**“National Reform Opposed to the Bible” American Sentinel 1, 7.**

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When we use the term “National Reform,” it is understood that we refer to the theories advanced by the Party which is endeavoring to secure a religious amendment to the Constitution of the United States. A true reform could not, of course, be opposed to the Bible; but the so-called “National Reform” movement is in no sense a reform, and that because it is opposed to the Bible. We use the term because it has been assumed by the Party, and not because we regard the movement as a reform. {AMS July 1886, p. 51.1}

A great point which the leaders of that Party aim to make is that Jesus is now the literal ruler and Governor of nations; that, for instance, the President of the United States is only the nominal head of this Government, but that Jesus Christ is the real head-the king-and that therefore his sovereignty should be formally acknowledged. If they were not infatuated they could certainly see the absurdity of speaking of the king of the republic, even if they could not see how antagonistic their position is to the truth of the Bible. We believe, however, that those who have not become intoxicated with the wine of National Reform error, can readily see the following points:- {AMS July 1886, p. 51.2}

When God had created the earth, he said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.” Genesis 1:26-28. {AMS July 1886, p. 51.3}

In this work of creation the Son was associated with the Father, and was the active agent for by him the worlds were made (Hebrews 1:2) and John says, “All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made.” John 1:3. Therefore it was the Son, as well as the Father, who gave the dominion of the earth to man. {AMS July 1886, p. 51.4}

With the narrative in Genesis agree the following words of the psalmist: “The Heaven even the heavens, are the Lord’s; but the earth hath he given to the children of men.” Psalm 115:16. From these two texts nothing can be plainer than that the dominion of this world has been entrusted to men. {AMS July 1886, p. 51.5}

Let no one imagined that we would intimate that God has nothing to do with this earth. We do not so believe, and the texts that we have quoted do not so teach. The greater includes the less, and the statement that the heavens are the Lord’s, is equivalent to saying that God rules over all, as is stated in Psalm 103:19: “The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom ruleth over all.” Therefore “the earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.” Psalm 24:1. But, while these texts recognize God’s right to all things, as Creator, they do not conflict with the statement, “the earth hath he given to the children of men.” {AMS July 1886, p. 51.6}

For what purpose has he given it to the children of men? That they may govern it, even as stated in Genesis 1:26, 27. This is shown in Romans 13:1-4, where it is stated that the powers that be are ordained of God, and that rulers are appointed to bear the sword of justice. The expression, “the powers that be are ordained of God,” refers to authority in general, rather than to particular Governments. And this should be sufficient to show that, although God rules the entire universe, he is not the head of any earthly Government. If he were, then there would be but one correct form of Government, and the officers of that Government would be appointed directly by Him, as in the case of the ancient Jewish Government. But no one can claim that of the various nations of earth, one is ordained of God, to the exclusion of the others. {AMS July 1886, p. 51.7}

Take for instance, Russia, Germany, England, and the United States. Here we have four Governments, all differing in their structure. Which of them is ordained of God? All of them. They are all for the purpose of preserving order, and of guarding the rights of each individual against the encroachments of others. This is all that earthly Governments are ordained to do. The whole of the law against the violation of which they can execute wrath is, “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself,” and this they can enforce only so far as concerns outward acts. They cannot compel a man to love his neighbor in his heart, but they can see that he does his neighbor no personal wrong, and when they do this, they are carrying out that for which they were appointed. And in thus executing justice between man and man the ruler is ordained of God, whether he is born to the throne, or whether he is elected by the people, or appointed by a few. The Czar of Russia, the Emperor of Germany, the Queen of England, and the President of the United States, are all equally ordained of God as ministers of justice; not because God is personally at the head of any one of these Governments, but because he has ordained that man shall be under authority, and the individuals above referred to are in authority in their respective Governments. In the discharge of their duty, they are each personally responsible to God, just the same as the humblest peasant. {AMS July 1886, p. 51.8}

But, although man was given dominion over the earth and all that it contains, all things are not now under him. Adam was overcome by the tempter, and so forfeited his dominion. He has not now perfect dominion over the earth, because it does not yield to him the increase that it formerly did; and the beast of the field, the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea are not passively subject to his control. What man forfeited, he has no power to regain. And so, since we do not now see all things put under him, Paul says that “we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.” Hebrews 2:9. Not only did Christ taste death in order to restore to man his forfeited life, but he also bore the curse of the earth (compared Genesis 3:17, 18 and Matthew 27:29), that He might redeem it, and restore to man the possession that he lost. {AMS July 1886, p. 51.9}

Since Christ alone could redeem the lost dominion, and has paid the price, it is to him that it is to come. Says the prophet, “And thou, O tower of the flock, the stronghold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it *come*, even the first dominion; the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem.” Micah 4:8. And so Paul directs the minds of the disciples forward to the time of “the redemption of the purchased possession.” Ephesians 1:14. And when that time shall come, and the kingdom shall be given to Him “whose right it is,” those who have suffered with Christ shall also reign with him. 2 Timothy 2:12; Romans 8:17. {AMS July 1886, p. 52.1}

But it is not within the power of men to restore the kingdom to Christ. Here is where the would-be National Reformers make their fatal blunder. They say, “We must gain the world for Christ, and place him in his rightful position as Sovereign.” But God says to the Son, “Ask of *me*, and *I* shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.” Psalm 2:8. When some of the people “thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear,” Christ told them that he was as one going into a far country “to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return.” Luke 19:11, 12. And Daniel, in the prophetic vision, saw the giving of the kingdom to Christ by the Father, and has described it in the following language: “I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.” Daniel 7:13, 14. {AMS July 1886, p. 52.2}

Add to the above the following prophetic account of the time and circumstances of the giving of the kingdoms of this world to Christ, and the utter folly of the claims of the Amendmentists will be apparent:— {AMS July 1886, p. 52.3}

“And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.” Revelation 11:15-19. {AMS July 1886, p. 52.4}

Here we see that the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, only when the time comes that the dead shall be judged, and when the corrupt of earth shall be destroyed. Compare Psalm 2:8, 9 and Revelation 19:11-21. {AMS July 1886, p. 52.5}

In this brief survey we have learned concerning Christ’s sovereignty, (1) That He is not now ruler of this world; the dominion given to man in the beginning, has been forfeited, and Satan having usurped the authority is “God of this world.” (2) Man has no power to recover the lost dominion; Christ alone has the power, and he has paid the price. The controversy therefore, is between Christ and Satan. (3) We are now only waiting “the redemption of the purchased possession,” when the kingdoms of this world shall be given to Christ, and he will reign forever as actual sovereign of this world. (4) He has now gone to receive the kingdom, and to return. (5) The Father has promised “the uttermost parts of the earth” to Christ for a possession, and he alone has power to bestow the gift. (6) Men do not win the kingdom to Christ and then place him on the throne, but on the contrary, when Christ comes on the throne of his glory, having received the kingdom, he will call the righteous to come and share it with him. Matthew 25:31-34. And (7) this will be only at the end of the world, when the dead shall be judged, and the wicked destroyed. {AMS July 1886, p. 52.6}

It has been before shown that the so-called National Reform theory is absurd; we think this shows that it is unscriptural. That is the reason for its absurdity, for whatever is unscriptural must be absurd. When we consider God’s great plan of salvation, and the infinite price that has been paid for the redemption of the earth, and of man, that he may be assisted to a place in the kingdom of God, it seems little less than blasphemous presumption for the puny creatures to arrogate to themselves the task of placing the Creator on his own throne! E. J. W. {AMS July 1886, p. 52.7}