

Kenya Elects First Evangelical Christian President

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God has taken center stage in Kenya with the newly elected President William Ruto.

Mr. Ruto celebrated this blessing by getting on his knees and praying with his wife, Rachel, once the Supreme Court affirmed his election victory.

Earning the nickname “Deputy Jesus” from his opponents, Mr. Ruto and his supporters now carry it as a badge of pride. This is reminiscent to the term “Deplorables” that former presidential candidate Hilary Clinton gave to supporters of Donald Trump, but the similarities between the two presidents do not end there.

President Ruto was viewed as a political outsider, a self-described “hustler.” He worked diligently to break the hold of power from the two dominant political families, the Odingas and Kenyattas, who tried to maintain their governmental power.

Compare this to the fact that outsider politicians in the United States have now ousted dominant political families in recent months. Come January 23, 2023, there will be no sitting member in Congress, the White House or state governments associated with the Bush, Cheney, Clinton or McCain families.

Kenya is a predominantly Christian country, with some 85% of the population identifying as Christian.

President Ruto put his faith on the forefront of his campaign, sharing pictures of himself as a young pastor to build relationships with his constituents.

He also credits his wife's prayer meetings and intercession on his behalf as a major contributing factor to his victory.

The same can be said for his deputy president Rigathi Gachagua's wife, Dorcas. She is a pastor who has lifted the two men and their country up in prayer, and has reaffirmed the importance of a prayerful family to bring glory to the Lord.

Exhibiting evidence of the unity that comes with honoring the Lord, President Ruto also enjoys the support of Kenya's Muslim community. They stand in agreement with Mr. Ruto's stance against same-sex marriage and in support of abortion restrictions within the country. Muslim support even gave Mr. Ruto's government a majority in the Kenyan Parliament.

President Ruto is expected to continue putting his faith first within his administration. Political analyst Macharia Munene explained to the BBC that this is how his opponent faltered when criticizing Christianity:

"His opponent Raila Odinga blundered when he spoke of Christianity being brainwashing and when his wife Ida spoke about regulating churches. All those statements worked in Ruto's favor vote-wise," Mr. Munene says.

Mr. Ruto hopes to start his term as president by tackling the crippling unemployment of younger workers, and to begin to lift up the poor communities of Kenya as the Bible commands.

President Ruto has shown that obedience to the Lord can and does lift up godly leaders. With an evangelical Christian in charge of an influential African country, Kenya is in a unique position to influence the continent to turn their hearts toward the Lord, repent of their sins and bring glory to God in the entire region. {eo}

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