

God on Government

The Bible teaches that we should honor God in all areas of our life—including how we employ our legal privileges as citizens (cf. Ac 22:25-29). Paul used the privileges of his Roman citizenship, and so should we use our privileges as citizens. We must, therefore, consider what God has to say as we vote and engage in other civic duties. What has God revealed about government?

1.) The Bible is sufficient for our views on politics (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

a.) Secular political theories are a failure. They can never have certainty.

b.) There is no such thing as a value-neutral political theory that has no presuppositions. Denying the authority of Scripture in politics is asserting that man is autonomous and independent of God—which is rebellion of the sort that took place in the Garden of Eden. Man is not autonomous.

c.) Since Scripture is sufficient, we can know what kind of government we should have from the Bible. The following are some Biblical teachings in different areas of government.

1.) 1 Samuel 8 teaches a lot about Biblical government and ungodly government. Let's take a look.

“In 1 Sam. 8 the prophet Samuel outlined what the practical cost of the rule by monarchy would be. H[e] [presents a] . . . somber picture . . . the [archaeological] evidence we do have points in . . . the . . . direction . . . that Samuel's sentiments were a realistic assessment of what traditional Levantine kingship meant in practice. Comparison with the data from the courts of such kingdoms shows clear similarities with Samuel's warnings.” (pg. 95, *On The Reliability of the Old Testament*, K. A. Kitchen. Kitchen goes on to give parallels of the sort of tyrannical practices Samuel warned about in 1 Samuel 8.)

8:1-3: The Relapse in Limited Government

1Sam. 8:1 And it came to pass, when Samuel was old, that he made his sons judges over Israel.

--Note here that, as you know, Samuel was in the line of judges, as we saw in the book of Judges. When God set up a government, He did not set up a monarchy. He set up a republic where the people chose their own leaders, who had limited authority, and God alone was their ultimate king. Wanting a monarchy was rejecting Him as king. Samuel was wrong to set up his ungodly sons as judges—and he didn't really have the right to do it, either. The judges in the book of judges did not pass their leadership down to their children. This compromise in the form of the Hebrew republic made monarchy—dictatorship--easier to transition into.

2 Now the name of his firstborn was Joel; and the name of his second, Abiah: *they were* judges in Beersheba. 3 And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment.

Note here one of the causes of the end of the Hebrew republic—ungodly spiritual and national leadership. Thus it is with forces attacking liberty in the USA.

a.) Unbelieving “Christianity” is at the head of the push towards socialism. No Jeremiah Wright-types = no Barack Obama types. And where did the Jeremiah Wright types come from? His denomination traces its roots back to Jonathan Edwards! Unconverted people let into churches—to modernism—to apostasy—and from spiritual apostasy to political bondage. (See here a warning for us!)

b.) Ungodly national leaders—as Samuel's sons were both spiritual and national leaders—help lead to the downfall.

c.) A third cause was ungodliness in the people themselves, 1 Samuel 12:6-13 (READ IT). For people to be politically free they must trust in Jehovah, the Triune God. Ps 33:12* Blessed *is* the nation whose God *is* the LORD; *and* the people *whom* he hath chosen for his own inheritance.

Happy *is that* people, that is in such a case: *yea*, happy *is that* people, whose God *is* the LORD. (Psalm 144:15)

Political liberty is a blessing from Jehovah, and thus ungodly people will not long remain politically free.

8:4-5: The Request For Big Government

4 Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah,

Note the representative nature of the Israelite government. Note also that the government was patriarchal. Men were in charge, not women. The rule of women is a curse:

Isa 3:12* *As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths.*

In the USA, since women are a majority of the population, women are ruling, and this is a curse. The woman's vote was a mistake. Since women have it, godly women should vote and follow their husband's leadership in that area, but men failed to lead when they allowed women to become in charge of the country by giving them the vote.

5 And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations.

Note that God specifically did not give Israel a king like the other nations. He set up a republic, but now, because of sin in the people, and sin in the judges, they chose to abandon liberty for monarchy, for big government, to be like heathen nations.

8:6-8—The Rebellion [against Jehovah] in Big Government

6 But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the LORD. 7 And the LORD said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them. 8 According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee.

It was a sin to want a monarchy, and God judged their wickedness in not trusting in Him by giving them over to their own ungodly desires. God often works in this way. cf. Jer 25:14: For many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of them also: and I will recompense them according to their deeds, and according to the works of their own hands. In Romans 1 God gives up the wicked to their own way as judgment.

8:9-18: The Ruin of Big Government

v. 9: *Deliverance to Big Government*

9 Now therefore hearken unto their voice: howbeit yet protest solemnly unto them, and shew them the manner of the king that shall reign over them.

So what does God picture as an evil government—as a curse befitting a sinful and ungodly people—as a government that is the opposite of a blessing from Him? Let us see.

v. 10-13: *Loss of freedom of association*

10 And Samuel told all the words of the LORD unto the people that asked of him a king. 11 And he said, This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: He will take your sons, and appoint *them* for himself, for his chariots, and *to be* his horsemen; and *some* shall run before his chariots. 12 And he will appoint him captains over thousands, and captains over fifties; and *will set them* to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots. 13 And he will take your daughters *to be* confectionaries, and *to be* cooks, and *to be* bakers.

A. *Loss of freedom in a military draft, v. 11-12.* We see here that ungodly government practices conscription and forces its citizens to serve it. A military draft is ungodly, and a curse, we see. A clear voluntary army is taught in Deut 20:1-9:

20:1* ¶ When thou goest out to battle against thine enemies, and seest horses, and chariots, *and* a people more than thou, be not afraid of them: for the LORD thy God *is* with thee, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

2* And it shall be, when ye are come nigh unto the battle, that the priest shall approach and speak unto the people,

3* And shall say unto them, Hear, O Israel, ye approach this day unto battle against your enemies: let not your hearts faint, fear not, and do not tremble, neither be ye terrified because of them;

4* For the LORD your God *is* he that goeth with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you.

5* And the officers shall speak unto the people, saying, What man *is there* that hath built a new house, and hath not dedicated it? let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man dedicate it.

