

## Daniel Chapter 3

[This chapter is a type of endtime events. The compulsory worship of the image in this chapter illustrates the coming crisis when the faithful will be compelled to worship the image of the beast. See on Rev 13. "All these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." 1Cor 10:11

Rev 13:15, "And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed."

Daniel contains two clear examples of State enforced religious laws:

1. In Daniel 3 we learn that it is wrong for the state to force people to worship a particular God.
2. In Daniel 6 we learn that it is wrong for the state to stop people worshipping a particular God.

### THE TIMING OF THE EVENTS RECORDED IN THIS CHAPTER

The events of this chapter occurred after those of chapter 2. cf. Dan 3:12, 30 with Dan 2:49. but before those events recorded in Dan 4, compare Dan 3:28-29 with Dan 4:34-37. The exact date of the events in this chapter is not known. No secular records yet unearthed records these events. A court Almanac (570-569B.C.) excludes those years as possible dates as it lists all high officials but neither Daniel nor his friends are mentioned.

Since the events described in Dan 3 resulted in Daniel's three friends being promoted, and since it is unlikely that they were soon removed from office, some time must have elapsed between the events of Dan 3 and the writing of the Almanac. It seems likely that the dedication of the image occurred in 594 / 593B.C., a year which coincides with the fourth year of King Zedekiah of Judah. According to Jer 51:59, Zedekiah made a journey to Babylon in his fourth year, probably to attend the dedication of the image. If so king Zedekiah apparently bowed before it]

**1 Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height [was] threescore [60] cubits** [a cubit was approx. the distance from the finger tip to the elbow. The standardized Babylonian cubit was 19.6 inches, just under half a meter. The image was therefore about 26.7m high.

### BABYLON & THE NUMBER 6

Babylonian wise men assigned mystical numbers to their many gods. The god Anu was assigned the number 60 the base figure in their sexagesimal system. 60 is divisible by 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, which makes it very practical mathematically.

"The world of mathematics and astronomy owes much to the Babylonians--for instance, the sexagesimal system for the calculation of time and angles, which is still practical because of the multiple divisibility of the number 60; the Greek day of 12 "double-

hours"; and the zodiac and its signs." *Enc' Britannica*, CD99 ed. art. The History of Ancient Mesopotamia.

### **SIX IS THE NUMBER OF BABYLON**

The image was 60 x 6 cubits in size.  $60 \times 6 = 360$ .  $1+2+3 \dots +36 = 666$ .

6 instruments are listed in verses 5, 10, 15.

6 gods are mentioned in Dan 5:4.

In Revelation 6 is the number of spiritual Babylon:

The term "Babylon" occurs 6 times in Revelation.

Babylon is presented under the symbol of a "woman" 6 times.

The Babylonian woman has 6 types of attire

6 items of Babylon will be no more at all" (Rev 18:21-23)

6 major sins are levelled at Babylon

Babylon's merchants trade with her in 30 items (6x5) commencing with gold, the highest value in her sight and concluding with "the souls of men," the thing of lowest value in her sight. (Rev 18:12-14), **[and] the breadth thereof six cubits** [The depth is not given but apparently in Hebrew if the depth is not given it is the same as the width. Thus we have  $60 \times 6 \times 6$ . It is significant that the number of the beast is 666 and therefore the number of the image of the beast.

Critics have pointed out that the proportions of the image (ten to one) are evidence that this story is fictitious because the proportions of the human figure are less than five to one. However we do not know what the image looked like. Part of it may have been a pedestal. The word "selem" here translated "image," was used in a 7th century Aramaic inscription from Nerab, near Aleppo to describe a slender column with only the bust of a human body on top.

The text does not require the image to be solid gold and something so large was probably gold covered.

In a dream the king had seen a metallic image which God interpreted through Daniel as a representation of histories four great kingdoms (see Dan 2)...

"The king had acknowledged the power of God, saying to Daniel, "Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods. . . and a revealer of secrets." Verse 47. For a time afterward, Nebuchadnezzar was influenced by the fear of God; but his heart was not yet cleansed from worldly ambition and a desire for self-exaltation. The prosperity attending his reign filled him with pride. In time he ceased to honor God, and resumed his idol worship with increased zeal and bigotry. The words, "Thou art this head of gold," had made a deep impression upon the ruler's mind. Verse 38. The wise men of his realm, taking advantage of this and of his return to idolatry, proposed that he make an image similar to the one seen in his dream, and set it up where all might behold the head of gold, which had been interpreted as representing his kingdom. Pleased with the flattering suggestion, he determined to carry it out, and to go even farther. Instead of reproducing the image as he had seen it, he would excel the original. His image should not deteriorate in value from the head to the feet, but should be entirely of gold--symbolic throughout of Babylon as an eternal, indestructible, all-powerful kingdom, which should break in pieces all other

kingdoms and stand forever.” See PK, p503-505

The king - The State

The wise men of Babylon - The Babylonian church

The three Hebrews - The end-time saints]: **he set it up in the plain of Dura** [the name of this plain survives in the name of a tributary of the Euphrates called “Nahr Dura” which enters the Euphrates 5km (8 miles) below Hilla. Some neighbouring hills also bear the name Dura. A tradition among the inhabitants of Iraq says the event took place at Kirkuk, which is now the centre of the Iraqi oil fields. This must be rejected as the event took place in the province of Babylon], **in the province of Babylon.**

