

Voting and God's Leaders

Pre-Election Commentary, October 30, 2024 – **Man Proposes, God Disposes**

The subtitle of this Commentary describes the selection and placement of leaders of nations at high and low levels of power. It is days before the 2024 national elections in the United States. God chooses, places, and removes leaders as He wills to do so. There is no doubt about this fact (Daniel 5:21).¹ Voting is not a sin and not evil. Citizens do play a part in fulfilling civic responsibilities. We are to **"render unto Caesar"** (Matthew 22:21; Mark 12:17; Luke 20:25) not just with tribute and taxes, but also with our service, such as voting.

In ancient times local governments were "representative" in ways different from today. In societies where most everyone was married, a man could voice his opinion within his village, clan, or tribe, and represented his extended family of wives, children, servants, and perhaps parents. Tribal elders represented groups of families and clans. Elders were often elected depending on the culture. Elders served on councils where public business was decided by vote.² Later, under the monarchies of Israel, the towns and cities had councils with local authority over everyday affairs. In New Testament times synagogue rulers were elected by the congregation.

There were two modes of voting. One is by visible public voting by acclamation. This is done today in small groups such as boards and councils contained by saying "yea" or "nay."³ Everyone notices how people vote. Legislative bodies today vote this way on procedural matters. Another way is to vote by secret ballot. This is usually done when issues are important and might require secrecy. Only the total count of ballots is known; no one knows how individuals vote.

Both modes of voting are found in Scripture. Several instances of "voting" were done in the *ekklesia*. **"The men coming together"** cast lots (voted) to have Matthias replace Judas (Acts 1:21–26). In Acts 14:23 the word "ordained" and in 2 Corinthians 8:19 the word "chosen" both are from a Greek word which is a common word "vote" to elect qualified leaders (see also 1 Timothy 3:1–13 and Titus 1:5). These were likely public votes in a small group, the *ekklesia*, where everyone (likely just the men) raised their hand to select between options. Seven men were chosen to serve the new *ekklesia* in Acts 6:1–6; elected by those present. In Acts 15:22 and 25, men were chosen or elected to vouch for Paul and Barnabas.

Private voting within a larger group was done by dropping a pebble, black or white (black for "no" and white for "yes") into a container. The balls were counted. Life and death decisions

¹ See my October 2004 Commentary "[The Selection of the U.S. President.](#)"

² God chose Moses to lead the 12 tribes of Israel. Several times the leaders and people tried to rebel against the leadership of Moses, which ended badly for the rebels. See Numbers chapter 16.

³ The Sanhedrin voted to condemn Jesus (Matthew 26:65–66; Mark 14:63–64). The people chose to release Barabbas and condemn Jesus.

were often done by secret ballot. This is what Paul meant when, as Saul before his conversion, cast his vote against Christians to punish and kill them:

“... which I do also in Jerusalem. And besides, MANY OF THE SAINTS I lock up in jails, obtaining authority from the chief priests. Besides, I deposit a ballot [psephos, a pebble] to dispatch them.”

• **Acts 26:10 CLV**

God chose Israel and separated them as a people from the nations, yet God gave Israel the opportunity to choose (to “vote”) to accept or reject the covenant God offered to Israel. It was a vote by all the people of Israel (Exodus 24:7). God chose Israel’s first king, Saul, and the people acknowledged and acclaimed God’s choice (1 Samuel 9:16–17, 10:24).

King David was anointed three times: **(1)** He was first anointed as king of all Israel by God through Samuel the seer (1 Samuel 16:1–13). God’s anointing designated David as Israel’s future king. **(2)** David was later anointed king by the men of Judah (2 Samuel 2:1–7). **(3)** Finally, David was anointed king of all Israel by all twelve tribes (2 Samuel 5:1–5). The anointings by the people of Judah and Israel acknowledged God’s decision. Each rebellion against David was thwarted, whether rebellion by his son Absalom (2 Samuel 15:1–12) or Sheba the Benjamite (2 Samuel chapter 20). They opposed God’s anointed king, who the people endorsed by their anointing.

God chooses our top national leaders today. We participate by voting. God has us living within the Babylonian system until Christ’s return. (See Dr. Martin’s article “[The Prophetic Birth of Our Civilization](#).”) Voting is part of that system as it presently exists. Remember, Jewish exiles to Babylon such as Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego, Mordecai, Queen Esther, Nehemiah, Zerubbabel, and Ezra all participated directly at high levels in the pagan Babylonian and Persian governments. See Daniel 2:49.

We are “free” to participate in our governments. It is honorable to do so at whatever level of authority. Part of that participation is to vote as citizens of a community or a country.

“Or are you not aware that the saints shall judge the world? And if the world is being judged by you, are you unworthy of the least tribunals? Are you not aware that we shall be judging messengers, not to mention life's affairs?”

• **1 Corinthians 6:2–3 CLV**

Do we, like Israel, receive the government we deserve? Why does God choose one person over another? God often raises to power **“the basest of men”** as Nebuchadnezzar, a truly base man, wrote to his subjects praising Daniel’s God (Daniel 4:17).

Vote and see if you agree with God’s choices. Before Christ returns God will select a vile man, the antichrist, to temporarily rule the entire world (Daniel 11:21–45) before Christ returns. There certainly seems to be an abundance of “base” in power these days. God tells us what to do in this instance. We are to pray for our leaders, asking God to have them rule so we may have a **“quiet and peaceable life”** (1 Timothy 2:1–3). God’s choices prevail, however long He chooses to have such people lead us.

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