

Transcripts of
**ENGLISH
HISTORY**

A Lecture Series by R.J. Rushdoony



R.J. RUSHDOONY

(1916–2001)

Rev. R.J. Rushdoony (1916–2001), was a leading theologian, church/state expert, and author of numerous works on the application of Biblical law to society. He started the Chalcedon Foundation in 1965. His Institutes of Biblical Law (1973) began the contemporary theonomy movement which posits the validity of Biblical law as God's standard of obedience for all. He therefore saw God's law as the basis of the modern Christian response to the cultural decline, one he attributed to the church's false view of God's law being opposed to His grace. This broad Christian response he described as "Christian Reconstruction." He is credited with igniting the modern Christian school and homeschooling movements in the mid to late 20th century. He also traveled extensively lecturing and serving as an expert witness in numerous court cases regarding religious liberty. Many ministry and educational efforts that continue today, took their philosophical and Biblical roots from his lectures and books.

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John Wycliff

R.J. Rushdoony

From any study of the Middle Ages, it is possible to paint a picture, and an accurate one, that would be so moving and so beautiful that we would all feel that it is wrong not to be a Catholic. On the other hand, it's also possible to paint a picture so devastating in its horror, and thoroughly true, that it would make us the most violent kind of anti-Catholic. The period, of course, was a very long one. It lasted for centuries; and during the course of that time, naturally a great deal happened up and down that represented a great variety of practices and standards. The Catholic Church, as we know it today, or have known it, is not the same church as that of the medieval era; it is a product of the Council of Trent. Now, the church from the Council of Trent on is now drawing to an end; and that the Second Vatican Council has, in effect, denied the Council of Trent.

Tonight we begin our study in a period; the 14th Century, when the church was in serious decline. Unbelief was rampant, men had come to regard the church as a place for ambition to have its way of power and advancement; and as a result, the corruption of the church was very great. Our particular concern is with England: England as an area of a movement that began at that time, but has still not spent its force. Indeed, we may say that our concern with it is that the full force of it is yet to come. There were people in England at that time deeply concerned with the corruption of the church. Just a few years before the era that we shall deal with—that of John Wycliffe, the Bishop of Lincoln was a man named Robert Grosseteste, a very fine scholar and writer. And Robert Grosseteste, in speaking of the extensive corruption; moral, financial, doctrinal corruption in the church, declared that the seat of it was in Rome, and in the papacy. The church had become deeply given to quibbling over trifles, and overlooking essentials.

Moreover, there was no longer the same zeal, whereby men once thronged into the monasteries and into the priesthood. To gain recruits for the ordinary functions of the church required all kinds of dishonesty. For example, consider this, coming from one of the highest churchmen of the day, one of the most brilliant scholars, a very godly man, Richard Fitzralph, the Archbishop of Armagh, in Ireland. He denounced the kidnapping of small boys by the friars, who took them away to rear them as friars, and here is an account from his writing:

“On going out from his end of the street, the archbishop met with a respectable English gentleman, who had made a journey to Avignon (the papacy had its seat then not in Rome, but in Avignon), for no other purpose but to obtain from the courier the surrender of his son, whom the begging friars of Oxford had inveigled last Easter, though yet only a boy thirteen years old. When the father hurried to Oxford to rescue him, he was only permitted to speak with his son under the eyes of several monks. And Fitzralph, archbishop of Armagh, says” ‘What is this but man-stealing, a crime worse than cattle-stealing, which is a penal offense; and this with mere children before they have come to years of discretion?!’”

Moreover, there was an externalism of a most amazing sort; as long as you conformed in some of the externals, you are a good churchman, no matter how reprobate a character you might be. Thus, GG Coulton, one of the greatest medievalist scholars, has said, and I quote (and this statement which Coulton is quoting comes from a Catholic priest, who became a cardinal):

“If a priest lets his hair grown, or adopts lay dress, he is cast into prison and severely punished. If he drinks in a brothel or frequents a harlot, or plays the dice or defiles other men’s wives, or never touches a religious book; yet, he is a pillar of the church. I do not excuse his change of dress, but I do blame this preposterous judgment.”

This is the kind of thing that was corroding the church. As long as one maintained the forms, as long as one didn’t break the rules, what one believed, and what one’s moral character were made no difference. As a result, there was a growing bitterness among the people, the common people in particular, at the corruption in the church. And, as a consequence of this, the people were alienated from the nobility and the royalty, which did nothing about the growing corruption, and from the church.

The result was, in England, the Peasants’ Revolt. The peasants felt they were being ground down to nothing and destroyed, and with reason. It was a time of tremendous wealth, because the nobility and the royalty were gouging the poor and destroying them. Feudalism, as a vital force, had died a few years before, and the lords no longer felt the responsibility towards those who were on their estates that they had in the previous century; and as a result, they were ruthless. The gap between high and low was just incredible. No one has ever written a history of plumbing, but it would be interesting, because we’d have many surprises in it. Thus, Richard II in this era in his palace, and incidentally we don’t know too much about things, because so much has been destroyed; castles were military places, and they didn’t have the conveniences that the houses of lords in London and the palaces had, and those have all disappeared virtually; the castles have survived, but Richard II, for example, in his palace had hot and cold flowing water, and baths where you could turn on your hot water tap and your cold water tap. But if you went out and saw the life of the common people, it would be primitive to the nth degree. There was this total gap; they were two peoples, almost, alien to one another.

The Norman lords who had come over with William the Conqueror, their families had long before died out, so that none of the old Norman lords still survived. True, some of their daughters who had intermarried into the other families, the Anglo Saxon families, carried on the Norman blood. But the significant thing is the Normans came over as a French-speaking people. Now that was 1066, and our period to the time of Wycliff is the 1300’s, a long time away, four centuries. But in this era, the nobility had become French-speaking, although they were not Normans; they were Englishmen. Why? Because they did not want to be associated with the common people. English was the language for the cattle, and they spoke French! This was the language of the family to emphasize their separateness.

As a result, the bitterness was intense, and the Peasants’ Revolt broke out. A poor priest, John Ball, together with Wat Tyler, was the leader of the revolt, and its bitterness was intense. It aimed at killing all lords, all gentlemen, all great churchmen, at burning all the tax rolls and title deeds; and securing the person of the king, capturing him, and compelling him to rule according to their wishes. Their slogan, which is to this day well-known, was:

“When Adam delved, and Eve span, who was then the gentleman?:

The revolt was put down rather brutally and bloodily under Richard II, who was the young king. Wycliff, although he did not favor a revolution, plainly stated his sympathies were with the common people and those who revolted, because their grievances were so severe.

The condition of the day was a fearful one. Among the common people there was still a great deal of paganism; the surviving fertility cults with their sexual rites and practices. Among the people in the court, the poets and writers, there was a great deal of cynicism and skepticism. The great poet of the court of Richard II was Chaucer. Although Chaucer echoes enough of the faith of the day, behind the façade of faith, there is a vein of cynicism in Chaucer. Basically, Chaucer shows that he believes more

in what he calls ‘the goddess Fortuna,’ a Roman goddess, than in the God of Scripture. Now, ‘Fortuna,’ ‘fortune,’ in English meant ‘fortune’ or ‘chance,’ ‘luck’ or ‘chance.’ It was very clear that luck or chance was more important in Chaucer’s thinking than God. Moreover, in one of his poems he says:

“A thousand times have I heard men tell
That there is joy in Heaven and pain in Hell,
And I do agree that it is so;
But nonetheless I well know also
That there is none dwelling in this country
That to Heaven or Hell has made journey”

That is, none has ever been in heaven or hell, so how do we really know this is true?

Into this age came a man, of whom we know less than we would like to know. We don’t know his birth date. It could have been any time from 1320 to 1328, he died in 1384: John Wycliff, a priest and mainly a scholar, an Oxford scholar. This was the era of the black death, the Plague. This was the era a few years before him in 1302, when Boniface VIII had issued to the Papal Bull UNAM SANCTAM, which declared the total claims of the papacy over church and state, over every area of life. Wycliff is best known for his translation of the Bible, which was done under his leadership by himself, and one or two associates in the years 1382 to 1384, the final version. He was spared in his lifetime, because there were a few powerful lords who, for their own reason, liked some of the things he had to say.

He had a great deal of hostility, as we shall see. After his death in 1428, his body was dug up and burned, at the orders of Pope Martin V. Before his death in 1382, twenty-four articles of Wycliff’s doctrine were condemned by the Archbishop of Canterbury and a group of churchmen who were loyal to the pope. A meeting was called (it really had no official status), in which the Archbishop made sure that only those who were loyal to the pope would be present and the twenty-four articles were cited and they were condemned. Now, I’m going to read these articles. One of them may be a surprise to you—we will come to it much later—but you will see how these were articles which Huss, John Huss, picked up in Bohemia; and then Luther from Huss and Cramer; then, from Luther. So, they returned to England much later.

1. That the material substance of bread and of wine remains, after the consecration, in the sacrament of the altar. (Denying transubstantiation)
2. That the accidents do not remain without the subject, after the consecration, in the same sacrament.
3. That Christ is not in the sacrament of the altar identically, truly and really in his proper corporeal presence.
4. That if a bishop or priest lives in mortal sin he does not ordain, or consecrate, or baptize.
5. That if a man has been truly repentant, all external confession is superfluous to him or useless.
6. That it is not founded in the gospel that Christ instituted the mass.
7. That God ought to be obedient to the devil.
8. That if the pope is fore-ordained to destruction and a wicked man, and therefore a member of the devil, no power has been given to him over the faithful of Christ by any one, unless perhaps by the Emperor.
9. That since Urban VI, no one is to be acknowledged as pope; but all are to live, in the way of the Greeks, under their own laws.
10. To assert that it is against sacred Scripture that men of the Church should have temporal possessions.
11. That no prelate ought to excommunicate any one unless he first knows that the man is excommunicated by God.

12. That a prelate thus excommunicating is thereby a heretic or excommunicate.
13. That a prelate excommunicating a clerk who has appealed to the king, or to a council of the kingdom, on that very account is a traitor to God, the king and the kingdom.
14. That those who neglect to preach, or to hear the word of God, or the gospel that is preached, because of the excommunication of men, are excommunicate, and in the day of judgment will be considered as traitors to God.
15. To assert that it is allowed to any one, whether a deacon or a priest, to preach the word of God, without the authority of the apostolic see, or of a Catholic bishop, or of some other which is sufficiently acknowledged.
16. To assert that no one is a civil lord, no one is a bishop, no one is a prelate, so long as he is in mortal sin.
17. That temporal lords may, at their own judgment, take away temporal goods from churchmen who are habitually delinquent; or that the people may, at their own judgment, correct delinquent lords.
18. That tithes are purely charity, and that parishoners may, on account of the sins of their curates, detain these and confer them on others at their will.
19. That special prayers applied to one person by prelates or religious persons, are of no more value to the same person than general prayers for others in a like position are to him.
20. That the very fact that any one enters upon any private religion whatever, renders him more unfitted and more incapable of observing the commandments of God.
21. That saints who have instituted any private religions whatever, as well of those having possessions as of mendicants, have sinned in thus instituting them.
22. That religious persons living in private religions are not of the Christian religion.
23. That friars should be required to gain their living by the labor of their hands and not by mendicancy. (Begging)
24. That a person giving alms to friars, or to a preaching friar, is excommunicate; also the one receiving.

Now, we shall return to the significance of these in a moment, as we develop the ideas of Wycliff; but you can see why in these articles that were condemned, they felt so strongly about Wycliff. He was striking at the foundations of the church, as it had developed.

Now, turning to Wycliff's thinking, first, with regard to the doctrine of grace. He emphatically declared that grace is the gift of God, and that it is grace that produces faith in us. Faith is not man's act, it is the gift of God and an aspect of grace. Moreover, he said, faith is not merely feeling; it is feeling and knowledge, so that one who is ignorant does not have faith, because knowledge is inseparable from faith. He denied the doctrine of the merits of the saints and the whole of the paraphernalia that was basic to the development of the church in his day.

Then, with regard to the Bible, he declared:

“Scripture alone is of absolute authority.”

Now, this was a revolutionary doctrine in his day, because one of the prominent doctors of divinity of his day, a friar, Brother Claxton, held:

“Holy Scripture is a false heresy.”

Well, that is shocking to us, but it does indicate how far the church had gone to disavow Scripture. So that, Wycliff said of the doctors and churchmen of his day:

“These modern satraps shut up the kingdom of heaven, because they persecute in many ways the

true meaning of holy Scripture and its professors, so that they say in the schools that holy Scripture is utterly false.”

Now, Wycliff knew what he was talking about, he was a ‘doctor,’ a professor at Oxford. Then he added:

“Therefore, they oppose the turning of the gospels into the vulgar tongue, so as to hide their baseness.”

They don’t want the Word of God translated, because it will reveal their wickedness.

Now, we come to a very important aspect of Wycliff’s doctrine. We’ll leave the Bible for a time, and we will return to it. You’ll see why the Bible was central to Wycliff’s system, when you understand his doctrine of dominion. This is so important and so revolutionary, that you can see why there was the horror of Wycliff down through the centuries as an anarchist, a communist; every kind of name was applied to him.

As a matter of fact, Wycliff is still popular with some radicals, who don’t know much about him, because they say he was a communist; after all, he was accused so much of being that, they’re sure he must have been one.

What was Wycliff’s doctrine of dominion, or lordship? The word, ‘dominion,’ which he took over from the Latin, had at that time the double sense or meaning of ‘authority’ and ‘ownership.’ Now, God, Wycliff taught, is the universal ‘dominus’ the universal dominus, or Lord. All men, he said, hold all things as a feudal grant from God, a ‘beneficium.’ Again, a Latin legal term of the day. Now, you see, what Wycliff was doing was to take feudalism, which had real origins in Christian faith, and teach out of the language of feudalism the doctrine of Scripture: God is the Lord, the feudal Lord of all creation. All things are under Him; all men hold everything as a beneficium from God. Now, in feudalism, every beneficium implies a corresponding service; and if you do not discharge that service, you forfeit the beneficium. This was the legal theory of the Declaration of Independence. The Declaration of Independence is a good Wycliffite document, because the relationship of George III to the colonies was as a feudal lord, a feudal king. He had violated the charter therefore, he had forfeited his lordship. Now, this is what the Declaration of Independence is about: it’s good Wycliffite doctrine.

There’s one scholar, Paul, who wrote a book some years ago, in which he held that the Wycliffite influence was basic in the forming of the United States; and I would say there is good evidence for it. Now, if all men hold their beneficium from God; and every beneficium implies corresponding services to God and to men under you, bad men thus have no rightful possession of anything. That was Wycliff’s radical conclusion. Well, you can imagine the shock that kind of a doctrine carried! His answer, however, was not revolution, that is not the way. He said we must obey authorities, even if they are demonic. The godly must obey Satan here, God must obey the devil, as it were; the people, God, must obey the devil. And this got shortened into the popular expression of Wycliff’s position among the common people: “Well, in times like these, God must obey the devil.” This is what they meant by it.

Now, his thesis was; the way of God is not the way of the devil; force and revolution are not to be used. The wicked, he said, have power, but not dominion. Even tyrants have to be obeyed in the Lord; but when we obey these tyrants, we do it because they have power, and we know they do not have dominion, and we witness to them that they do not have dominion. In other words, they have neither ownership or authority; all they have is power. Well, what’s happened to dominion? Oh, said Wycliff, the righteous man has dominion, although he does not always have the power to put that into practice. Hear this sentence from him:

“Every righteous man is lord over the whole sensible world.”

