



Lesson Guide

Lesson 9 - The State: Whose Law?

Introduction

In the southwest quadrant of our compass lie the spheres of the state, politics, and law. On this, the ninth of twelve worldview tours to be completed during the course of *The Truth Project*, we will take a close and careful look at how these spheres are interconnected and how they relate to other aspects of the social realm: family, church, labor, community, and the relationship between God and man. Special attention will be given to the design, structure, and role of the *state*, its place in God's plan for human society, and the rightful extent and limits of its power. The state, as we will see, has the capacity to exert a tremendous power for good in the affairs of mankind as long as it operates within its proper boundaries; but it also has the potential to become the most horrendously pathological and abusive of all the social spheres if not kept in check.

Themes

Significantly, Dr. Tackett begins this tour with a look at older ideas about the relationship between the state and the *ethical* realm. According to Webster's 1828 Dictionary, law, politics, and the state are, among other things, concerned with the preservation and improvement of a people's *morals*. Though few today would be inclined to accept this definition, a moment's reflection is sufficient to demonstrate how important it really is. For as Dr. Tackett illustrates by considering a very simple question – "Can the state steal?" – human governments *are* capable of error and transgression and *must* be held accountable to a higher ethical law if they are to be prevented from wreaking havoc in the lives of the citizens entrusted to their oversight and care.

God's perspective on the state, as we will discover through a careful examination of the relevant scriptural passages, is that it is strictly subordinate to *His* sovereign dominion and control. Just as the Son is subject to the Father, the wife to the husband, and the elders of the church to the headship of Christ, so the authority of the state, within the economy of the divine design for the political sphere, is subject to and dependent upon the authority of God Himself. Governors and magistrates hold their power purely as delegates and representatives of the King of all kings. They are appointed and armed with the sword in order that they might 1) punish evil and 2) condone good. Those who forget these principles and become puffed up with a sense of their own importance are, like Ahab (1 Kings 21), Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 4:20-30), Uzziah (2 Chronicles 26), and Herod (Acts 12:21-23), liable to swift and severe judgment.

This last point is worthy of special attention; for, as the Bible and history demonstrate, when human rulers overstep their bounds, deny the sovereignty of the various social spheres, and seek to establish state control over every other area of human life, tyranny, oppression, and violence

are sure to follow. The godless expansion of the power of the state has reared its ugly head many times in the past, most notably in the 20th century regimes of rulers like Stalin, Lenin, Hitler, Mao, and Pol Pot. It is raising its head again in our own time, says Dr. Tackett. Without God, truth, or any higher moral standard, people are increasingly looking to the state as savior and the supplier of every human need. In the face of this trend, Bible-believing Christians must have the courage to resist what Dr. Tackett calls “The Rise of the State” – to stand firm, draw a line in the sand, and say, “This far and no more.”

Points to Watch For

Dr. Tackett warns students at the outset of this tour that some may find themselves “conflicted” as they contemplate the implications of his message. This is because, as a result of the raging of the *Cosmic Battle*, many people in our day have been *taken captive* by the lie that the state, and not God, is to “go before us” as our savior and sustainer and the source of all good things. This discussion is calculated from beginning to end to expose and challenge this assumption. There are obvious implications here for the debate between proponents of “liberal” and “conservative” social policy (i.e., the “welfare state” and its opponents).

Discussion Questions (Pick 3 or 4 for your discussion time.)

(Make these questions your own. That is, don’t just “read” them, but become familiar with them so that they don’t appear as simply an item to get through. Go through them yourself before your group meets and ponder them.)

1) Opening Question: (this may be the only question you need to ask).

A. Ask your guests to list what they saw on the tour. Here are some of the key items: The question of whether or not the state can ever be guilty of stealing; Naboth's vineyard; Nebuchadnezzar; the sovereignty of God over kings; the design of the sphere of the state; the king subject to God; why Israel asked for a king; God's warning of what the king would do; sphere sovereignty and Uzziah; cowboy movies; Romans 13 and the purpose of the state to punish evil and condone good; the delegation of authority and how it was found already within the Godhead; why we have uniforms and take oaths of office; the millions that have been put to death by this sphere; the rise of the state and the rise of the global state; Israel rejecting God and wanting the king to "go before them."

