

"And God blessed them, and God said unto them . . . have dominion over . . . every living thing that moveth upon the earth"
(Genesis 1:28).

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GOD'S DOMINION MANDATE AND THE NATIONS TODAY

by Henry M. Morris*

Despite all the lethal turmoil in the nations of the world today, God is now visiting *"the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His name"* (Acts 15:14), thereby creating a new nation, the Church, composed of people from every human nation on Earth who have trusted Christ for salvation and been *"born again."* That "nation" does not have a capital or a king here on Earth.

"For our conversation is in heaven" (Philippians 3:20). The word translated *"conversation"* actually means *"citizenship."* That is, while we may be citizens of the United States or some other nation here in this world, we are also citizens of the heavenly kingdom, which is none other than *"the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ"* (II Peter 1:11). This kingdom is actually called *"an holy nation"* (I Peter 2:9), and we are, in effect, *"ambassadors for Christ"* here on Earth (II Corinthians 5:20).

That does not imply, however, that the established earthly nations are no longer of interest to God as nations. Remember that God *"hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation"* in every case for the indi-

vidual nations, having made *"all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth"* (Acts 17:26).

Many nations of the past no longer exist, having failed in their God-given opportunities and passed their appointed times. But there are now perhaps 200 viable nations functioning today. These are all still under active observation by God in terms of their faithfulness in seeking Him and in accomplishing His primeval dominion mandate.

The Ongoing Dominion Mandate

God's primeval dominion mandate (Genesis 1:26–28) has never been withdrawn, and thus is still in effect. It was given originally to Adam and Eve, then confirmed and expanded to Noah (Genesis 9:6–7) after the great Flood.

It is, therefore, appropriate to raise the question as to how well the dominion mandate is being implemented by the present nations. A basic component in the mandate (Genesis 2:24) was the establishment of monogamous life-long marriage as the basis for producing the population needed to accomplish the other components of the mandate.

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It is obvious that the nations have failed miserably in this aspect. The nominally Christian nations of the west have given priority to monogamy in their legal codes, but divorce and “serial” polygamy have become very common, and now even cohabitation without marriage. The many Moslem nations of the world flagrantly disobey this mandate, as do the others. The Koran allows each man to have four wives, as well as easy divorce.

As far as “*subduing the earth*” is concerned, a number of nations have made contributions in terms of science, technology, commerce, education, and cultural products, although the most important such contributions have come from Europe and America. In spite of all this advance in science and technology, however, mankind is still a long way from subduing the Earth. We have not been able to control the weather or make the great deserts fertile and habitable or develop cures for numerous deadly diseases (cancer, Alzheimer’s, M.S., A.L.S., etc.).

Long ago, God described the patriarch Job as “*none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil*” (Job 1:8). Yet when God finally spoke to Job, in Job 38–41, He answered none of Job’s questions concerning the reason for his suffering. Instead, He gave out a remarkable monologue about His own great Creation and its providential maintenance. The monologue took the form of some 70 or more rhetorical questions having to do with that creation and Job’s lack of understanding thereof. The very phenomena which Adam and his descendants should have been seeking to understand in order truly to subdue the Earth and develop it to the glory of God and the benefit of His creation.

If God needed to rebuke Job—not for his wickedness, but for his lack of con-

cern for God’s dominion mandate—then what must He say about us?

Even those marvels we have been able to comprehend in science have been encrusted with science falsely so-called—that is, evolutionism. And even man’s great contributions in the fine arts have been polluted with utter banality and even blasphemy in so much of what now passes for art. The sophisticated realms of economics and business are intermingled with much greed, deception, and even criminality. And true education for transmitting truth has been so undermined that the real truth as found in Christ and His creation has been submerged in humanistic philosophy.

It would seem, despite our so-called high civilization, we are still far from fulfilling God’s dominion mandate.

In reference to the command to nations to “*seek the Lord,*” as stipulated in Acts 17:27, there has been at least limited obedience on the part of some nations—but, it is doubtful whether today any nation, as a whole, could be described as truly seeking God as revealed in the Bible and in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Human Governments

Another component of the dominion mandate was given to Noah and his sons following the great Flood.

That component was the authorization of human government. The command was very simple, yet exceedingly broad in its implications. “*Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed*” (Genesis 9:6). The crime of murder was no longer to be merely the trigger of a series of family “payback” revenge killings, leading to general continuing violence. Instead, God established the principle of human government to exercise authority over the process. This authority would inevitably imply the need to also exercise some kind of con-

trol over those human activities which might otherwise lead to murder—such things as robbery, assault, slander, rape, etc. Laws would have to be set up governing many types of human behavior, with appropriate punishment for disobedience.

Over the centuries many different forms of government have developed in the different nations of the world, ranging from pure democracies to total dictatorships. There have been absolute monarchies, limited monarchies, oligarchies, feudal systems, fascist and communist states, religious theocracies, and others.