**2 Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent to gather together the princes** [Aramaic “achashdarpan,” previously thought to have been of Persian origin. Cuneiform sources show that under the form “satarpanu” the word was used as early as the time of Sargon II (722-705B.C.)], **the governors, and the captains, the judges** [Aramaic “adargazar,” judge has so far only been found in middle-Persian form “anadarzaghar,” meaning counsellor. This does not prove that it was not in use before the Persian period. Practically every discovery of a new inscription reveals words previously not known to have existed so early. Even if the word is from a time later than Daniel it may simply show that the copyists had updated the word], **the treasurers** [The origin of this Aramaic word, “gedabar,” has not yet been determined], **the counsellors** [Aramaic “dethabar,” literally “lawbearer.” This word is found in cuneiform sources], **the sheriffs** [Aramaic “tiphtay.” Police officers], **and all the rulers** [Aramaic “shilton,” from which sultan derives. Here meaning all lower officials] **of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up** [A clay tablet reports that a serious mutiny occurred in Nebuchadnezzar’s army in the king’s 10th year. See Wiseman, *Chronicles*, p73.

Nebuchadnezzar squelched the rebellion and the tablet says, “slew many of his own army.” Perhaps the summoning of the rulers to the dedication of the image was triggered by this revolt and was to test his subjects’ allegiance?].

**3 Then the princes, the governors, and captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces** [the repetition of all the titles, so characteristic of Semitic rhetoric, like the lists of instruments (v 5, 7, 10, 15). is not found in the original LXX translation. This is possible because such repetition was objectionable to the classical taste. The later Greek translation of Theodotion retain the repetition], **were gathered together unto the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up.**

**4 Then an herald** [Aramaic “karo.” Critic used to offer this as a proof of the late origin of Daniel’s book for karo was considered to be of Greek origin. However the word is of Iranian origin. See H.H. Schaeder, *Iranische Beitrage I* [Hale, 1930], p56] **cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages** [This typifies the global enforcement of the worship of the image of the beast in Rev 13. “causeth all...”],

**5 [That] at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp** [Aramaic “quthros,” is generally thought to have come from the Greek “kitharis or kithra,” “zither.” So far there is no evidence that the word is of Iranian derivation. However it would not be strange to find Greek loan word in use in Babylon. Cuneiform texts show that Ionians and Lydians were employed on royal building projects in Nebuchadnezzar’s time. These carpenters and artisans may have introduced their instruments and with them their Greek names], **sackbut** [A mistranslation of the Aramaic “sabbeka.” A sackbut was an early slide trombone but the sabbeka was a triangular instrument with four strings], **psaltery** [Aramaic “pesanterin,” a triangular string instrument], **dulcimer** [Aramaic “sumponeyah.” The “dulcimer” a kind of bagpipes. Critics have used this to discredit this chapter. However it is now known that the ancient Greeks had bagpipes and were traders in Babylon in the sixth century B.C. It appears that the Babylonians adopted the strange Greek instrument made from a dog skin.

See T.C. Mitchell & R. Joyce, *The Musical Instruments in Nebuchadnezzar’s Orchestra*, in D.J. Wiseman, et. al., *Notes on Some Problems in the Book of Daniel*. Also Yamauchi, *Greece and Babylon*, 1967.

Six instruments are mentioned. This list of six occurs three times (5, 10, 15). When the instruments are listed in verse 7 there are only 5. This means that the 6 instruments are listed just 3 times making a trinity of 6.

The worship of the image is mentioned 6 times (Daniel 3:5, 7, 10, 12, 14, 18). The worship of the beast and his image is mentioned 6 times in Revelation (Rev 13:15; 14:9, 11; 16:2; 19:20; 20:4)], **and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up:**

**6 And whoso falleth not down and worshippingeth** [Ancient peoples did not object to worshipping idols so any lack of compliance would be taken as hostility toward Nebuchadnezzar and his government] **shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace** [Compliance was associated with pleasure (the music) and pain (the furnace). The king may have expected some to refuse his command. The furnace was probably a brick kiln ordinarily cone shaped and fueled with a mixture of chaff and crude oil. A tremendous heat is produced and through the opening by which the fuel is admitted one can see the bricks glowing white hot

The death penalty for noncompliance may seem harsh but absolute monarchs have always been afraid of anyone who might challenge their authority.

The threat was no idle bluff. Jer 29:22 records the fact that the king roasted in the fire two Jewish men, Zedekiah and Ahab.

## **THE HOUR**

This is the first mention of the “hour” in all the Bible. In fact outside the N.T. the word “hour” is only found in Daniel. This further identifies this story as a type of the last great trial of God’s people - the worship of the image of the beast and the beast. God speaks to those of the second to last church saying, “Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the HOUR of temptation, which shall come upon all

the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth” Rev 3:10. All the world will unite to enforce the papal policy for one hour, “And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one HOUR with the beast” Rev 17:12].

