

# Kingdom Report

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Week of 3 July 2021

## Property Expropriation and the Law of God

We have a debate in South Africa about changes to the Constitution concerning expropriation and property rights and the State. The church seems to be absent in this debate. So let me remind you what scripture reveals about God's law and property rights.

In August a parliamentary committee must report back on the wording of recommended changes to the South African constitution which allows the government to expropriate property without the need for compensation to its owners. This came about from the ANC's general conference when President Ramaphosa was elected as leader of the ANC and thereby president of South Africa.

The ANC position was before the conference that the constitution already allowed the government to expropriate what they want when they want but for many the land reform issue was going too slow and part of the reason was that there was not enough money to buy out land. The new change to the constitution would make expropriation without compensation more explicit than merely implied.

This issue needs analysis and comment from the church community but I don't see any. If these changes are implemented I see economic disaster ahead apart from the fact that it is a complete repudiation of Biblical law. And I would have thought that would have been obvious to church leaders....apparently not.

I want to give you some scriptural guidance here but more than that I want to point out why this is a sign of deeper problem we have here with the church's problem with discipleship of the nation seeing as we are a majority Christian population. More on that in a moment.

First let's look at the basic scriptural premises.....

One of the world famous 10 Commandments of scripture which all civilized societies uphold in law is "Thou shalt not steal". This pre-supposes that people have a legal and scriptural right to property. Property right stems from it is mine by right of the fact that I bought it or I made it or I inherited it or it was given to me. God in scripture recognizes those rights of the individual to own and do with their property as they wish. To take it away without the consent of the owner is theft.

The next basic premise is that all of creation is God's property by right of the fact that He made it. This is clearly expressed in Psalm 24:1....

***"The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof; the world and they that dwell therein."***

For those of you who wish further scriptures here are my suggestions:  
Gen. 14:19,22; Ex. 19:5; Lev. 25:23; Deut. 10:14; Psa. 50:10-12; Psa. 89:11; 1 Cor.  
10:26.28

The next premis is that God who is owner of all had however given the earth to man with a command to be fruitful and multiply and care for His creation and thereby produce a return on His investment: Psalm 115:16...

***"The heaven even the heavens are the Lord's but the earth has he given to the children of men."*** And Genesis 1:26-28.

This temporary loan/gift to all mankind of God's property is to be legally divided into ownership that is demarcated by established landmarks and boundaries that are not to be removed and trespassed on by others. Deut. 19:14...

***"Thou shalt not remove thy neighbour's landmarks which they of old time have set..."***

Also: Deut. 27:17; Job. 24:2; Prov.22:28; Prov. 2:30

Property is to be properly deeded and witnessed and deeds are to be preserved as a record. Jer. 32:8-14

The government of South Africa and its plans to be able to expropriate any property without need for compensation recognizes neither God's property rights on the earth neither the rights of individuals to own that property. That is what gives government the right to expropriate without compensation. From the arguments between themselves and the opposition party the EFF it is a matter are we going to do it with or without judicial adjudication.

I want to critique this lawlessness of our government but I need to draw your attention by way of comparison to America's constitution of the 1700's when people still believed in God and even the Masons who drew up their constitution had to acknowledge God and where the rights of man originate from: I quote:

***"We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal that they are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are life liberty and the pursuit of happiness....that to secure these rights governments are instituted among men."***

The original American constitutional idea was sound from a Biblical point of view. All rights of man, the right to property, the right to life, the right to pursue whatever you wish with your life is a right derived from our Lord God who gives these rights to us by His right of creation.

The purpose of government is to secure our rights from theft by others. Thereby scripture says that God has given the sole right to the power of the sword to punish those who infringe or steal other's right to life or property to government.

The South African government does not acknowledge that a person's property rights are derived from God. The government has proclaimed that they are owners of all property in the land and all that the land contains. That is why they claimed rights to all minerals and all water and the claim to all land is merely an extension of those

rights. If it wants land it can either decide to pay for it or it can decide not to pay for it. Why? Because ultimately it is the owner of all land.

