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Devout Naga Apprise at Nagalim

Sowing the Seeds of Democracy

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What does God say? Read 2 Samuel 2:4; 5:1-3

In today's passages, both the people of Judah and Israel took the initiative to approach David and asked him to be their king—that is, David was the people's choice. Indeed, this is the biblical method of choosing political leaders: only with the willing consent of the people can one be chosen to lead others (see Deut. 17:15; Hos. 1:11). Conversely, self-appointed leadership or seizure of power by force or enticement has no divine stamp of approval.

There are also other biblical truths that can be cited to support certain democratic principles of government: First, the Bible teaches that every person is endowed with some degree of capacity to rule (Gen 1:26). In other words, any person, male or female, could be chosen to political leadership. Second, the institution of government is for common good, and not for a special ruling class (Rom. 13:1-4).

The American Experiment

In 1636, Minister Thomas Hooker founded Connecticut. In 1639, Hooker drafted the Fundamental Order of Connecticut, a set of principles that made Connecticut's government more democratic. As a result of his role, some historians have called Hooker "the Father of American democracy."

In 1681, King Charles II granted William Penn, a Quaker preacher, permission to establish a new colony which the latter named it as Pennsylvania. Penn tried to create a government that was fair to all its people. He limited his own powers so that "the will of one man may not hinder the good of the whole country." He also provided a means of changing the colony's laws to reflect the will of the people. Penn sold land to colonists at low prices and created a government that would care for the poor. Penn named the capital of his colony as Philadelphia, which in Greek means "City of Brotherly Love."

In short, all the early settlers established some forms of self-government based on biblical principles. They declared that they were forming a "civil body politik" that would enact laws for the general good of the people. This was not imposed on them from without by a king or by some other conquering force. It was purely a voluntary submission to a government that they themselves had created. It was setting up a government to function with the consent of the governed—a kind of democracy.

Okay, so now what?

The democracy in Nagaland is a flawed one: It is one where public servants rule and civil workers are not that civil at all. In a real democracy, the people are the masters. As such, they don't need to beg from their government; rather, they can command their government.

Source: <http://morungexpress.com/sowing-the-seeds-of-democracy/>