6* And what man *is he* that hath planted a vineyard, and hath not *yet* eaten of it? let him *also* go and return unto his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man eat of it.

7* And what man *is there* that hath betrothed a wife, and hath not taken her? let him go and return unto his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man take her.

8* And the officers shall speak further unto the people, and they shall say, What man *is there that is* fearful and fainthearted? let him go and return unto his house, lest his brethren's heart faint as well as his heart.

9* And it shall be, when the officers have made an end of speaking unto the people, that they shall make captains of the armies to lead the people.

For that matter, this was not a standing army at all, as can be seen from v. 9—this was a militia that was called together only when needed. The Hebrew republic did not even have a standing army.

Note that for a militia like this to work, the people must be armed. This fact provides a Biblical basis for an armed populace. Cf. 1 Samuel 13:19-20 (read it)—this was a bad situation. The government was not to compel people to be in the military or in other occupations (1 Sam 8:13). This shows that fascism is unbiblical. In fascism, people still technically own their businesses, but the government tells them what they can or cannot do with them.

Loss of liberty as family roles are usurped by government, v. 11-13, "He will take your sons, and appoint them for himself . . . and he will take your daughters."

Fathers no longer had control over their children; now the State would have control over them. If the State wanted the children for its own purposes, it did not matter what the family thought; the government was going to get them. This is like what the "UN Treaty on the Rights of the Child," and the modern Child Protective Services people are saying. Contrast the extent of parental authority in Scripture:

Deuteronomy 21:18-21

18* If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and *that*, when they have chastened him, will not hearken unto them:

19* Then shall his father and his mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the elders of his city, and unto the gate of his place;

20* And they shall say unto the elders of his city, This our son *is* stubborn and

rebellious, he will not obey our voice; *he is* a glutton, and a drunkard.

21* And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones, that he die: so shalt thou put evil away from among you; and all Israel shall hear, and fear.

The State was to be so far from usurping parental authority that the parents could bring their children to their local city rulers, and, if they proved that they had been spanking him and he still did not listen, and he had clear evidence of rebellion, such as being a glutton and a drunkard, the State would enforce the parents' authority to such an extent that it would allow the parents to have their son stoned to death. But now, with the advent of the monarchy, parental authority was usurped. When Saul wished, he took David, and let him go no more to his house. "And Saul took him that day, and would let him go no more home to his father's house" (1 Sam 18:2). "when Saul saw any strong man, or any valiant man, he took him unto him" (1 Sam 14:52). The State could require compulsory service, parental desires or children's desires to the winds.

A related improper violation of parental—and church—authority is secular education. The government is never given the role of educating children in the Bible. Parents are to educate (Deut 6:4-7) and education took place through God's institution (Eph 4:11-12, 1 Timothy 3:15, etc.), but never through the government. Public schools should be abolished.

Loss of freedom of occupation, v. 11-13.

The government was now dictating to people what jobs they were to hold and how they were to hold them—it was asserting control over the economy. The Biblical pattern is for free economic exchange without government interference. Individuals can freely contract with employers on whatever are mutually acceptable terms. (It is true that the following text is a parable, where God is compared to the householder, but the righteous character of the householder still presents an economic pattern. The householder, picturing God, does not make unsound arguments or do unjustly):

Matt. 20:1 For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man *that is* an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard. 2 And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard. 3 And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, 4 And said unto them; Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they

went their way. 5 Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise. 6 And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? 7 They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, *that* shall ye receive. 8 So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them *their* hire, beginning from the last unto the first. 9 And when they came that *were hired* about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. 10 But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny. 11 And when they had received *it*, they murmured against the goodman of the house, 12 Saying, These last have wrought *but* one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day. 13 But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny? 14 Take *that* thine *is*, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee. 15 Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good? 16 So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen.

Note that the employer and employee could freely contract one with another, and no injustice was done as long as both fulfilled the terms of their contract. Note as well the authority of the employer, in that he could lawfully give different levels of wages to his different workers at his discretion, as long as a agreed upon contract was not violated. The government should enforce violations of contract as instances of thievery, but it is not to impose requirements upon employers or employees concerning what kind of contracts they can make. Today the government eliminates the freedom of both employers and employees in their contracting in many ways.

1.) Employers are not free to hire people to work whatever shifts are acceptable to both of them—even if an employee would rather work four ten hour days than five eight hour days, they are not free to contract to do so without the penalty of a government imposed 50% hike in pay (overtime). If employees contract that over 40 hours they get paid extra, that is fine, but the government now forces them to do so, and since money does not come out of the sky, that decreases the normal hourly wages employees would otherwise get.

Employers and employees give over 15% of their paychecks to the Social Security system, Medicare, etc. There is no freedom to opt out of this government run program. The fact that one would likely get over five times as much money by investing that 15% in the stock market as one is promised in IOU's from the government for Social

Security doesn't matter—you're in, period.

Soon employers are going to be required to do all sorts of things under ObamaCare that are going to be even far the worse.

Another government imposed destruction of freedom of contract takes place with union laws. If, say, 100, or 1,000 people, or whatever number of people, freely agree together to bargain collectively with an employer, and freely agree to pay dues to have someone represent them, that is fine; there is nothing unbiblical about it, as long as the employer is treated with the reverent respect that Scripture sets as the pattern for employee/employer relations (cf. Ephesians 6:4-9). However, the government has no right to take away the right of other individuals to freely contract with employers outside of a union. In most states in the country, if 50%+ 1 people who are employees of a business form a union, they can deprive the 49.9% of their right to freely contract with an employer and force the minority to join, pay for, etc. a union. Such laws are unjust and unscriptural.

Weaking of the private sector for the public sector, v. 11-13.