He has the dominion, and therefore, he has a duty under God to reorder, to reconstruct all things in terms of rightful dominion. Now, how does he do that? Well, Wycliff, as we saw, was the translator of the Bible. His word for the Bible, he didn't say Scripture; he didn't say Holy Bible, he said 'God's Law,' or 'God's law-book.' That was his term for the Bible; God's Law. To disregard the law of God was to forfeit dominion.

Therefore it was necessary to know the Bible, the law of God. When he issued his Bible, he wrote a preface to it, and this is what he declared:

“This book is for the government of the people, by the people, and for the people.”

You've heard that, haven't you? It was stolen, without credit, and misused by Abraham Lincoln, because he dropped God's law from the picture in his use of it. I don't know whether Bob Ingram knows it, but he's a good Wycliffite, and his book is a good Wycliffite book. But you can see the point. This is why Wycliff dedicated himself to getting the Bible out in the language of the people, because it was his calling, he felt, to get that word out, so that the people could exercise dominion: “...the government of the people, by the people, and for the people.” How? In terms of God's Law. Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God, therefore, the gates of grace God opened up through His Word. Dominion was opened up by the Word, therefore to reconstruct society required the Word.

Thus, you have here John Wycliff, who has been called 'the Morning Star of the Reformation' by some. The man who preached salvation by the grace of God, and who also preached sanctification by the Law, declaring that: “this is the way, this is how we will rebuild England.” He held, moreover, to the doctrine of the sovereignty of God, as you would naturally expect, and to predestination. He was so anti-papal that he did hold to the supremacy of the king over the clergy, and to a churchly state. You might say that the church of England, as it was set up under Henry VIII and Edward VI, is a Wycliffite-type of institution. Now, how much Wycliff was responsible for that, we don't know. His influence has never been properly studied. But John Wycliff had very definitely unleashed something. He began a movement that called for the reordering of all things, in terms of the law of God; that declared authority and ownership, rested in grace; and that dominion belonged to those who were the saints of God: “every righteous man is lord over the whole sensible world.” In other words, what he was saying is that Christ is King of creation and king over the earth; and we are heirs in Christ. Every righteous man, therefore, is lord over the whole sensible world. He cannot exercise that dominion apart from Scripture.

The remarkable thing is that although within a generation the Wycliff influence died, as far as scholars were concerned, and the nobility, it persisted. In the next generation, Sir John Oldcastle, one of the nobility, led a rebellion. He was a Wycliff follower, but he was not obeying Wycliff in this respect, and they were badly defeated, and the Wycliffite influence was wiped out, as far as the nobility and the clergy were concerned. Besides, neither the nobility nor the clergy liked the idea of dominion being forfeited by bad character, because a good character was a rarity among them. But what happened was this; a movement developed called the 'Lollards' movement. It's not what they called themselves. They were the people of God; but the Lollards went down to the lowest level with the Bible, and they circulated the Bible. They were down on the lowest level, so that they were virtually unknown to the king and his court, and to the bishops and archbishops. They vaguely knew that there was Lollardism somewhere down in the lower levels, but it wasn't anything they could touch.

It went into Scotland, also, and it paved the way for the Reformation in Scotland. In fact, the first

Scottish translation of the Bible was simply a translation of a Wycliff Bible. They were poor people, and they didn't know the original languages; but they had Wycliff's Bible, and they translated it into Gaelic for the Scotch people. It was a secret movement, it persisted from the 1300's on, century in and out. It had a powerful influence on Puritanism. It had a powerful influence on Scotland and the Scottish Reformation. There are those who hold that it had a powerful influence on the forming of America. People were aware of its existence. The only time they concerned themselves with it was when occasionally someone or people of any consequence would become involved in it.

In the century after Thomas Hoccleve, the poet, in a course of an anti-Lollard poem, wrote, as follows:

“Hit is unkindly for a knight
that should a king's castle keep,
to babble the Bible day and night,
in resting time, when he should sleep.”

It was regarded as something beneath the dignity of a knight or a gentleman to have anything to do with the Bible and with Lollard ideas; but it did not perish. It is still with us today.

Thus, in an era of social ferment, the black death, revolution, tremendous upheavals in England and abroad, Wycliff's answer was; dominion, by means of God's Law, the Scripture. Give the Scripture to the people that the grace of God may work in their hearts unto salvation and then, by means of God's law-Word, they may exercise dominion and establish, thereby, a Christian renewal.

We owe so much to Wycliff. His emphasis on God's law was very important to the idea of supremacy of law. He was a great contributor to that principle. We are, all of us, here today spiritual heirs of John Wycliff. The future belongs to him. There is no question, but while there are, perhaps, details in the system of John Wycliff that we could not agree with, because he was talking in the language of the day, and some of the scholastic realism (we won't bother to go into it) sometimes influenced his language and his thinking. In the essentials, Wycliff was right. And if there's any future for man, and under God, we believe that the future is ours, under God, it will be in terms of the kind of thinking John Wycliff did.

Let us pray. Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of thy grace and mercy has raised up men like John Wycliff, we give thanks unto thee, that thy Word spoken through him does not return unto thee void, but shall accomplish thine ordained purpose, that the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ. We thank thee, our Father, that though the wicked in our day have power, great power, they have neither lordship, authority, nor ownership, that these things are ours in Christ Jesus. Make us bold, therefore, to claim our inheritance in His name, and to shake the things that are, so that the things which cannot be shaken might remain. Thou hast given unto us, O Lord, thy Word, the Word that shook us and made us in Jesus Christ a new people, and the Word that shall shake this generation and the generations to come. We wait on thee, our Father, and we act in terms of thy calling. In Jesus' name, amen.

ENDNOTES:

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3. Geoffrey Chaucer. The Legend of Good Women. Edited by Walter W. Skeat. Oxford: Clarendon

Press, 1889.

4. That is, begging.

5. Edward P. Cheney, ed. "England in the Time of Wycliffe." In *Translations and Reprints from the Original Sources of European History*, Vol. Volume 2. Philadelphia: The Department of History of the University of Pennsylvania, 1897, 9-11.

6. "And Scripture alone and exclusively has this importance and authority for the Church—a doctrine which corresponds almost literally with the motto of the German Reformation, *verbo solo*, the Word alone. To Scripture alone, therefore, is the prerogative ascribed of 'authenticity.'" Gotthard Victor Lechler. *John Wycliffe and His English Precursors*. Translated by Peter Lorimer. Vol. Volume 2. London: C. Kegan Paul & Co., 1878, 22.

7. Cited in; Margaret Deansley. *The Lollard Bible and Other Medieval Biblical Versions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1920, 242.

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King Richard III

R.J. Rushdoony

Our Lord and our God, we give thanks unto thee that all the days of our life are circumscribed by thy grace, that underneath all the experiences of life are thine everlasting arms. We thank thee, our Father, that the events of our time, chaotic though they may seem to our eyes, are part of thy perfect and all-wise plan. Teach us, therefore, so to walk day by day, that we may ever be mindful of thy government, with certainty of thy grace, the inescapableness of thy victory, and the glories of thy government. Grant that in all things, our Father, our hearts be surely fixed there where our true joys are to be found, even in Jesus Christ our Lord. In his name we pray, amen.

As we study the development of a movement of reconstruction in English history, we began with John Wycliff and his concept of 'dominion,' and its importance to our day. Tonight, we go to the reign of Richard III. Richard III is a loser, as it were, on the scene of history, and losers do not generally get a fair representation from the historians. The winners have a habit of rewriting history, of destroying many documents, of trying to give a picture which will conform to their particular purpose. Some of you may have noticed Sunday in the Los Angeles Times a long review of a new biography of Napoleon. The biography is by an Englishman, who says that Napoleon's wars were defensive, that he was a man of integrity and of character, a very great man. The reviewer admits the evidence is very good, but he still finds it difficult to accept that picture; and yet, it is not a new account.

One of the best things ever written by anyone on Napoleon was a four-volume study of his life written a hundred years ago by an American, Abbott. Many years ago, another Englishman, McNair Wilson, wrote a very fine and appreciative work on Napoleon. But Napoleon, you see, lost; and every kind of filth was invented to blacken him, in order to justify the Bourbon who succeeded him and was, himself, a scoundrel; and, therefore, the facts have trouble overcoming the propaganda.

More recently, we have a picture of Nicholas II, Czar of Russia, which is largely myth. Some accounts have pointed out how much progress there was in his reign. There were problems, there were mistakes; but all the same, there was a middle class developing. Industry was developing, the farmers were making great strides. It was a time of real advance; but to read the history books, Nicholas was nothing but a fumbling fool, and his regime a time of unrelieved darkness.

But perhaps no one has ever fared worse than Richard III. After all, he goes further back. And it was so important for Henry VII, the father of Henry VIII, who succeeded Richard III, to blacken Richard, because Richard was still throughout his reign popular with the common people. And so he got his associates, men like Sir Thomas More and others to invent histories of the reign of Richard III, which blackened him thoroughly. Then, these propaganda pieces were picked up in a series that a playwright did on English royalty, which was totally Tudor in its emphasis; and the stereotype image of Richard has stayed with us. The man who did it was Shakespeare. His play, 'Richard III,' is the classic play of a villain. Everything except the twirling mustache is there, and some of the plays of the last century added to that. His 'Richard III' is a murderous, brutal villain who enjoys murder, enjoys plotting and killing, who gloats over his villainies, and who dies crying: "A horse, a horse, my kingdom for a horse!" He's been for a few centuries the favorite villain of all stagegoers, and of students of drama.

The sad fact is that, contrary to Shakespeare, Richard III was not a tyrant, he was not a murderer, he

was not a villain, and he was not a hunchback. They vilified him so thoroughly that he is spoken of from the days of Henry VII on, and Henry VIII especially, as a 'crook back,' which he was not. He was, in fact, a very sensitive man who died when he was barely thirty-three. Who was of very slight frame and appeared to be more a scholar than a warrior, although from the time he was barely in his teens, he was in the saddle and was one of his brother's great generals.

His brother, Edward IV, was a remarkable monarch. He was handsome, commanding in appearance, six-feet-four in size, and quite a domineering figure. And it's ironic that his brother, who was a full twelve inches shorter than he was his great general. 'Small Richard,' his kid brother, many years younger than he, was the general who was so important to everything that Edward IV did. It's an ironic fact: Richard; small, sensitive, given to reading and studying, giving all the appearance of a book-worm. Also he had contracted some ailment as a young man, which left one hand somewhat crippled. Perhaps it was polio, we don't know enough about things in those days; anything except the picture of a soldier; and yet a very commanding and brilliant general. So that, without him, his brother would have never succeeded.

The irony of it is, there was another brother, George, Duke of Clarence, who was, like Edward the king, a tall, handsome figure. In fact, he was so handsome and so commanding of appearance, so persuasive at oratory that he was a continual problem, because he could lead people in any direction. He was also a very vicious, untrustworthy person, because he had become, more or less, an alcoholic. He finally had to be executed by Edward IV. His execution, which was thoroughly justified for treason, was (we are told, but there's no way of knowing) by being drowned in a barrel of wine, which was the way he had apparently indicated he would like to go, and have his fill of it.

Now, what was the situation and the setting when Richard III came to the throne? The long War of the Roses was tearing England apart. The War of the Roses was the conflict between two powerful families in England, who were very closely related, who were cousins and were both of royal blood, each claiming the right to the crown. The white rose was the emblem of the House of York. The red rose, later, with Henry Tudor, became the emblem of the House of Lancaster. Both were descended from Edward III, who was king of England from 1327 to 1377. Now, after Edward III, the kingdom had a contested succession. Edward III had three sons. He was of the House of Lancaster. One son was John of Gaunt, who married Blanche of Lancaster; another son was Edmund, Duke of York; and a third son was Lionel, Duke of Clarence. None of these ascended to the throne; but his grandson, who was born of John of Gaunt, ascended as Henry IV. He was succeeded by Henry V, who was succeeded by Henry VI.

Meanwhile, a marriage had been contracted by Henry V with the daughter of Charles VI of France. All this is perhaps confusing and a bit tiresome, but it's to set the stage for what happened. The marriage with France introduced into the royal family the diseased and defective blood of the French line; and as a result, Henry VI was a totally incompetent monarch. He was feeble of mind. He was barely capable of marriage; he was married to Margaret of Anjou, who was a very strong-willed, powerful woman, who really ruled the realm, and ruled it very badly.

Henry VI was a kindly person, although very feeble of mind. He spent most of his time with monks and priests, and endless hours in praying. There were times when he was not at all in his right mind. When he was, he was almost childish in his devotion to the faith, very superstitious, something of a problem for the ladies of the court, because if any one of them came with a dress that was even slightly low-cut, he would go up in smoke and say: "Oh, for shame, for shame, for shame," and run away and hide in the corner. He was quite an embarrassment to all the men of the court, because he was guilty of such naïve and childish things upon every occasion. Finally, Henry was so incompetent that there was no possibility there.

At any rate, to make a long story short, the kingdom was falling into anarchy, and at this point, it became necessary for the nearest relative and next in line, Edward IV, to take over. Henry V, Henry VI represented total incompetence. The realm was falling apart, and Edward IV of the House of York took over, and he reigned from 1461 to 1483. I mentioned Edward IV earlier, as the brother of Richard III.

Now, Edward IV was, on the whole, a very superior king, one of the finer kings of England. The weakness of Edward, as we shall come to subsequently, was in his marriage. The times, however, were very, very much times of transition. The old feudal loyalties were gone; feudalism had died. Now, we still have feudalism to this day in the structural aspect. The county form of government is an aspect of feudalism. But as far as the spirit of feudalism, the old loyalty between a lord and his people, and his watchfulness over them, it was gone. The Renaissance had taken the place of Catholic Europe and feudalism; and the Renaissance was now in full power.

When we were dealing with world history, we discussed the Renaissance at some length, and I pointed out how totally humanistic it was. The result in England was a non-religious emphasis in church and state. The churchmen were not concerned with the faith. Men and state were totally amoral and ruthless. Moreover, the Renaissance was characterized by refinement and cruelty, combined in the same person. A refinement in taste, a refinement in manners, a refinement in everyday living, combined with the most ruthless kind of cruelty.

When we think of brutality and cruelty and torture, we must remember that we're thinking primarily of what the Renaissance developed. There was some of this in the medieval period, but it became routine and commonplace in the Renaissance. For example, John Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester, the constable of England, was one of the great Renaissance figures in England at the time. He had traveled to Jerusalem, to Venice, to Florence and Rome. He had studied at Padua. He brought back to England a cargo of manuscripts of ancient and classical writers. He, himself, translated many Latin works; and Caxton, who had begun his career at that time, printed two of his translations. And yet, he was rightfully called 'the butcher of England.' He thought nothing of submitting men to the most brutal and inhuman tortures, and priding himself on the refinement with which he did it. And no torture of any man could move him in the slightest; but he was quite likely to weep, if one of his ancient manuscripts were carelessly torn by someone. He, himself, was executed in 1470 by Edward IV, and he went to his execution by behaving very coolly, and he asked the executioner to perform his office of beheading with three strokes, in honor of the Trinity, he said.

It was a time, also, of great wealth and poverty. The lords were Renaissance lords. They prided themselves on being wealthy and powerful, even though it meant grinding the peasants to nothingness. In old England, the peasantry had a relatively good life, considering the times. Now, they were being bled white by the lords. In the previous century in the days of Wycliff, there had been the rebellion under John Ball and Wat Tyler, and after that under Sir John Oldcastle. But now, the backbone of all rebellion had been crushed out of the people, and the oppression was extreme.

