

# The Problem and Promise of Human Government

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## Introduction

SA local government elections on 3 August.

- Many Christians don't know how to think Biblically about human government.
- **Vote your values, but hope in God.**

Isaiah 33.22: <sup>22</sup>For the LORD is our judge; the LORD is our lawgiver; the LORD is our king; he will save us.

- Separation of powers: judiciary, legislature, executive.
- Only the LORD may occupy all three at once!

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## Surprising fact

The story of the Bible, from beginning to end, can be summed up in terms of human government!

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**Gen 1.27-28**

<sup>27</sup>So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

<sup>28</sup>And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion...

- God's initial intention was for humans to rule as vice-regents.

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**Gen 49.10**

<sup>10</sup>The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he comes to whom it belongs and the obedience of the nations is his.

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**Exo 6.7,11**

<sup>7</sup>I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God, and you shall know that I am the LORD your God, who has brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.

<sup>11</sup>"Go in, tell Pharaoh king of Egypt to let the people of Israel go out of his land."

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**Deut 17.14-15**

<sup>14</sup>When you come to the land that the LORD your God is giving you, and you possess it and dwell in it and then say, 'I will set a king over me, like all the nations that are around me,'  
<sup>15</sup>you may indeed set a king over you whom the LORD your God will choose. One from among your brothers you shall set as king over you. You may not put a foreigner over you, who is not your brother.

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**Deut 28.36-37**

<sup>36</sup>The LORD will bring you and your king whom you set over you to a nation that neither you nor your fathers have known. And there you shall serve other gods of wood and stone.  
<sup>37</sup>And you shall become a horror, a proverb, and a byword among all the peoples where the LORD will lead you away.

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**Deut 33.4-5**

<sup>4</sup>when Moses commanded us a law, as a possession for the assembly of Jacob.  
<sup>5</sup>Thus the LORD became king in Jeshurun, when the heads of the people were gathered, all the tribes of Israel together.

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**Josh 8.40, 42**

<sup>40</sup>So Joshua struck the whole land, the hill country and the Negeb and the lowland and the slopes, and all their kings. He left none remaining, but devoted to destruction all that breathed, just as the LORD... commanded...

<sup>42</sup>And Joshua captured all these kings and their land at one time, because the LORD God of Israel fought for Israel.

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**Judges 3.8, 10**

<sup>8</sup>Therefore the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia. And the people of Israel served Cushan-rishathaim eight years.

<sup>10</sup>The Spirit of the LORD was upon him, and he judged Israel. He went out to war, and the LORD gave Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia into his hand. And his hand prevailed over Cushan-rishathaim.

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**1 Sam 2.7-10**

<sup>7</sup>The LORD makes poor and makes rich; he brings low and he exalts. <sup>8</sup>He raises up the poor from the dust; he lifts the needy from the ash heap to make them sit with princes and inherit a seat of honor... <sup>10</sup>...The LORD will judge the ends of the earth; he will give strength to his king and exalt the power of his anointed."

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**1 Sam 10.18-19, 25**

<sup>18</sup>...“Thus says the LORD... ‘I brought up Israel out of Egypt, and I delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the hand of all the kingdoms that were oppressing you.’ <sup>19</sup>But today you have rejected your God, who saves you from all your calamities and your distresses, and you have said to him, ‘Set a king over us.’ <sup>25</sup>Then Samuel told the people the rights and duties of the kingship, and he wrote them in a book...

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**1 Sam 12.13-15**

<sup>13</sup>And now behold the king whom you have chosen, for whom you have asked; behold, the LORD has set a king over you. <sup>14</sup>If you will fear the LORD and serve him and obey his voice and not rebel against the commandment of the LORD, and if both you and the king who reigns over you will follow the LORD your God, it will be well. <sup>15</sup>But if you will not obey the voice of the LORD, but rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then the hand of the LORD will be against you and your king.

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**1 Sam 16.1**

<sup>1</sup>The LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul, since I have rejected him from being king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil, and go. I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons."

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**2 Sam 5.3, 12**

<sup>3</sup>So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, and King David made a covenant with them at Hebron before the LORD, and they anointed David king over Israel.

<sup>12</sup>And David knew that the LORD had established him king over Israel, and that he had exalted his kingdom for the sake of his people Israel.

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**2 Sam 7.12-13**

<sup>12</sup>When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom.

<sup>13</sup>He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

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**Dan 4.32**

<sup>32</sup>and you shall be driven from among men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field. And you shall be made to eat grass like an ox, and seven periods of time shall pass over you, until you know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will."

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**Luke 1.31-33; 22.29**

<sup>31</sup>“And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. <sup>32</sup>He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, <sup>33</sup>and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.”  
<sup>29</sup>and I assign to you, as my Father assigned to me, a kingdom...

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**Rev 11.15**

<sup>15</sup>Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever.”

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**Proportional Representation**

Isaiah 33.22: <sup>22</sup>For the LORD is our judge; the LORD is our lawgiver; the LORD is our king; he will save us.

- As Christians we should be involved in all levels of government, like Daniel, William Wilberforce, Albert Luthuli, Mogoeng, etc.
- Where we can't we should vote for appropriate representatives: proportional representation.
- National and local: values and service.
- People abuse power; the LORD 'will save us'.

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**conclusion**

- Proportional representation
- The problem with human leaders is that they are fallen; the promise is that there is One who is not!
- 'Vote your values,' but hope in God.

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