The fact is that before this point, we really don't see people working for the government at all; people on the public dole were very, very limited, or even nonexistent, in the Hebrew republic. As far as we can tell, even the city judges that are mentioned and ordained to sit in the gate were volunteer, unpaid positions. But now the State was employing large numbers of people. That is an unscriptural pattern, part of the curse of big government, as are all these characteristics. Furthermore, such a State run system of employment does not create useful wealth to the same extent that people do as part of a free economy in the private sector. The people, for example, who have to run in front of the king's chariot (v. 11) could be doing something far more useful, but the State has required them to do what is less beneficial instead. As the king would take the sons of families and "appoint them for himself" (v. 11), so the State has people employed for its own ends, rather than them being allowed the freedom to pursue what is beneficial to themselves or to society as a whole. Note that government control of food (v. 12) is specifically mentioned. Government subsidies to farmers should all be abolished. Note that the State is also more militarized in vv. 11-13. Big governments cause and fight more wars than republics with limited governments do.

Objection. Does not the government need to enforce labor laws, requirements for safety conditions, etc.?

Answer. No, it does not. God's system was not that the government required people to enforce certain standards of safety, etc., punishing those who did not. Rather, God's system is seen in Deuteronomy 22:8; Exodus 21:28-30, etc.:

8* When thou buildest a new house, then thou shalt make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thine house, if any man fall from thence.

28 If an ox gore a man or a woman, that they die: then the ox shall be surely stoned, and his flesh shall not be eaten; but the owner of the ox *shall be* quit. 29 But if the ox were wont to push with his horn in time past, and it hath been testified to his owner, and he hath not kept him in, but that he hath killed a man or a woman; the ox shall be stoned, and his owner also shall be put to death. 30 If there be laid on him a sum of money, then he shall give for the ransom of his life whatsoever is laid upon him.

Instead of having a government agency requiring everyone to do something and punishing those who do not comply the way the agency requires, God's way is to have no punishment for not doing something ahead of time, but if anyone gets hurt, the person responsible has happen to him whatever he caused to happen to someone else. In other words, if you own a mine company and some miners die because of lack of safety that is your fault, you die. The CEO, if he is at fault for bad working conditions that lead someone to lose his arm, he loses his arm.

That would work as a way to have people keep others safe, no?

Loss of freedom of property, v. 14-16.

Loss of freedom and protection for physical property through "redistribution," v. 14

Loss of freedom and protection for growth in wealth and income through 10% taxation, v. 15.

Loss of freedom and protection for human "property," v. 16.

14 And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your oliveyards, *even* the best of *them*, and give *them* to his servants. 15 And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers, and to his servants. 16 And he will take your menservants, and your maidservants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put *them* to his work.

A curse of big government is the destruction of property rights; the State can confiscate and take over private property for its own purposes. It takes some people's property using force in v. 14 and gives it to those that it favors, in v. 14 the king's servants. This "redistribution" of income is a violation of "Thou shalt not steal" (Exodus

20:15) just like it is if a thief comes and “redistributes” your goods by force. The eighth commandment requires the protection of private property, and “redistribution” of income is stealing. Government programs to “redistribute” the income some to others is stealing. Politicians who campaign on the rich “paying their fair share,” the nature of which is never defined, to give money or goods to others, is government robbery. God commands individual believers and churches to generously and selflessly help the needy and poor (2 Thess 3:10; Gal 6:10; Lu 6:35)¹—and the brother who sees another brother have need, and does not help him, acts like an unconverted person and should consider if he is really saved (1 John 3:17), but for the government to employ force to extract money from people to give to either the rich or poor is the sin of stealing, not charity or generosity. Social programs like Social Security are not part of the Biblical mandate of government and should be abolished (while those who were promised benefits should not be ripped off but should get what they were promised.) In the Pentateuch and in other books of the Bible God repeatedly commanded the members of the Hebrew republic (and the later monarchy) to help the poor (Deut 15:10-11, etc.), and Jehovah promised to bless those who did so and curse those who refused to do so—but the GOVERNMENT never forced anyone to engage in “charity”—which, if it is done by force, is not charity at all—the most governmental officials did was use public reproach and censure, reminding people who were not charitable of God’s punishments (Nehemiah 5:1-13).

People argue that the Lord Jesus or early Christianity was in favor of socialism or communism because He had few possessions and commanded particular people to sell all that they had and follow Him, or because the church at Jerusalem, for a while, because of the three thousand converts from the Day of Pentecost, quite likely, had “all things common” (Acts 2:44), so that they did not treat what was their own as if it really was (Acts 4:32). However, generous charity to meet the needs of believers, and voluntary giving up or selling of property or goods (and the situation at the Jerusalem church was voluntary, and Peter, while this common sharing of goods was going on, recognized the continued existence of private property, Acts 5:4—and this communal situation was temporary at Jerusalem and not copied by Gentile churches elsewhere, although generous charity certainly was, cf. Acts 9:36, 39), are TOTALLY different from the government employing force to get unwilling unregenerate people to be “charitable” by taking their

¹ 2Th. 3:10 For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.

Gal. 6:10 As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all *men*, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and *to* the evil. (Luke 6:35)

goods and money to give to other people. Neither the Lord Jesus nor the Jerusalem church in its earliest days give a shred of evidence in favor of governmental force employed for such an end.

Likewise, bribery—including bribing certain classes of people to vote a certain way by promises of government handouts—is a sin and “perverted judgment” (1 Sam 8:3. The government is to be impartial and neither favor the rich or poor:

Thou shalt not wrest judgment; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous. (Deut 16:19)

2 Thou shalt not follow a multitude to *do* evil; neither shalt thou speak in a cause to decline after many to wrest *judgment*: 3 Neither shalt thou countenance a poor man in his cause. (Exodus 22:2-3)

He that oppressteth the poor to increase his *riches*, *and* he that giveth to the rich, *shall* surely *come* to want. (Proverbs 22:16)

In our country, very often it is popular for poorer people to vote in elected officials who promise to use the force of government to steal from the rich to give them/ “redistribute” to them the goods of those who have more. This is stealing, and it is based on envy. Even if it is profitable to us (in the short term—obedience is always best in the long view), it is still wrong, and we need to oppose it.

17 He will take the tenth of your sheep: and ye shall be his servants.

Note that oppressive taxation was a flat 10% rate—this made the people into the king’s “servants” or slaves. God demands a tithe—a tenth—and the government should get less than God gets, it seems. In a situation where the government was as small and as limited as in the Hebrew republic, less than a 10% income tax was currently in place, because a 10% rate was going to be a new thing that was higher than they were currently paying, something that would cause them to “cry out” (v. 18) because of its oppressive nature.