How wealthy these lords were can be gauged by the life of the Earl of Warwick, the most powerful of them, a fairly modern figure called 'the kingmaker,' and a thoroughly Renaissance figure. I'd like to read from a modern historian's account, Paul Murray Kendall's account of the Earl of Warwick. He has a book out on Warwick, as well. He was of the House of Neville:

"The Earl of Warwick, lived more intensely than most men, by his vision of himself and the reflection of that vision in the eyes of others. Heir though he was, in so many ways, to the arrogant, king-rivaling barons of the past, the hazy picture he drew of his place in the world was tinged with the colors of a coming age. It was magnificence he groped for as much as power, a many-faceted excellence which

would catch the light of admiration from every direction. Having put Edward (Edward IV) on the throne, as he conceived (that is, he thought he had), by his conquering sword, he delighted in clapping harness on his back at all hours to keep him there. He was equally zealous to play the master statesman, and let foreign kings behold his greatness; and he must be bountiful, too, as he hoped to be loved beyond the limits of ordinary acclaim.

His castles were thronged with retainers, tenants, suitors.

At his London inn there might be as many as six oxen [steers] roasted for a breakfast; anyone who was acquainted with a member of his household was permitted to carry away as much meat from the Earl's kitchens as he could thrust upon a long dagger.

When the Earl rode through the streets of London or passed through villages on errands of diplomacy or war, crowds of people cried "Warwick! Warwick!" as if he were a deity dropped from the skies. No one was so splendidly arrayed as he, and none bowed so low in courteous salutation to the meanest bystander who would shout a greeting. He perpetually wooed the world, and for a time, he won it. He was indeed genuinely amiable, generous, abounding in energy. Small wonder that he had deeply impressed one frail and earnest apprentice in knighthood who dwelt for a time in his castle at Middleham. Yet, the Earl's charm and élan, the grandeur of his estates and offices, and the smile of fortune had hitherto concealed his serious disabilities. His genius was a plant that could only flower in the noonday sun; the wintry touch of adversity caused it to shrivel."

This was characteristic of the Renaissance figures. They were playing for a stage; and if they didn't have the applause of people, they would become paralyzed and afraid. Let me read further of a banquet held by the Earl of Warwick for King Edward:

"The banquet itself was one of the most sumptuous of the age, proclaiming the undiminished opulence of the Nevilles and pointedly exceeding the splendor of King Edward. The great Earl himself performed the office of steward, and brother John of Northumberland, that of treasurer, while Hastings, Edward's Lord Chamberlain, was comptroller. Sixty-two cooks laboured to prepare 104 oxen, 6 wild bulls, some 4,000 sheep, calves, and pigs, 500 stags, 400 swans, and a galaxy of other meats, which guests by the thousands— some 6,000 according to report— washed down with 300 tuns of ale, 100 tuns of wine, and a pipe of yprocas. Then came 13,000 sweet dishes followed by an array of 'sotelties', one of which depicted Samson pulling down the pillars. Well might this extravagant display suggest to the guests that the destiny of England laid with the House of Neville."

You can see how the people were poor, when they had lords milking them to live in that kind of extravagance. I might add the Earl of Warwick ended up dead when he reached a little too high, and his naked body was dragged in front of the cathedral.

Thus, it was a time of unconcern for the peasantry. It was also a time of religious decline. The monasteries and the convents, which had long been the bulwark of the common people in their charity and their concern, were now places of great wealth and unconcern for the people. There were perhaps six thousand monks and two thousand nuns in the kingdom. And the convents and monasteries had become centers of wealth. The church owned about a third of England. Earlier, it had used the income for welfare purposes, but now, it was just building up its own power. And if you were a wealthy widow or bachelor, or a wealthy widower, you could go and reside in a convent or monastery, and have the monks and nuns your servants; and have all kinds of catering at your whim. You could have your hunting dogs and your servants, your entire retinue there; and live the life of Riley with your boyfriend, or a mistress. This was on the condition, of course, that after you died, having been so lavishly entertained, your property would go to the convent or the monastery. And so, the monks and the nuns

were becoming more concerned with doing this kind of thing and gaining, thereby, than in serving their purposes.

Edward IV, I said earlier, was a wise king, but he was a foolish lover. First of all, he had married and, as it later came out, illegally; so it was not a legitimate marriage, although his wife thought it was; Elizabeth Woodville. Now Elizabeth Woodville was the last person he should have married. She was a beautiful woman, but the Woodvilles were an ambitious family. They were on the Lancaster side, and his enemies, and they ruled the realm. Through Queen Elizabeth, who controlled Edward, and supplied him with all kinds of girls and women to keep him sexually happy, they got their way. The only thing Queen Elizabeth did not tolerate was any attachment to one woman. The idea was to keep him continually titillated with a procession of them; and the one she resented was Jane Shore, famous in history, who became his mistress for the time. When Edward woke up to what was going on and how thoroughly his kingdom was being gutted by his wife, and how thoroughly his court was saturated by these people, it was much too late to act. And in despair, he lost all will to live, and simply curled up and died, as it were. There's no known reason for his death, except, as people of the day themselves said, the king suddenly seemed to have no desire to live and seemed totally despairing of everything that he had done.

He left two small sons, Edward VI and Richard, named after his brother. He left as their guardian his brother, Richard, Duke of York, who subsequently became Richard III. Richard III had to make a race for London to gain control of his nephews, because the queen and all the Woodvilles were going to set aside Edward's request, and rule the kingdom themselves, which would have meant sure anarchy and possibly foreign invasion. However, after he gained power, he found out from the Woodvilles, themselves, as some of the factions began to quarrel, some aspects of his brother's private life that he had not known, because his brother was some years older than he, and Richard had been a small boy when his father was a man; namely, that the marriage to Elizabeth Woodville was not legal. Therefore, young Edward VI was a bastard, and, according to English law, not entitled to the throne. There was a great deal of soul-searching on Richard's part; and, after considerable counseling with some of the men of the realm, he then took over as the next legitimate heir, and in 1483 became king of England.

Now, at this point, comes in the story of villainy and the charge against Richard that he supposedly murdered his two nephews. The evidence against this is nonexistent. No court of law could even hear a charge against Richard III. There were two other men who could have done it. In fact, Richard was not even in London, he was up in York at the time it was supposedly done; of course, he could have asked someone to do it for him. The other two who could have done it were Buckingham, the Duke of Buckingham, or Henry Tudor, Henry VII, on orders from above. Now, the curious fact is that they were supposedly killed 1483 to '84. And yet the significant fact is that their mother, Elizabeth Woodville, trusted herself and her person to Richard III after the supposed murder, and did not apparently believe that they had been murdered, or knew that they had not been, in spite of the common story. She regarded Richard as trustworthy, although she was opposed to him. She felt she could trust herself and her daughters more safely to Richard III, than to her own family. This is a very significant point.

After Richard III died, she then had her daughter, Elizabeth Woodville, named after herself, married to Henry Tudor, whereby he made himself, as it were, the heir. But after the marriage, she found out something that made her turn on her son-in-law; and he turned on her and stripped her of all her possessions, and confined her under guard for the rest of her life. And the supposition is she found out who was responsible at a much later date for the murder of her two sons. So, everything in the behavior of the mother, Elizabeth Woodville, indicates that she knew it was not Richard; so that, not only all the evidence we have does not point to Richard, but very definitely, the conduct of the mother of the two princes indicates that she knew it was not Richard; and it was probably someone acting at the order of Henry Tudor, later Henry VII.

Now, let's turn to the reign of Richard III. We've been preparing the stage for it, because it's important to understand what it was and when it came. We've seen a long period of trouble, of conflict, with the crown going back and forth between the Houses of York and Lancaster; a great deal of unrest, the people being ground down, the breakup of feudalism. And now, Richard III comes to the throne, and with his program to make the law of God the law of the realm, fully. This is a surprising thing; Christian reconstruction. What does he do? He immediately begins to pass laws that will make the law of God mandatory in the realm.

Now, I'm going to read you a statement from Charles Knight, a historian, who believes that he was a villain, that Richard was a villain. And yet, in the course of repeating all the propaganda the Tudor historians gave out, this is what he says:

"A great legal authority looking at these acts of Richard III, fifteen altogether, may say of this, his only parliament, 'We have no difficulty in pronouncing it the most meritorious national council for protecting the liberty of the subject and putting down abuses in the administration of justice, which have sat since the time of Edward I.' But in opening the volumes of our laws, as furthered by authority 'from original records and authentic manuscripts,' we are struck with a change upon the face of these statutes of Richard III, which indicates as true a regard for the liberty of the subject of the laws themselves. For the first time, the laws to be obeyed by the English people are enacted in the English tongue. But, beyond this, they are the first laws which were ever printed."

And he goes on to say not only were they remarkable, and that they were geared for the understanding of the common man, but the laws strictly forbade anyone from tampering with printing and the dissemination of knowledge.

Another very interesting thing, since Richard III was killed, and everything he had confiscated and scattered, it's very difficult to find any of his personal effects and papers. But something was discovered, not too many years ago, which had his signature, and it's been authenticated by every historian, and it was very obviously his, no doubt about it. What was it? It was a copy of John Wycliff's translation of the New Testament, and it shows obvious use. Now, what Richard III did was this; to apply God's Law, the law of scripture, to the land; to cut back all the abuses by the nobility, but to tell the nobility: "I am going to make each of you the source of justice in your realm. Too much power has been concentrated in the central government. The development for the last century or two has been concentrating power in London, and we've got to break this. So, I want each of you to become the ruler in his particular area, the dispenser of justice, and I will be the Supreme Court, as it were." And he made himself that. The commonest man in England found that if he was not getting justice from a local court or from a local lord, he could appeal to the king, and the king would hear him. The king, in fact, was not in London very often; he was on horseback touring the kingdom continually to see that justice was done.

Moreover, he was enacting legislation to further the middle class, the mercantile element. So that he was at one and the same time making justice again possible for the common man, so that for a period of five or six centuries, the common man in England never had it so good as he did in the three years under King Richard. But he also was laying the foundation for the future power of the middle class in England.

Then, he was making sure that the taxation was equitable, and that it was not a one-way street to the crown. In fact, he kept turning back funds from city after city to the cities, and living off of his estates at York, that the power would not be concentrated in his person and in the office of king. In three years, he established godly government and justice. He chose the ablest men of the realm for his

council. He worked to reform the church, so you had the ironic fact that the king was the real preacher. He was preaching to the churchmen continually, pleading with them, to be godly, to conform themselves to the Word of God. He, himself, in his behavior was very much a Puritan, and was spoken of as being such. When he had been very young in his early teens, he had been involved in an affair with a woman, by whom he had two sons. It was the only affair in his life. When he married Anne, his wife, he was absolutely faithful to her and exemplary in his conduct. He never disavowed the two illegitimate sons. He spoke very humbly of his earlier sins. He continually preached morality and the integrity of the family to his kingdom, so that he was not only a king who dispensed justice, but he was, in a sense, a teaching king and a scholarly king.

The result was that England was again becoming strong, as it had not been for some time. And, as a result, some of the continental powers, especially in France, began to conspire against his regime, using Henry Tudor. Now, Henry Tudor, later Henry VII, was legally not eligible for the kingship, because he was on both sides, on his mother's side and his father's side back a generation or so, doubly a bastard. This was strictly forbidden that anyone of a tainted inheritance to become king. However, Henry Tudor had a very powerful factor on his side; the Lancasters had no other champion, so they chose him. On top of that, his mother was now married to Lord Stanley, a very powerful lord. Richard III did everything to try to wean Lord Stanley over his side, and conferred great honor and authority and wealth upon him, but none of it worked. An invasion by Henry Tudor was made. There was no response by the people. No one rallied to Henry's side, but Richard III was very bitterly hurt and disillusioned. Everyone decided to sit on the sidelines.

Meanwhile, Richard, himself had been struck with tragedy. His son, a very fine boy, had died. His wife, Queen Anne, also died. He was all alone. He saw no one to carry on the work he had done, because his closest relatives were, in effect, strangers to his heart and to his purpose. And so, he felt hopeless, and without hope, no man really can live; and to be alone, as he was, was a bitter fate.

Now, if Richard III had done nothing but stay in London and postponed battle for two years, Henry VII would have gotten nowhere, he would have had no popular support; his support from abroad would have gradually dwindled away, and he would have had to run for his life. But Richard III, lonely and feeling hopeless, because there was no one to carry on his work, even though he was young, only going on thirty-three, feeling very old, because he had been in the saddle as a warrior before he was quite 13, decided to risk everything in battle. And so he rallied his men of York and went against Henry Tudor. When he went to the place of battle where the two armies were to meet, Bosworth Field, he found four other armies there, four powerful lords; Northumberland, Stanley, and others, all waiting around like vultures to join in when they saw which way the battle was going. Richard III called his men together, and he told them: "Old England is dead. If I lose, all the old liberties of Englishmen are gone for generations to come,"—as they were, until Cromwell, and after. "And if I win," he said, "it will not be the same, either, because I will deal with a ruthless hand with the laws of the land." And he went into battle. Things were going very much his way, and he made a sudden charge on Henry Tudor and caught him by surprise; and was within a hair's breadth of killing Henry Tudor himself, when Lord Stanley, Henry Tudor's stepfather, decided to bring his army into the battle in favor of his stepson. And at that point, with this third army charging in, and Northumberland deciding if that's the way it goes, he charging in also, the battle was lost within a hair's breadth of victory. And Richard III was slain, his body stripped naked, tossed over his horse, and taken naked to town. His reign was like that of another young king, King Josiah, of the Bible, who in Jeremiah, who had worked with him, warned him against going to fight with Pharaoh, it was not the Lord's will, went all the same, because he saw the hopelessness of trying to convince the leaders of Judea of God's cause.

Henry Tudor, who had the tainted blood that Henry VI and Henry V had, a strain of very real madness, ascended the throne; and the totalitarian regime began, which was carried on in the realm of Henry

VIII. And it was only finally by the destruction of the Tudor/Stuart line that the people of England were able to reclaim their old liberties. The memory of Richard lingered for a long time among the common people. Henry VII had trouble throughout his reign, because, while the common people were unable to do anything in the way of armed revolt, they insisted on maintaining their respect and loyalty for their champion. Some of the cities where, because the middle classes were in power there and they had profited by Richard III's justice, some of those cities also markedly maintained their loyalty. But the attempt, the last attempt in Catholic Europe, to establish Christian reconstruction in terms of God's Word had ended; but it was not finished. The circulation of Wycliff's Bible continued underground, and it was to come into the open in another century or more, when a great attempt was made again to reestablish England, and to reconstruct it in terms of the Word of God.

Let us bow our heads now in prayer. Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, we thank thee that in every age thou hast had thy witness, and thou hath accomplished thy purpose; that thou art like a master-weaver, weaving together the warp and woof of history in terms of thy sovereign purpose. Teach us, therefore, to walk in terms of thy Word, and in terms of thy calling, that we may be more than conquerors, through Jesus Christ our Lord. In His name we pray. Amen.

ENDNOTES:

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3. Knight, Sir Charles. The Popular History of England: An Illustrated History of Society and Government from the Earliest Period to Our Own Times, Vol. II- from the Reign of Richard II. to the Reign of Edward VI. London: Bradbury and Evans, 1862, 199, 200.

Oliver Cromwell

R.J. Rushdoony

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, Who, age after age, has raised up unto thyself men to serve Thee, we thank thee that the world is never without thy witness, nor without thy Word, nor without thy testimony; for the heavens declare the glory of thy creation and of thy handiwork. Guide us, our Father, day by day, that we may see, indeed, that thy purpose and thy plan is glorious; that thy Word never fails, but brings back unto thee that which thou dost purpose. Bless us, now, as we study the things of thy creation. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Tonight, we shall consider the era of Cromwell; and Cromwell's work, in terms of reconstruction. Most of you have been watching, I suspect, Henry VIII; and now, Elizabeth, the Queen. How many of you have, incidentally, been seeing that. Well, if you've missed it, you have missed a very well-done and accurate series on English history, and they are well worth seeing on the reruns. The Elizabeth series will finish this coming week.

