

What is the financial secret to stable government? (29:14)

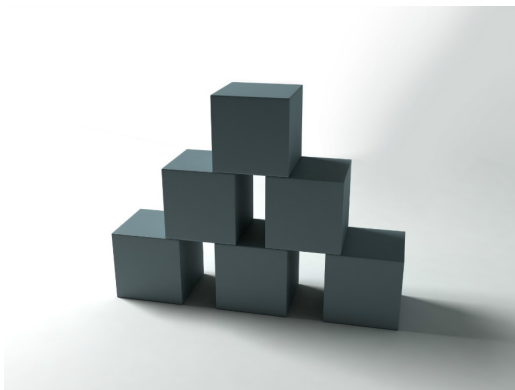
If a king judges the poor with truth, his throne will be established forever.

THE TEXT (NASB)

If a king judges the poor with truth, his throne will be established forever.

The king that faithfully judgeth the poor, his throne shall be established for ever. KJV - Proverbs 29:14

INTRODUCTION



The key to lasting leadership is this: Treat **the poor** properly.

It's ironic; you would think leadership whether government or **king** would be more interested in the rich—since they have more to contribute. No! it's *the poor* who hold the key to jurisdictional stability.

How does that work?



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COMMENTARY

Usually the poor are ignored by those with power and authority. They are vulnerable to abuse since they can't afford military or legal aid. It's counter intuitive, but it's amazing that the poor are most significant. According to the text, treatment of the poor can strengthen or destroy those who are great and powerful—even the king. There is a power higher than both the poor and the king. That higher power is God himself, who, despite having absolute sovereignty, identifies with the poor since he has their same humble attitude.

Translation: *Poor*



The Hebrew word for poor in this verse, דָּל (dāl, pronounced “dahl”), is sometimes used to mean financially poor, but it's also used to mean socially poor—“humble”—as in low social status. When dāl is used in Exodus 23:3, it appears in the context of interpersonal justice. Refer to Proverbs 28:3 and 21:13 for a fuller understanding of this important social class. You can also see the subtle differences in the meaning of the various Hebrew words translated in English simply as “poor.”

Justice - Not Just Charity

The text doesn't say that the poor need a handout—they need **truth**. The word *truth* is sometimes translated as faithfulness. Good social policies call for just and fair treatment of all people, regardless of their wealth. But why not merely show compassion and give generously to the poor, since they are in need? Simply because a handout can rob the recipient of personal dignity and self-respect. A “hand-up” is often worth more than a handout. Treating the poor with truth implies allowing the working poor to have the full benefits of their labour, paying low or zero income taxes. A stable government will motivate its citizens to work with the carrot, not the stick. It will be the whole carrot, not an after-tax remnant. More about fair taxation at [wise taxation](#).

Poverty as a Trainer

Sometimes God uses poverty as a school to train us in valuable life skills including diligence,



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respect for authority, proper planning, punctuality, and honesty. Well-meaning but unwise, misguided government welfare programs can ruin these lessons by letting the poor “off the hook” too easily. Prolonged government aid which is not combined with personal effort indirectly encourages people to be lazy and plead helplessness to justify inaction.

Good Government



Good government develops a business environment of consistent commercial standards. It's an excellent way to benefit the poor. Any government that fosters operating conditions for good, honest business will survive. According to the text, cruel, corrupt governments don't last long.

The text doesn't say that the king will live forever, but that “**his throne will be established forever.**” No human government has lasted forever. Some empires including Chinese dynasties have lasted for centuries but to date all kingdoms including the Egyptian, Assyrian, Greek, Roman and British have collapsed. Some last longer than others. According to the text their stability is directly related to the justice they grant to their lowest class.