American liberal politicians typically want to raise taxes so that the rich “pay their fair share,” while conservatives want taxes lower, but neither side can give any authoritative basis for what is actually the just rate of taxation. Scripture, however, does supply an answer—taxation should be below a 10% flat rate. Anything higher is oppressive and a curse.

Furthermore, notice that the tax rate was flat, not graduated. In our country,

people with higher incomes do not just pay a higher amount of tax at a flat rate, but a higher percentage of tax. This is unrighteous. In fact, the income tax system has become so uneven that, for the year 2008, it was as follows:

Percentiles Ranked by AGI	AGI Threshold on Percentiles	Percentage of Federal Personal Income Tax Paid
Top 1%	\$380,354	38.02
Top 5%	\$159,619	58.72
Top 10%	\$113,799	69.94
Top 25%	\$67,280	86.34
Top 50%	\$33,048	97.30
Bottom 50%	<\$33,048	2.7

Note: AGI is Adjusted Gross Income Source: Internal Revenue Service

<http://www.ntu.org/tax-basics/who-pays-income-taxes.html>

“Focusing on the statistical middle class — the middle 20 percent of households, as ranked by income — underlines this point. Households in this group made \$35,400 to \$52,100 in 2006, the last year for which the Congressional Budget Office has released data. . . . Taking into account both taxes and tax credits, the average household in this group paid [a total income tax rate](#) of just 3 percent. A good number of people, in fact, paid no net income taxes. They are among the alleged free riders.”

Furthermore, in 2009, 47% of the population paid no income tax at all.

(above from <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/14/business/economy/14leonhardt.html>)

The problem with the top 50% of tax payers paying over 97% of the taxes, and the bottom 50% paying under 3%, and 47% of people paying no income tax at all, while people with more money pay a very high percentage, is that the people who are getting a

free ride feel no incentive to reduce taxes overall, since they are the beneficiaries of what was improperly stolen from those with more money by the government. Once this percentage goes over 50%, and a majority of people get used to government controlled stealing from a minority, freedom and republicanism are finished, and socialism is in. Thomas Jefferson illustrated the far more Biblical mindset our contry used to have in this regard:

To take from one, because it is thought his own industry and that of his father has acquired too much, in order to spare to others who (or whose fathers) have not exercised equal industry and skill, is to violate arbitrarily the first principle of association, "to guarantee to everyone a free exercise of his industry and the fruits acquired by it."

Not only does the government tax people directly, but it indirectly taxes people through inflating the national currency.

Money is something that we use instead of barter to exchange goods and services; it is a means of exchange. When you go to work, you exchange your time and whatever talents you employ on your job for money, instead of cows, chicken eggs, etc. You then take this money and exchange it, say, at the grocery store, for whatever you need, instead of, say, getting food by promising to mow the lawn at Wal Mart. Currently, our currency is green pieces of paper called dollars. Our country requires them as the unit of exchange; a business is not allowed, for example, to refuse to receive dollars and only take gold or silver, or euros, etc. The government controls the amount of green paper in circulation through an organization called the Federal Reserve, which prints (or electronically creates) vast quantities of dollars and controls, in this way and in others, the extant quantity of dollars.

Government control of currency is entirely different than the Biblical system. Note Genesis 23:16:

And Abraham hearkened unto Ephron; and Abraham weighed to Ephron the silver, which he had named in the audience of the sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, current money with the merchant.

Note that currency was "silver" (and other texts mention gold as currency, 1 Kings 9:14, 28, etc.; "talents of gold."). The Hebrew word translated "money" is the same word as

“silver.” The currency was not pieces of paper that the government required you to accept; it was gold and silver. In our country, the pieces of paper used to be able to be exchanged for gold, but that eventually stopped, so that under President Nixon the pieces of paper were no longer able to be redeemed by anyone for gold or silver, and were now backed by nothing at all.

Note further that the money was “current money WITH THE MERCHANT.” The medium of exchange was not dictated by the government, but people could exchange goods and services using whatever medium both parties thought was acceptable. If a merchant would take it, and you wanted to give it, you were free to exchange on that basis. What ended up happening is that people wanted to exchange quantities of gold and silver, and these were the medium of exchange. Abraham, to get land in Genesis 23:16, weighed a certain amount of silver, four hundred shekels worth, and thus bought land. Ephron was happy to accept silver, and the merchants in the day were happy to get it as well. The government was not dictating anything about what was exchanged.

Isaiah 1:22-25 (cf. Jeremiah 6:30) warns about people who were corrupting the currency by mixing in base metal with the silver (or gold), and passing it off as the pure product. God was going to punish those who did so, and restore an uncorrupted currency, one without dross (base metal mixed with the silver):

22* Thy silver is become dross, thy wine mixed with water: 23 Thy princes *are* rebellious, and companions of thieves: every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards: they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them. 24 Therefore saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts, the mighty One of Israel, Ah, I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies: 25 And I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin:

When an individual mixed dross with the silver, debasing the value of the currency, he was stealing—it was the sin of robbery.

When the government prints more dollars and expands the number in circulation, they are doing the same sort of thing as someone was who increased the amount of metal in use as currency by mixing in base metal with the silver—this is stealing. As the government increases the amount of money in stock, the value of the dollars people have goes down. As a (simplistic) illustration, let us say that there was 100 trillion dollars in circulation. If the government had another 100 trillion printed, for a short time it would look like

everyone had just gotten richer, because there was all this extra money, but then the reality that nothing had happened besides some work on a printing press would set in, and everyone's dollars would come to be worth half as much. If you had saved \$10,000, you could now only buy with that \$10,000 what you could have bought for \$5,000 before the government doubled the amount of money. It is like the government took half of your money in taxes, and it is stealing. Government control of currency, and government increasing of the supply of green paper that we have to exchange for goods so that what we have saved decreases in value, is a hidden tax, and it is stealing.