**7 Therefore at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery [Five instruments listed here. See on verse 5], and all kinds of musick, all the people, the nations, and the languages, fell down [and] worshipped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.**

**8 Wherefore at that time certain Chaldeans [the caste of magicians, scientists, astrologers and astronomers] came near, and accused the Jews [probably still smarting at their exposure when they were unable to interpret the dream of Daniel 2. They took this opportunity to present the Hebrews in the worst possible light. “Acused” Aramaic “akalu qarsehon,” literally “they ate the pieces,” or “they gnawed at.”].**

**9 They spake and said to the king Nebuchadnezzar, O king, live for ever.**

**10 Thou, O king, hast made a decree, that every man that shall hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick [Six instruments mentioned. See on v 5], shall fall down and worship the golden image:**

**11 And whoso falleth not down and worshipping, [that] he should be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.**

**12 There are certain Jews whom thou hast set over the affairs of the province of Babylon [Clearly referring to their promotion recorded in Dan 2:49. This shows that the event in this chapter occurred after those of Dan 2. This reference to their position was no doubt designed to emphasize the danger of men in such position defying the king. The three Hebrews & Daniel had literally saved these accusers their lives (Dan 2:24) and they repay the kindness by urging the king to destroy them!], Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego; these men, O king, have not regarded thee: they serve not thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up [Daniel’s absence is notable. Whether the king anticipated the problem this would cause Daniel and sent him away is unknown. Daniel may have been ill or absent on state business. Had Daniel been present he would no doubt have stood loyal to God. His test came later. See Daniel 6.**

### **THREE NOT FOUR**

It is probable that Daniel’s absence was by design. God arranged affairs such that the faithful at this time would number three, not four, for typological reasons. The three worthies typify the endtime faithful who will be made up of those called from spiritual Babylon i.e. from the dragon, the beast and the false prophet. and who proclaim the three angel’s messages of Rev 14].

**13 Then Nebuchadnezzar in [his] rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach,**

**Meshach, and Abednego. Then they brought these men before the king** [Many in the future will be brought before rulers to answer for their faith. Luke 21:12 “...brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake.”].

**14 Nebuchadnezzar spake and said unto them, [Is it] true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up?**

**15 Now if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick** [Six instruments mentioned. See on v1, 5], **ye fall down and worship the image** [this typifies the endtime crisis of the beast and the image of the beast in Rev 13] **which I have made; [well]: but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who [is] that God that shall deliver you out of my hands** [The king had previously acknowledged the true God's greatness (Daniel 2:47) but he had slipped back into his pagan ways. The kings offer of a second chance was not needed. The Hebrews had already made up their minds. Typifying the sealing of God's end time saints. See Rev 22:11.

“Deliver” is a key word in Daniel.

God did deliver them and the king confessed, “there is no other God that can DELIVER after this sort” (v 29).

In Daniel 6 God delivered Daniel from the lions.

Ultimately Michael will stand up “and at that time thy people shall be DELIVERED, every one that shall be found written in the book..” (Dan 12:1)]

**16 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we [are] not careful** [Aramaic “chashach,” “to be in need of.” i.e. “we have no need to answer you in this matter.” RSV. They had already shown their response to the kings demand by their actions. They were not arrogant and verse 18 shows that they were not even certain their lives would be spared] **to answer thee in this matter** [Why, one might ask did these three worthies even attend the ceremony as they no doubt new what would be required. They show how God's people will go as far as they can to satisfy civil law.

“They had been obedient to the laws of Babylon so far as these did not conflict with the claims of God, but they would not be swayed a hair's breadth from the duty they owed to their Creator.” SL 37].

**17 If it be [so]** [Two translations are possible. The K.J.V. is best. Modern comentators translate it, “If our God is able...” making it as though the three Hebrews doubted God's ability which certainly was not the case as they elsewhere reveal.

The LXX has no “if” at all], **our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace** [The worthies knew that God COULD deliver them from the flames], **and he will deliver [us] out of thine hand, O king** [They were certain that God WOULD deliver them out of the kings power whether it be through their deaths or through a miracle!].

**18 But if not** [this must refer to the possible deliverance from the fiery furnace. It cannot refer to their deliverance from the king's hand for they were certain of that], **be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up** [They reflected the character of Christ, who at the time of His crucifixion said,, "...O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou [wilt]." Matt 26:39].

**19 Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego: [therefore] he spake, and commanded that they should heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated** [This is not to say that they could increase the temperature seven times but merely that the king commanded that they do so. This they probably tried to accomplish with an extraordinary supply of chaff and crude oil which fuelled such furnaces. Any increase in heat would only consume more quickly those cast in. However the deliverance from such an inferno would also be more incredible!

"Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee..." Ps 76:10. Nebuchadnezzar's wrath only worked to bring praise and glory to God].

**20 And he commanded the most mighty men that [were] in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, [and] to cast [them] into the burning fiery furnace** [Through the employment of the mighty men and the increased heat of the furnace the king intended to forestall any possible intervention but it all worked to glorify their Deliverer!].