B. Ask your guests to point out the ones that were particularly interesting or striking to them and why.

C. Ask if this particular area struck anyone else as well.

D. Ask if there were other items that they saw that stood out to them. (You may want to read back through the list if you need to.)

- 2) **At the beginning of the discussion, Dr. Tackett establishes the point that the state, like an individual private citizen, is capable of stealing, murdering, and committing crimes. Why is this concept so important? What are its deeper implications for the nature and design of the state?**

(The basic principle to highlight here is the existence of a supreme, overarching *ethical* standard to which the state, like everybody else, is ultimately accountable. This standard in turn implies the existence of God, without whom we have no basis for morals, and who has intentionally placed Himself at the pinnacle of the socio-political design for human life.)

- 3) **What is law? Where does it come from? How is it supposed to function?**

(Law is *not* an arbitrary concept. To use the Platonic language we picked up in Lesson 2, the *particulars* of any given nation's laws are supposed to reflect the *universal* ethical standard that has its roots in the nature and character of God. This means that human beings, including government authorities, are not free to "invent" laws on the basis of their own preferences. It also implies that the law of the state cannot be regarded as *absolute* – we must constantly re-evaluate it with reference to eternal truth and change it if it does not measure up to the higher ethical standard.)

- 4) **What did Abraham Kuyper mean by the term "sphere sovereignty?" How does the story of King Uzziah (2 Chronicles 26) illustrate the importance of this concept? Why is it so vital to our understanding of the role of the state today?**

(The important point here is that the state, within the economy of God's design, does *not* have the right to usurp the authority of the other social spheres – family, church, labor, God and man – in terms of their own specific purposes. For example, the government has no rightful jurisdiction over the church sphere. King Uzziah violated this principle when he entered the Temple and attempted to burn incense on the altar. It is crucial that we grasp this concept today, for we live in a time when the so-called "death of God" has blurred the lines between the spheres and opened the way for the state to arrogate to itself a kind of "divine" authority over all aspects of life. The unchecked path of this position is what we call "totalitarianism," a form of government that has been responsible for more death, destruction, and misery than any other in the history of the world.)

- 5) **God permitted Israel to establish a monarchy, but warned the people that they would later regret it. Why did God say that they had rejected *Him* from being their king? How else might they have dealt with the problem of Samuel's corrupt sons?**

(There is a great deal of food for thought here. In some ways, a discussion of this subject could provide an introduction to the topic of Lesson 10, "The American Experiment." Recognizing the evil inherent in human nature, the people *should* have been wary of placing too much power in the hands of any one man. By looking to a king to "go out before them," they were in effect handing over a huge portion of the sovereignty of other social spheres to the governing authority and expecting it to function as their "savior." In this way, they were aiding and abetting the "rise of the state" as a rival to God. As an alternative, they *could* have asked Samuel to discipline his sons or replace them with godly judges – a privilege and responsibility that resides within the hands of the people in a form of government in which the leaders are elected..)

6) **Jesus said, “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s” (Matthew 22:21). What connection do you see between this passage and the situation described in 1 Samuel 8?**

(It is rarely mentioned that Jesus’ words have clear implications for the concept of “sphere sovereignty.” Christ indicates that there are *limits* to the power and authority of the state: some things are rightly Caesar’s, but others belong to God alone. In claiming the “best of your fields and vineyards ... a tenth of your grain and your vintage ... and a tenth of your sheep” [1 Samuel 8:14-17], Israel’s future king will in effect be *setting himself up in the place of God*. When Jesus said “Render unto Caesar ...,” He was *not* giving the Pharisees a straight answer to their question. Instead, in typical Jesus fashion, He was throwing the question back at His interrogators: “How do *you* see the relationship between the sovereignty of God and the authority of the ruler? What do *you* think is appropriate in this situation? How will *you* order your life and behavior accordingly?)



