

Email To: All NLC Pastors

From: Rasik Ranchord

URGENT

**URGENT – PLEASE READ NOW
FINAL LAP BEFORE ELECTION DAY**

Dear Pastor

WHY I GOT INVOLVED IN THE POLITICAL ARENA: MY BACK STORY

We live life **forward** but understand it **backward!** (Gen 45:5; 50:15-21)

On Thursday morning of our Conference Ps Chavez from Las Vegas spoke on Isa 43:18-19; *“Forget the former things, do not dwell on the past. See I am doing a **new thing**. Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?”*

It took me back to when the Lord first spoke to me about moving from Christchurch to Wellington. In 1976 I was passing through Wellington and a pastor friend said to me “I believe the Lord is calling you to Wellington.” I dismissed it outright. I was well established in ministry with Pastor Peter Morrow and I loved being there. That night I could not sleep and I said “Lord are you trying to tell me something?” I turned to the scripture and Isa 43 18-19 was strongly quickened to me. It was a ‘rhema’ word from God. Of course a new thing could mean any number of things. God’s word was in seed form. God began to unfold it through a renowned evangelist who came for a campaign. We had a Pastors’ Conference. The evangelist asked Pastors to come forward for a prophetic word. Ps Peter Morrow was standing next to me. He prophesied over Ps Peter then he prophesied over me. The Lord is stirring your heart like a pot being stirred to its depth. There is coming a change in your ministry”. Long story short, we came to Wellington which is Lalita’s home city (until then I did not really like Wellington). **Life is indeed understood backward!**

I intended to study Law which was my passion but due to circumstances beyond my control I changed to a Bachelor of Commerce degree which included many Law papers but also some accounting papers and I majored in Economics. All this was good training to be able to discuss issues intelligently with politicians. Looking back over the last 46 years (from 1977 to 2023) I can now see clearly how the Lord opened

(a) ministry to politicians at a regular Wednesday morning breakfast when parliament is sitting as well as founding Prayer @ Parliament 25 years ago and becoming an unofficial chaplain to many Christian MPs and also Cabinet Ministers and Deputy Speakers over the years. One day I received a word of encouragement (encouragement is the oxygen of the soul) from a very unexpected source. Some years ago when **Sir John Key** was Prime Minister of New Zealand I was handed a copy of his biography written by John Roughan (2014) from a Deputy Speaker of the Parliament who was my very close friend. I opened it and on the inside leaf of the book was a handwritten note “To Rasik, In thanks for your Pastoral care for the MP’s Prayer Breakfast. Best wishes (signed John Key). It blew me away!

(b) to bring understanding to the church at large of our responsibility in the public square. In the latter half of the 20th Century the church lost its understanding of its role as the Church and its relationship to the State. The Church was guilty of making the gospel and the government as **alternatives** either/or instead of both/and. Consider the incident when the Pharisees and the

Herodians joined forces to trap Jesus in His Words. (Matt 22:15-22). They framed their question, “is it right to pay the imperial tax to Caesar or not?” as an either/or A binary option instead of a complementary, both/and option. Jesus’ answer was complementary, “Give back to Caesar what is Caesar’s **and** to God what is God’s. In the second half of the 20th Century the Church has fallen into the same trap; the Church’s task is seen as preaching the gospel only and having nothing to do with politics (politics is the science of governance). The only adjective they had to describe politics was ‘dirty politics’ so any engagement with the State was to be minimal: Submit to the Laws of the land and pay your taxes. Praying for the Government as we are exhorted in 1 Tim 2:1-2 was markedly absent. They prayed for conversion of souls, for the sick and for missions, all very necessary but I seldom heard praying for Government. This was the foundation scripture which God gave me to start Prayer@Parliament. Being engaged in politics or seeking a career in politics was frowned upon. In spite of the fact that what the government does affects every man woman and child in NZ. In the last 30 years the Church has begun to play ‘catch-up’ but there are still many churches and denominations who do not engage in any way in politics. It has led to a poor biblical understanding of the roles of the Church and the State and their relationship. A dearth of Christian members of parliament and the fact that 242,000 eligible Christians did **not** vote in the last election bears testimony to that alarming situation. The kingdom of God has been **inaugurated** (commenced) and **continuing** (advancing) and at the second coming it will be **consummated** (climax). In the period between his first and second coming the kingdom of God must be proclaimed (Matt 24:14) and we must engage with human governments (Rom 13:1-7) **but we must not conflate (mix together) the two**. The kingdom of God must not be identified with human kingdoms. For the church as a corporate identity to endorse political parties or candidates is to **politicise** the church. The other extreme is to privatise our faith (making faith purely a matter between me and God). **Quotable Quote: “Voting isn’t marriage. It’s public transport. You are not waiting for ‘the one’. You’re getting on the bus and if there isn’t exactly one going to your destination you don’t stay home and sulk. You must take the one that’s going closest to where you want to be”.**

MY CONVICTIONS

This has been my deeply held conviction for over 40 years.

- *The Church’s responsibility is primarily the Gospel for only the gospel can bring salvation.*
- *The Church’s second responsibility is to the State to be a Prophetic voice to commend when the government does right and to criticize constructively when it does wrong, functioning as salt and light (Matt 5:13-14)*
- *Pastors should **teach** their duties to government but not **direct** them as to who to vote for or which Party to support. That is the people’s prerogative. Our policy should be “**we teach, you decide**”*
- *These responsibilities are not alternatives (either/or) but complementary. The Gospel first, responsibility to government second.*
- *This is the position held by **Jesus**: Gospel Matt 24:14; Government Mark 12:13-17; John 19:11. **Paul**: Gospel Rom chapters 1 to 8. Government Rom 13:1-7 **Peter**: Gospel 1 Peter 1: 5-11; Government 1 Peter 2:13-17*

For further information see my paper **God, Gospel and Government** (see www.PrayeratParliament.org.nz/downloads)

- God has called me to be a Minister of the Gospel and has given me the gift of teaching. I have a passion to minister to pastors, people and politicians!

Rasik Ranchord

Former Spokesperson for Public Affairs for NLC

National Director of AMPP (Adopt MPs For Prayer)

Founder of Prayer@Parliament

ACTION POINTS FOR THE LAST LAP BEFORE ELECTION DAY

1. 12 Days to Election Day (from 1st Oct)
2. Early Voting starts on 2nd Oct (now)
3. Encourage voting now so that we can focus on Praying and encouraging others
4. Final exhortation by the Pastors to their churches to vote. There only one Sunday left before Election Day
5. **Exodus17:8-13 Strategy.**
 1. Vertical engagement through Prayer and Intercession
 2. Horizontal engagement at the ground level (church leaders mobilizing the church to participate in this election).
6. It is now time to focus more fervently on praying. What happens on the Mount of Prayer affects what happens on the plain of engagement in Election.
 - Local Church Prayer Gatherings
 - Prayer Networks in NZ
 - Radio Rhema is holding a National Day of Prayer on Friday 13th Oct on the Eve of Election Day
 - Post Election Prayer@Parliament on Thursday 30 November 2023 in the Grand Hall
7. **I have attached a powerful testimony of what happened in the National Election of India In circa 2000 when thousands of Christians prayed throughout the country. This will greatly encourage you.**

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