**21 Then these men were bound in their coats, their hosen, and their hats, and their [other] garments [note the focus on the flammable things], and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.**

**22 Therefore because the king's commandment was urgent, and the furnace exceeding hot, the flame of the fire slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego** [the death of the strongmen showed that the following deliverance of the Hebrews was not due to abnormal flames.

In Daniel 3 the fire was made to destroy the righteous. The wicked died in the fire.

In Daniel 6 the lions were intended to destroy Daniel. The wicked were devoured by the lions.

In Esther Haman made gallows (Est 5:14) to destroy the righteous Mordecai. The wicked Haman died on the gallows (Est 7:10)].

**23 And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace** [Following verse 23 manuscripts of the oldest translations of Daniel, the LXX & Theodotion, contain a long Apocraphal addition of 68 verses called, The Song of the Three Holy Children." The song has three parts:

1. Prayer of Azarias (Abednego) (vs 24-45).

2. An interlude, describing the heating of the fire and the descent of the angel of the Lord to cool the flames (vs 46-50).

3. The benediction of the three (vs 51-91).

Although recognized by Jerome as spurious, this addition is found in Roman Catholic Bibles as canonical. Scholars debate whether it is of Jewish or Christian origin. A number believe that it was produced about 100B.C.

The Jews do not accept it as Biblical and it has no place in the Bible. See on the Apocrypha].

**24 Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, [and] spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did not we [the use of “we” either shows that the king was now wanting to distance himself from the condemnation of the Hebrews or that the sentence was decided in conjunction with the counsellors] cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king.**

**25 He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God** [The word translated “God” is used in both the singular and the plural. The RV, ASV, RSV translate the passage, “like a son of the gods.” Both translations are possible. As Nebuchadnezzar was acknowledging the supremacy of the most high God (v 28, 29) the singular, “God,” is preferred by conservative scholars and can be defended linguistically.

He who walked on water, walked on the fire with those in the flames.

“The Hebrew captives...had told of Christ, the Redeemer to come; and in the form of the fourth in the midst of the fire the king recognized the Son of God.” PK 509.

“When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee...when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.” Isaiah 43:2.

### **THE DELIVERER**

Jesus Christ is the Deliverer, “And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.” Matt 1:21. Christ saves us not just from our sins PAST but from sinning in the PRESENT. He saved the three worthies from sinning and He can save us from sinning today! “Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present [you] faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, [be] glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.” Jude 1:24

In verse 28 this Son of God is called an “angel,” See on verse 28] .

**26 Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace, [and] spake, and said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, ye servants of the most high God** [This does not indicate that the king had given up his polytheistic concepts, only that he recognized the God of the Hebrews as superior to all others], **come forth, and come [hither]** [The Hebrews had no desire to leave the flames because they were in the presence of their Lord!]. **Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, came forth of the midst of the fire** [They came forth with only their bonds burned. Shadrach, Meshach & Abednego were the names given them by their Babylonian captors. The meanings of their Hebrew names is appropriate considering their deliverance: Hananiah (“Yaweh is gracious”) Mishael (“Who belongs to God.”) Azariah (Yahweh helps”)].

**27 And the princes, governors, and captains, and the king's counsellors, being gathered together, saw these men, upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them [THE CHRISTIANS RELATIONSHIP TO THE STATE**

God had said all nations were to “serve the king of Babylon” (Jer 25:11; Jer 27:6-9) but the deliverance of the three worthies who refused to serve the king's religious command shows that God gives no **earthly king or dictator any right to command anything pertaining to religion**. The three worthies maintained individuality in religion in obedience to the law of God but in violation of the authority of the king. **God sanctioned this violation (Daniel 3)**. The Hebrews did not subject themselves to the Babylonian monarch in matters of religious service and God honoured their refusal. The State has no jurisdiction in the religious realm. In making Nebuchadnezzar the head of nations, God did not make him head of religion.

Rom 13:1”Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.” This experience shows that this subjection is only in civil matters and that the State has no right to demand any religious observance].

**28 [Then] Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, Blessed [be] the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent his angel [Christ is the Angel of the Lord], and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king's word, and yielded their bodies [Rom 12:1 “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, [which is] your reasonable service.”], that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God.**

**29 Therefore I make a decree [In this way The kingdom and others besides were made aware of the awesome God of the Hebrews], That every people, nation, and language, which speak any thing amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill [This decree destroyed freedom of speech and the freedom to practice ones own religion.**

Rom 14:5 “One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day [alike]. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.”]: **because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort [THE STATE AND RELIGIOUS LAWS**

“It was right for the king to make public confession, and to seek to exalt the God of heaven above all other gods; but in endeavouring to force his subjects to make a similar confession of faith and to show similar reverence, Nebuchadnezzar was exceeding his right as a temporal sovereign. He had no more right, either civil or moral, to threaten men with death for not worshiping God, than he had to make the decree consigning to the flames all who refused to worship the golden image. God never compels the obedience of man. He leaves all free to choose whom they will serve.” Prophets and Kings, p510-511].