The 16th Century, the era of Henry VIII and Elizabeth, was one of monetary inflation, not only in England, but all of Europe. It continued into the 17th Century. It was a time of dramatic changes and movements. The Reformation had been born, its influence was affecting all of North Europe and, of course, England. England was facing great internal changes because of the Puritan movement. As one historian, himself a Marxist, has commented:

“Dissent rooted in a century of Bible reading could not be easily crushed.”

A very interesting point! The very dedicated study of the Bible, and the study of the Bible, not merely as a devotional book, as you have in fundamental circles today, and in the Jesus movement and elsewhere. The study of the Bible as applicable to every area of life; to economics, to politics, to law, to every other area meant that there was a tremendous movement everywhere to change the things that are in terms of what God had decreed.

Thus, throughout the reign of Edward VI and Queen Elizabeth, the Puritan movement grew. In 1588, the Armada sent by Spain to conquer England, and to make it a Catholic nation was defeated. The long era of Catholic and Spanish plots against Elizabeth came to an end. This did not end Catholic conspiracies, but it meant that the power of the Catholic conspiracy in England was, to all practical intent, broken, because their bulwark, Spain, had been defeated. Spain never again had the same power internationally. Thus, with the defeat of the Spanish Armada, the entire European picture, the international scene, was drastically altered. It was comparable to what would happen tomorrow, internationally, if suddenly the Soviet Union were so thoroughly defeated that it would be virtually out of the picture as an international threat.

Now, the consequences of the defeat of the Armada were very dramatic within England, because now, the Puritans were no longer needed. This is something you don't get in the history books. But, the Puritans had been the backbone of the entire anti-Spanish movement. It was the Puritans who were the sea captains, who had been hitting the Spanish merchant vessels and the Spanish Fleet. It was the Puritans who were the ones who worked night and day to protect Queen Elizabeth, because they were

afraid that if she were killed, Mary, Queen of Scots, who was executed shortly before the Armada, would become the queen; and they distrusted her, with cause. It was the Puritans in every area who had been the powerful force, protecting and furthering Elizabeth's rule. They were powerful, they were independent, they were the dominant party in Parliament, and they were making themselves heard.

Now for some time, going back before Richard III and temporarily abated then, and coming to full force in Henry VII and Henry VIII, and from there on, you had a movement of raw absolutism. The old English liberties had virtually disappeared. Parliament had become a rubber stamp. But, under the Puritans, with their power dominating Parliament, Parliament was now refusing to be a rubber stamp; and this, Elizabeth did not like.

Now those of you who saw Elizabeth the Queen the last couple of times, the last couple of installments, saw a figure there very prominent; in fact, next to Elizabeth, the central character on the scene; Walsingham. Now, Walsingham was the man who, as one of her chief secretaries of state, was responsible for uncovering one Catholic plot after another against the life of Queen Elizabeth. It was Walsingham who uncovered the work of the priest, Ballard, who came into the country and set afoot the Babington plot to assassinate Queen Elizabeth and to put Mary, Queen of Scots on the throne. It was Walsingham who got the evidence on all of them, and on Queen Mary. None of this made Elizabeth grateful to Walsingham. As a matter of fact, Walsingham, who was a very scrupulously honest man, was never properly paid. Unlike any of the other men who served her (most of the others were lords), he served her with never a penny of the money he handled going into his pocket. He lived and died a poor man. In fact, he impoverished himself working to defend to Elizabeth's life, and to protect England from Spain, with hardly a "thank you" ever from Queen Elizabeth. He was so poor when he died that his wife had difficulty burying him and had to have a private service, because she could not afford any of the things that went with a proper burial. It is ironic that, to this day, although the textbooks recognize the importance of Walsingham as one of the men who was most instrumental in preserving England from becoming a Catholic province, to this day only one life of Walsingham has been produced that is in English.

But, with the defeat of the Armada, Elizabeth now could, in effect, kick the Puritans in the teeth. And James I, who succeeded her just a few years later, about fifteen years later, 1603 to 1625; the dates of his reign—was as anti-Puritan as could be. As a matter of fact, he instituted the policy of leniency for Catholics within the country, favoring them as against the Puritans, and a thoroughly pro-Spanish policy. Everything was now done to cater to the Spaniards, to the point where the Spanish ambassador had more power sometimes in England than Parliament.

There isn't anyone here who doesn't know the name of Sir Walter Raleigh. In 1618, Sir Walter Raleigh was executed, and yet Sir Walter Raleigh was the man who, not only had done a great deal at sea to defend the power of England, but had also done the first explorations of Guinea and South America, and claimed a vast segment of South America for the English crown, before the Spaniards had ever done so; and he fought to defend it. He defeated the Spaniards again and again, and so the Spanish ambassador went to James I with instructions from the King of Spain to ask for the execution of Sir Walter Raleigh; and that's why Sir Walter Raleigh had his head chopped off. Raleigh, although he was not a Puritan, was working along the lines of a Puritan policy; and it was now treated as treason. Everything was being done to cater to the country that a few years ago had tried to conquer them. As a matter of fact, James I actually sent a delegation to beg the King of Spain to give the Infanta, the princess, as a bride for Prince Charles. They were refused, and failing this, they went to France, another Catholic power, and there they found Henrietta Maria, who became the wife of Charles and queen, when Charles became Charles I.

This is why America was settled, incidentally. It was 1618 when Sir Walter Raleigh was executed, and

within a couple of years, the Puritans were moving to New England. They had begun to lose all hope, as far as England was concerned. Cromwell was among those who planned to go. Sir Henry Vane, one of the great leaders, did go for a time and returned later; but their hope of creating a Christian commonwealth, of re-establishing and developing ancient liberties of Englishmen were now gone. And they looked to America to build there, as they said: "a new Zion unto the Lord." England had become anti-Puritan, anti-Protestant, anti-middle class, anti-merchant; and parliament was, for many years, not even called to meet.

Of course, this is why to this day the Royalist cause is so popular with intellectuals and leftists; it was anti-Puritan and anti-middle class; and today, with your intellectuals being anti-Puritan and anti-middle class, quite naturally they glorify James, and especially Charles I. And yet, the sad fact is these monarchs, like most of the monarchs of the Old World between the latter part of the Middle Ages and the 20th century, because they practiced so much inbreeding; marrying cousins again and again and again, are sometimes not altogether bright, or all there; and seeds of very serious mental instability were passed down. Mary, Queen of Scots brought it over from France. She was half-French, and passed it on to her son, James I, Charles I. Of course, George III, a couple of centuries later came from such a long line of marriage of cousins that he spent much of his reign not knowing who he was, and his son, George IV, was very, very mentally unstable.

This kind of thing is not very often talked about; but in one case of one so-called very great king, he was not entirely house-broken when he was fifty and sixty years of age. And yet, men like this are glorified, rather than coming to the truthful facts with regard to the middle-classes, or Protestants, or Puritans, depending on the situation. Thus, the Royalist cause is popular to this day with many scholars, because it was anti-middle class and anti-Puritan. Moreover, it was the champion of humanism, the Royalist cause was, and of the Renaissance.

Now, to give you an idea of what monarchy meant then, let me quote from Hume's History of England, David Hume, the philosopher, and this is from Volume IV. He is writing here about Queen Elizabeth, with respect to the protests of the Puritan parliament against the monopoly she was granting:

"These grievances, the most intolerable for the present, and the most pernicious in their consequences that ever were known in any age, or under any government, had been mentioned in the last parliament; and a petition had even been presented to the queen complaining of her patents; but she still persisted in defending her monopolists against her people. A bill was now introduced into the lower house, abolishing all these monopolies; and as the former application had been unsuccessful, a law was insisted on as the only certain expedient for correcting these abuses: the courtiers, on the other hand, maintained that this matter regarded the prerogative; and that the commons could never hope for success, if they did not make application, in the most humble and respectful manner, to the queen's goodness and beneficence. The topics which were advanced in the house, and which came equally from the courtiers-and the country gentlemen, and were admitted by both, will appear the most extraordinary to such as are prepossessed with an idea of the privileges enjoyed by the people during that age, and of the liberty possessed under the administration of Elizabeth. It was asserted, that the queen inherited both an enlarging and a restraining power; by her prerogative she might set at liberty what was restrained by statute or otherwise; and by her prerogative she might restrain what was otherwise at liberty [no law could bind here, she was above the law]: that the royal prerogative was not to be canvassed, nor disputed, nor examined, and did not even admit of any limitation: that absolute princes, such as the sovereigns of England, were a species of divinity: that it was in vain to attempt tying the queen's hands by laws or statutes; since, by means of her dispensing power, she could loosen herself at pleasure: and that even if a clause should be annexed to a statute, excluding her dispensing power, she could first dispense with that clause, and then with the statute [this sounds like the Federal Register, doesn't it?]. After all this discourse, more worthy of a Turkish divan than of an English house

of commons, according to our present idea of this assembly, the queen, who perceived how odious monopolies had become, and what heats were likely to arise, sent for the speaker, and desired him to acquaint the house, that she would immediately cancel the most grievous and oppressive of these patents.

The house was struck with astonishment, and admiration, and gratitude, at this extraordinary instance of the queen's goodness and condescension. A member said [this was not a Puritan member], with tears in his eyes, that if a sentence of everlasting happiness had been pronounced in his favor, he could not have felt more joy than that with which he was at present overwhelmed: another observed, that this message from the sacred person of the queen was a kind of gospel or glad tidings, and ought to be received as such, and be written in the tablets of their hearts: and it was farther remarked, that in the same manner as the Deity would not give his glory to another, so the queen herself was the only agent in their present prosperity and happiness."

Now, consider what they were fighting against when this was the idea that had developed: that no law could bind the crown. If a man were convicted of murder, the king could set aside the sentence, or the queen. Or, if a person were declared innocent, the crown could step in and sentence them, in spite of that; the absolute power of the monarch. Now, this was the issue at stake.

Let's skip over some years, almost a century, to 1660, the year of the Restoration, when Charles II was brought back after Cromwell's death; and they tried those members of Parliament and of the court that had tried Charles I and executed him.

"The trial opened on Tuesday (October 9, 1660) with the presiding judge's charge to the jury. Bridgeman traced the legal position of the monarchy from the earliest times, showing that no single person or community of persons has any coercive power over the King of England; that the King was supreme Governor, subject to none but God, and could do no wrong, and that if he could do no wrong he could not be punished for any wrong."

Now, that was the thesis of the monarchy. Absolute power, in other words, had been transferred by the Renaissance and by humanism from God to man. This did not develop overnight, it began centuries earlier in the latter part of the Middle Ages. It developed in several fields; and we have it with us in all three.

First of all, it developed in the papacy. The popes began to declare themselves to be above all men, to be infallible, to have divine right over men; that what was decreed from the see of St. Peter was binding upon all men. This is, of course, the doctrine of papal infallibility. You had the same doctrine in the universities, as humanism took over there. They declared that the university and the scholar was beyond all law; neither church nor state could touch him, and they called this 'the doctrine of academic freedom,' which you still have. It is an assertion of the divine rights of the academy, of the university, beyond all law. No one can touch them. In fact, if they committed a crime, they were beyond church and state to touch them; only the academic senate could rule on a scholar; the divine right of the university and its scholars.

In the political realm, it was the doctrine of the divine right of kings. We saw Sunday morning, when we were going over again the doctrine of dominion, authority and ownership are aspects of dominion. And if dominion is transferred (final, absolute dominion) from God to man, then absolute authority is transferred to man, also; and it's just a question of argument who has it; the church, or the pope, or the state, or the university? And this is why, of course, in the church today, you have the kind of thing happening. Someone sent me something recently from a church that is supposed to be more conservative than most, where it was flatly stated that all members were bound to obey at all times authorities in the church. Nothing said about 'insofar as authorities in the church are obedient to God.' It was a flat

requirement of obedience. What is this, but a claim to divine right? Now, this is what humanism did; it transferred the rights of God to man.

And in England, what they had to fight was this claim on the part of the crown. As a matter of fact, the king was, you see, a religious figure. It was believed that his touch was healing; and annually, there was a day when people came to be touched by the king and healed. For example, on the week of Sunday, June 17, 1660, came Charles II, who had just returned to England. On Saturday, King Charles touched more than 600 persons in the banqueting hall, putting around the neck of each a white ribbon with an angel of gold on it. Supposedly, this had healing power, and, of course, that was a medallion like people get when they go to shrines in Catholic countries. They had come to the shrine, the king, because, he, having divine power could heal people, supposedly, by his touch.

Thus, the Civil War that arose in England had its roots in this fact. Did the old feudal concept of dominion beneficium still prevail? Was the crown still a feudal crown, holding it in terms of performing certain duties for the people of England as defender of the liberties of Englishmen? Cromwell, in 1653, said of the Civil War and the execution of the king:

“The king’s head was not taken off because he was king, nor the lords laid aside because they were lords, but because they did not perform their trust.”

Now, he was speaking as an old-fashioned Englishman there, as one who believed in the feudal laws of England and saw them as still relevant. This is why the civil war was fought: it was to re-establish godly law and order in England, as against a man-god on the throne.

Cromwell’s hope was to prepare the people for godly self-government; and he undertook the rule, he said, until:

“God may fit the people for such a thing, rescued as they have been so recently out of their thralldom and bondage under the royal power. This may be the door to usher in the things that God has promised; which have been prophesied of; which He set the hearts of his people to wait and expect. You are at the edge of promises and prophesies.”

This was the dream, shared not only by Cromwell, but countless numbers of people; that if the people would but press forward in terms of God’s Law, they could establish an order in which the promises of Deuteronomy 28 would be fulfilled; where England would indeed be a land blessed of the Lord.

England did prosper, mightily. It became for awhile under Cromwell the most powerful nation in Europe, for the first time in its history, not equaled again until the last century. Its army was so disciplined that, in a day when armies were rabbles in arms. When an army was disbanded, the country was afraid because the soldiers going home robbed and killed. They became beggars in the streets and highwaymen—all of ‘Oliver’s men,’ as they were called, were within a matter of days home and in gainful work. There was never a beggar seen from Oliver’s Army, nor a criminal. His army was never defeated after the first defeat, where he learned the art of war; he was just a country squire at the time. It was feared by all Europe.

Under Oliver’s rule, commerce prospered and science had its glorious beginning, so that within a decade or two, England became the center of science in the world. But Cromwell learned also very quickly, to his bitter disillusionment, the people want the results of a godly order; not the moral disciple that goes into it.

When he was going into one city in 1650 with Lambert, one of his associates, and the crowd was

cheering, Cromwell turned to Lambert, and he said:

“These very persons would shout as much, if you and I were going to be hanged.” Almost ten years later to the day, Lambert remembered that, when he was led into London to be tried and hung by Charles II.”

This was the thing that caused him to despair. The people wanted a godly order, but they did not want the moral discipline that went into it. And he had another problem; godly faith was declining. Calvinism was beginning to decline in England, even during the Puritan régime. The effect of humanism was saturating the country, because the one area where the change had not been made, where the reform had not been made, was education, and the universities continued as they had before, and they were turning out humanists.

It's very interesting a man who was not a Christian, a scholar, DP Walker, has written a book on the period called *The Decline of Hell*. And he said because of the growing humanism, people began to lose their faith in God and in judgment, and in Hell. And when they began to lose their belief in Hell, they began to think sin wasn't such a serious matter after all. What's a little adultery between friends, and what's a little graft, if you don't get caught? And this is what he says:

“Theories of democracy rose as hell declined.”