THE STATE
whose Law?

1

POLITICS
Webster, 1828

"The science of government; that part of ethics which consists in the regulation and government of a nation or state, for the preservation of its safety, peace and prosperity; comprehending the defense of its existence and rights against foreign control or conquest...and the protection of its citizens in their rights, with the preservation and improvement of their morals."

2


Webster, Noah (1828). *American Dictionary of the English Language*. San Francisco, CA: Foundation for American Christian Education (Rosalie Slater, Ed., 1967).

ETHICS VS MORALS
What is stealing?
James & Heidi



3

ETHICS VS MORALS
Can the state steal?
1 Kings 21
Ahab, Jezebel, & Naboth



4

Some time later there was an incident involving a vineyard belonging to Naboth the Jezreelite. The vineyard was in Jezreel, close to the palace of Ahab king of Samaria. Ahab said to Naboth, "Let me have your vineyard to use for a vegetable garden, since it is close to my palace. In exchange I will give you a better vineyard or, if you prefer, I will pay you whatever it is worth."

1 Kings 21

5

But Naboth replied, "The LORD forbid that I should give you the inheritance of my fathers."

So Ahab went home, sullen and angry because Naboth the Jezreelite had said, "I will not give you the inheritance of my fathers." He lay on his bed sulking and refused to eat. His wife Jezebel came in and asked him, "Why are you so sullen? Why won't you eat?"

1 Kings 21

6

He answered her, "Because I said to Naboth the Jezreelite, 'Sell me your vineyard; or if you prefer, I will give you another vineyard in its place.' But he said, 'I will not give you my vineyard.' "

Jezebel his wife said, "Is this how you act as king over Israel? Get up and eat! Cheer up. I'll get you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite."

1 Kings 21

7

So she wrote letters in Ahab's name, placed his seal on them, and sent them to the elders and nobles who lived in Naboth's city with him. In those letters she wrote: "Proclaim a day of fasting and seat Naboth in a prominent place among the people. But seat two scoundrels opposite him and have them testify that he has cursed both God and the king. Then take him out and stone him to death."

1 Kings 21

8

So the elders and nobles who lived in Naboth's city did as Jezebel directed in the letters she had written to them. They proclaimed a fast and seated Naboth in a prominent place among the people. Then two scoundrels came and sat opposite him and brought charges against Naboth before the people, saying, "Naboth has cursed both God and the king." So they took him outside the city and stoned him to death. Then they sent word to Jezebel: "Naboth has been stoned and is dead."

1 Kings 21

9

As soon as Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned to death, she said to Ahab, "Get up and take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite that he refused to sell you. He is no longer alive, but dead." When Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, he got up and went down to take possession of Naboth's vineyard.

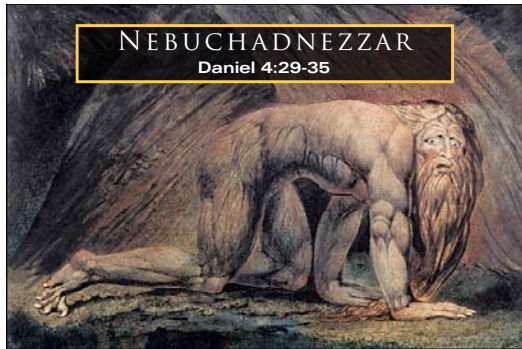
1 Kings 21

10

Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite: "Go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, who rules in Samaria. He is now in Naboth's vineyard, where he has gone to take possession of it. Say to him, 'This is what the LORD says: Have you not murdered a man and seized his property?' Then say to him, 'This is what the LORD says: In the place where dogs licked up Naboth's blood, dogs will lick up your blood—yes, yours!'"