The government robbing people by inflating the currency is often very attractive for a number of reasons. First, there is a time delay between the time the currency is printed and the time people realize that more money is available. In that time lapse, an artificial prosperity seems to be taking place, and this sort of artificial prosperity helps when election time rolls around. Second, people do not often connect the actions of the government with the increasing prices they see, and so there is not the same kind of anger there would be if IRS agents came in and took away half of your bank account. In fact, with the time delay between the increase in the amount of money and the increase in prices that inevitably follows, people often blame whoever is in power at the time, even if they are not responsible for the increase in the money supply. Third, while inflation is bad if you have saved money, because when the government reduces your \$10,000 saved to what is really the same as \$5,000 although you still have the same numbers (\$10,000) in your bank account, inflation is beneficial to you if you are in debt. If you owe someone \$200,000, and the government puts twice the amount of money in circulation, it is now as if you only owed \$100,000. Inflation hurts savers and it helps those in debt. And guess who is, by far, the biggest debtor? The government itself! The national debt, as of yesterday (Saturday, October 30), is: \$13,667,301,172,681.26. Since September 28, 2007, it has been increasing an average of \$4.13 billion a day. Scripture teaches that a national debt is a curse. When Israel was blessed, God promised them:

“The LORD shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow.” (Deuteronomy 28:12)

When they fell into sin, then God promised them:

43* The stranger that *is* within thee [and now China owns a huge percentage of our debt] shall get up above thee very high; and thou shalt come down very low. 44 He shall lend

to thee, and thou shalt not lend to him: he shall be the head, and thou shalt be the tail. (Deuteronomy 28:43-44).

If the government can cut the value of the dollar in half, it is like cutting what it has to pay back to people in half. So, because of the time delay involved in inflation, because people don't blame the government when it happens, and because inflation hurts savers and helps debtors, the government likes to inflate the currency. However, it is still stealing—it violates Isaiah 1:22-25. But the government would not have the power to inflate the currency if it got out of the money business and let people trade in whatever they wanted—or even if it promised to give people gold or silver in exchange for their dollars whenever they requested, as it used to be possible.

Thus, taxation at 10% or above is ungodly, and the hidden tax of inflation is ungodly. People who endure taxation at this sort of level, and the other items mentioned in 8:11-17, are slaves, v. 17b. They are being oppressed, 1 Samuel 12:3.

One might allege the example of Joseph in Genesis 47:13ff. to affirm that a 20% tax rate was acceptable, for in Genesis 41:35, after Joseph had the dreams about the famine coming on the land of Egypt, he recommended to Pharaoh to take a fifth, 20% of the food, and store it up for the upcoming seven years of famine. However, there are many factors that show that this example does not justify taxation above 10%.

1.) Even if one were to concede the justice of a higher rate because of Joseph's recommendation in Egypt, the change/increase over a 10% maximum specified as slavery and a curse in 1 Samuel 8 would only take place where absolute disaster or utter ruin was coming—so only in a life-threatening emergency, such as a famine that was going to be seven years long where there would be no harvest of anything at all, and so could lead to the starvation of just about the entire population—would such a rate of taxation take place. Furthermore, this emergency tax could only be temporary—Joseph's higher rate lasted only for seven years. Wouldn't it be nice if the government only taxed at 20% if there was an emergency that threatened the utter dissolution of the nation, and it did it only temporarily until the imminent and awful threat was passed?

2.) The Egyptians were not godly people, but idolators, as was the Pharaoh, and the country was an absolute monarchy, a dictatorship, where the people had no freedom. Furthermore, notice that the result, in Genesis 47:13ff., of the famine was that the entire population ended up selling themselves as slaves to Pharaoh and the government so that they would not die. (It is interesting to note that Joseph chose to have them sell

themselves as slaves rather than adopting a welfare state and giving them the grain free when they had nothing! Selling them grain, rather than giving it to them for free, would keep them from being wasteful with what they got. Furthermore, note that even when they sold themselves as slaves to Joseph and Pharaoh in Genesis 47:13ff. that they still had private property, etc.—and that the requirement that they thenceforth give 20% of their goods to Pharaoh, 47:24-25, was because they were now slaves to Pharaoh! Genesis itself shows that 20% taxation is what is properly fit for slavery!) Furthermore, the people of Egypt would have known how Joseph got where he was—if they had trusted in God, they could have saved their grain like Joseph saved grain, and then they would not have had to sell themselves as slaves. The government did not coerce the land sales—the priests, etc. still owned their land. Nor does the text say they could not have redeemed/bought back their lands and freed themselves.

Loss of freedom regretted, v. 18.

18 And ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen you; and the LORD will not hear you in that day.

The people would not like the big government that they had chosen—but God was going to judge them by giving them one, and they would not be able to get out of it. Israel, having abandoned the republican government God established over them, had a monarchy, a bigger government, until the exile. Freedom, once lost, is extremely difficult to recover. It is the natural state of fallen man to be in degradation, poverty, misery, famine, and disaster. The freedom and prosperity the USA has enjoyed for so long is extremely unusual and atypical for human history, and we need to be very thankful for it.

Consider that the Antichrist will have the strongest central government ever, with the greatest degree of wickedness accompanying it. There will be no free buying or selling—one will need the mark of the beast (Revelation 13:17). There will be no free market, but price controls (Revelation 6:6). There will (in non-economic matters) no religious freedom, but a state “church” with compulsory worship, etc.

The Reasons for Big Government (v. 19-20)

1.) Rejection of the Word of God, v. 19.

The word of the prophet Samuel was the Word of God. The people rejected the Word of God in choosing big government. Today people who reject the Word of God lose economic and political freedom. “If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed” (John 8:36). He gives spiritual freedom from sin, political freedom, economic freedom, and all other freedoms, as He is the Fountain and Source of all blessing to man whatsoever. One can see historically that the closer nations have been to obeying the Bible, the more they have tended to have political and economic freedom.