Everybody was just as good as everybody else, including the criminal. Sounds very modern, doesn't it?

And one of the interesting things about the whole Civil War era is this. First, it so savagely hated, Cromwell and the Puritans, by the scholars. And yet, a very interesting thing is that a number of Marxist scholars have become the greatest specialists on the period, especially the English Marxists. Some of them are very hostile to it, and some of them are very favorable to it, because, they say: “Look, they came close to making it work. Why it's the one time they set about to create an ideal order in the modern era, with social justice for everyone!” Now, we don't agree with their ideas, but they just about made it work; they really did make it work, and the people changed their mind and called the king back after Cromwell died. “What's the reason for it?” It's very interesting, therefore, to read what they say. In fact, these Marxists have a journal in England just dedicated to studies of Cromwell and the Puritans, trying to get to the root of it.

I'm going to read some remarks by one Marxist, who's very honest; and, at this point he drops his economic determinism and Marxism, because he does honestly account for it in terms of their theology. And this is what he says as to why it worked; and this is Christopher Hill, English Marxist:

“Predestination is at the heart of protestantism. Luther saw that it was the only guarantee of the Covenant. ‘For if you doubt, or disdain to know that God foreknows and wills all things, not contingently but necessarily and immutably, how can you believe confidently, trust to and depend upon his promises?’ Without predestination, ‘Christian faith is utterly destroyed, and the promises of God and the whole Gospel entirely fall to the ground: for the greatest and only consolation of Christians in their adversities is the knowing that God lies not, but does all things immutably, and that his will cannot be resisted, changed or hindered’. Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott. Luther declared that he would not have wanted free will, even if it could have been granted to him: only God can make salvation certain, for some if not for all? Indeed the whole point for Luther lies in the uniqueness of the elect. Once touched with divine grace they are differentiated from the mass of humanity: their consciousness of salvation will make them work consciously to glorify God. The psychological effects of this conscious segregation of a group from the mass is enormous.

Calvin went a step further and boldly proclaimed that God was useless to humanity unless he had knowable purposes which we can trust and with which we can cooperate. 'What avails it, in short, to know a God with whom we have nothing to do... How can the idea of God enter your mind without instantly giving rise to the thought that since you are his workmanship, you are bound, by the very law of creation, to submit to his authority?' 'Ignorance of Providence is the greatest of all miseries, and the knowledge of it the highest happiness.' Faith gives us 'sure certainty and complete security of mind', of a sort that is self-evident to those who possess it and inexplicable to those who do not.

Men have often commented on the apparent paradox of a predestinarian theological system producing in its adherents an emphasis on effort, on moral energy. One explanation that has been offered is that, for the Calvinist, faith revealed itself in works, and that therefore the only way in which an individual could be assured of his own salvation was by scrutinizing his behaviour carefully night and day to see whether he did in fact bring forth works worthy of salvation. It is by means of works performed through grace, in Calvin's view, that the elect 'make their calling sure, and, like trees, are judged by their fruits.' as Thomas Taylor put it.

Salvation, consciousness of election or predestination, consisted of the turning of the heart toward God. A man knew he was saved, because he felt, at some stage of his life an inner satisfaction, a glow, which told him that he was in direct communion with God. Cromwell was said to have died happy when assured that grace once known could never be lost: for once he had been in a state of grace. We are not dealing here with the mystical ecstasy of a recluse; we are dealing rather with the conscience of the average gentleman, merchant or artisan.

Professor Haller seems to me to have expressed this better than anyone else when he writes that the Puritan preachers were 'dealing with the psychological problems of a dissatisfied minority'; their object was 'to inject moral purpose into men who felt lost in moral confusion'. 'Men', he adds, 'who have assurance that they are to inherit heaven, have a way of presently taking possession of the earth.' This courage and confidence enabled them to fight, with economic, political or military weapons, to create a new world worthy of the God who had so signally blessed them: a world remoulded in their image, and therefore in his."

Now, I think this is a very interesting statement, because it so very definitely reflects, not a Christian perspective, but an outsider looking at it. Let me quote one more thing from this Marxist, just a few sentences:

"'The greater the trust, the greater the account,' Cromwell told Hammond; 'there is not rejoicing simply in a low or high estate, in riches or poverty, but only in the Lord.' In this sainthood of all believers the saints were perforce doers, not (for the best of them) in any calculation of reward for action, but simply because that was what being a saint meant. At Doomsday, Bunyan said, men will be asked not 'Did you believe?' but "Were you doers, or talkers only?" To be convinced that one was a soldier in God's army and to stand back from the fighting would have been a contradiction far less tolerable than that which philosophers have detected between individual freedom and divine predestination. Previous theologians had explained the world: for Puritans, the point was to change it.

'Duties are ours, events are the Lord's,' said Samuel Rutherford."

Now, in that next to the last sentence, did you recognize Karl Marx? Marx took up that sentence and said: "Up until now, the philosophers have been content to explain the world. It is their duty, rather, to change it." You see, they were imitating the Puritans. A very interesting thing is that Stalin knew a little

bit about English history, and what period did he know something about, the seventeenth Century and Cromwell. Here it worked. Why couldn't they make it work? And Stalin was very defensive about the fact he didn't have the results that Cromwell did. In other words, Marxism, with its economic determinism, was trying to ape the Puritan commonwealth and its results. The results were tremendous.

And the sad fact is, however, there was no one to carry on and to unite it when Cromwell died. England had never been so prosperous, nor so well-governed or law-abiding. But Cromwell, of his two sons, he left the rule to the one, who was the only one that was popular with the army and with parliament, but he was a mild-mannered young man, who simply wanted to live on his estate, and farm. The other son, who was very capable, none of them wanted. They didn't want a strong man, and as a result, the son to whom he left England resigned the power in a hurry. General Monck took over, and after a while, called in Charles II; and Charles II very quickly broke virtually all the promises that he had made.

And yet ten years before Cromwell, when someone had said to him, when he had said: "What are we going to do? These people are not yet ready to rule themselves, and parliament is just arguing back and forth, and it's all falling upon me;" someone said, "Well, couldn't you bring back Charles II?" Cromwell remarked, "He is so damnably debauched, he would undo us all. Give him a shoulder of mutton and a whore, that's all he cares for." And he was right. The reign of Charles II was a period of unbroken profligacy. The reputation of England sank to an all-time low. Charles II, himself, was in the pay of the country they were at war with part of the time. He was in the pay of Louis XIV. He was a traitor, acting as an agent of the French crown, so he could get enough funds to continue with his debauchery.

And it is interesting how the people very quickly, who had been so ready to shout and cheer when he returned, were disillusioned.

"Within a few years, not only Bristol Baptists were looking back nostalgically to those halcyon days of prosperity, liberty, and peace... those Oliverian days of liberty'. An unsentimental civil servant like Samuel Pepys, soon to be accused of papist leanings, recorded in July 1667 that: 'Everybody do now-a-days reflect upon Oliver and commend him, what brave things he did and made all the neighbour princes fear him.' Cromwell's former ambassador to France, Lockhart, whom Charles II also employed, 'found he had nothing of that regard that was paid him in Cromwell's time'. George Downing made a similar remark about the attitude of the Dutch to him, and the Ambassador of the Netherlands in 1672 told Charles II to his face that of course his country treated him differently from the Protector, for 'Cromwell was a great man, who made himself feared by land and by sea.' The common people were muttering similar things. "Was not Oliver's name dreadful to neighbour nations?" Lodowick Muggleton asked in 1665. Four years later an apothecary of Wolverhampton was in trouble for contrasting Cromwell's successful Dutch policy with Charles II's bungling. Nor was it only in foreign affairs that such contrasts could be made. Roger Boyle's biographer points out that the inefficiency of Charles II's government was such that 'despite the king's frequent efforts to reward him, Orrery was a richer man in the service of Cromwell than in the service of Charles I'. It is the sort of thing men notice. The odious comparisons had become so frequent that French and Italian visitors commented on them."

But, of course, what Cromwell had done, according to John Morley, was to destroy absolutism in both church and state; and as a result, he did lay the groundwork for the liberties that followed within a few generations, and that survived until World War I. Cromwell's death was a rather sad one, because he knew what the people were, and he knew that his work might not long endure. And yet, he died as a godly man. The Protector's ... and I quote from Blauvelt's study, "The Protector's mind was clear, and for himself, he was happy that he thought much about the country that he was leaving, about God's cause and God's people. On the night of August 31st, he was heard to pray, 'Lord, though I am a

miserable and wretched creature. I am in covenant with thee through grace, and I may I will come to thee for thy people. thou hast made me, though, very unworthy, a mean instrument to do them some good, and thee service; and many of them have set too high a value upon me, though others wish and would be glad of my death. Lord, however thou dost dispose of me, continue to go on and do good for them. Give them consistency of judgment, one heart and mutual love, and go on to deliver them; and with the work of Reformation, make the name of Christ glorious in the world. Teach those who look too much upon thine instruments to look more upon Thyself. Pardon such a desire to trample upon the dust of a poor worm, (speaking of his enemies) for they are thy people, too; and pardon the folly of this short prayer, even for Jesus Christ's sake; and give me a good night, if it be thy pleasure.' Less than four years ago, his mother's last words to him had been, 'My dear son, I leave my heart with thee; a good night.' On Thursday night, after nominating his successor, he was restless, but happy. 'God is good, indeed He is,' he was heard to say often, 'and once I would be willing to live to be further serviceable to God and His people, but my work is done. God will be with His people.' To one who would give Him a sleeping draught, he said, 'It is not my design to drink or to sleep, but my design is to make what haste I can to be gone.' Later he spoke some exceeding self-debasing words, annihilating and judging himself, mingled with broken texts, implying much consolation and peace. Toward morning, he fell into a coma; and between three and four in the afternoon, the crowd that waited for news at the palace gates were told that the Lord Protector was dead. Those sad eyes that once shed piercing sweetness were closed forever. It was the 3rd of September, the day of Dunbar and Worcester, his fortunate days. He had no more fortunate day than the 3rd of September, 1658, when he reached the bound of life, where he laid his burden down. He had been a good constable. He had kept the peace. He had saved England from anarchy. He had not hoped, he had said, to do much good, but only to prevent some evil; and he had done that. The old order of things in its general outline, at least, came back; and the short period of his power soon came to seem but a strange interlude in his country's story. But by his sword, he had saved parliamentary government. He had made absolute monarchy impossible in England. He had done it by force; but back of the force lay the will of the people of England; but the great thing to which he looked forward was a spiritualized England, an England in which all the people would be the Lord's people, and in which all the Lord's people would be prophets. Will England, or any other country, ever attain to that?"

They had come close. They had, in fact, succeeded to a great degree, but the people abandoned it and, within a year or two, were longing for the good old days of Oliver. As long as the early 1800's, according to the Anglican divine and poet, George Crabbe, the people in the rural village where he served and in other rural communities would say: "the good old days" or "Oliver's days." A long time had passed, almost two centuries, and it was still remembered as "the good days."

I said the Marxists in England have done more research into this era than any other, because it came so close, and, to a large degree, it succeeded. And yet, with all the volumes they have written and giving testimony, as Christopher Hill does to the fact that it was predestination, a faith in the sovereignty of God and in His Word, and God's law-order, the world under God's Law that was the bulwark of their power, they still looked for the answer somewhere else. But the work of reconstruction, to which Cromwell had dedicated himself, can only be accomplished in any age in only one way; under God, and in terms of His law-word. The world must be under God's Law. Let us pray.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, we thank thee that, though great men come and go, thou art the same yesterday, today, and forever. Thou changest not. And thy purpose for men and nations is the same: that the world should be under thee and thy Law. Thou hast called us. Thou hast predestined us, in terms of thy glorious purpose, that all these things be accomplished. Use us, O Lord, in terms of these things. And make us not talkers only, but doers of thy Word. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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3. Patrick Morrah, 1660: *The Year of Restoration* [Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1960], p. 184
4. Hill, Christopher. *God's Englishman*. London: History Book Club, 1970, 108.
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John Milton, I

R.J. Rushdoony

Let us begin with prayer. Almighty God, our heavenly Father, enable us by these, our sessions, to prepare ourselves better day by day for thy service, to know the direction of thy workings and the direction of our calling, that we might do those things which are acceptable in thy sight and which are necessary for thy kingdom's sake. Grant us this, we beseech thee. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Tonight, we begin our study of John Milton. We saw last week that a very serious weak link in the situation in England and, indeed, everywhere in every country affected by the Reformation was education. Having said this, we should qualify it with a statement that education was greatly furthered by the Reformation. Because the Reformers felt so strongly about knowledge of Scripture, they worked earnestly and intently to further education as much as possible. Puritanism in particular, was most dedicated to intensive and extensive education. But the weakness was that education was not Reformed. It was not rethought in terms of theological principles through and through.

The weakness of it is apparent in one of the great documents of the period, Milton's study titled *On Education*. Milton said it better than any of the others, but he summarized, really, in his own perspective the weaknesses of the reformed Reformation perspective. He declared in the beginning, and I think this is as good a statement on education as you can find anywhere:

“The end then of learning is to repair the ruins of our first parents by regaining to know God aright, and out of that knowledge to love him, to imitate him, to be like him, as we may the nearest by possessing our souls of true virtue, which being united to the heavenly grace of faith, makes up the highest perfection.”

What he is simply saying is that the purpose of education must be to undo the work of the fall of man, and to start man on the path of virtue, of doing all those things which God requires of him.

But the trouble then was that, as he began to outline this education, it was simply the old classical education. A heavy diet of Greek and Roman authors and of classical humanism. And this was the weakness of all the Reformers; and this was one of the reasons why very quickly the Reformation was undercut, because Protestantism emphasized education far more than Catholicism did. It always has. But it simply took over the old education and made it more extensive. And as a result, it was propagating humanism, when it was trying to propagate the faith.

Now, Milton had some good things to say on education. He did say that the study of law should begin with a study of Moses. But he didn't see the distinction between what Moses taught, and Greek and Roman law. He lumped it all together and said we're going to study all of it. It was old, and therefore, it was good. There are many people like that today, you see. Many conservatives assume if a thing was in practice a hundred years ago, it was good; or if it's an old book, it has to be good. Of course, this is not true. Humanism was just as rampant then. As a matter of fact, where our history is concerned, our history writing was almost immediately captured by Harvard and the Harvard Unitarians. We had one Christian history of America, published by Noah Webster, the author of our first dictionary; but then the Harvard historians took over. So, because a thing is old doesn't mean it's necessarily good. Sin, after all, is almost as old as man. This was the weakness of their educational work. They went back to the

old; and with the old, they incorporated the old sins.

And this is why Milton, himself, because he was a product of such education, and a very intelligent product of it, absorbed so many conflicting strands. He had a brilliant mind. But he was at one and the same time in some of his writings Trinitarian and anti-Trinitarian, Arian and Orthodox, Calvinist and anti-Calvinist. You can make a case for almost any position out of some writing or other of Milton.

Some people have said that the English have been poor as philosophers, because they are not logical. And it is true, there has not been as outstanding a philosophical tradition in England, as in Germany, or Scotland, or France, or other countries, although there have been two or three outstanding philosophers of the modern world in England; Locke, Berkeley, and Hume, in particular—and they ascribe it to something in the English mind. This is nonsense. The English mind is as capable of logic as the Scottish mind, or any other mind; but one of the problems in England was that it was an area where education progressed and was more intensive than elsewhere, and had a heavy classical orientation. As a result, this confusion, this eclectic smorgasbord-type of thinking, a little bit of this, and a little bit of that, and a little bit of that, became very quickly ingrained in England. In Scotland, because so much education began with the Reformation, they were more consistent; until, of course, the same influences began to infiltrate them, also.

