

book. They were to complement one another and both were accountable to God. In **Deuteronomy 17:14-20**, God lays out the law for kings. The qualifications for rulers is seen in **II Samuel 23:1-4**. The Lord said in **Proverbs 8:15-16**, *“By me kings reign.”* It is perfectly clear in the Scriptures, that government has a great responsibility before God Almighty in every way. The blue print for a nation is laid out in **Deuteronomy 28**. A nation will either receive from God blessings or curses.

“Bad men cannot make good citizens. It is impossible that a nation of infidels or idolaters should be a nation of free men. It is when a people forget God that tyrants forge their chains.”

Patrick Henry

“Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance.”

Psalms 33:12

“The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.”

II Samuel 23:3

The Riches OF GRACE

“hath appeared to all men.” Titus 2:11

Robert W. Reed
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Government

“Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.”

Proverbs 14:34

+ THE DUTY OF GOVERNMENT +

According to Scripture, civil government is a divinely ordained institution. Human government has its origin as far back as the Noahic covenant in **Genesis chapter nine**. Human government was instituted for the welfare of mankind with humanity governing itself by God’s laws. The Noahic covenant was universal in that it was made with every creature and it was eternal in that it still exists today. After the flood (**Genesis 6-8**) God divided the people into nations (**Genesis 11**). The Lord separated these nations (**Genesis 10:32**) and established their boundaries that they should seek after the Lord and find him (**Acts 17:26-27**), Amen.

“Are not all mankind under the law to God, and where and when did the King of all the earth announce that nations were to be free from His control, and from all recognition of His existence and authority!”

Charles Spurgeon



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**“ Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ,
and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.”**
Acts 16:31

This article will present three responsibilities of government. Civil government is ordained by God to minister justice, whereas the home is to minister education and the church is to minister grace. Each of these three institutions are accountable to God for its origin and authority. Each institution is to follow the Word of God. The state is not to usurp the authority of the home or the church. This is exactly why it is not to be involved in education, welfare, etc. Each institution is given a certain sphere of rule and each one has boundaries.

To Punish Evil Doers

According to **Romans 12:17-21**, we are told not to carry out personal vengeance, for vengeance belongs to God. But in **Romans 13:1-7**, God established government (higher powers) to punish evildoers and to restrain evil in a society. This same truth is repeated in **I Peter 2:14**, *“Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well.”* According to **Romans 13:3**, *“Rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil.”* In **verse 4**, it says that, *“He beareth not the sword in vain: for he is a minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.”* The word sword is a symbol representing the authority given by God to punish the ones who do wrong. The ruler or governmental official is called a minister in **verse 4** and **verse 6**. A minister is a servant, someone who performs a task. The Greek word for minister in **verse 4** is “diakonos” from which we get our English word deacon. The Greek word for minister in **verse 6** is “leitourgos” and is used of religious leaders in **Acts 13:2**, of angels in **Hebrews 1:14**, and of Old Testament priests in **Hebrews 10:11**. The ruler is a minister to carry out justice in a society as a minister of the gospel is to carry the gospel to the world for salvation. Rulers used to be called public servants because they are ordained of God to serve the public. They are to minister to the needs of their subjects. Government has the responsibility to carry out God’s laws.

In **Genesis 9:1-6**, God delegated governmental powers to protect society and restrain evil. In **verse 5-6**, we see the institution of capital punishment after the flood, which is the highest function of government, the judicial taking of life. The state has been entrusted with the power of the sword to punish the evildoer. The civil ruler serves as God’s minister of justice and is totally accountable to His Word.

To Protect Its Citizens

According to **Numbers 1:1-3**, God instituted an “armed citizenry” for the protection of the nation of Israel. As one writer put it, “The Israelite army was a militia and not a standing army.” They came to battle with each man bearing his weapon (**Numbers 31:3, I Samuel 25:13, Nehemiah 4:17-18**). The citizens of a nation are to be protected from oppression and tyranny. The protection of life, liberty and property should be top priority for the subjects of a nation and if its rulers are godly this will be the case. No country should put its soldiers in harm’s way fighting unjust wars. Government leaders should stay out of global involvement and keep its borders closed to intruders. No honest government has any business incorporating any gun control laws. It is certain that the state should keep its taxes well below what God receives (10%).

To Promote Good

According to **I Timothy 2:1-2**, rulers are to promote that which is good, *“I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.”* We are commanded to pray for magistrates that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, so that the gospel might be freely preached (**verses 1-6**). Please notice, the texts speaks of a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. Rulers are not to be indifferent to godliness or honesty but are to promote them both. This is why **I Peter 2:14** says that rulers are to praise them that do well. In other words, civil government is to promote religion. The state is to assist the church in Christianizing the world because both state and church are ordained of God for the good and welfare of society. The state is to legislate morality, that is, enforce God’s laws. As one writer put it so well, “The church is commanded to teach God’s law to its members and the state is commanded to enforce God’s laws to its citizens.”

In the Old Testament the nation of Israel was a theocracy, with God as King. Even though the church and state among the Israelites had separate functions, both were ordained of God and were to work in harmony with each other for the glory of God and the furtherance of the kingdom. Both were ministers of God and were to use the same law