There is an interesting incident in scripture of a land transaction between king David and Araunah. David wanted to build the Temple of the Lord. The place where it was to be built was Mt. Moriah where Abraham was to offer Isaac. God wanted the land for the Temple. David could have seized it for God. However Araunah offered it freely to David. David refused to either seize it or accept it as a gift. He paid for it. God intended building His temple where He would dwell on that land. God through David could have expropriated it without compensation. He did not and David did not. Neither God nor His government on earth will take land legally owned by another for nothing.

Our government however says we are looking at this the wrong way. They declare themselves "the custodians" of the land. Legally a custodian is one who cares for a child because they are not an adult to make their own decisions or able to own property. They need a custodian.

Governments around the world and increasingly the American government as well as our own, not only do not recognize that it is self-evident that God is creator of earth and its people and thereby all rights are derived from God.....no they now look upon themselves as god of the people and the property of the nation. They confer rights on the people. Think of all the things you must increasingly ask government permission to do in your pursuit of life, liberty, property and the pursuit of what makes you happy. Every year more of your rights are circumscribed and redefined and limited.

In contrast Jesus said that our heavenly Father our real custodian is to be approached with "Our Father which are in heaven, hallowed be thy name...give us this day our daily bread". Instead for 18 million South Africans dependent on welfare we have go to government with the request...give us our daily bread. Instead of "hallowed be thy name" the name of our politicians are hallowed everywhere on statues and buildings and roads and memorials. Instead of praise and worship to God our politicians have "praise singers" going before them in parliament.

To be truthful I do not blame politicians and government for all our ills. I see rather a majority Christian people of our land who have never been discipled. Meaning they do not know scripture or the law of the Lord or what the Lord requires of our government, our economy or our schools or our society.

Jesus gave commandment in Matthew 28:19-20

***"Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. And lo I am with you always even to the end of the world."***

This is a well known and well preached verse. Except here is the problem. What are all the things "whatsoever I have commanded you" that we must teach the nations? Have we taught our people about scriptural property rights? Have we taught them what is the scriptural role of government? If all our church does is look for all the red letters in the gospels and say ok that is what Jesus said so that is what we are going to teach, then we have missed all the "whatsoever I have commanded you".

Jesus of the New Testament is the Yahweh of the Old Testament. The person that Moses met on Mount Sinai that gave him the law was Jesus! The entire body of biblical law found in scripture are the things that Jesus commanded that we should be teaching the nations.

So the few scriptures that I have quoted here on property rights and theft...these are only some of the commandments that Jesus commanded and that we are to teach the nations. But our churches do not do that. It is not popular preaching. We rejoice how the Lord has made us free from "the law".

The result is that our people across the nation do not know that our government according God's law is acting lawlessly and we as a nation will pay severe economic punishments for this.

The "God is dead" culture of the modern world has now permeated through to our nation. When the working assumption is that God is no longer to be considered our supreme authority as a nation then government steps in and says we are now god. If you have prayers of supplications and needs you ask us. If you want permissions you ask us. If you want to pursue your happiness you need our permission. If we want your land we will take it.

And it will not stop there. If you want medical help in future you will ask government because the next thing is that all medical aid payments will go into one pot to be doled out by government for all. The assets of the medical aids will become government property.

The same will happen to retirement needs of the elderly. The pension assets of the retirement industry will become the assets of the government for them to distribute as they see fit.

Impossible you say? Why? The precedent has been established. The property rights of individuals are granted by government and can be withdrawn by government. They have not been granted by God and so government is not accountable to God or His law.

So where are we as a nation now? We are in the same place that Israel always came to when they would not obey the laws of the Lord. God sent them into bondage to serve bad rulers who would destroy the nation. Then Israel would repent and turn to the Lord. We are not there yet. More economic destruction is still ahead since our church leaders are still not willing or able to teach the nation all the things which Jesus commanded us and therefore disciple the nation.

I think we still need another 7 years at least of a "God is dead and therefore we can do as we wish with this nation" type of government to bring us to desperation to really turn to the Lord and decide that we are going to make South Africa a Christian nation obedient to the Word and Law of God.