Now all of this makes clear, first, one of the reasons why the Reformation did not accomplish as much as it should have accomplished; and, second, it makes clear the area the Reformation of today must work in, the direction it must take. We must have not only Christian schools, but a root and branch Christian philosophy, a Christian thinking, in order to command the future. Consistent, systematic thinking is powerful. It is significant that today the most powerful philosophy in our world is Marxism, and after that, existentialism; and both of them are consistent, logical humanisms. They are not going to be defeated until they are opposed by a consistent systematic Christian faith; and this is where the work of Christian education will be so important for the future.

Milton saw the failure. He was deeply distressed by it. The Commonwealth had failed; or rather, it had been renounced. It had been successful, and the people turned away from it. Milton, sometime before, years before it collapsed, wrote a poem on the temper of the people, in which he, in effect, expressed the problem, the problem that people found freedom and truth too difficult, too much responsibility. In 1646, fourteen years before Charles II came back, he wrote in Sonnet XII:

“I did but prompt the age to quit their clogs
By the known rules of ancient liberty,
When straight a barbarous noise environs me
Of owls and cuckoos, asses, apes and dogs.

As when those hinds that were transformed to frogs
Railed at Latona’s twin-born progeny
Which after held the sun and moon in fee.
But this is got by casting pearl to hogs;

That bawl for freedom in their senseless mood,
And still revolt when truth would set them free.
License they mean when they cry liberty;

For who loves that, must first be wise and good;
But from that mark how far they rove we see
For all this waste of wealth, and loss of blood.”

Now, his point is very well taken. It wasn't liberty the people wanted: it was license; and who loves liberty, he said: "...must first be wise and good." And, of course, this was the problem that both Cromwell and Milton faced: how can you have a godly order with ungodly people; and there were too many who were in positions of power, who were ungodly.

One of the most dramatic scenes in English history of the period, which you never find in the history books, or the words of that scene you never find in the history books, was when Cromwell dissolved the Rump Parliament. Now, the dissolving of the Rump Parliament is in the history books, but not what he told them and why he was getting rid of them. He felt they were too immoral to have the responsibility of rule, that they were corrupt men. And he walked in there to tell them they were finished; and if they didn't clear out, he would bring in the army and chase them out. And, looking two of the men in the eye as he spoke, he said: "Some of you are whore masters." And nobody opened their mouth to disagree with him. Now, that was the problem, you see. That was what concerned Cromwell and what concerned Milton. Can you have a virtuous country without virtuous people? And this was the thing that distressed Cromwell so intensely, and darkened his later years, because he saw that those who, with when the chips were down, truly wanted to be virtuous and wanted a virtuous regime were limited. And he could say to members of parliament (and no one contradicted him because it was true): "some of you are whore masters." This was a matter of deep concern, deep distress to Cromwell and to Milton.

Now, how were they going to bring about a virtuous order? Well, their answer, Cromwell's and Milton's, because Milton was high up in Cromwell's regime, was a very interesting one. They were going to have to withhold a great deal of political liberty, but grant as much liberty of press, as possible. In his *Areopagitica*, Milton wrote, and I quote:

"Truth and understanding are not such wares as to be monopolised and traded in by tickets, and statutes, and standards. We must not think to make a staple commodity of all the knowledge in the land, to mark and license it like our broad-cloth and our wool-packs."

In other words, let's have freedom of expression. Now, they had still some censorship, they hadn't eliminated everything in the way of censorship that had existed in the previous regime; but the goal was as much liberty of press, so that the ideas could come out, there could be a clash of ideas, some thinking, some developing, the freedom to know. Milton further wrote,

"There is yet behind of what I purposed to lay open, the incredible loss and detriment that this plot of licensing puts us to; more than if some enemy at sea should stop up all our havens and ports and creeks, it hinders and retards the importation of our richest merchandise, truth; nay, it was first established and put in practice by Antichristian malice..."

So, we're going to have to limit the political liberty, they say, but we are going to have to have as much freedom for ideas to come out in the open, so that we can argue against them; we can knock them down with the truth, and get people to see the truth.

There was another problem, however, and here, there was no agreement. It's a problem that has still not been effectively answered. And both Milton and Cromwell did much thinking and much speaking on this subject; liberty of conscience. There were some who were against any kind of liberty of conscience; and, of course, that was commonplace in that day. None of the Catholic countries allowed liberty of conscience. Some of the Protestant countries definitely did not, and there were many who argued against it. William Prynne, a member of parliament who was somewhat Puritan, but later very pro-monarchist, in 1644, in his tract *A Fresh Discovery of Some Prodigious New Wandering Blazing*

Stars said that if liberty of conscience were to prevail, then paganism, popery, and Judaism could not be excluded; and a man could also plead liberty of conscience, he said, for adultery, for drunkenness, for lying, for rebellion, and for treason. Anything could be justified in terms of liberty of conscience.

Now, of course, modern scholars, when they deal with Prynne's tract, treat it with contempt; but he did raise a very fundamental point. And, of course, this is precisely the kind of argument that is being made today by the Supreme Court, and by the Civil Liberties Union and other agencies. That in the name of liberty of conscience almost any type of practice, perversion, and anything else can be justified and must be tolerated. In fact, Justice William Douglas of our Supreme Court has said that, in terms of liberty of conscience, cannibalism must be allowed. Now, he hasn't said "in the United States," but he has said we shouldn't be going with our missionaries to interfere with the liberty of conscience of cannibals. Where are you going to draw the line if you advocate liberty of conscience?

You see, we have not answered the question they raised. In our day, we have simply treated the question as one to despise, but if you have full liberty of conscience, it means anarchism: anything is tolerable. The sentiment in America was that there is liberty of conscience for anything that is in conformity with common-law Christianity and the morality of Scripture. This is why they denied liberty of conscience to polygamists. When they said if we grant it to you (when the Mormon issue went to the Supreme Court) we've got to grant it to those who believe they have a right to kill someone, or can practice human sacrifice or cannibalism, or almost any practice under the sun. Where will we then draw the line? And this is why, through the last century, they held that this is a Christian nation, not that any doctrine is thereby established, but that the Bible, as it were, is the common-law basis of our country. Now that was an adequate answer; but we've dropped that answer. Now, because we have dropped it, we are moving into anarchism.

But in that day, Milton and Cromwell were wrestling with this problem; and their answer was fairly close to the one that America finally gave to the problem.

As a result, because they saw these issues which most people did not see, theirs was a situation of no small frustration. Then came the death of Cromwell; then, within two years, the return of Charles II, as the people decided they didn't want freedom. They didn't want the problem of trying to decide these things for themselves. It'd be much simpler to have a king and take care of everything. The return was a real problem to Milton. He had to go into hiding. There were some in parliament who felt that he should be beheaded, Charles II was not of that opinion, but his income was virtually gone; and on top of that, he was blind. And it was then, or a little before, a few years before, that he wrote his famous sonnet on his blindness, which perhaps most of you know:

"When I consider how my light is spent,
Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,
And that one Talent which is death to hide
Lodged with me useless, though my Soul more bent

To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest he returning chide;
"Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?"
I fondly ask. But patience, to prevent

That murmur, soon replies, "God doth not need
Either man's work or his own gifts; who best
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state

Is Kingly. Thousands at his bidding speed
And post o'er Land and Ocean without rest:
They also serve who only stand and wait.””

As time went by, with the Commonwealth lost, Milton expressed his thinking about it in *Paradise Lost*. The poem, of course, is about the Fall of Man; the Garden of Eden; Adam and Eve there and the temptation and their Fall; and being driven out of the Garden of Eden. But, naturally, as he wrote on this subject, he was thinking of what had happened in England. They had been so close, and yet, they had turned away from that; and now, England's prestige was at an all-time low. And they had a man as king, who was notorious for his immorality; a man who's only distinction was that he was clever with witticisms. One of Charles II's courtiers said of him, and Charles acknowledged that it was true, the courtier remarked that when he died, it could be written over his tomb: Here lies the king who never said a foolish thing, nor ever did a wise one. He enjoyed being witty; but when it came to acting with wisdom, the kingdom went downhill under him; and he was in the pay of Louis XIV of France.

These things were bitterness to Milton. And so, when he wrote about *Paradise Lost*, he was thinking of what they had lost; and of the immorality that was taking place, when it was now a matter of pride for the young lords, who were the popular courtiers, to get girls and women in the streets, and rape them publically and boast about it. He began *Paradise Lost* with these words:

“Of Man's First Disobedience, and the Fruit
Of that Forbidden Tree, whose mortal tast
Brought Death into the World, and all our woe,
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man
Restore us, and regain the blissful Seat,
Sing Heav'nly Muse, that on the secret top
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire
That Shepherd, who first taught the chosen Seed,
In the Beginning how the Heav'ns and Earth
Rose out of Chaos:

...

And chiefly Thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer
Before all Temples th' upright heart and pure,
Instruct me, for Thou know'st; Thou from the first
Wast present, and with mighty wings outspread
Dove-like satst brooding on the vast Abyss
And mad'st it pregnant: What in me is dark
Illumin, what is low raise and support;
That to the highth of this great Argument
I may assert Eternal Providence,
And justifie the wayes of God to men.”

Now, of course, he was in the process, not only trying to explain why God had allowed the Commonwealth to fail, but also to think through for himself why it had happened.

Now in the first book, of course, he begins with the Fall of Satan; and he gives us quite a dramatic picture of Satan. There are many who say that Satan is Milton's real hero. Well, of course, these writers are reading their own feelings into Milton, because for them Milton is a hero, because Milton portrays Satan speaking with all the grand eloquence of a humanist: I am the captain of my fate and master of my soul – that type of thing. And Satan, as they picked themselves up in hell, having been cast out of heaven, addresses all his cohorts, the fallen angels:

“What though the field be lost?
All is not lost; the unconquerable Will,
And study of revenge, immortal hate,
And courage never to submit or yield:
And what is else not to be overcome?
That Glory never shall his wrath or might
Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace
With suppliant knee, and deifie his power,
Who from the terrour of this Arm so late
Doubted his Empire, that were low indeed,
That were an ignominy and shame beneath
This downfall; since by Fate the strength of Gods
And this Empyrean substance cannot fail,
Since through experience of this great event
In Arms not worse, in foresight much advanc’t,
We may with more successful hope resolve
To wage by force or guile eternal Warr.”

And then he declares:

“To do ought good never will be our task,
But ever to do ill our sole delight,
As being the contrary to his high will
Whom we resist. If then his Providence
Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,
Our labour must be to pervert that end,
And out of good still to find means of evil;”

Let’s make all good work together for evil: this is the principle of Satan.

“Consult how we may henceforth most offend
Our Enemy, our own loss how repair,
How overcome this dire Calamity,
What reinforcement we may gain from Hope,
If not what resolution from despare.”

And then he goes on to say:

“Is this the Region, this the Soil, the Clime,
Said then the lost Arch-Angel, this the seat
That we must change for Heav’n, this mournful gloom
For that celestial light? Be it so, since he
Who now is Sovran can dispose and bid
What shall be right: fardest from him his best
Whom reason hath equald, force hath made supream
Above his equals. Farewel happy Fields
Where Joy for ever dwells: Hail horrors, hail
Infernal world, and thou profoundest Hell
Receive thy new Possessor: One who brings
A mind not to be chang’d by Place or Time.

The mind is its own place, and in it self
Can make a Heav'n of Hell, a Hell of Heav'n.
What matter where, if I be still the same,
And what I should be, all but less then he
Whom Thunder hath made greater? Here at least
We shall be free; th' Almighty hath not built
Here for his envy, will not drive us hence:
Here we may reign secure, and in my choyce
To reign is worth ambition though in Hell:
Better to reign in Hell, then serve in Heav'n."

Now, what Milton is saying is he looks at the political situation 'round about him, at the men of the court, and saying they're not just playboys or misguided politicians; they're Satanic. Men are either righteous, or they're Satanic. And what is Satan's purpose? It is a will to evil, to make all good work together for evil.

Look at the politics of today. It helped Milton to explain what was going on around him. Doesn't it help you to understand what's going on today? And isn't it a mistake not to have that perspective? You cannot say these men are blundering. Their answers come up too uniquely bad for that reason: it's a will to evil. "Better to reign in hell, than serve in heaven: to reign, as against to serve." The ultimate in horror for Satan is to bow the knee to God: "Everyone his own god," this is his principle.

Thus, evil, Milton tells us, is not error, it is a will to disobey God; it is a hatred for God and righteousness. As a result of this, the temptation of man, he says, was inevitable. Evil wants to pervert, to degrade, to bring all down to its level. And so, no sooner was Adam created than all hell began to plot their Fall, to make all good work together for evil; this was the goal. And, of course, then when he portrays the fall of man, first of all, and Eve, he portrays the same motive in Eve, because this is the essence of sin. Sin is intensely missionary-minded. So, when Eve eats of the forbidden fruit, she says:

"This may be well: but what if God have seen,
And Death ensue? then I shall be no more,
And Adam wedded to another Eve,
Shall live with her enjoying, I extinct;
A death to think. Confirm'd then I resolve;
Adam shall share with me in bliss or woe:"

Then, she says again, to Adam now:

"Have also tasted, and have also found
Th' effects to correspond, opener mine Eyes,
Dimm erst, dilated Spirits, ampler Heart,
And growing up to Godhead; which for thee
Chiefly I sought, without thee can despise.
For bliss, as thou hast part, to me is bliss,
Tedious, unshar'd with thee, and odious soon.
Thou therefore also taste, that equal Lot
May joyne us, equal joy, as equal Love;
Least thou not tasting, different degree
Disjoyne us, and I then too late renounce
Deitie for thee, when Fate will not permit."

I want you to be a god, like me. I'm so unselfish I don't want to enjoy anything without you.

So Milton very clearly gives us this will to pervert, this will to make all good work together for evil. And, as a result, writing this after Charles II's return, he was a very deeply distressed man; and his conclusion was not the happiest. At the end of *Paradise Lost*, he says:

“...Truth shall retire
Bestuck with slanderous darts, and works of Faith
Rarely be found: so shall the World goe on,
To good malignant, to bad men benigne,
Under her own waight groaning till the day
Appeere of respiration to the just,
And vengeance to the wicked, at return
Of him so lately promis'd to thy aid
The Womans seed, obscurely then foretold,
Now amplier known thy Saviour and thy Lord,
Last in the Clouds from Heav'n to be reveal'd
In glory of the Father, to dissolve
Satan with his perverted World, then raise
From the conflagrant mass, purg'd and refin'd,
New Heav'ns, new Earth, Ages of endless date
Founded in righteousness and peace and love
To bring forth fruits Joy and eternal Bliss.”

So, his outlook when he ended the poem, *Paradise Lost*, the twelfth book, was amill'. He was very much overwhelmed by his pessimism, his sense of despair at the fact that men so readily adjusted to evil, that men a few years ago were so eloquent in praising Cromwell were now going out of their way to curry favor with Charles and praising a most degenerate man, as though he were the epitome of virtue.

But sometime after *Paradise Lost* was published, a friend who was visiting Milton said: “you have written about paradise lost, but what about paradise regained? Is that all there is to the world and the Scripture?” And this jolted Milton, so he wrote a shorter poem, *Paradise Regained*, which begins:

“I Who e're while the happy Garden sung,
By one mans disobedience lost, now sing
Recover'd Paradise to all mankind,
By one mans firm obedience fully tri'd
Through all temptation, and the Tempter foil'd
In all his wiles, defeated and repuls't,
And Eden rais'd in the wast Wilderness.”