2.) *A desire to follow the ungodly, v. 20a.*

Israel desired to be like the heathen, pagan nations that were around them in spiritual, political, and economic darkness and disaster. They did not want to be different. Think of this verse when people say the USA should follow the example of the socialist states in Europe! Think of this, also, members of the church of God, or young people wanting acceptance with the world—think on the consequences of wanting to be like the ungodly! Note that the elders stated in 8:5 also that they wanted a king to be like the heathen nations.

3.) *Abdication of responsibility, v. 20b.*

They did not want to be self-governing—it took work—or to judge themselves, but wanted the king to take care of their civil duties. (Keep this in mind if you try to get out of jury duty!) This is the attitude of those who do not vote or do not seek to influence our country for righteousness. They were civically lazy.

4.) *Faithlessness, v. 20c-d.*

Jehovah was supposed to go before them to fight their battles, and be their King—but they did not want Him as their invisible King to fight for them and go before them, but wanted a human king. (They got one—Saul—who was the tallest Israelite, but he was still a disaster—Goliath was taller—and a short boy named David took care of Goliath because Jehovah was going before David to fight for him!) This faithlessness ties back into 1 Samuel 8:7: “And the LORD said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.” (1 Samuel 8:7). The verb *rejected* is often elsewhere translated *despised*. They rejected republican government and wanted a big

government because of sin—they did not want Jehovah as their King, but wanted to go their own way. “And ye have this day rejected your God, who himself saved you out of all your adversities and your tribulations; and ye have said unto him, *Nay*, but set a king over us. Now therefore present yourselves before the LORD by your tribes, and by your thousands.” (1 Samuel 10:19). Because of Israel’s rebellion, they got a king as judgment: “O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me *is* thine help. I will be thy king: where *is any other* that may save thee in all thy cities? and thy judges of whom thou saidst, Give me a king and princes? I gave thee a king in mine anger, and took *him* away in my wrath” (Hosea 13:9-11).

The phraseology of v. 20 is similar to that of 2 Samuel 5:24, “the LORD go out before thee” [to win in battle], and Psa. 68:7, “O God, when thou wentest forth before thy people, when thou didst march through the wilderness; Selah.” Human leaders could do something similar (Numbers 27:17; cf. Judges 9:39)

Application

- 1.) Do not rebel against Jehovah. Sin will bring eternal and temporal evil consequences.
- 2.) Accept the truths of what God teaches about righteous government, and seek to promote one. Use your privilege as a citizen and vote. Vote for people who are as close to Scripture as possible. Comparing Democrats and Republicans, in the overwhelming majority of instances, the Republican will be better. Vote for the most Biblical candidate that is viable in primaries. Contact your legislators. Be salt and light.
- 3.) You should be overwhelmed with gratitude for the freedom God has given us to this nation, and use it to preach the gospel.
- 4.) Most fundamentally, note that sin in God’s people was the reason for the dissolution of the Hebrew republic and the establishment, in God’s righteous judgment, of a monarchy instead. God sets up kings and brings them down—He is sovereign over what happens in government. He turned the course of nations for the sake of His people Israel: “When the most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the LORD’S portion *is* his people; Jacob *is* the lot of his inheritance” (Deuteronomy 32:8-9). So today He turns the course of nations, and blesses or brings them down, for the sake of His church—for the sake of independent, fundamental Baptist churches.

The sin of Samuel, in appointing his sons to be judges, and the sins of his sons as judges, were key to the dissolution of the Hebrew republic—failure among spiritual leaders brought the end of political freedom. How are you doing in your spiritual leadership? Do you realize that by your failure here, you are contributing to the end of political freedom and the advance of tyranny?

The sin of the elders in wanting to be like the heathen nations was central to the end of their republic. Do you want to be like the world? Do you fear to take up the cross and follow Christ closely? Do you fear the world's reproach and seek to minimize Biblical separation? You are contributing when you do so to the destruction of freedom in America—as well as highly displeasing God.

The sin of the people of God in general led to the dissolution of the Hebrew republic. “[T]hey have rejected me, that I [Jehovah] should not reign over them,” 8:7, cf. 8:8. Are you submitting to God's rule and kingdom? Or are you holding on to sin?

The sin of unconverted people among professors in God's institution led to the end of the Hebrew republic, 8:8. They claimed to be the people of God, but they were unsaved idolators. Are you unconverted? Not only are you on your way to hell, but also you are helping to destroy the country. You may complain about the loss of political freedoms—and yet you are part of the problem, not of the solution, because of your sin and your rebellion against God!

One of the best things you can do is fulfill the Great Commission and defend the purity and faithfulness of the NT Baptist church of which you are a member. More converted people means more righteousness in the nation; more churches planted means more righteousness in the nation; fewer churches that compromise, more that are on fire for God and getting stronger, means more blessings from God; and spiritual, political, and economic liberty are all blessings from God. States in the USA that have more true churches tend to have more godly government and more freedom than states with fewer true churches; compare the “red” and “blue” states in terms of Biblical influence. Are you going out and preaching the gospel door to door? Are you keeping sin and compromise out of your family, and out of the church? Are you passionately committed to practicing personal and ecclesiastical separation to maintain the holiness and purity of the church? Get right with God personally—have Him as your king in all areas—and get out and preach the gospel so that others can submit to Him as king—and you are doing the best possible thing to promote political liberty in the long term.

21 And Samuel heard all the words of the people, and he rehearsed them in the ears of the LORD. 22 And the LORD said to Samuel, Harken unto their voice, and make them a

king. And Samuel said unto the men of Israel, Go ye every man unto his city.

Should Homosexuals be Put to Death by the Government?²

For decades now—and with great success—cultural elites have been pushing the normalization of the abomination of sodomy. We have now gotten to the point where sodomites are being allowed to “marry,” and the normalization of homosexuality—with the related marginalization of Biblical Christianity—continues at a ferocious pace. Bible-believing Baptist churches, and other Christian conservatives, stand against sodomite “marriage” with one voice—but have we, too, been influenced by the cultural pressure for the normalization of sodomy?

