

Proverbs on Government, Justice and Oppression

People may be surprised to learn what the Bible actually expects from human government. Contrary to what the world expects, the Bible is silent about a government supplying jobs, providing medical care, educating its citizens, or making sure the currency is competitive. Instead, Scripture expects certain characteristics from those who rule, and certain actions from those who rules.

I. The Characteristics of Government

Rulers are to balance truth and mercy (20:28)

Rulers are to refuse bribes (29:4)

Rulers are to rule without partiality (29:14)

Rulers are to be morally upright and refuse wickedness (16:12, 29:2). A wicked ruler brings only oppression (28:15-16)

Rulers are to refuse intoxication and moral looseness (31:3-5)

Rulers are to listen to truth, and not lies (29:12)

II. The Actions of Government

Their laws and judgements must not transgress God's Law (Proverbs 16:10)

They are to discourage evildoers from their evil (20:8)

They are to find out and punish evildoers (20:26)

They are to remove evildoers (25:5)

They are to rightly condemn the wicked and not vindicate them (17:15, 24:23-25)

They are to promote justice (14:34)

They are to protect life (24:11-12, Gen 9:6)

They should protect private property (Ex 20:15-17)

III. The Actions of Citizens

It is foolish to provoke authority to wrath (20:2)

Citizens should have godly intentions and speak graciously (16:13, 20:11)

Citizens ought to submit and to shun revolutionaries (24:21)

Citizens should not try to boast before rulers (25:6-7)

Citizens must be careful not to be manipulated by power and wealth (23:1-3)

The wickedness of a nation will return upon itself in the form of its rulers (28:2)