

## Election Results

We've just come through a long and contentious election season, which involved lots of mudslinging. And not just by the candidates. Far too often differences of political opinion escalated into personal attacks, "I respectfully disagree and here's why," becoming "You're criminally insane and I refuse to listen!" Now I hope we can *all* agree on something: to put aside the nastiness and get on with life.

It is right, of course, that we care about what's going on in our government – federal, state, and local – that we become informed, check how the candidates and initiatives line up with truth, common sense, the Constitution, and the Word of God, to pray about it, and then to vote. And so it can be disheartening if we believe the "wrong person" has been elected. But don't despair. First, remember that it's God, not any person or party, who is ultimately in control. And secondly, God has often chosen very unlikely people (a shepherd boy, a prostitute, a zealous persecutor of Christians) and at least one donkey (Numbers 22) to accomplish His purposes.

*The Lord moved the heart of Cyrus king of Persia to make a proclamation... "The Lord, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and has appointed me to build a temple for him at Jerusalem in Judah. Anyone of his people among you – may his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem in Judah and build the temple of the Lord... And the people of any place where survivors may now be living are to provide him with silver and gold, with goods and livestock, and with freewill offerings for the temple of God..."*  
(Ezra 1:1-4)

When God ordained that the exiled Israelite captives be allowed to return to their land and rebuild the temple, He didn't raise up a hero from among their own people to achieve their freedom, as might have been hoped. Instead, He appointed an unexpected man for the job: a pagan king, the most powerful man on earth at the time. God not only moved Cyrus's heart to let the exiles go free but to send them back to Jerusalem with riches in hand!

Before the election, we should all have been praying for honest, god-fearing individuals who would govern rightly to be placed office. But now, pray (and keep right on praying) that God will use those who *have* been elected, godly or not, compelling them, like Cyrus, to govern according to His will – preferably with but even without their knowledge or consent. God can work in mysterious ways, even through your least-favorite candidate.

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