

Government and Election 2023

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Morning brothers and sisters.

In a few months' time NZ will have another election. To some of us, this is their first election specially friends from China, who have never had a chance to vote for their leader in China.

I believe this election is very important for the future of this nation. Why? Let's go back to 2016-2017. Towards the end of 2016, we had a series of events happened. In 9th Nov. NZ agreed with US secretary of states John Carrey start a notion in UN to divide the land of Israel. 14th Nov. Kaikoura earth quake happened. The power of quake was so great that some part of the sea bed was raised by 2-3 metres. 5th of Dec. Prime Minister John Key resigned. 23rd of Dec. the notion was presented to UN and passed. It was recorded that Wellington Rainfall was 149% above normal, Sunshine 75-89% below Normal for 2016-2017 Summer. Why do I mention these? Because I believe God tried to warn us through the natural disaster that something is going to happen, so that His children can take action and be prepared. In this series of events, I summarise 4 key points :

1. Ungodly government policy,
2. Natural disaster,
3. resignation of PM.
4. Down fall of a government

Remember 2017 election result? National won the election but couldn't form a government. And we had Labour government till today.

Now this year 2023 is another election year. What are some of events happened that similar to 2017? Ungodly government policy, Natural disaster, resignation of PM? What will happen next? I don't know. All I can say is with all these signs, I know God want to tell us this election is very important. This election will shape the country in future. As His children, we need to be very careful who we vote this time.

So today I want to touch the topic of government. What does God have to say about government? Because if we don't know God's heart for government, how we can elect a government that can represent God's value?

Let's read today's scripture.

(1 Samuel 8: 6--22)

God's structure

Up until Samuel's time, YHWH led Israelites through judges, priests, and prophets. There was no government structure. There was a social structure – that each tribe lived together in a piece of land designated to them. Under each tribe, families lived together. In a family, the head of family was the father, in a tribe, the head of tribe were elders who were respected by their people.

Judges, prophets and priests role were to lead people to a restoration of a right relationship with YHWH and to victory over their enemies.

The whole social structure was built upon and around families. It is interesting, isn't it? If we read through the Bible, God calls Himself "God of Abraham, Isacc and Jacob", "God of your

forefathers”(exodus 3&4), Jesus taught us when we pray we shall call Him “ our Father in Heaven”. It has always been God’s intention that we as human beings to build our lives in a family environment. So there is no surprise, families become Satan’s main target to destroy.

King Or God

But people were not satisfied.

Bible verse (1 Samuel 8: 6-9)

God said very clear that people wanted a king because they didn’t want God. Let’s pause for a moment. People wanted a king, a government because they didn’t want God, God said they rejected Him.

Why did God say choosing a king = rejecting Him? This is very serious warning. I believe none of us want to reject God. Before we get to the answers, let’s see what government does according to God’s words.

1. You will be forced into wars

(1 Samuel 8: 11-12)

First thing God warns us about government is war. Man would be forced into arm to fight in wars.

Now look into history, isn’t it true? “Of the past 3,400 years, humans have been entirely at peace for 268 of them, or just 8 percent of recorded history. How many people have died in war? At least 108 million people were killed in wars in the twentieth century.”

108 Million people were killed in wars in 20th century alone.

Think about all the great wars you can remember, how many of them were fought just for Kings, Emperors, or government ambitions to conqueror. How many of them were fought for the sake of human benefit?

Chinese had a saying “春秋无义战”, meaning between 771BC to 476BC, all the wars happened in China, none of them was fought for righteousness. Even though every king claimed that he started the war for righteousness.

Governments like war because war brings many benefits to them.

2. You will pay taxes to government

(V12-15)

Second warning from God is that not only men would fight and work for king, but women would be forced to work for them as well. Not only will you and your family work for king, a king/government would tax you. They would also take your assets, not your bad assets, but the best fields, vineyards and olive orchards. Your best asset becomes kings’. Why does king take your asset? To give to his officers and officials, so that these officers and officials will work for kings to take more from you, to wage more war for his own sake.

