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November 6, 2008: God and the Election of Barack Obama

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Title: God and the Election of Barack Obama

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11/6/2008--Listening to comments of high school students concerning the election of Barack Obama on NPR this morning I was uplifted by their awakened hope for the future. Whatever you think of Obama, his election was something genuinely new and hopeful in the world. When the biblical scholar Walter Brueggemann described the core biblical understanding of God, he emphasized this sense of surprise: "The Old Testament insists that there is a moral shape to the public process that curbs the raw exercise of power. It equally insists that there is a hidden cunning in the historical process that is capable of surprise and that prevents the absolutizing of any program or power." This election is the kind of surprise Brueggemann was pointing to. I don't mean Barack Obama was sent from God. I mean that at the heart of reality, there is grace. We don't get what we deserve. Something wonderful and unexpected will often happen.