Let me state, first of all, that I am against reconstructionism, against Presbyterian theonomy, against the Roman Church-State and Calvin’s Geneva, against focusing on politics instead of gospel preaching. I am for NT Baptist churches, dispensationalism, freedom of religion, preaching the gospel to every creature as our focus, and so on. I agree that homosexuals can be saved and rejoice if they come to church services and hear the gospel. I am not afraid of homosexuals (that is, I am not “homophobic”) nor do I hate people who are involved in that sin. I recently did a series of evangelistic Bible studies with a homosexual man who had all kinds of filthy pictures posted all over his house on the wall. My fellow Baptists and I were kind to him, showed him Christian love, invited him to church, and even invited him over to our house for lunch. There were various times when he needed a ride, since he didn’t have a car, and a ride was offered on our part and was accepted on his. Unfortunately, after spending a number of hours with him patiently giving him the gospel and dealing with his objections, while he was, I believe, convicted at various points, he was not willing to repent of his sodomy—at least not as of my writing this post. I have even shed tears over his unconverted condition. He knows we care about him, and about other involved in his sin. Our church has given the gospel to many sodomites (and, naturally, very many people not guilty of that perversion) through house-to-house evangelism and mass evangelism at events where large groups of people are gathered together, whether a State fair with large numbers of normal unconverted people or a “Pridefest” with large numbers of sodomites. We have sought to speak kindly and respectfully to people at all such venues and give soft answers that turn away wrath when ridiculed, cursed at, threatened and so on. While bold proclamation of the gospel will often bring opposition, we have not sought to whip up unnecessary opposition as some, unfortunately, do at such events. I even grew up in San Francisco and have friends from my youth as an unconverted person who are homosexuals, and we seek to be kind to them and show them Christian love and give them the gospel. We have sent them cards on special occasions, given them gifts, and so on. The writer of this post is not some crazy person filled with a deep hatred for homosexuals—indeed, if you who read this post don’t like what the following paragraphs say, before you say that I hate homosexuals, you ought to consider how much time you spend giving them the gospel—if you don’t give them the gospel, perhaps I am the one that loves them, and you are the one that hates them. If you are afraid to talk to them because of their gross sin, but

² Reprinted from: <http://kentbrandenburg.blogspot.com/2013/08/should-homosexuals-be-put-to-death-by.html>

I speak to them politely and treat them like human beings created in God's image, like people who have eternal souls that need to be saved just as my own sinful soul was saved, perhaps you are the one that hates them while I love them.

With all of the above stated as an introduction, there is no reason why God's laws in Israel about the State putting sodomites to death (or adulterers, for that matter, Lev 20:10) would be bad laws today. God's laws are good laws—very good, glorious, and wonderful laws—the best possible laws. What does Scripture say is the responsibility of the State toward those who engage in homosexuality?

“If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.” (Leviticus 20:13)

I am happy if thieves attend church to hear the Bible, although the State should punish theft. I am happy to preach the gospel to murderers, whether in a prison ministry or elsewhere, but I still agree with Scripture that murderers should be executed by the State. Similarly, we should show love as individuals, and be part of a church that shows love to sodomites, while recognizing that, ideally, the State should enforce a death penalty for sodomy. We should want a godly government that takes away the sodomites out of the land, as godly government did of old (1 Kings 15:12; 22:46). The Passover and other ceremonial laws are types of Christ which have been abolished, but the death penalty for sodomy that God gave Israel is not a type of anything and has not been abolished—it is valid for today. How could we know what laws would be good for the State to enact if we can't listen to the Bible? Can we not learn anything about what a godly government is like from the laws God gave the Hebrew republic?

Furthermore, before the Mosaic law, Scripture states that that among the pre-law Gentiles such as Job, adultery was “an heinous crime; yea, it is an iniquity to be punished by the judges” (Job 31:11)? If adultery is righteously punished by a Gentile State, is not the greater sin of sodomy also? Scripture does not teach that the criminalization of sexual iniquities such as sodomy and adultery are things that the State should just ignore. They should be illegal, and they should be punished the way God punished them in the Bible. Since both Jews and Gentiles in Scripture recognized that sexual perversions were Biblically described as criminal and/or worthy of death, it would be good law, were Biblical values practiced (as they are not likely to be in the USA again before the Rapture, unless there is a great national revival), to have a death penalty for sodomy. A death penalty for sodomy would result in far fewer dear people deciding they were “born that way,” hardening themselves to the gospel, and dying young of AIDS—many lives would be saved. What is more, God be glorified as more of His Word was put in practice. Sodomites would also refrain from being proud, but be fearful instead because of their sin, and be more willing to hear and receive the gospel of the grace of God. A death penalty for sodomy would be a good law.

To reiterate, I am not at all arguing for people being vigilantes or taking the law into their own hands. The individual Christian's duty is to love and do good to all men, including

sodomites. I am arguing that the State should re-criminalize sodomy and enforce a death penalty for those that commit it and are found guilty after due process of law.

I would also like to point out that if what I have said seems “extreme” or “wrong” or “un-Christian” to you—but you cannot refute it from Scripture—that you have been influenced by our culture’s incessant drumbeat for the normalization of sodomy. It was only in 2003—merely ten years ago—that our activist Supreme Court in *Lawrence v. Texas* struck down American laws declaring sodomy illegal, reversing its own 1986 ruling in *Bowers v. Hardwick* that upheld the constitutionality of American anti-sodomy laws. Our culture has slid towards Sodom very quickly in these last ten years, and Christians have been caught up in it. You are one of them, if you can’t refute this post Biblically, but are not willing to agree with it.

If you think that what I have said is true, but it ought not to be preached because people won’t like it, you also have been influenced by our evil culture. While our country descends ever further into the pit, let the Lord’s true churches pass down all the truth and reject all unbiblical cultural influences. It might cost you something. It is still okay to believe that marriage is between one man and one woman, but if you agree with this post, and people at work find out, you might lose your job. Nevertheless, Bible-believing churches need to recognize and unashamedly preach and teach all the truths in the Bible, both those that pertain to the individual’s responsibility to do good and act kindly towards sodomites, and those that pertain to the State’s responsibility to execute those found guilty, after due process of law, of this unspeakable perversion.