1 Kings 21

11



Nebuchadnezzar, William Blake, 1795. Color print finished in pen and watercolor. British Museum.

12

Twelve months later, as the king was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon, he said, "Is not this the great Babylon I have built as the royal residence, by my mighty power and for the glory of my majesty?"

The words were still on his lips when a voice came from heaven, "This is what is decreed for you, King Nebuchadnezzar: Your royal authority has been taken from you. You will be driven away from people and will live with the wild animals; you will eat grass like cattle. Seven times will pass by for you until you acknowledge that the Most High is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and gives them to anyone he wishes."

13



Nebuchadnezzar, William Blake, 1795. Color print finished in pen and watercolor. British Museum.

14

At the end of that time, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven, and my sanity was restored. Then I praised the Most High; I honored and glorified him who lives forever. His dominion is an eternal dominion; his kingdom endures from generation to generation. All the peoples of the earth are regarded as nothing. He does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back his hand or say to him: "What have you done?"

15

THE DESIGN OF THE STATE



16

**GOD:
SOVEREIGN OVER KINGS**

Proverbs 16:9-10 (NAS)
 "The mind of man plans his way,
 But the LORD directs his steps.
 A divine decision is in the lips of the king..."

Proverbs 21:1
 "The king's heart is in the hand of the
 LORD; he directs it like a watercourse
 wherever he pleases."

17

**GOD:
SOVEREIGN OVER KINGS**

Daniel 2:21
 "He changes times and seasons; he sets
 up kings and deposes them."

Romans 9:17
 "For the Scripture says to Pharaoh:
 'I raised you up for this very purpose, that I
 might display my power in you and that my
 name might be proclaimed in all the earth.'"

18

**WHY DID ISRAEL ASK
FOR A KING?**

1 Samuel 8



19

When Samuel grew old, he appointed his sons as judges for Israel. The name of his firstborn was Joel and the name of his second was Abijah, and they served at Beersheba. But his sons did not walk in his ways. They turned aside after dishonest gain and accepted bribes and perverted justice.

So all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah. They said to him, "You are old, and your sons do not walk in your ways; now appoint a king to lead us, such as all the other nations have."

1 Samuel 8

20

But when they said, "Give us a king to lead us," this displeased Samuel; so he prayed to the LORD. And the LORD told him: "Listen to all that the people are saying to you; it is not you they have rejected, but they have rejected me as their king. As they have done from the day I brought them up out of Egypt until this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so they are doing to you. Now listen to them; but warn them solemnly and let them know what the king who will reign over them will do."

1 Samuel 8

21

Samuel told all the words of the LORD to the people who were asking him for a king. He said, "This is what the king who will reign over you will do: He will take your sons and make them serve with his chariots and horses, and they will run in front of his chariots. Some he will assign to be commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties, and others to plow his ground and reap his harvest, and still others to make weapons of war and equipment for his chariots.

1 Samuel 8

22

He will take your daughters to be perfumers and cooks and bakers. He will take the best of your fields and vineyards and olive groves and give them to his attendants. He will take a tenth of your grain and of your vintage and give it to his officials and attendants. Your menservants and maidservants and the best of your cattle and donkeys he will take for his own use. He will take a tenth of your flocks, and you yourselves will become his slaves."

1 Samuel 8

23

IS THE KING SOVEREIGN OVER EVERY SPHERE?



24



25

But after Uzziah became powerful, his pride led to his downfall. He was unfaithful to the LORD his God, and entered the temple of the LORD to burn incense on the altar of incense.

Azariah the priest with eighty other courageous priests of the LORD followed him in. They confronted him and said, "It is not right for you, Uzziah, to burn incense to the LORD. That is for the priests, the descendants of Aaron, who have been consecrated to burn incense. Leave the sanctuary, for you have been unfaithful; and you will not be honored by the LORD God."