Paradise Lost has its setting in the Garden of Eden. There, because man submits to Satan's temptation, good is made to work into evil by Satan and man. But now he takes up the wilderness, the place of the temptation. For because Christ, the second Adam, defeats Satan, Eden is raised in the waste wilderness, It's the beginning of the new creation.

Now Satan, as he speaks to the hosts of hell, concerning Christ and His coming before the temptation, sees Christ as a threat against satanic rule. Will the world be Christ's realm, or Satan's? And he addresses the hosts of heaven, thus:

“O ancient Powers of Air and this wide World
(For much more willingly I mention Air,
This our old conquest, than remember Hell,
Our hated habitation), well ye know
How many ages, as the years of men,
This Universe we have possessed, and ruled
In manner at our will the affairs of Earth,
Since Adam and his facile consort Eve
Lost Paradise, deceived by me, though since
With dread attending when that fatal wound
Shall be inflicted by the seed of Eve
Upon my head. Long the decrees of Heaven
Delay, for longest time to Him is short;
And now, too soon for us, the circling hours
This dreaded time have compassed, wherein we
Must bide the stroke of that long-threatened wound
(At least, if so we can, and by the head
Broken be not intended all our power
To be infringed, our freedom and our being
In this fair empire won of Earth and Air)--
For this ill news I bring: The Woman's Seed,
Destined to this, is late of woman born.”

Christ has come. This is the showdown. He is to break our head; but is it possible, can we tempt Him as we tempted the first? Are we able somehow to turn Him to our cause? And so in due time, Satan presents himself to Christ when, after the baptism, He goes into the desert. He presents himself in disguise, at first; and then openly, as Christ recognizes him. But he declares himself to be the friend of man. This is Satan's claim: I am the friend of man. Are you?

And so, he challenges Christ: So you've come to be the new Adam, the savior of men. Well, are you a friend to men? Well, if you are, give them bread! Look at the hunger in the world. Look at all the economic problems. With all your miraculous powers, you're letting men suffer? I'm a better friend to man, than you are. And give them miracles; to have all that power and not use it!? You have power to do men good; and what stupidity it is, what evil. You call me evil, but you're good. Think of the suffering it causes to men. And Satan says,

“...Though I have lost
Much lustre of my native brightness, lost
To be beloved of God, I have not lost
To love, at least contemplate and admire,
What I see excellent in good, or fair,
Or virtuous...”

In other words, he says: “I know what men need.”

“...I should so have lost all sense.
What can be then less in me than desire
To see thee and approach thee, whom I know
Declared the Son of God, to hear attent
Thy wisdom, and behold thy godlike deeds?
Men generally think me much a foe

To all mankind. Why should I? they to me
Never did wrong or violence. By them
I lost not what I lost; rather by them
I gained what I have gained, and with them dwell
Copartner in these regions of the World,
If not disposer--lend them oft my aid,
Oft my advice by presages and signs,
And answers, oracles, portents, and dreams,
Whereby they may direct their future life.”

So Satan says: “I am man’s friend.” He never comes out openly and says God is their enemy, but he puts the burden on Christ: if you’re going to be a friend of man, why don’t you do something for them!?

Then Satan tells Jesus there is no power in His way: His way of trying to win men by faith to get them to serve God. Man will only stumble long, he’ll never enjoy life. The easier way is to give man, to use a modern expression, ‘cradle to grave’ security; then everybody will be happy, and the world will be sweetness and light, joy and plenty, and everyone will be happy.

“Therefore, if at great things thou wouldst arrive,
Get riches first, get wealth, and treasure heap--
Not difficult, if thou hearken to me.
Riches are mine, fortune is in my hand;
They whom I favour thrive in wealth amain,
While virtue, valour, wisdom, sit in want.’
To whom thus Jesus patiently replied:--
‘Yet wealth without these three [virtue, valour, wisdom] is impotent
To gain dominion, or to keep it gained--”

There is no dominion your way. There may be power, there may be wealth, but no dominion.

Then Satan tries another approach:

“If kingdom move thee not, let move thee zeal
And duty...”

And he goes on to say: “You are, indeed, the King, the new Adam, the head of the new humanity, You have a duty to provide for Your people.”

And when Christ refuses him, Satan’s answer is:

““Since neither wealth nor honour, arms nor arts,
Kingdom nor empire, pleases thee, nor aught
By me proposed in life contemplative
Or active, tended on by glory or fame,
What dost thou in this world? The Wilderness
For thee is fittest place: I found thee there,
And thither will return thee. Yet remember
What I foretell thee; soon thou shalt have cause
To wish thou never hadst rejected, thus
Nicely or cautiously, my offered aid,

Which would have set thee in short time with ease
On David's throne, or throne of all the world,
Now at full age, fulness of time, thy season,
When prophecies of thee are best fulfilled.'”

And Satan says (this is when they're on the pinnacle of the temple): I'll take You back to the desert. You belong there, isolated from man. You have no interest in man. You are impractical. Your way will bring nothing to man. Accept Your own defeat, which You will find soon enough. And Satan is rejected by Christ, and departs.

And then, we have an angelic choir hailing paradise restored. And here we have a postmil' perspective that comes out after the pessimism of Paradise Lost. They declare,

“True Image of the Father, whether throned
In the bosom of bliss, and light of light
Conceiving, or, remote from Heaven, enshrined
In fleshly tabernacle and human form,
Wandering the wilderness--whatever place,
Habit, or state, or motion, still expressing
The Son of God, with Godlike force endued
Against the attempter of thy Father's throne
And thief of Paradise! Him long of old
Thou didst debase, and down from Heaven cast
With all his army; now thou hast avenged
Supplanted Adam, and, by vanquishing
Temptation, hast regained lost Paradise,
And frustrated the conquest fraudulent.
He never more henceforth will dare set foot
In paradise to tempt; his snares are broke.
For, though that seat of earthly bliss be failed,
A fairer Paradise is founded now
For Adam and his chosen sons, whom thou,
A Saviour, art come down to reinstall;...”

And so, Christ's victory in the wilderness, and then His cross, and His defeat of sin and death break the back of Satan; and a fairer paradise is founded now. But the way is not the way of Satan; and the way is a difficult one. It is a battle. But paradise, Milton concluded, has been regained. The beachhead has been established. The king has triumphed, and it is up to us now to follow Him and to establish His victory in one area after another.

Let us bow our heads now in prayer. Almighty God, our heavenly Father, indeed a fairer paradise was established by our Lord and Savior by His victory over Satan in the wilderness and on the cross. And we thank thee that thou hast called us to be citizens of this new creation. Empower us by thy grace and by thy Word that we may in one area after another conquer in His name; that we may learn by those defeats of the past how the war is to be won, and may set forth Christ's dominion in every area of life. Grant us this, we beseech Thee. In Jesus' name. Amen.

ENDNOTES:

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4. Milton, John. *Areopagitica, and Of Education: 1644*. Facsimile Edition. Menston, England: The Scholar Press Ltd., 1968, 29.
5. John Milton, *Sonnet 19*

John Milton, II

R.J. Rushdoony

Our Lord and our God, Who of thy grace and mercy has set thy seal upon us and made us thy people in Jesus Christ; we gather together again to rejoice in Thee, to study the things of this world from the perspective of thy kingdom. Bless us, Our Father, in thy service, and strengthen us, that we may praise, magnify, and glorify thee in all things. In Jesus' name. Amen.

We saw last week, as we studied the life of Milton, a personal tragedy that the restoration of the monarchy meant to him. We also had a glimpse into the conditions of England with the Restoration. The Restoration meant the return of monarchy. Monarchy is readily glamorized from a distance, and there is no question that there were some very powerful, great, and remarkable men who were kings in England and elsewhere over the centuries. But the fact also remains that monarchy was very often a very sorry thing, and especially as European history progressed. Because so much emphasis was placed upon royal blood, an excessive inbreeding developed, and the kings began to show some peculiar quirks. Earlier in English history, William the Conqueror was the son of a king by a servant girl, and illegitimate; but he had been made king, because it was clearly recognized he was a true son of his father, the ablest man in Normandy. And he was a very remarkable monarch, and essentially a very just monarch, who did much for both Normandy and England after he conquered it. There were many very powerful and brilliant monarchs in England and elsewhere. But by this time, the monarchy was very sadly reduced, and the kind of men who became kings showed the effects of a tainted heredity. They were outwardly often very elegant men, but personally were thoroughly contemptible persons.

I'm going to read just a brief passage from Aubrey's *Brief Lives*. John Aubrey, in the period of Milton, and thereafter, was a strong royalist. He had nothing but dislike for Cromwell and the Puritans. And yet, as the editor of Aubrey's *Lives* summarizes his point of view, he comments:

"Even during these troublous times, the Court was still the cultural centre of the nation, and the circle of poets and playwrights that usually clustered round the King, was augmented by the very fact of the war. Many men were in the same case as John Cleveland, the Cambridge poet, who, 'being turned out of his Fellowship for a malignant, came to Oxford, where the King's Army was, and was much caressed by them.' And it was while the King [Charles I] was in residence at Christ Church that William Cartwright, the dramatist, was buried in the cathedral there at the early age of thirty-two. 'Pitty 'tis so famous a bard should lye without an Inscription,' Aubrey thought, for his contemporaries had expected great things from him: 'Tis not to be forgott that King Charles I st dropt a teare at the newes of his death.' In view of this sensibility, it is astounding to find that the manners of the Court were so foul. For in the next reign, Anthony Wood was to write [of the court of Charles I]: "To give a further character of the court, though they were neat and gay in their apparell, vet they were very nasty and beastly, leaving at their departure their excrements in every corner, in chimneys, studies, cole-houses, cellars. Rude, rough, whoremongers; vaine, empty, careless." With this attack Aubrey was in full agreement for he himself pointed out that it was the lascivious King Charles II, and not the elegant Charles I, who was the Patterne of Courtesie, and first brought good Manners into Fashion in England, and in 1670 he said, Till this time the Court itself was unpolished and un mannered. King James's Court was so far from being civill to woemen, that the Ladies, nay the Queen herself, could hardly pass by the King's apartment without receiving some Affront."

Now, of course, with Charles II, manners were emphasized, but the manners went hand in hand with a moral depravity. It was courtliness, it was an emphasis on the proper use of things in Court, but an utter contempt for moral considerations.

Moreover, there was increasingly a moral indifference. One of the most interesting indications of this is the Diary of Samuel Pepys. If you've never read it, it's quite a treat. The diary of Pepys was only decoded about 1900, and, I believe, first published around 1909. And it is only now that the full diary is being published by the University of California at Berkeley Press. Pepys was a very important man in English history, because he was, in a sense, the founder of the modern British Navy. He was a hardheaded, realistic man in government affairs. King Charles II thought highly of him and relied on him. Pepys confided to his diary that the country never had it so good as when old Oliver was alive, because, as a military man, he could see what happened to the international prestige and power of England. And yet, when you read Pepys' diary, and I won't go into some of these passages; some of them are quite amusing, he is endlessly philandering with other women; and then feels sorry for his wife and speaks of her: "my wife, poor wretch." And he puts a price on his philandering, he figures that, well, this girl was young, and that it was worth so much to him in pleasure, so he will lean over backwards, let his wife spend a little more money, so that he figures he's paid off for it by allowing her to have so much extra for spending money; a perfect Pharisee.

To read a few of his comments:

25th, Christmas Day

"To church in the morning, and there saw a wedding in the church, which I have not seen many a day; and the young people so merry one with another! and strange to see what delight we married people have to see these poor fool decoyed into our condition, every man and woman gazing and smiling at them."

June 12th, 1667

"Home, where all our hearts do now ache; for the news is true, that the Dutch have broke the chain [stretched across the Thames to protect the idle British fleet] and burned our ships, and particularly the Royal Charles..."

That's how helpless England had become, when, a few years before, it had never even lost a skirmish anywhere on the Continent or in England under Oliver.

"...other particulars I know not, but most sad, to be sure. And, the truth is, I do fear so much that the whole kingdom is undone, that I do this night resolve to study with my father and wife what to do with the little that I have in money by me, for I give up all the rest that I have in the King's hands, for Tangier, for lost. So God help us! and God knows what disorders we may fall into, and whether any violence on this office; or perhaps some severity on our persons, as being reckoned by the silly people, or perhaps may, by policy of State, be thought fit to be condemned by the King and Duke of York, and so put to trouble; though, God knows! I have, in my own person, done my full duty, I am sure. Home, and to bed with a heavy heart."

July 29th

"Cousin Roger and Creed to dinner with me, and very merry; but among other things they told me of the strange, bold sermon of Dr. Creeton yesterday, before the King: how he preached against the sins of the Court, and particularly against adultery, over and over instancing how for that single sin in David the whole nation was undone; and of our negligence in having our castles without ammunition and powder when the Dutch came upon us; and how we have no courage nowadays, but let our ships be taken out of our harbour."

“Among other discourse, my cousin Roger told us a thing certain, that the Archbishop of Canterbury [Gilbert Sheldon] that now is do keep a wench, and that he is as very a wench as can be; and tells us it is a thing publicly known that Sir Charles Sedley [this was Gilbert Sheldon] had got away one of the Archbishop’s wenches from him, and the Archbishop sent to him to let him know that she was his kinswoman, and did wonder that he would offer any dishonour to one related to him.”

“Cousin Roger did acquaint me in private with an offer made of his marrying of Mrs. Elizabeth Wiles, whom I know; a kinswoman of Mr. Honiwood’s, an ugly old maid, but good housewife, and is said to have £2500 to her portion. But if I can find that she hath but £2000, which he prays me to examine, he says he will have her, she being one he hath long known intimately, and a good housewife, and discreet woman; though I am against it in my heart, she being not handsome at all. And it hath been the very bad fortune of die Pepyses that ever I knew, never to marry an handsome woman, excepting Ned Pepys.”

The 30th

“...with Creed to White Hall, in our way meeting with Mr. Cooling, my Lord Chamberlain’s secretary, on horseback, who stopped to speak with us; and he proved very drunk, and did talk, and would have talked all night with us, I not being able to break loose from him, he holding me so by the hand. But, Lord! to see his present humour, how he swears at every word, and talks of the King and my Lady Castlemaine in the plainest words in the world. And from him I gather that the story I learned yesterday is true—that the King hath declared that he did not get the child of which she is conceived at this time. But she told him, ‘___ ___ me, but you shall own it!’ It seems, he is jealous of Jermyn, and she loves him so, that the thought of his marrying of my Lady Falmouth puts her into fits of the mother; and he, it seems, hath been in her good graces from time to time, continually, for a good while; and now, as this Cooling says, the King had like to have taken him a-bed with her, but that he was fain to creep under the bed into her closet.”

“I never heard so much vanity from a man in mv life: so, being now weary of him, we parted, and I took coach, and carried Creed to the Temple. There set him down, and to my office till my eyes begun to ache, and then home to supper:”

Then he goes on and on in this vein, very typical. Now here is a man who is very upset at the licentiousness of the Court and how flagrant it is, and the drunkenness of people in high office so that nothing gets done. The Dutch declare war on them, and sail right into the harbor, and burn up their fleet; and everybody is too drunk to do anything about it, and he feels we’re in bad, immoral times. But notice this, this is one of the mildest episodes of his philandering, but I think it’s significant where it happens, in church.

August 18

“...into St. Dunstan’s Church, where I heard an able sermon of the minister of the place, and stood by a pretty, modest maid, whom I did labour to take by the hand, but she would not, but got further and further from me; and, at last, I could perceive her to take pins out of her pocket to prick me if I should touch her again — which, seeing, I did forbear, and was glad I did spy her design. And then I fell to gaze upon another pretty maid, in a pew close to me, and she on me; and I did go about to take her by the hand, which she suffered a little, and then withdrew. So the sermon ended, and the church broke up, and my amours ended also. Took coach and home, and there took up my wife, and to Islington.”