**30 Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, in the province of Babylon [The Hebrews had shown qualities of character which made it evident that they could be trusted with still greater responsibilities and clearly the great God was with them.**

## **THE ENFORCED WORSHIP OF THE BEAST & HIS IMAGE**

“As in the days of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, so in the closing period of earth's history the Lord will work mightily in behalf of those who stand steadfastly for the right. He who walked with the Hebrew worthies in the fiery furnace will be with His followers wherever they are. His abiding presence will comfort and sustain. In the midst of the time of trouble--trouble such as has not been since there was a nation--His chosen ones will stand unmoved. Satan with all the hosts of evil cannot destroy the weakest of God's saints. Angels that excel in strength will protect them, and in their behalf Jehovah will reveal Himself as a "God of gods," able to save to the uttermost those who have put their trust in Him.” PK 513

## **THOUGHTS ON CHURCH & STATE**

God declares anyone innocent who violates any law that interferes with their relationship to Him, i.e., any law which invades the rights of conscience. See cases "The King vs. Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego;" and "The State vs. Daniel," (Daniel 3 & 6).

### **1. No earthly king or dictator has the right to command anything pertaining to religion**

The three worthies maintained individuality in religion in obedience to the law of God but in violation of the authority of the king. God sanctioned this violation (Dan 3).

“The right of private judgment in religion, and the principle of individual responsibility to God, are two essentials of the Protestant Reformation. Without these there never would -- there never could -- have been any Reformation. But these are not only essentials of the Protestant Reformation. They are essentials of Christianity itself. “ A.T. Jones, *Lessons from the Reformation*, p20.

### **2. God gives no government the right to make any religious law**

Daniel maintained individuality in religion in obedience to the law of God but in violation the law of the Medes & Persians. God sanctioned this violation (Dan 6).

In Dan 3 the king was wrong for commanding worship. In Dan 6 the government was wrong for forbidding it.

### **3. God does not give the Church the right to use the power of the State to achieve His will**

Christ maintained individuality in religion in violation of the ‘church.’ God sanctioned this violation. The crucifixion of Christ was the result of the union of church & state.

### **4. God does not give the Church the right to command anyone what they should believe or not believe, teach or not teach.**

The spread of Christianity was in obedience to the law of God but in violation of the existing church authorities - the Jewish priesthood. God sanctioned such violation (Acts 5:17-19; 28-42).

The Reformation from popery was also in violation of papal church authorities, - the priesthood. The parties in the wrong in both instances clearly identified themselves by

persecuting and killing those in the right for matters of religious conviction. God opposes & exposes the powers which attempted to control individuality in religion. Thus any attempted domination is seen to be absolutely wrong and individuality is seen to be an absolute right.

### **5. As between individuals**

“So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.” Rom 14:12. If a man will not choose to have faith unto salvation let him alone as you will never force him to have faith unto salvation. If the love of Christ is insufficient to draw a man to righteousness compulsion will never force him into righteousness.

### **6. God & Ceasar**

Had sin never entered there would only have been one jurisdiction but now there are two, God & the civil power. Because all do not choose to obey God there needs to be a power in the world that will cause those to be civil who choose not to be moral.

The two jurisdictions are distinct:

Civil	Moral
Physical	Spiritual
Temporal	Eternal

The church is not of this world and it can never take civil power without becoming of this world and such an act would be apostacy. The Bible presents that church which seeks State power, as a harlot who has committed fornication with the kings of the earth (Rev 17).

The true church is represented as a pure woman who remains faithful to Christ (Rev 12).

### **7. Individuality - the Supreme gift**

The existence of an intelligent creature necessitates a Creator. A Creator necessitates honour, devotion and subjection from the creature. This is the principle of government. With the creation of the first intelligent creature came the first relationship - “Love God with all...” With the creation of the second intelligent creature came the second relationship “...[love] thy neighbour as thyself.” Creatures are equal and their first allegiance, devotions etc. is to their Creator.

This was the first and ultimate government and it was self government under God based on the intelligent recognition of relationships.

God’s intelligent creatures are to be moral which necessitates them possessing freedom of choice.

**History shows that the union of religion and the State has resulted in the greatest apostasies from God, and has caused more misery than any other thing in all history.**

**All civil powers, even pagan Rome, are ordained by God to keep order in matters of civil rights, defined by the policeable laws on the second table of the Decalogue. These last 6 commandments define man’s relationship to man. The State’s jurisdiction ends there. (See Rom 13).**

Ancient Israel were one people governed by God in a Theocracy. That Theocracy ceased

at the time Israel went into captivity in Babylon about 600B.C. Spiritual Israel, the true church, now live in various nations and God in His wisdom has ordained that his people are to obey the civil laws of the country in which they live so long as those laws do not require the violation of God's moral law of Ten commandments.

### **Morality is un-policeable**

The state can police civility but it is unable to police morality because morality is of the heart and internal, e.g. lust.

The State cannot legislate morality, for the State cannot police the thoughts. However if immorality leads to crime, e.g. rape, the civil power may punish, but it must be remembered that the punishment is not for immorality but for incivility.