2 Chronicles 26

26

Uzziah, who had a censer in his hand ready to burn incense, became angry. While he was raging at the priests in their presence before the incense altar in the LORD's temple, leprosy broke out on his forehead. When Azariah the chief priest and all the other priests looked at him, they saw that he had leprosy on his forehead, so they hurried him out. Indeed, he himself was eager to leave, because the LORD had afflicted him.

2 Chronicles 26

27

King Uzziah had leprosy until the day he died. He lived in a separate house—leprosy, and excluded from the temple of the LORD. Jotham his son had charge of the palace and governed the people of the land.

The other events of Uzziah's reign, from beginning to end, are recorded by the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz. Uzziah rested with his fathers and was buried near them in a field for burial that belonged to the kings, for people said, "He had leprosy."


2 Chronicles 26

28

**SPHERE SOVEREIGNTY
AND KING UZZIAH**

"Just trying to do something good"

2 Chronicles 26



29

SPHERE SOVEREIGNTY

Cowboy Movies
(got a lot right)



30

THE DESIGN OF THE STATE

Relationships, Roles,
Authority & Submission

31

THE STATE

Romans 13

Delegation of Authority
Submission
Purpose

32

Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong...

Romans 13:1-6

33

Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you. For he is God's servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience. This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing.

Romans 13:1-6

34

THE STATE

Romans 13

Delegation of Authority
Submission

Purpose

35

our source of **Truth**...

FOCUS ON THE NATURE OF GOD

delegation? submission?



36

TRIUNE DELEGATION

After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed: "Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you.

For **you granted him authority** over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him."

John 17:1-2

37

TRIUNE DELEGATION

Then comes the end, when [Christ] delivers the kingdom to God the Father...For "God has put all things in **subjection** under his feet."

1 Corinthians 15:24 & 27 (ESV)




38

TRIUNE SUBJECTION

When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made **subject to** him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all.

1 Corinthians 15:28




39

"SUBJECT" TO...

Wives "subject" to their husbands
 Bondslaves "subject" to their masters
 People "subject" to their rulers

Titus 2 & 3 (NASB)



40

CHRISTIAN DUTIES TO THE CIVIL MAGISTRATE

pay taxes, pay respect, give honor

Romans 13:7

...fear God, **honor** the king.

1 Peter 2:17




41

THE STATE

Romans 13

Delegation of Authority
Submission

Purpose



42

THE STATE

Romans 13

purpose of the Civil Authority?

1. Punish evil
2. Condone good

43

Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink.

In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Romans 12:17-21

44

THE STATE

Romans 13

purpose of the Civil Authority?

1. Punish **evil**
2. Condone **good**

The Civil Authority **must** know the basis for calling something **good** or **evil**.

45



46

Dictator	Deaths
Joseph Stalin	42,672,000
Mao Zedong	37,823,000
Adolf Hitler	20,946,000
Chiang Kai-shek	10,214,000
Vladimir Lenin	4,017,000
Hideki Tojo	3,990,000
Pol Pot	2,397,000

R. J. Rummel, "Death by Government"

47

Rummel, R. J. (1994). *Death by government*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.

"Almost 170 million men, women and children have been shot, beaten, tortured, knifed, burned, starved, frozen, crushed or worked to death; buried alive, drowned, hung, bombed or killed in any other of a myriad of ways governments have inflicted death on unarmed, helpless citizens and foreigners."

R. J. Rummel, "Death by Government"

48

Rummel, R. J. (1994). *Death by government*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, p. 9.

ideas **DO** have consequences

"THOSE WHO CAN MAKE YOU BELIEVE ABSURDITIES CAN MAKE YOU COMMIT ATROCITIES."

~ Voltaire

49

Voltaire (Francois-Marie Arouet) (2005). Decisions. Cited in *The quote chache* (Online). <http://quotes.prolix.nu/Authors/?Voltaire>.