Miscellaneous Further Notes:

Scripture likewise teaches the sanctity of marriage between one man and one woman (Mr 10:6-9), and that, so far from putting its blessing upon the sexual perversion of homosexuality, the practice of such evil (and other sexual sins such as adultery, Lev 20:10) should be forbidden and punished by the State (Lev 20:13; 1 Ki 22:46), although the individual Christian must love all people as himself, including those involved in sexual sin, act kindly, and do good to them (Mt 22:39; 1 Cor 6:9-11).

9 If mine heart have been deceived by a woman, or *if* I have laid wait at my neighbour’s door; 10 *Then* let my wife grind unto another, and let others bow down upon her. 11 For this *is* an heinous crime; yea, it *is* an iniquity *to be punished by* the judges. 12 For it *is* a fire *that* consumeth to destruction, and would root out all mine increase. (Job 31:9-12)

Job 31:28: This also *were* an iniquity *to be punished by* the judge: for I should have denied the God *that is* above.

Furthermore, the protection of innocent life and the execution of capital punishment upon murderers is one of the foundational roles of the State (Gen 9:6; Rom 13). God established in Israel that the murder of the preborn was a capital offense, equal to other murder (Num 35:31); if a man hurt a pregnant woman with child, so that she gave birth prematurely and the child died, God said to give “life for life” (Ex 21:22-25). He employs the same word for the “babe . . . in [the womb]” (Lu 1:41, 44) and the “babe” outside of his mother, in a crib and desiring his mother’s milk (Lu 2:12, 16, 1 Pet 2:2, cf. Lu 18:15, Ac 7:19, 2 Tim 3:15). God has a purpose for and knows children before their birth (Jer 1:5, Ps 139:13-16). He clearly declares the child in the womb a person who requires legal protection (cf. Gen 1:26-27, 9:5-6). Conception wonderfully produces a new individual who possesses the image of God as much as he will nine months or nine years later. Abortion, therefore, is murder, murder of an exceedingly unnatural kind, where a mother initiates the death of her child. Since imposed by judicial tyranny on our nation in the infamous *Roe v. Wade* decision, abortion has drowned this land in the blood of over 45,000,000 children, a slaughter of more helpless boys and girls than the populations of the states of Oregon, Nevada, Idaho, Montana, Utah, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, Minnesota, Iowa, Arkansas, Mississippi, and Alabama combined. God will punish our nation for engaging in this unspeakable evil, just as He did Israel for shedding “innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters” (Ps 106:38). The Lord has sworn that “murderers . . . shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death” (Rev 21:8). You are a murderer, or have assisted in the commission of murder, if you have had an abortion, assisted in an abortion, employed or sold devices that almost always induce early abortion by preventing implantation rather than conception, such as the IUD, or that sometimes act in this manner, such as both the standard birth control “contraceptive” pill and the “morning after” pill, counseled someone to have an abortion or not warned someone you knew who planned to have one, voted to support abortion (the party platform of the Democrats, and the position of some Republicans), directly owned companies that support abortion through possessing their stock or indirectly possessed such stock through mutual funds, or are merely intellectually pro-life but do nothing to stop the bloodshed. When God judged the nation of Judah for her sins, He “set a [protective] mark upon the foreheads of the men that *sigh and that cry* for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof,” and spared them only; those with a merely mental opposition He utterly destroyed with the rest (Eze 9:5-6). You do nothing to save “those that are ready to be slain . . . He that keepeth thy soul, doth not He know it?” (Prov 24:11-12). This very day thousands of children have been

ripped limb from limb, suctioned out from their mother's womb, and thrown in the garbage. An ocean of blood from millions of murdered innocents cries out to God for vengeance—if you are a killer, or a supporter of this massacre, or idly do nothing to stop it, “how can ye escape the damnation of hell?” (Mt 23:33).

The book of Esther is a paradigm for the kind of heathen government that is rejected in 1 Sam 8.

Matthew 25:16, etc.; running a business, trading, financial work, etc. is labor (ergadzomai).

-Government instituted to restrain sin, Genesis 9, etc. This is still what it is doing in Romans 13. When it starts redistributing/stealing, attacking others and making war to get things, etc. it becomes part of the greater curse.

Prov 19:10

Constitutional government: Written law/Moses in Exodus, 1 Samuel 10:25. (cf. 8:9, 11; the other places for this phrase. See what this means in relation to 10:25—even in an ungodly kingdom have written laws?)

John 18:36; 2 Cor 10:4; Christians do not fight to set up earthly religious kingdoms, as Romanism, Islam, etc. do.

Foreign policy: Treaties must be honored, Ezekiel 17; Joshua 9. (Note the strength of Joshua 9—even though the Gibeonites had deceived them). Deut 20:11—treaties with foreign governments were allowed, not forbidden. See the implications of that text on treaties and their types. Also, 2 Sam 21—wrath on Israel b/c Saul broke the treaty with the Gibeonites.

In all of this, we see that it is indeed God that sets up and brings down nations, and that nations need to seek Him to be blessed by Him, and that He even spares heathen nations

on account of their repentance (cf. Jonah) and turns the course of the nations for Israel/by implication, the church (Deut 32:8). Cf. Gen 15:16.

Note that the Antichrist will have the strongest central government ever, with the greatest degree of wickedness. No free market, no free buying/selling, no religious freedom, a state “church” with compulsory worship, etc. All must take the mark of the beast or die, unable to buy or sell, Revelation 13:17.

It is God’s blessing to keep what you have labored for (rather than give it to the government): Isa 62:8-9; 65:21-23; Jer 31:5; Eze 48:18-19 (these are Millennial, but you can see it elsewhere as well).

“As Israel dwells in Heshbon,...and in all the cities by the side of the Arnon for three hundred years, why have ye not taken away (these towns and lands) within that time”

(i.e., during these 300 years)? If the Ammonites had had any right to it, they ought to have asserted their claim in Moses’ time. It was much too late now, after the expiration of 300 years. For “if no prescriptive right is to be admitted, on account of length of time, and if long possession gives no title, nothing would ever be held in safety by any people, and there would be no end to wars and dissension” (*Clericus*).