The enforcement of God's moral law by the State would require the death of all men including the statesmen, for all have sinned and "the wages of sin is death." (Rom 3:23; 6:23). If the penalty is changed then the law has been changed and can no longer be called God's moral law.

Civil law may be based upon God's moral law but it must ever be remembered that civil laws are not moral laws, at best they reflect the legislators moral values but they are only civil in nature.

The enforcement of Christ's code by the civil power is unworkable. God's moral government includes mercy and pardon. Christ taught that "If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him." If the State adopted such a system it would destroy civil government in twenty-four hours.

### **Crime & Sin must not be confused**

Sin is a breach of Divine moral law.

Crime is a breach of Human civil law.

The civil powers have no right to punish transgressors of the moral law, they may only punish violators of the civil law. The civil law concerns mans relation to man and it purely external.

The moral law concerns mans relationship to His Maker and is internal, spiritual.

Crime is a civil matter within the civil powers jurisdiction. Sin is a moral matter and outside the civil powers jurisdiction.

The punishment for breaking civil law (crime) is measurable. The punishment for breaking Divine law (sin) is eternal. The smallest sin demands everlasting death. The retribution for sin is therefore beyond the civil powers ability to measure out and enforce. Sin and crime must not therefore be confounded.

### **Forced morality in the name of Jesus misrepresents Him:**

"Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord [is], there [is] liberty." 2 Cor 3:17. Forced morality is forced hypocrisy.

### **Truth is not determined by majority vote, state, democracy or dictator, therefore mankind cannot even determine true moral law collectively.**

Furthermore, since civil powers were formed the majority have always been in error.

Free to follow and to worship God or not. Free to think moral thought or not.  
The civil law must not only give men freedom of religion but freedom from religion if they so desire.

**As the civil State is not infalible it cannot with safety favour any moral or religious teaching.**

As the States function is to maintain civility and not morality, the state should teach obedience to civil law and leave moral teaching to family & religious groups.  
Unless a state was infallible it could not choose among the sects of religion the 'correct' religion to enforce. The claim to infallibility is papal not protestant.

**The union of Church & State was the result of transgression**

The church could never have united with any earthly State had sin not occurred. Had men always kept the great commandments to love God supremely and one's neighbour as oneself there never would have been any earthly State. God would have been the only law Maker, King & Government.

Therefore the State powers which have come about are a result of sin and are only to be obeyed as far as those laws do not require the violation of God's moral law (Rom 13; Acts 5:29).

The uniting of Church & State requires the rejection of God. Israel wanted a king, they wanted to become a state like those around them, (I Sam. 8:5). God protested ( I Sam. 8:9), the people persisted ( I Sam. 8:19, 20) and God said " they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them." 1 Sam 8:7. As that people were then the church whenever the church forms any connection with any State or kingdom on the earth, in the very doing of it she rejects God.

God separated Abraham, the Father of the faithful, from the earthly State system. God promising him, Christ and Christ's followers, the world to come, the heavenly Kingdom. Gen 12:1; Heb. 11:8-9, 16; Rom. 4:13; Gal. 3:29; Acts 7:5.

**God cannot accomplish His work through civil power**

God did not wish to use the power of the Egyptian State to do His work, instead He called Moses out of Egypt away from the throne to which he was destined. Heb. 11:24-26. Christians are likewise called out of earthly alliances into the heavenly kingdom.

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" 2Cor 6:14.

Jesus did not attempt to change the world through political means, neither did He instruct His people to attempt to do so. Jesus actually refused opportunities to take State power to further His work (John 6:15). To attempt Christ's work using the force of the State is therefore un-Christlike.

**Uniting church & State obstructs God's purpose**

Uniting Church & State Obstructs the Purpose of the Church to demonstrate the superiority of God's government over all State systems (Deut. 4:5, 6).

## **Since Christ's time, no earthly government has been or can be a government of God (a Theocracy)**

Moses led Israel out and they were governed by the laws of God - i.e. a Theocracy. God allowed them a king and chose Saul, but Saul failed to do God's will. David was chosen and David's throne was established forever. Solomon took the throne which was called "the throne of the Lord." 1 Chron 29:23. The government was a government of God. Zedekiah took the throne and they were made subject to Babylon. God said at this time, "Thou profane, wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end, thus saith the Lord God; Remove the diadem, and take off the crown: this shall not be the same: exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it, and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him." Eze 21:25-27; see chap. 17:1-21.

From the days of Babylon the throne was successively under the dominion of Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome (Three overturnings). Who is "He...whose right it is?" "Thou . . . shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." Luke 1:31-33. When on earth Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world." Thus the throne of the Lord has been removed from this world, and will "be no more, until He come whose right it is," and then it will be given him. And when is that time? That time is the end of this world, and the beginning of "the world to come." Therefore while this world stands, a true theocracy can never be in it again. From the time of Christ until the end of the world every theory of an earthly theocracy is a false theory. (e.g. the Papacy and the ecumenical political movement).

Many today wish to make Christ King of this world and His teachings the law of the land, and they intend to bring it in by politics even though Christ's kingdom is not to be brought in by human hands. (See Dan 2:34; cf. Heb 9:24; 2 Cor 5:1).