The Bible speaks of a kingdom that will put an end to all other kingdoms and "endure forever." (Daniel 2:44). I find it interesting that this kingdom, which refers to the kingdom of Jesus Christ, has the King Himself identifying with the "least" of His citizens. Amazing. The greatest of all kings takes intense care, of the least in His kingdom (Matthew 25:45)

OUR CREATOR, REDEEMER, AND FRIEND

Jesus claimed to have been given “all authority in heaven and on earth,” (Matthew 28:18) thereby implying that His kingdom is all-encompassing and permanent.

This fulfills an ancient prophesy predicting that, in the days of the Roman Empire, God would set up a kingdom that would endure forever (Daniel 2:44).

The Roman civil authorities tried to destroy faith in Jesus Christ yet His followers have increased steadily and outlasted all human governments.



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APPLICATION

- Memorize the text in your favourite Bible translation and think about it often.
- Learn to be humble by thanking and publically praising those who have made you successful in whatever success you may enjoy. Humility is more powerful than you realize.
- How do you handle the little guy? Make sure you treat the weak justly and fairly. Note the importance of the poor in Daniel 4:27. What was king Nebuchadnezzar promised if he showed mercy to the poor? Also note the attitude toward the poor of a city, infamous for its sexual immorality - read Ezekiel 16:49. How was its period of financial prosperity terminated?
- Consider how Jesus treated the poor (Matthew 19:21, John 13:29, 2 Corinthians 8:9).

Which one of these steps, if any, does Jesus want you to take now? Ask Him.



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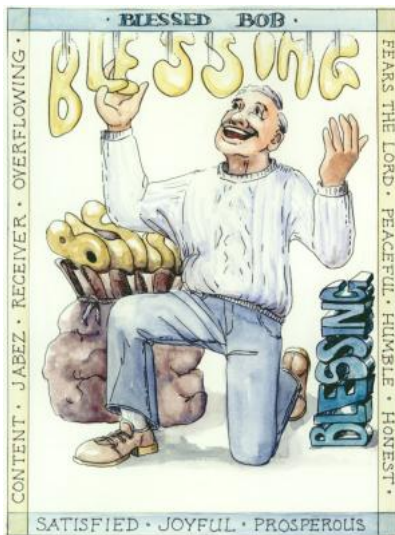
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KEY WORDS

authority, dignity, government, justice, leadership, less assets (quantity), poor (dāl pronounced “dahl”), power, sovereignty, stability, standards, truth, social assistance

ILLUSTRATION

[Who is Blessed Bob?](#)



Blessed Bob is very fortunate. He recognizes that good things come from God! God is shunned by many, but not by Bob. Bob loves God. He wants to receive all the good things that God has for him. He's not too proud to ask God for help. In fact, Bob prays often. Some think that he prays without ceasing. But he is not without fault. Blessed Bob makes many mistakes, and when he does, he admits his errors. He corrects them and presses on.

Bob gets so many blessings he feels overwhelmed. His cup overflows. But he doesn't hoard his blessings. Like Generous Genevieve, Blessed Bob likes to give to others. He is truly prosperous, even though there are many who are financially richer than he is.

We see examples of Blessed Bob in the Bible in the lives of Job and Joseph. Job went through some very good times (Job 29:2-25) and some very bad times (Job 2:7-8). Joseph had similar financial cycles (Genesis 39:2,21). Both men kept their focus on God, not on their financial condition (Job 1:21, Genesis 50:19-21).

More recently we have examples of those who have lived with the same life focus. R. G. LeTourneau was the inventor of the largest earth moving machines in the 1930's and 1940's. He credited God for his tremendous success. He gave away much of his wealth while he was



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still living saying that, "When I shovel money out to God's interests, God shovels money back to me, but God's shovel is bigger than mine." He was called the mover of men and mountains because of his great work and influence. On his gravestone, R. G. LeTourneau left all visitors with these words, SEEK YE FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS AND ALL THESE THINGS SHALL BE ADDED UNTO YOU MATTHEW 6:33.

Blessed Bob is full of joy. He is satisfied with life!

