

Success of President Barack Obama: The God-Factor

Written by Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr.
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We all should well remember that in the aftermath of President Nelson Mandela winning the election in South Africa in 1994, there soon began a growing list of cynics and political pundits who mistakenly believed that President Mandela was compromising too much with the political forces of opposition at the expense of paying attention to the socioeconomic needs of the core of his base constituency in the African National Congress.

The aspirations and struggles of African people for freedom, justice, equality and empowerment have helped to advance the cause of freedom and justice for all people throughout the world. The most brutal forms of slavery, genocide and apartheid for centuries never extinguished or eliminated the God-given humanity of African people across Africa, nor across the Americas. Today we must not allow ourselves to get lost in the desert of despair and hopelessness because of the persistence of poverty, unemployment, and injustice even though we have Black presidents in many nations today including the United States. But we should not take what progress that has been made for granted.

The fact of the matter is that both Mandela and Obama not only achieved historic and monumental political victories, they both with their own unique intellect and outstanding leadership abilities have helped to shape the world community better to advance the cause of liberation, freedom and empowerment. The truth is there is more opportunity today for African Americans to move forward more than ever before if we would work harder together, pool our trillion-dollar resources, and raise up another young generation of freedom fighters, entrepreneurs, and institution-builders. Thus, I stand firmly for the re-election of President Obama without reservation. We cannot afford to become cynical and hopeless. Real social change does not happen overnight or in three to four years. But time is on our side because God is on our side if we do the right things at the right times at the right places not just for ourselves but for all people.

Don't worry this is not a sermon. It is, however, a sober reminder to those of us who may succumb to some malignant cases of social amnesia or to those who are addicted to that self-destructive disease known as "The Willie Lynch Syndrome." Yes, there are ample reasons to express concerns and criticisms about the continuing plight of millions of our brothers and sisters in our communities who are crying out for a better quality of life. But engaging in efforts to derail the re-election of President Barack Obama is foolhardy and counterproductive to the overall interests of the African American, Latino American and other progressive constituencies in the United States.

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I like to quote old African proverbs because they are so universally relevant to both the contradictions and opportunities that we face today as we prepare to enter into the 2012 national political season. A wise man from the Congo once said, "Don't be fooled by those who want you to exchange your soul for a trinket..... for the eternal is more valuable than a thing that may look good only for one moment in time." W.E.B Dubois reminded us that the soul of Black people should never be for sale on the auction block of political expediency. Do not let the Tea Party sell you a cup of politically contaminated brew. Stay sober and conscious of what is happening. Remember Willie Lynch. The 2012 elections in the United States will be the most important elections of our lifetime. This will be a referendum on going forward or going backward. In many states there have measures put in place to discourage and to suppress the Black and other minority vote. We must challenge these repressive voting policies in every state and community.

Be careful what you pray for because our prayers will be answered. That is why I am optimistic.

I believe President Obama will be re-elected. But we must not rest as if this is a done deal because it will be a struggle and another historic contest. Don't miss or forsake your chance and responsibility to participate in civic action. Vote and make an important difference. Yes every vote will count if you vote! We are at another pivotal time. Watch closely how the U.S. Congress will handle the next vote on the deficit. Watch the economy turn around to the positive in the face of all the negative commentators. Watch how President Obama will continue to take the high road doing the presidential debates. I am writing this piece for the NNPA from Johannesburg, South Africa where I am reminded that our struggle for freedom is constant. The entire world is watching America and the success of President Barack H. Obama. No, it will not be the X-factor, but it will be the God-factor that will ultimately win.

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