Though all governments, Roman, Papal, Moslem, Atheistic, Communist etc., be allowed of God (Rom 13:1), none are the government of God. God's government is moral, all earthly governments are civil.

## **Christ taught a separation between Church & State**

Christ said, "My kingdom is not of this world." (John 18:36).

God's Kingdom is to be set up "without hands" (Dan 2:45). which means by Divine power. cf. Heb 9:11, 24; 2 Cor 5:1; Col 2:11, not human efforts.

Christ's people are not to have their allegiance divided between earthly State & heavenly Kingdom. Christian can not serve two masters. Their patriotism is due Christ and His kingdom alone.

## **Jesus taught that State and religion are separate entities with separate jurisdictions**

"...Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's. Matt. 22:21). To unite them would destroy the distinctness Christ maintained.

### **God grants to all religious liberty**

"One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day [alike]. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." Rom 14:5. God is judge.

Jesus would not judge or compell and neither should His followers. (John 12:47-48). God will judge men at the last day.

God Himself does not force us to accept His will or command the State or any power to enforce it for Him. The State should not therefore try to impose God's will for Him.

Any command as to what shall be believed kills spiritual advancement by making change in spiritual understanding illegal. (See Acts 5:40).

To legislate how one must worship is to legislate against one ever changing how one worships. It prohibits unhindered advancement and understanding.

Permitting religious legislation opens the way for an evil religion gaining the State power.

The church is to promote faith, which cannot be promoted through State force.

The State cannot enforce God's perfect will as it does not know God's perfect will.

The State's place is to ensure civility not to teach morality.

To grant the teaching of any groups moral values in public schools is to open the way for the teaching of moral values one rejects.

### **Education about the origin of the universe etc.**

As science is observable, testable and repeatable and as the origin of all things is not, ALL teachings on origins are faiths or religions, not science.

The actual science conducted by adherents of both sides is usually good but the conclusions drawn by both sides are philosophical in nature.

The deductions, conclusions and beliefs based on the science must be left up to the individual. To silence others conclusions of the facts is opposing free speech.

No religious workers, religious relief agencies, or any religious organization should be supported by the State because doing so would be to show bias toward certain religious groups.

It is wrong that tax payers of a particular religious persuasion should, via government taxation, be made to fund the promotion of religious teachings to which they are opposed. Keeping religion out of government is not irreligious but Christian.

### **SUMMARIZED THOUGHTS**

"As Christ's kingdom is spiritual then it follows that His church should not be formally

associated or united with the state, or any other earthly institution. The separation of church and state is enshrined in the constitution of the United States of America and is the secret of that nations power & prosperity. The founding fathers of the American constitution knew from European history the terrible conditions which befall a nation when the power of church and state are blended together. Many of those who migrated to America sought religious freedom, the freedom to worship their God according to dictates of conscience, without interference from the state. Though religious men themselves, they legislated themselves into a position in which their religion could never assume the power of the state. See Section 116 of the Australian Constitution.

As the Holy Spirit is to lead men, their consciences must be free to follow His guidance. When conscience is compelled to obey another power the Holy Spirit is restricted in His operation. Therefore, the founding father's made the separation of church and state part of the constitution, a protection against tyranny.

When Jesus walked among us, He constantly taught that His kingdom "was not of this world" – a kingdom of individuals who entered spiritually, not literally - a kingdom of the heart and the mind.

The book of Revelation is about the struggle between these two kingdoms - Christ's spiritual kingdom upholding freedom of conscience - and Satan's literal kingdom, where church and state laws, compel the conscience. This struggle is a major focus of several prophecies, where the union of church and state is symbolically represented as the union of two incompatible elements such as a blending of iron with clay of the feet of Daniel 2, and the unlawful practice of adultery and fornication.

The Roman Catholic Church is the ultimate example of the results of mingling churchcraft and statecraft together and though that awful system died off, prophecy foretells its restoration.

### **THOUGHTS ON CIVIL & MORAL LAW**

Every generation is one step from barbarism. Every generation needs to be 'civilized.'

Civilization is an entity in which individuals mutually consent to restricted civil liberties for the harmony of all but they do not necessarily consent to any single standard of what constitutes morality.

The two principles are involved in the civil state: Laws & Force.

The two principles involved in the Christian religion are Laws (obedience to God's requirements) and Free Will.

Laws arise from a system of values.

Civil laws grow from some kind of moral basis, but civil laws are not moral laws just as a tree is not soil.

To prosper civilization requires civil laws based on "good" morals. The "goodness" or

otherwise of the moral soil from which civil laws spring can be tested by the quality of fruit borne in society. Only a civil code rooted in true morality will yield civil prosperity.

Trying to change the morality of society through changing civil law is like trying to change the soil through pruning the tree.

Moral values lie beneath the soil out of the reach of the lawmakers. The soil must be changed if the fruits on the tree are to be changed.

Public policy in a democratic society is the political and economic application of civil law based on the dominant existing societal morality.

Democratically based civil law reveals the underlying moral values of the majority.

Dictatorial Civil law reveals the underlying moral values of the dictator.

All people, by their words and actions, cannot avoid 'teaching' others their underlying moral values.

