ went all the way to the highest levels of government! Mary and Joseph successfully have and raise Him despite horrible external circumstances.

**If the policies of man and bad circumstances truly controlled destiny, then we wouldn't have Jesus.** He would never have gone the Cross, rose from the dead, and then ascended to Heaven. We'd still be in our sins, our end would be death, and there would be no hope for anyone.

**WHATEVER GOD HAS DECLARED IS WHAT HAPPENS.** He gave His only begotten Son to preach the good news, work miracles, shed His blood for our debts, and then beat death by living out everlasting life. He went to Heaven to intercede for us, and He's coming back and bringing His Kingdom with Him.

Just as God told Isaiah that I quoted earlier: *everything He said about the past came true then. Everything He says about the future will come true too.* Then He calls upon us to live that way.

**After the Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus**, the Apostles aren't left as orphans but Jesus fulfills His prophetic promise to send the Holy Spirit, which He does in Acts 2. The Apostles immediately evangelize thousands, preaching the Gospel and working miracles just like Jesus.

**The Sanhedrin hated it**...who were they? Policy makers like Congress, except religious. They had their own armed police who enforced their rules. They were a council of priests and, if you were brought up Jewish, you obeyed them. They were considered the ultimate authority on God's Laws and the interpretation of the Bible. They were greatly feared and had the power to have you beaten, jailed, and even executed.

**SO THEY CALL A COUNCIL MEETING** to discuss the Apostles great success in getting people to believe in Jesus as the Christ.

**[Act 5:17-20 NIV]** 17 Then the high priest and all his associates, who were members of the party of the Sadducees, were filled with jealousy. 18 They arrested the apostles and put them in the public jail. 19 But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the doors of the jail and brought them out. 20 "Go, stand in the temple courts," he said, "and tell the people all about this new life."

POLICY: the Sanhedrin said "stop preaching Jesus" then followed up their decree with enforcement—tossed them in jail. Angel appears and says "keep preaching and don't worry: it's not your time yet."

**[Act 5:21-25 NIV]** 21 At daybreak they entered the temple courts, as they had been told, and began to teach the people. When the high priest and his associates arrived, they called together the Sanhedrin--the full assembly of the elders of Israel--and sent to the jail for the apostles. 22 But on arriving at the jail, the officers did not find them there. So they went back and reported, 23 "We found the jail securely locked, with the guards standing at the doors; but when we opened them, we found no one inside." 24 On hearing this report, the captain of the temple guard and the chief priests were at a loss, wondering what this might lead to. 25 Then someone came and said, "Look! The men you put in jail are standing in the temple courts teaching the people."

Please note that since **Jesus prophesied the Apostles would go into the nations to preach, they couldn't and wouldn't be held or killed while still in Israel.** Their time would come yes: 11 of 12 were martyred for the cause eventually. But not here, not today, and they knew that. How did they know? We come full circle: ***Jesus said they would go outside Israel to the Gentile nations.***

**Consider the choices they had to make:**

- If they were living according to POLICY they would have stopped preaching.
- If they lived according to circumstances, they were in jail. They could have gotten all depressed and just given up.
- OR they could ***live according to the destiny Jesus declared to them.*** They surely didn't like the policy of the Sanhedrin nor the fact that they were in jail...but they believed and acted according to God's will and not man's.

**[Act 5:26-33 NIV]** 26 At that, the captain went with his officers and brought the apostles. They did not use force, because they feared that the people would stone them. 27 The apostles were brought in and made to appear before the Sanhedrin to be questioned by

the high priest. 28 "We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name," he said. "Yet you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and are determined to make us guilty of this man's blood." 29 Peter and the other apostles replied: "We must obey God rather than human beings! 30 The God of our ancestors raised Jesus from the dead--whom you killed by hanging him on a cross. 31 God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might bring Israel to repentance and forgive their sins. 32 We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him." 33 When they heard this, they were furious and wanted to put them to death.

POLICY: "we told you to stop preaching this stuff!"

PROPHECY: "we obey God and trust in Him, not you. We saw resurrected Jesus! He now sits on a throne ruling as King, just as was prophesied! What He says is going to happen takes precedence over what you think should happen. We'll stick with God."

*Their story is very similar to that of Daniels 3 friends, wouldn't you say?*

Rabbi Gamaliel "intervenes" and stops the execution. Then this happens:

**[Act 5:40-42 NIV]** 40 His speech persuaded them. They called the apostles in and had them flogged. Then they ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. 41 The apostles left the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name. 42 Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Messiah.

POLICY: the Sanhedrin repeat their order to stop preaching Jesus.

CIRCUMSTANCES: they were flogged.

*The Apostles are flogged and let's not make light of that:* it doesn't just mean beaten with fists or even sticks, but flayed with a whip or the horrid Cat of 9 tails. Something that takes skin and muscle off the bone.

*As a new believer, the first time I read these verses* I was shocked to the point where I had to stop reading and couldn't function for a short bit. How could the Apostles be HAPPY over these terrible circumstances?

**Years ago as a kid I had 3 guys gang up on me.** Two of them held my arms while the 3<sup>rd</sup> one lit me up with punches to my gut and face. When was all was said and done I was in horrible pain, humiliated, and couldn't breathe. The first 2 lasted for days. I hated going to school and everyone seeing my bruises and having heard the story. What was worse is the bullies who did this talked it up to everyone and laughed in front of me about it.

***What the Apostles went through was way way worse yet they're***

***“rejoicing.”*** Why aren't they angry? Why aren't they going to some court of law to get justice? Why not round up a few boys, especially some Zealots, and get some hot revenge?

Look at the last half of verse 41: **because they got to be like Jesus**. You see, they were there at the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus made a specific prophetic promise:

**[Mat 5:10-12 ESV]** 10 "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 "Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

**They rejoiced because they were living and believing the prophetic promises of God vs the policies of man and circumstances.**

Are you and I truly living this way? We know it's the right thing, but are we really doing it?

- Are we frustrated and angry over the policies being passed here in America?
- Are we depressed at the horrible circumstances like the inflation, chaos, and wickedness these policies are causing?
- Are we hoping a political Messiah will step in to change these policies and save our country and way of life?

***Or are we truly looking to God's promises?***

- Things aren't going to be like this forever, Jesus is coming back.
- He'll make war on the wicked, unbelieving nations, and crush them.
- He's bringing His kingdom with Him and said Kingdom will dominate the planet.
- Both our King and His Kingdom will be righteous, just, and eternal!
- Even if we perish before all that happens, our spirits will follow Jesus by ascending to heaven to be with Him until such a time as He returns.
- When He returns, we'll follow Him here and rule with Him!
- In the meantime, He says He will never leave or forsake us.
- That He's with us, right up to the very end.