



# The Kingdom Perspective

## Lex Rex

Hello, this is Pastor Don Willeman of Christ Redeemer Church. Welcome to The Kingdom Perspective.

The notion of the rule of law is not something that just happened in the history of Western civilization. It was not accidental. Rather, just as ideas have consequences, so ideas also have antecedents. There's always something that comes before.

Most clearly, this notion can be traced to writings of Scottish thinker Samuel Rutherford (c. 1600-1661). In his famous book *Lex Rex* (1644), as the Latin title would suggest, Rutherford was proposing that nations be ruled by law and not merely by kings. This means that the power of the governing authorities should be limited by something objective, something outside themselves—by a law or constitution. In other words, a government should not be a pure monarchy, oligarchy, dictatorship or even a pure democracy. Rather, we should be governed by objective law that restrains both master and mob, limiting both the prince and the people from having all the power.

Now, where did he get this idea? Well, he got it from the Bible. He was, after all, a Presbyterian minister. The Bible teaches that human beings and human society were designed to operate best under the dictates of God's Eternal Law. For example, all throughout the Old Testament books of Kings and Chronicles, the peace and stability of the nation of Judah is correlated to their faithfulness to the Law of God. When the Law of God is revered, the king and the people flourish. But when the Law of God is ignored, evil and chaos ensue.

Now, as Christians, we ought not sit back and say, "Yeah, that's what's wrong with the world! People aren't obeying God!" Rather, we should be more self-reflective. Are we and our churches marked by obedience to God's Law?

Something to think about from The Kingdom Perspective.

### **2 Chronicles 12 (NASB)**

<sup>1</sup> When the kingdom of Rehoboam was established and strong, he and all Israel with him abandoned the Law of the Lord....<sup>13</sup> So King Rehoboam became powerful in Jerusalem and reigned there. For Rehoboam was forty-one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned for seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city which the Lord had chosen from all the tribes of Israel, to put His name there. And his mother's name was Naamah the Ammonitess. <sup>14</sup> But he did evil because he did not set his heart to seek the Lord.

### **2 Chronicles 15 (NASB)**

<sup>1</sup> Now the Spirit of God came on Azariah the son of Oded, <sup>2</sup> and he went out to meet Asa and said to him, "Listen to me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin: the Lord is with you when you are with Him. And if you seek Him, He will let you find Him; but if you abandon Him, He will abandon you. <sup>3</sup> For many days Israel was without the true God and without a teaching priest and without the Law. <sup>4</sup> But in their distress they turned to the Lord God of Israel, and they sought Him, and He let them find Him.

### **2 Chronicles 17 (ESV)**

<sup>3</sup> The Lord was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the earlier ways of his father David. He did not seek the Baals, <sup>4</sup> but sought the God of his father and walked in his commandments, and not according to the practices of Israel. <sup>5</sup> Therefore the Lord established the kingdom in his hand. And all Judah brought tribute to Jehoshaphat, and he had great riches and honor. <sup>6</sup> His heart was courageous in the ways of the Lord. And furthermore, he took the high places and the Asherim out of Judah.

<sup>7</sup> In the third year of his reign he sent his officials, Ben-hail, Obadiah, Zechariah, Nethanel, and Micaiah, to teach in the cities of Judah; <sup>8</sup> and with them the Levites, Shemaiah, Nethaniah, Zebadiah, Asahel, Shemiramoth, Jehonathan, Adonijah, Tobijah, and Tobadonijah; and with these Levites, the priests Elishama and Jehoram. <sup>9</sup> And they taught in Judah, having the Book of the Law of the Lord with them. They went about through all the cities of Judah and taught among the people.

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