And so, on and on and on. He goes to church and listens to the sermon, and says it’s a very good one, and sometimes says it was a powerful sermon against adultery and a real indictment of the

Court; and then he flirts with the girls in the church, and picks up one and heads for a nearby hotel. This was the morality of the day.

Now, from a historian of the period, to give you something more, because all of this ties in with Milton in *Samson Agonistes*, which we will come to very soon. Partly in reaction against Puritan repression now, this is by an English historian, who is not sympathetic to the Puritans:

“Partly in obedience to their natural bent, a good many restoration Londoners went to excesses of drunkenness and lechery; and the actors were not the least of the sinners. The great mass of the English people were still sober and God-fearing. The wastrels and rakes were little more numerous in proportion to the total population than at any other period; but, because of lax law enforcement, they were more open in their wickedness. Also, they were the ruling elite now with the King. When young gentlemen heeded by wine ran riot in the streets at night, broke windows, beat up harmless pedestrians, skirmished with the watch, there were many indignant outcries, but few punishments. The King, himself, was given to hard drinking, and the popularity of the habit among his subjects is suggested by the words of a popular song: ‘Good store of good claret supplies everything, and the man that is drunk is as great as a king.’ The widespread addiction to lechery could be illustrated by hundreds of examples, from Pepys and his holes in a corner affairs with servant girls and workmen’s wives, to the King’s mistresses, flaunted in public to the rage of respectable people. Love and gaming were the two principle pastimes in the rambling galleries and chambers of White Hall.” [This is the palace] “Consequently, both diversions, but particularly love, were indulged in by the gentlemen of the town. Keeping became so much a matter of fashion, that Francis North, Lord Wilford, a sober lawyer and courtier, was seriously urged to keep a whore, because his failure to do so made him look ill-looking upon at Court.”

Now, it became so much the fashion that, even if you were not interested, you kept a mistress, although you never had anything to do with her, and you were faithful to your wife, because you wanted to keep up appearances, and you didn’t want to be frowned on by the world at large; and you would be looked down upon by everyone of any consequence in the government. This kind of thing continued on upper levels off and on into the last century. And Samuel Butler, who wrote *Erewhon*, kept such a mistress, with whom he never had anything to do; and he’d go once a week, dutifully. He supported her full-time and spent an hour chatting with her—although he didn’t enjoy the conversation—just so the world at large would think he was a proper English gentleman.

“By the same token, many an amorous lady ventured her person and her reputation with a gallant; and the husband who resented his wife’s lewd conduct was considered a fool and a spoil sport. When the Earl of Chesterfield, fearing an entreat between his wife and the Duke of York,” (who later was James II) ”dragged the reluctant lady off to his country estate, the young blades of the Court such couple made, concurs as Lord Buckhurst, Sir Charles Sedley, the Earl of Rochester, and George Etheredge, diverted everybody with witty ballads at his extent”

And so on and on and on. This was the character of the Court. This was the character of those who were ruling England.

Now, into this picture, let us fit in *Samson Agonistes*, because it was written by a man who was blind, and who was deeply, deeply distressed by his blindness; a man who had been active as one of the high officials of government under Cromwell, and who, therefore, felt keenly what had happened to England. And so he wrote *Samson Agonistes*, *Samson*, in his agony, in his blindness.

Now, very obviously, Milton felt like *Samson*: he, too, was blind; he was helpless, chained, as it were. He had been facing, possibly, execution not too long before, when Charles II had returned; but also,

he knew that others were like him and were like Samson, in that they were helpless. They had been great and important men a few years before, under Cromwell; and now they were helpless, and had the sad fact of seeing, seeing with their eyes, the degradation of England, a country they had made great for a period. Of seeing the Dutch fleet sail up, while drunkards couldn't even do anything to defend it, and burned the English fleet.

Then, too, he saw England as the blind Samson: helpless; a prisoner in a Philistine prison. So, Milton saw the Court, the rulers, as the Philistines; and the old godly element of himself and others like him, as Samson; eyeless in Gaza. But he begins Samson Agonistes by having Samson declare:

“Whom have I to complain of but my self?”

After all, it was England, it was the English people, who had called Charles II back. And so, Samson begins his meditations at the very beginning:

“A little onward lend thy guiding hand
To these dark steps, a little further on;
For yonder bank hath choice of Sun or shade,
There I am wont to sit, when any chance
Relieves me from my task of servile toyl,
Daily in the common Prison else enjoyn'd me,
Where I a Prisoner chain'd, scarce freely draw
The air imprison'd also, close and damp,
Unwholsom draught: but here I feel amends,
The breath of Heav'n fresh-blowing, pure and sweet,
With day-spring born; here leave me to respire.”

And so, Samson meditates on what has happened. England had been strong; but he says very quickly:

“But what is strength without a double share
Of wisdom, vast, unwieldy, burdensom,
Proudly secure, yet liable to fall
By weakest subtleties, not made to rule,
But to subserve where wisdom bears command.
God, when he gave me strength, to shew withal
How slight the gift was, hung it in my Hair.”

Samson's gift was his hair, easily shorn; and his gift easily lost. And England's strength had been great, the greatest power for the first time in its history in all of Europe.

“But what is strength without a double share
Of wisdom...”

And England had thrown away its strength; and now had the indignity of being the joke of Europe. And had he but known how much more deeply, he would have been hurt, but its very ruler was in the pay of the enemy! And then his grief, his blindness, beginning in line 66:

“O loss of sight, of thee I most complain!
Blind among enemies, O worse then chains,
Dungeon, or beggery, or decrepit age!

Light the prime work of God to me is extinct,
 And all her various objects of delight
 Annull'd, which might in part my grief have eas'd,
 Inferiour to the vilest now become
 Of man or worm; the vilest here excel me,
 They creep, yet see, I dark in light expos'd
 To daily fraud, contempt, abuse and wrong,
 Within doors, or without, still as a fool,
 In power of others, never in my own;
 Scarce half I seem to live, dead more then half.
 O dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon,
 Irrecoverably dark, total Eclipse
 Without all hope of day!
 O first created Beam, and thou great Word,
 Let there be light, and light was over all;
 Why am I thus bereav'd thy prime decree?
 The Sun to me is dark
 And silent as the Moon,
 When she deserts the night
 Hid in her vacant interlunar cave.
 Since light so necessary is to life,
 And almost life itself, if it be true
 That light is in the Soul,
 She all in every part; why was the sight
 To such a tender ball as th' eye confin'd?
 So obvious and so easie to be quench't,
 And not as feeling through all parts diffus'd,
 That she might look at will through every pore?
 Then had I not been thus exil'd from light;
 As in the land of darkness yet in light,
 To live a life half dead, a living death,
 And buried; but O yet more miserable!
 My self, my Sepulcher, a moving Grave,
 Buried, yet not exempt
 By priviledge of death and burial
 From worst of other evils, pains and wrongs,
 But made hereby obnoxious more
 To all the miseries of life,
 Life in captivity
 Among inhuman foes."

That's a very moving and sad account of the agony of blindness—blindness to a man who had been a man of action, and who could feel an intense grief over the condition of his country. But there was grief also over his fall and over the fall of England:

"How counterfeit a coin they are who friends
 Bear in their Superscription..."

All those who had been friends earlier of the Commonwealth were now there dancing to the tune of a corrupt Court. And so, he goes on to say there is a love of bondage on the part of these people, a jealousy of God's servants, and in lines 268 ff.

“But what more oft in Nations grown corrupt,
And by thir vices brought to servitude,
Then to love Bondage more then Liberty,
Bondage with ease then strenuous liberty;
And to despise, or envy, or suspect
Whom God hath of his special Favour rais’d
As thir Deliverer; if he aught begin,
How frequent to desert him, and at last
To heap ingratitude on worthiest deeds?”

It galled Milton to see now men ready to tolerate anything the Court did, who a few years ago were ready to criticize Cromwell, and Milton, and Fairfax, and other men if they sneezed; nitpicking, straining every gnat with godly men; and now swallowing every camel with King Charles.

And so, he declares in lines 410 ff.:

“...O indignity, O blot
To Honour and Religion! servil mind
Rewarded well with servil punishment!
The base degree to which I now am fall’n,
These rags, this grinding, is not yet so base
As was my former servitude, ignoble,
Unmanly, ignominious, infamous,
True slavery, and that blindness worse then this,
That saw not how degeneratly I serv’d.”

Here, Samson is commenting on his slavery to sin—to Delilah—and he says this is worse than my blindness now. And he is saying, thereby, that the worst bondage is to sin, and the greatest bondage of England is its spiritual and moral bondage, the bondage to sin. And then he says a little later, lines 460:

“This only hope relieves me, that the strife
With me hath end; all the contest is now
Twixt God and Dagon; Dagon [god of the Philistines] hath presum’d,
Me overthrown, to enter lists with God,
His Deity comparing and preferring
Before the God of Abraham.”

And he says perhaps it’s the best, for the best, God’s purpose: that Cromwell is dead and others are dead, and I am on the sidelines. The battle is now between God and Satan. They are seeing evil face to face. They are going to have to deal with it. They’re going to have to reckon with it.

Now, as the poem goes on, and our time is limited tonight, Samson purposes to go along with the Philistines when they want him to go to their temple for their celebration. The story, of course, is familiar to all of you; how Samson wrapped his arms around the pillars of the temple and prayed to God that he might have his strength once again and topple them, and kill the Philistine leadership and himself, of course, with them.

Now, of course, this incident is the heart of *Samson Agonistes*. The Huntington Library Journal, a quarterly, has an article in the May 1971 issue on *Samson Agonistes*. The title is, *No Power but of*

God: Vengeance and Justice in Samson Agonistes; and what the author Anthony Low has to say is Samson Agonistes is very much criticized by many, many critics, because it is regarded as a rather bloodthirsty poem, a poem of vengeance; that Milton builds it up to the fact that Samson is going to do that which will destroy the Philistines. However, as the writer points out, what Milton here emphasizes is not personal vengeance. He makes it clear that God says: "Vengeance is mine. I will repay." That God works only through his appointed servants. Therefore, vengeance cannot be personal, but God's appointed men, officers of state, can take vengeance into their hands, because they do it as officers of law. And the point he makes and develops at great length is that Samson was a judge of Israel, and that the action Samson took was a part of his continuing warfare against the Philistines, and that God works through his appointed servants and appointed channels, not through revolutionary activities, to overthrow his enemies and to bring justice, His vengeance, upon them.

Now, I want to take just a few minutes to deal with this. This is a very important point. There will be a little bit about this in the April Chalcedon Report. but this ties in with something that is very much a part of the current scene. One of the things that characterizes the last hundred years is the extent of political assassination that the modern world has seen. Take our country, alone. We have had within a hundred years, from 1864 to about 1963, four presidents assassinated. In that time, we've also had many other political figures assassinated: a mayor of New York, and many other public figures. In Europe, many, many prime ministers, several kings and Czars, many high officials of state assassinated. What is behind this? Never in history have there been in Western Europe and the history of Christendom after the Roman Era as many assassinations as we've had in the last century. It is not likely that they're going to abate. Everything points to more of this sort of thing. You have the Weathermen today dedicated to this sort of thing. Well, it is the philosophy, to use their own term, of direct action. Now, a philosophy of direct action is a denial of due process of law. It is a denial of the courts. It is a denial that God is on the throne; and He will, in due time, bring things to pass. The direct action people believe that if you see a wrong, you go after it and eliminate it in whatever way possible. So the Weathermen will blow up things. They will destroy, because this is direct action.

Now, the philosophy of direct action is also the philosophy, increasingly, of the government. What are executive orders, except a form of direct action, are they not? They bypass legislation. And what was Nixon's demand that there be a moratorium by the courts on busing, but direct action? If he really wanted to oppose busing legitimately, the thing to do was to go through Congress, pass a law outlawing busing, and the law can, by act of Congress, be exempted from judicial review. But he didn't do that, did he? Direct action, which is illegal. He instituted wage and price controls last August 15th, didn't he? Direct action! Was Congress asked to do anything? Not until afterwards. They were instituted on his say so; Direct action. Now, this is precisely the kind of thing that Milton was writing against in Samson Agonistes.

Milton, as much as anyone, was distressed and would like to have seen Charles II dropped into the bottom of the sea. He was a Puritan, through and through. He resented the debauchery of the Court. He regarded them as a pack of Philistines; depraved, degenerate men, Dagon worshippers; or Satan-worshippers, we would say. What was the answer? Not direct action. In a sense, what they were getting was the work of God. He began by saying,

"Just are the ways of God."

We didn't deserve what we had. We were in bondage to sin, before we became in bondage to Charles II. It was our sin that led us into this situation; and it's only as magistrates become judges—rulers who will, themselves, raise the banner of law—that we have any right to do anything against Charles II. The vengeance of God, therefore, must be through appointed officers of law. God will, in due time, bring forth His judgment through his appointed men; and vengeance cannot be a personal thing. Now, this

is what he is saying. And this is the argument that he develops at great length in *Samson Agonistes*.

And then he concludes, though he does not have that to point to in England. Samson did it to the Philistines. But here is Milton, not too far away from his last year. No one in sight; no prospect of anything like this happening in England—and what is his conclusion? The last lines of the chorus, lines 1745 ff., the last lines of *Samson Agonistes*:

“All is best, though we oft doubt,
What th’ unsearchable dispose
Of highest wisdom brings about,
And ever best found in the close.
Oft he seems to hide his face,
But unexpectedly returns
And to his faithful Champion hath in place
Bore witness gloriously; whence Gaza mourns
And all that band them to resist
His uncontrollable intent,
His servants he with new acquist
Of true experience from this great event
With peace and consolation hath dismiss,
And calm of mind all passion spent.”

These are Milton’s last words: “All is best, though oft we doubt.” God in his sovereign wisdom is weaving together the strands; and we cannot see the final result, but he is bringing them together not to frustrate us; not because it’s God purpose to leave me—a blind Samson, so to speak—bitterly frustrated and unhappy for years, for decades, while my country goes from bad to worse. No, God has His purpose in this. He has brought judgment upon the land. He will bring judgment upon the court and the Philistines; so that, in this confidence, we must do our duty and wait on the providence of God. Thus, Milton’s last word is one of an acceptance of God’s sovereign purpose, of confidence that God will prevail. The peacefulness with which the poem ends, we must remember, was one which Milton had without seeing the enemies of anyone destroyed, without seeing a corrupt Court brought down. It was, therefore, a confidence that God does that which is best, and makes: “all things work together for good to them that love Him, to them who are the called, according to His purpose.”

A few years after his death, of course, there was the Glorious Revolution of 1688. It was nothing like that which Milton would have hoped for; but, at least, it drove out the Stuarts, and it was the beginning with William and Mary, of a different kind of England. And we, too, in our day, as we see evil apparently prospering, as the psalmist said “the wicked flourish as the green bay tree;” we’re not thereby to become foolish, as the psalmist admitted he had become, as he looked at the lot of the wicked. “If the wicked prosper, it is that they be destroyed,” the psalmist says. God has His purpose, and the end, thereof, is that all things be reconstituted in terms of His sovereign purpose.

Let us pray. Our Lord and our God, we acknowledge in thee that all is best, where oft we doubt what thine unsearchable wisdom is accomplishing. Teach us, therefore, Father, day by day to be confident in thee; and to know, our Father, the world is governed not by the things that are, but by thy sovereign, unchanging and unchangeable purpose. That thou canst not fail. Thy kingdom shall triumph, and ours is the victory in Jesus Christ. Bless us, our Father, unto thy purpose and in thy victory. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

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