

Readings from the Word of God

24 October 2021

1 Samuel 8:1, 3-7 (NKJV, modified)

¹ Now it came to pass when Samuel was old that he made his sons judges over Israel. ³ But his sons did not walk in his ways; they turned aside after dishonest gain, took bribes, and perverted justice.

⁴ Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah, ⁵ and said to him, “Look, you are old, and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now make us a king to judge us like all the nations.”

⁶ But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, “Give us a king to judge us.” So Samuel prayed to Jehovah. ⁷ And Jehovah said to Samuel, “Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them.”

New Jerusalem §312

Good order cannot be maintained in the world without officials who are required to observe everything that is orderly and everything that is disorderly and to reward people who live properly and penalise people who live improperly. If this is not done, the human race will perish, since everyone has by heredity an innate desire to rule over others and to gain possession of their goods, which gives rise to hostility, envy, hatred, vengeance, guile, cruelty, and any number of other evils. So we need to be kept under restraint by laws. Those of us who do what is good need to receive rewards that accord with our love of honours and of financial gain. Those of us who do what is evil need to receive punishments that affect those same loves

(namely, loss of honour, wealth, and life). Otherwise the human race would perish.

Married Love §351

[C]ivil laws of justice... mean such injunctions as are found in the Ten Commandments, namely, not to commit murder, not to commit adultery, not to steal, and not to bear false witness. These injunctions are civil laws of justice in all countries of the earth, for without them no state would survive.

Doctrine of Charity §161

[People]... holding the highest positions in kingdoms, commonwealths, provinces, cities, societies,... [e]ach one of them in their own position, if they look to the Lord and shun evils as sins, and if they honestly, justly, and faithfully carry out the work of their exalted function, they are continually doing a good of use to the community and to the individuals in it, and become charity in form. And this takes place when the good of the subjects or citizens affects them; and when this affects them, it moves them to enact, together with those who are wise and God-fearing, laws of use, to see that they are kept, and to be first in living subject to them; also, to appoint over the groups of people under them officials, who are intelligent and at the same time of good will, through whom, under their supervision, judgment and justice may prevail, and the general good always be promoted. They will regard themselves as the highest in rank of those serving others, and not as the head, for the head directs all things of its body from love and wisdom in itself; and Love and Wisdom in itself is the Lord alone, by whom they, too, will be directed, as a servant.

Matthew 20:25-28 (NKJV)

²⁵ But Jesus called them to Himself and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. ²⁶ Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. ²⁷ And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave—²⁸ just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

Matthew 6:33 (NKJV, modified)

“Seek first the kingdom of God, and His justice and all these things will be added to you.”

***Doctrine of Charity* §§130-131**

The general good consists of these things: That in a society or kingdom there should be

1. What is Divine among them.
2. What is just among them.
3. What is moral among them.
4. Diligence, skill, and uprightness among them.
5. The necessaries for life.
6. The necessaries for all kinds of work.
7. The necessaries for protection.
8. Sufficient wealth, because these three kinds of necessaries are procured with it.

The general good is from these things, coming not from the things themselves, but from each of the individuals there, and through the goods of use which they each perform—as what is Divine is indeed there by means of ministers, and what is just by means of governors and judges; as what is moral is there by

means of what is Divine and what is just; and as necessities are there by means of all kinds of work and commerce; and so on.

Luke 6:35 (NKJV)

But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High.