50



51

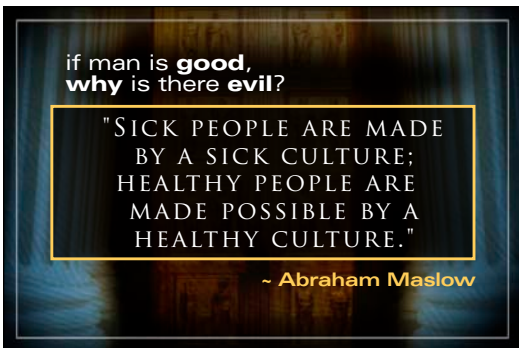


52

Noebel, David. *Understanding the Times*. Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 1991, p. 355.

Or, the original source:

Rogers, Carl. "Notes on Rollo May." *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*. Summer 1982, p. 8.

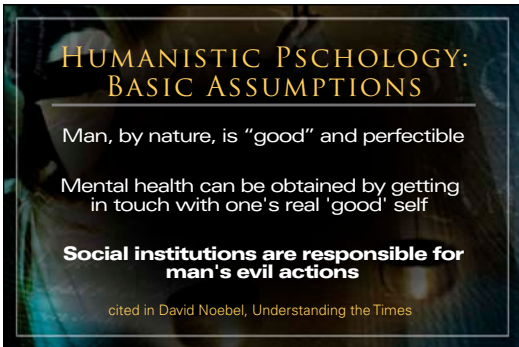


53

Noebel, David. *Understanding the Times*. Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 1991, p. 355.

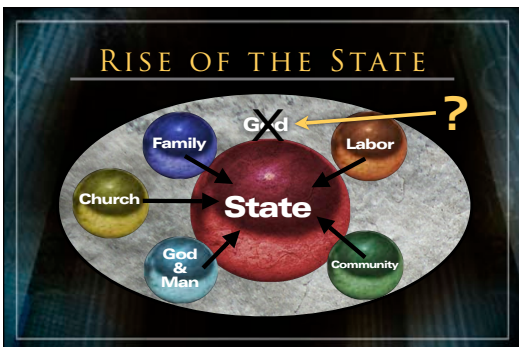
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Maslow, Abraham (1968). *Toward a Psychology of Being*, 3rd Edition. New York: John Wiley, 1999, p. 7.



54

Noebel, David. *Understanding the Times*. Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 1991, p. 359-361.



55

HEGEL

"The Universal is to be found in the State...The State is the Divine Idea as it exists on earth...We must therefore worship the State as the manifestation of the Divine on earth, and consider that, if it is difficult to comprehend Nature, it is harder to grasp the Essence of the State...the State is the march of God through the world..."

cited in "Idols For Destruction"

56

Schlossberg, Herbert. *Idols for Destruction*. Wheaton: Crossway 1993, p. 178.

Or, the original source:

quoted in Popper, Karl R. *The Open Society and its Enemies, 4th ed., 2 vols.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1963, vol. 2, p. 31.



57

HUMANIST MANIFESTO II

"...No deity will save us;
we must save ourselves."

58

Kurtz, Paul & Wilson, Edwin H. (Preface). (1973). *Humanist Manifesto II*. (Online). American Humanist Association. www.americanhumanist.org/about/manifesto2.html.

HEGEL'S GOD

When a society rejects God, it will increasingly look for someone else to save them.

That "savior" often becomes the "king"...

Hegel's "March of God on the Earth"

59

Schlossberg, Herbert. *Idols for Destruction*. Wheaton: Crossway 1993, p. 178.



60

HUMANIST MANIFESTO II

"We deplore the division of humankind on nationalistic grounds. We have reached the turning point in human history where the best option is to transcend the limits of national sovereignty and to move toward the building of a world community in which all sectors of the human family can participate. Thus we look to the development of a system of world law and a world order based upon transnational federal government."

Kurtz, Paul & Wilson, Edwin H. (Preface). *Humanist Manifesto II*. (Online). American Humanist Association. www.amerianhumanist.org/about/manifesto2.html.