### **Sin & Crime**

(a) The transgression of civil law is crime and is punished by a variety of temporal punishments. The transgression of moral law is sin and is only punished by one eternal punishment - death.

(b) Crime can be atoned for by works. Sin cannot be atoned for by works.

(c) Moral law forbids not only the evil act but the evil thought. Civil law can only forbid the evil act.

(d) Morality concerns the thoughts. Civility concerns the actions.

(e) Morality is internal. Civility is external.

(f) Men can police civility. Men cannot police morality for it is internal.

(g) Civil law is to protect citizens from the will of another. Moral law is to protect individuals from the wrong use of their own free will.

(h) God's moral law is unchanging. Civil law is dynamic and changing. Even Christian's ideas of morality alter.

Civil law concerns man's outward relationship to man and is based on the second table of the ten commandments, i.e. laws 6-10.

Moral men have committed crimes when the civil law demanded an immoral act. e.g. Daniel 3, 6.

Morality teaches us to distinguish right from wrong, innocence from guilt, and justice from injustice.

Christian Education, p239

"Children are what their parents make them, by their instruction, discipline, and example. Hence the overwhelming importance of parental faithfulness in training the young for the service of God. Children should early be taught the sacredness of religious obligations. This is a most important part of their education. Our duty to God should be performed before any other. The strict observance of God's law, from principle, should be taught and

enforced. 'For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children: that the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children. That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments; and might not be as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation that set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not steadfast with God.' (Ps 78:5-8)."

## **Christians & Politics**

Gospel Workers, p391

"The Lord would have His people bury political questions. On these themes silence is eloquence. Christ calls upon His followers to come into unity on the pure gospel principles which are plainly revealed in the word of God. We cannot with safety vote for political parties; for we do not know whom we are voting for. We cannot with safety take part in any political scheme. We cannot labor to please men who will use their influence to repress religious liberty, and to set in operation oppressive measures to lead or compel their fellow-men to keep Sunday as the Sabbath. The first day of the week is not a day to be revered. It is a spurious sabbath, and the members of the Lord's family cannot participate with the men who exalt this day, and violate the law of God by trampling upon His Sabbath. The people of God are not to vote to place such men in office; for when they do this, they are partakers with them of the sins which they commit while in office."

Fundamentals of Christian Education, p478

"I call upon my brethren who are appointed to educate, to change their course of action. It is a mistake for you to link your interests with any political party, to cast your vote with them or for them. Those who stand as educators, as ministers, as laborers together with God in any line, have no battles to fight in the political world. Their citizenship is in heaven. The Lord calls upon them to stand as separate and peculiar people. He would have no schisms in the body of believers. His people are to possess the elements of reconciliation. Is it their work to make enemies in the political world?--No, no. They are to stand as subjects of Christ's kingdom, bearing the banner on which is inscribed, 'The commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.' They are to carry the burden of a special work, a special message. We have a personal responsibility, and this is to be revealed before the heavenly universe, before angels, and before men. God does not call upon us to enlarge our influence by mingling with society, by linking up with men on political questions, but by standing as individual parts of His great whole, with Christ as our head. Christ is our Prince, and as His subjects we are to do the work appointed us by God."

Selected Messages Book 2, p336

"Our work is to watch, and wait, and pray. Search the Scriptures. Christ has given you warning not to mingle with the world. We are to come out from among them and be separate, "and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor. 6:17, 18). Whatever the opinions you may entertain in regard to casting your vote in political

questions, you are not to proclaim it by pen or voice.”

### **SHOULD CHRISTIANS VOTE?**

While Christians should vote on issues they should not vote for political parties because:

- 1.** All parties betray trusts. There is no assurance one’s vote will count for righteousness even if one’s party wins. (See Ps 146:4).
- 2.** One is held accountable for the actions of the party one voted for.
- 3.** Jesus never used politics to further His work. He avoided it and so therefore will His followers. As Christ’s kingdom is not of this world (John 18:36) it is clear that any party running for worldly political power is not of God. Thus the only political powers are of the world and no Christian could rightly vote for such.
- 4.** Christ’s kingdom is not of this world (John 18:36). We are “pilgrims” and “strangers,” ambassadors of another government with citizenship in heaven (Heb 11:9, 13; Phil 3:20). Politics is entirely of the world.
- 5.** Rom 13:1 is a general statement as to civil governments which are better than anarchy. We are told to obey & pray for civil rulers, but nowhere are we told to elect, appoint, install, or do politics for them.

### **QUESTIONS**

#### **Were not Daniel and Joseph statesman?**

Daniel served as a faithful SLAVE according to God’s command (Jer 25:11) He did not stand for election. Joseph likewise.

#### **Was not Israel a kingdom?**

God did not desire His people to form a kingdom with a human king. However the people rejected God and God gave them a king. Israel was a Theocracy but God has done away with that form of government until Christ returns. God therefore requires His people to obey the civil laws of the land in which they live as long as those laws do not conflict with God’s moral law of ten commandments.

#### **Would one not get the government one deserves if one does not vote?**

One will get the government one deserves even if one does vote].