

How Prophecies Led New El Salvador President to Run for Office

Nayib Bukele was elected president of El Salvador this past February. At the age of 37, he is the youngest president ever elected in El Salvador, and the youngest president in Central America. He has little political experience prior to this election, having only served briefly as a mayor. He is a successful businessman who had no ultimate desire to run for president.

Yesterday in El Salvador, President Bukele addressed a conference of pastors, businessmen and businesswomen, and local leaders. The day before, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo visited the presidential palace. He and Bukele announced joint efforts between the United States and El Salvador to confront drug trafficking, reduce pressures on immigration and pursue joint economic development.

At today's conference, instead of highlighting the successful state visit, Bukele delivered a personal testimony on his feelings about government. He told the story about being of Palestinian heritage and finding purpose in Christianity. He was a successful businessman by the age of 29, making more money than he ever dreamed. He had no desire to be a politician. He served as mayor to give back to his community as many self-sacrificing people do. Service on city councils, school boards and city task forces are often thankless jobs.

Last year, Bukele was approached by a group of pastors who told him they had received a spiritual message that he should run for president. His response was as you might expect: "No way; you've got to be kidding." Later, another group approached him with the same prophecy. He thought it odd, but

this time took note. As the deadline for making a decision about running for president neared, he was approached a third time. These pastors were certain they were correct in their message to him. They asked him to prayerfully consider a run. When they pressed him for an answer, they told him they would respectfully accept his decision. He again told them no.

Bukele struggled with his final decision. Soon thereafter, another pastor whom he did not know advised him not to “fall into the fourth place.” When asked to expand on what he meant, the pastor said it was missing God’s call on your life. Bukele then decided to reconsider and filed for the office of presidency.

In the opening days of the campaign, Bukele fell into disagreement with his political party. They threatened to kick him out of the party, which would eliminate his position on the ballot. He stood his ground, and the party expelled him. In his testimony to the audience, he said he asked God: “Why would You lead me to this point if You wanted me to run? Why did You allow this to happen?” He paused and then referenced the fact that God did not answer him.

As was the normal in this scenario, a stranger turned up at the campaign headquarters and explained that Bukele could still get on the ballot with 50,000 citizens’ signatures on a petition. He had no idea how to obtain them. The stranger said, “We’ll take care of it.” Forty-eight hours later, 200,000 people had signed a petition for his candidacy. When advised of this, the campaign manager thought they had said 20,000 because even that seemed like an unrealistic number.

Bukele won the general election with 53% of the vote, trouncing all party candidates at one time. No individual had won the presidency in that country since 1972 without a major party endorsement. On the night of the election, he was still surprised at the results. In discussions with his spiritual leaders, he was asked, what makes you think God needs a

political party?

Since his election, Bukele has instituted more reforms than all presidents of the previous 49 years combined. For instance, he swept all prisons of cell phones so inmates could not direct illegal activity outside of the prison walls. Funny, no one ever thought of that before. before!

After his speech today, Bukele attended lunch with a smaller group of us. He told us that he had no prepared remarks for the morning speech. He walked to the stage intent on speaking from his heart to simply give his personal testimony. He was most grateful for God's faithfulness. A few of us had an opportunity to address him directly. It was clear that the way he receives information and decides how to act upon it is based upon an analysis of whether or not such action will help the families of El Salvador. In his general address, he said through all this he finally came to the conclusion that, when God continues to give you the picture so many times, and always shows up in support of the vision, that maybe it is time to start believing Him.

What if there is a God? What if He is who He says he is? What if He has a plan? "'For I know the plans I have for you,'" declares the Lord, "'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future'" (Jer. 29:11, NIV). And what if nations at least believed it was possible?

Bukele closed with: "It's important to put government in the hands of God. Pray for wisdom, and run government God's way."

Bukele now enjoys 80% approval ratings. He is following a new trend, from Kiev to Guatemala City to Washington, D.C., where citizens have sought non-career politicians for a new hope for their nations' futures. He is taking full responsibility for all of the national problems plaguing El Salvador, including lost population from migration to the United States. President Bukele is *believing in the possible*.

For 2,000 years, this has been Christ's message.

My name is Marc Nuttle, and this is what I believe.

What do you believe?

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