61

from whence cometh our salvation? from God?...or the State?

I lift up my eyes to the hills—
where does my help come from?
My help comes from the LORD,
the Maker of heaven and earth.

Psalms 121:1-2

"...the State is the march of God through the world..."
Hegel

62

from whence cometh our salvation? from God?...or the State?

The salvation of the righteous comes from the LORD;
he is their stronghold in time of trouble.

Psalms 37:39

63

THE DESIGN OF THE STATE

why did the elders ask for a **change** in the form of **civil government**?
and **what** would the king **do**?

God

→

King

→

Citizens

Prov 16:9-10
Prov 21:1
Dan 2:21
Rom 9:17
Deut 17:16-20

Ex 22:28
Rom 13:1
Tit 3:1
1 Pet 2:13-17

Psa 22:28
2 Chr 20:6
Job 12:23
Isa 14:26-27
Luke 20:25
Acts 17:24-26
Isa 14:24-25

64

THE WARNING

"...warn them solemnly and let them know what the king who will reign over them will do."

1 Samuel 8:9

and their response...?

65

REFUSING THE WARNING

But the people refused to listen to Samuel. "No!" they said. "We want a king over us. Then we will be like all the other nations, with a king to lead us and to **go out before us and fight our battles.**"

1 Samuel 8:19-20

66

who will go before us?

"Come, make us gods **who will go before us.**"

Exodus 32:1

"They told Aaron, 'Make us gods **who will go before us.**'"

Acts 7:40

67

who will go before us?

"...**the Lord will go before you**, the God of Israel will be your rear guard."

Isaiah 52:12

68



"And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud..."
Exodus 13:21

69



"...and by night in a pillar of fire..."

70

SOCIAL DISORDER & THE DECLINE OF A CULTURE

Five attributes marked Rome at its end:

- a mounting love of show and luxury
- an obsession with sex, including homosexuality

71

Gibbon, Edward (1946). *The history of the decline and fall of the Roman Empire*. New York, NY: Heritage Press.

SOCIAL DISORDER & THE DECLINE OF A CULTURE

- freakishness in the arts, masquerading as originality, and enthusiasms pretending to be creativity
- an increased desire to live off the state**

Edward Gibbon, Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire

72

Gibbon, Edward (1946). *The history of the decline and fall of the Roman Empire*. New York, NY: Heritage Press.

who are we really rejecting?

God said to Samuel:
 "...it is not you they have rejected, Samuel, but **they have rejected me** as their king."

1 Samuel 8:7

73

THE STATE

whose Law?

74



Outline

Lesson 9 - The State: Whose Law?

- I. Introduction – What is Politics? Should politics be concerned with ethics & morals?
- II. What is stealing? Can the state steal?
 - A. Story of Naboth's Vineyard – 1 Kings 21 – King Ahab committed murder and theft
 - B. Story of Nebuchadnezzar – Daniel 4 – Why is the King eating grass like cattle?
 - C. Scripture revealing God's sovereignty over kings
- III. Design of the State - God, King (the civil authority), and citizens
 - A. Why did Israel ask for a King? – 1 Samuel 8 – corruption in civil government
 - B. Sphere Sovereignty
 1. Story of Uzziah - 2 Chronicles 26 – The king entered the temple to burn incense, a seemingly "good thing" – God afflicted him with leprosy because he crossed a sphere boundary
 2. Cowboy Movies – Churches did not sit on state soil, but on God's soil
 - C. Romans 13:1-6 – Submission and authority established by God
 - D. Delegation of Authority & Submission – Divine Attributes stamped on social order
 1. Delegation – The Father delegated authority to Jesus; God delegated authority to the civil magistrate
 2. Subjection – The Son is subject to the Father; wives are subject to husbands; people are subject to their rulers
 - E. State Purpose – To punish evil and condone good – Law is based on ethics
- IV. The Rise of the State
 - A. Death by the state – Because the state holds the power of the sword, it has the capacity to become tyrannical and commit extreme atrocities