When a government is getting stronger, and it will, it will take everything it wants to take, land, money, human power etc. It will create a large group of bureaucratic force to enforce its power, to make it bigger stronger, so that it can take more from you. TV series “Yes, Minister”.

In one of its episode, it tells a story that government built a hospital, hiring 450 administrative staff, but can't afford to hire doctors and nurses. So the multimillion pound hospital, with all the latest equipment, couldn't treat a single patient. Guess what, I was told this was based on a true story.

"He will also take a tenth of your grain and grapes and give it to his officers and officials." Before, Israelites only pay tithe as an offering to God. This tithe support the Levites, because they didn't have any land. Now adding 10% to kings, that is 20%.

3. You become slaves.

"You will become the king's slaves, and you will finally cry out for the Lord to save you from the king you wanted. But the Lord won't answer your prayers." (v 18)

God's final warning is that you will become slaves of your king/government. Once your assets are taken away from you to feed the king/government officials, you own nothing but to become a slave to make a living. You may think that it only happened in the past. After all we are living in a modern and a democratic country, we can vote. We are a free country. Are we?

Think about 2020 to 2022, 3 years of multiple lockdowns, and the vaccine mandate. When the mandate was enforced, how many people lost their jobs, lost their income, how many can't afford their mortgage that they had to sell their property. How many people had to take the vaccine against their own will, just in order to keep their jobs?

When our then PM was asked about that her mandate created 2 classes of people in NZ. You know what she said? "That is what it is". One sentence put about 10-15% of NZ population into 2nd class citizens. Think about this, PM supposed to be a servant to NZ public, people she supposed to serve became a subject that she can decide which part is better than the other.

God told to them, one day people would cry out to God, asking God to save them from their own government, but He wouldn't answer their prayers.

Well, you may say, David you just paint a very dark picture, what shall we do?

God's Plan

Even though God didn't like the government idea, he did allow Israelites to have their kings. And through these kings, God taught them what is a good king like vs a bad king. Specially through King David, God taught His people, that a king as a person shall pursue God' heart, to lead them to restore their relationship with God. For 33 years, King David set up worship teams taking roster playing music, singing hymns to God 24 hours every day. They whole city was emerged in hymns worshipping God. Imagine you walked along Queen Street, everywhere you go, all you could hear are hymns, every person you met are worshipping God. Wouldn't that be marvellous?

In [Exodus 19:5-6] God told Moses that he should tell the Israelites that "**Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.**"

[Revelation 5: 9-10] "**You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth.**"

It has always been God's desire that His children to be a nation of priests and a holy nation.

When I arrived in NZ 2002, every Sunday morning, most of TV channels would have worship or pastor preaching program in the morning. On Sundays, most of business were closed, except petrol station. Christian population rate was above 70% in 1991, in 2018 it dropped to about 35%. NZ in a sense was a holy nation of priests.

But things have changed. NZ government systematically pushed Bible and Biblical education out of public schools, department. When JA was in power, one of first things she did was to remove prayer to Jesus from parliament programme.

What shall we do? Can we bring NZ back to a nation of priest and a holy nation? What does these to do with the coming election?

Let's connect the dots. We know God doesn't like government, we also know a Godly king/leader can lead a whole nation towards God. God's intention is for us to build a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

Our identity decides who we vote. If we were slaves, then we would choose a government or leader who can make us lives better, who can give us more food, more money, more time to rest. We would choose a better slave master.

Knowing we are kings and holy priests we should have a different perspective to look at the election. We no longer choose a better slave master who may make our lives easier, instead we choose representatives of God's kingdom. The person we vote for should represent Kingdom's value, not earthly value. That means we can't support murdering unborn babies, supporting LGBT ideology, can't participate in so-called pride movements. If a MP/party is for these ideologies, we can't vote for them. Because if we do, it means we endorse their action.

So in this election, I encourage all of us to pray for our country, to pray that God will lead us vote for the right person that He delights. We vote for a leader and a party that is willing to pursue God's heart. Think about the parliament is full of God's holy priest, what a wonderful country New Zealand would be.

Let's us win our country back for His kingdom. Let's us build up a holy nation again.