Americans generally believe that the governmental system developed by our founding fathers (Washington, Madison, Jefferson, et al.) is the best of all, although this opinion is not necessarily shared by the rest of the world. Nevertheless, many nations have tried to emulate it, at least in part. Furthermore, both our Constitution and the legal regulations have been largely founded on the English “common law,” which in turn was developed mainly as an application of Biblical principles centered around the Ten Commandments.

It is significant, however, that the Bible does not specify which form of government should be employed, but only that the nations are responsible to govern themselves, with everything developed with capital punishment as the ultimate weapon.

Whatever form the government may take, it is important to remember that *“there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.”* Consequently, God’s will is that *“every soul be subject unto the higher powers”* (Romans 13:1). This is true regardless of whether that “power” is kind or cruel, ungodly or righteous.


Even though we Christians are actually citizens of heaven, we are also commanded to be good citizens of our own nation here on Earth. *“Put them in mind*

to be subject to principalities and powers” advised Paul to Pastor Titus concerning his flock, *“to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work”* (Titus 3:1). And Peter said: *“Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well”* (I Peter 2:13–14). The Lord Jesus Himself said: *“Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar’s; and unto God the things that are God’s”* (Matthew 22:21).

Of course, there is a limit. We are to render to God the service He commands, even if Caesar forbids it. *“We ought to obey God rather than men”* (Acts 5:29) was Peter’s response to the decree of the council for the disciples to stop preaching about Christ.

In any case, God is clearly still much aware and concerned about the governments of nations, even though they are neither His chosen nation Israel nor His church. These governments are actually, whether they realize it or care, involved in one key phase of the dominion mandate. For the most part, they have fulfilled this role acceptably, at least in preventing the anarchy that prevailed before the Flood, when there were no governments.

However, one concern is that more and more nations have rejected capital punishment, no matter how heinous the murder or other crime. Since this was the very basis for God authorizing human government in the first place, this may turn out to be still another measure of how nations have failed to carry out God’s dominion mandate, and therefore may soon find their appointed time ending.

There is coming a time, however, when the Lord Jesus Christ returns, that He will establish a better government throughout the earth. 

DO CREATIONISTS REALLY BELIEVE IN EVOLUTION?

by John D. Morris


The Institute for Creation Research is well known for its conviction that the scriptural account of creation is true as it stands. In particular, we notice that ten times in Genesis 1 God created the various plant and animal types “after their kind.” He did not transform one kind into a different kind, as evolution insists. Once the kind was created it could vary and adapt, but no new basic kinds would appear by this limited variation. In some cases, a *kind* might today be known as a *species*, but in others the term *genus* or *family*, as identified in modern taxonomy, might be more appropriate. Unfortunately, each of the above terms are poorly defined, thus equating *kind* with any of them would be misleading.

Creationists, in general, believe that after creation and especially after the curse, variation and adaptation favored a range of traits in plants and animals, many of which are preserved as fossils deposited by Noah’s Flood. Representatives of each land-dwelling, air-breathing animal kind were on board the Ark, but they disembarked into a very different world after the Flood. Migrating into a vast array of “unfilled ecological niches,” they adapted and varied into modern-day species through isolation and inbreeding. Such a transformation involves no *new* genetic material derived by mutation as required by evolution. It merely favors already existing genes, which fit new environments, forcing non-favored genes into elimination.

Let’s illustrate this scenario by using the original “dog” kind, which probably involved many individual dogs exhibiting a wealth of traits, and a robust gene

pool allowing much variety. Two representatives were chosen by God to survive the Flood on the Ark, and from them the vast array of “dogs” we know today have descended, including wolves, coyotes, and domesticated dogs. It is well established that all domestic dogs were bred from a wolf-like ancestor within the last few thousand years. But today’s breeds are genetically deficient. The gene pool of a poodle does not contain all the genes needed to produce a St. Bernard, even though the two breeds are interfertile. No evolution has taken place, just variety within the created kind.

What then are we to make of the recent comment by Dr. Hugh Ross, well-known semi-creationist, and aggressive advocate of billions of years, the Big Bang, and death before sin, who labels ICR and other young-earth creationists as “hyperevolutionists.” He claims that we must account for the “half billion species” in the fossil record by major changes after creation and the curse, and the “five million” alive today in the thousands of years since the Flood from the “30,000” or so on the Ark. (*The Genesis Debate*, 2001, pp. 126–127.) Dr. Ross neglects to mention that very nearly *all* the fossil and present species are marine dwellers, and are *not* descended from Ark survivors. He disavows the Flood as worldwide and exhibits little understanding of genetics in his rush to accept billions of years and death as part of God’s “very good” creation, and insists that the curse’s effects were mainly spiritual.

How much better to accept a literal view of Scripture. When you do, the scientific facts fall into place. 



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