- B. State seen as "savior" – Hegel: "the State is the march of God through the world ..."
 - C. State begins to assume roles and responsibilities within the sphere of the family
 - D. "Go Before Us" – 1 Samuel 8:19-20 "with a king who will lead us and go out before us and fight our battles" Also see Exodus 32:1, Isaiah 52:12, and Isaiah 45:2
 - E. Decline of a culture – Social disorder in America is strikingly similar to that which marked the decline of Rome
- V. Conclusion – "... but they have rejected Me as their king" 1 Samuel 8:7



Key Terms

Lesson 9 – The State: Whose Law?

Boundary questions: Questions that address authority boundaries of particular social institutions. Examples: Can the state steal? Can the state murder? The story of Naboth's Vineyard is an example. 1 Kings 21 – King Ahab had Naboth killed in order to take Naboth's vineyard. In God's perspective, King Ahab overstepped his boundaries and committed murder and theft.

Civil Magistrate: The authority position of a nation or state.

Delegation of Authority: The formal grant of power, responsibility, and authority to someone else; this concept, like submission, is part of the triune nature of God. This grant is almost always carried out with a formal declaration (oath) and often with some mark of delegation (i.e. uniform).

Pervasive: To spread throughout, occupying a great area, permeate.

Politics: "The science of government; that part of ethics which consists in the regulation and government of a nation or state, for the preservation of its safety, peace, and prosperity; comprehending the defense of its existence and rights against foreign control or conquest ... and the protection of its citizens in their rights, with the preservation and improvement of their morals." From Webster's 1828 dictionary.

Rise of the State: Because the state has the means to garner vast wealth and power, it can also begin to think that it has ultimate authority over every other social sphere. When this happens, the state will begin to see itself as God, with no boundaries and reject the idea of sphere sovereignty, bringing every other social sphere under its control.

Roles of the King/Civil Magistrate: God's servant to punish evil and condone good. Based on Romans 13.

Sphere Sovereignty: God has designed each social sphere for a particular purpose with unique laws, roles and responsibilities to fulfill that purpose. Therefore, a pastor has the position of authority in the sphere of the church, but does not have authority in the sphere of the State. This concept was originally developed by Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920). That sphere has been given a sovereign charge to fulfill that purpose that another sphere should not breach. An example of the "breach" is found in the story of Uzziah. 2 Chronicles 26 – King Uzziah assumed authority in the sphere of the church. The Lord struck him with leprosy because he had overstepped the boundaries of his authority.

Subjection: The bringing of a person or people under the control of another. Like submission and delegation, this is found within God's social design because it is found within the Godhead (i.e. Jesus "subjected to" the Father).



Scripture References
Lesson 9 – The State: Whose Law?

1 King 21:1-9	Dan 4:29-36	Prov 16:9-10	Prov 21:1
Dan 2:21	Rom 9:17	1 Sam 8:1-18	2 Chron 26:1-23
Rom 13:1-6	John 17:1-2	1 Cor 15:24,27	1 Cor 15:28
Titus 2 & 3	Rom 13:7	1 Pet 2:17	Rom 12:17-21
Psa 2:1-3	Psa 121:1-2	Psa 62:1-2	Psa 37:39
Psa 22:28	2 Chron 20:6	Job 12:23	Isa 14:26-27
Luke 20:25	Acts 17:24-26	Isa 14:24-25	Prov 16:9-10
Deut 17:16-20	Ex 22:28	Rom 13:1	Titus 3:1
1 Pet 2:13-17	1 Sam 8:9	1 Sam 8:19-20	Ex 32:1
Acts 7:40	Isa 52:12	Ex 13:21	Isa 45:2



Recommended Reading

Lesson 9 – The State: Whose Law?

Please note that not everything in these suggested resources should be considered endorsed by Focus on the Family. Nevertheless, Dr. Tackett has found this material helpful. Scripture should be your first and primary resource.

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