

# The Law of Nations

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## I Biblical basis for the Nations

- A. God's Plan for the Nations – Psalm 2; Revelation 22:2 (see Quotes on Law of Nations)
  1. Nations are extensions of individuals - Genesis 10
  2. God's view of Nations - Acts 17:26
    - a. God is Creator of the nations, and there is only one race (but many tribes)
    - b. Nations have a providential destiny with borders known (and ordained) by God.
    - c. Nations should seek God. (see also Psalm 72:11, 17, 82:8; 86:9)
    - d. Kingdom is expressed nationally in eternity. (see Biblical Principles of Foreign Policy)
  3. Nations are judged in accordance with the condition of God's people – Psalm 2; 33:12
    - a. Kingdom government is bottom up (reflecting the people)
    - b. Nations are judged at the “bottom” as well as the top (bands and cords) – Pr. 29:2
- B. God governs the Nations - Psalm 22:27-28; 66:7; 67:4
  1. God governs the nations by His law (see also Blackstone quotes on law of nature/revelation)
    - a. Law of nature - God's laws revealed in nature - Romans 1:20; 2:14-15
    - b. Law of Revelation - God's law written in His Word - Romans 3:10-18
  2. God's Law is the model covenant – Ex. 19:6; 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 2:9-12; 2<sup>nd</sup> Cor. 5:20 – ambassadors

<b>Loving God</b> <b><u>Unity: Christian Self-Government</u></b> <b>Domestic Policy</b>	<b>Loving One's Neighbor</b> <b><u>Union: Voluntary Association</u></b> <b>Foreign Policy</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. God is Sovereign - <b>source</b> of law</li> <li>2. God is Worshipped - <b>way</b> of law</li> <li>3. God is Honored - <b>oath</b> of law</li> <li>4. God's Work - <b>priority</b> of law</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Honor <b>jurisdictions</b> - <i>parents</i></li> <li>6. Honor <b>life</b> - <i>no murder</i></li> <li>7. Honor <b>contracts</b> - <i>no adultery</i></li> <li>8. Honor <b>property</b> - <i>no theft</i></li> <li>9. Honor <b>reputations</b> - <i>no libel</i></li> <li>10. Honor <b>trade</b> - <i>no coveting</i></li> </ol>

3. God's **Kingdom** operates in concentric spheres (see chart Covenantal Foreign Policy)
  - a. God's covenant was first made with Adam - an individual - see Genesis 1:26-28; 2:7
  - b. It expands to marriage - Genesis 2:23-24
  - c. The family expresses a covenant of (my brother's keeper) - Genesis 4:8-12; 6:1-2
  - d. The church or ecclesiastical covenant of intercession - Genesis 8:20-22
  - e. Towns and counties as well as the national covenant - Exodus 19:1-3
4. God's **covenant** begins within (self-government - domestic) before being extended to greater spheres of voluntary union (foreign) – a covenant clarifies three key questions...
  - a. When should I unite? (**Sanctity**) – “*when actions (union) do not violate principle (unity)*”
  - b. When must I separate? (**Sanction**) – “*the action required violates principles of unity*”
  - c. When, how do I resist? (**Justice**) – “*using the force necessary to restore lawful justice*”
5. God governs among the nations - no centralized government above the nations (Psalm 2)
  - a. Due to this fact, **globalism** or centralized control of nations is not God's design
  - b. **Nationalism**, where people see their race or nation as inherently better, is also not of God
6. God governs through the golden rule - Matthew 7:12; 22:39
7. God judges a nation in relation to self-preservation – (see On Immigration position paper)
  - a. The Kingdom has borders and citizenship – lawful entry into both is required
  - b. Lawful entry includes *language, customs* and a *submission* to laws (private charity)
  - c. Uniform laws means no quotas, favoritism, birthright citizenship or special welfare
  - d. Preserving proper attitudes towards immigrants – lawful first in line, unlawful must wait

## II Philosophers of the Law of Nations during the Reformation

### A. Hugo Grotius (1583-1645) - The Netherlands

1. The first to articulate a cohesive philosophy; hence “father of the law of nations”
2. The two fundamental truths of the Christian religion
  - a. To love God with a godly faith, sincere obedience and complete trust
  - b. To love our neighbor as ourselves (golden rule – see also Matthew 7:12)
3. The Rights of War and Peace by Grotius – 1625 (quotes from Grotius)
  - a. Rights of Peace – law of nature binds individual, law of nations to those who consent
  - b. Rights of War – *cause* defensive, *conducted* with justice and valor – see Grotius quote

### B. Samuel de Puffendorf (1631-1694) – Germany

1. Law of nature internal (individual) while law of nations external (states)
2. God is directly Sovereign over each nation (equality), so no positive law above any nation
3. Treaties are not part of the law of nations, apply only to those who consent to them
4. Self-preservation is critical for nations for they have the liberty to succeed or fail

### C. Emerich de Vattel (1714-1767) – France

1. Defined - “*laws subsisting between nations and states, and the obligations that flow from it*”
  - a. Nations are in the state of nature and equal (like individuals)
  - b. Law of nature is binding, not identical to law of nations - learn art of application (quote)
2. Laws in application of the Law of Nations - Golden Rule of Beneficence
  - a. 1st - *Do good to all nations without injuring your own rights*
  - b. 2nd - *Each nation is to be left alone in peace*
  - c. 3rd - *Treaties yield sovereignty for the purpose of unified action*

### D. James Wilson – (1742-1798) - United States (quote) – a summary of the law of nations

1. Wilson articulated the accumulation of wisdom on the law of nations
2. It inspired President Monroe and John Quincy Adams – (see JQA tenets of foreign policy)
  - a. **Independence** – avoiding interdependence or isolationism.
  - b. **Neutrality** – self-preservation to avoid intermeddling or appeasement.
  - c. **Interposition** – limited intervention by treaty; avoiding nationalism and globalism.

## III The Just War Doctrine (quote from Ambrose)

### A. Christianity initiated the Just War theory.

1. Ambrose, Augustine, Aquinas, and Calvin based just war on the character of God Himself
2. Ultimately, these pioneers demonstrated that love ought to be the highest motive in war.
3. Original sin is what makes necessary the use of force – it is the source of evil on earth

### A. Just Cause for War - fight for the right reason – *Jus ad Bellum*

1. Declared by pre-determined proper authority
2. Self-defense from attack, or possibly a preemptive strike
3. Right intention – advancing good and avoiding evil
4. War as the last resort to right a wrong -
5. A reasonable hope of success, standing for principle, as little loss of life as possible

### B. Just Conduct in War – *Jus in Bellum*

1. No consent to evil – don’t do evil that good may come – proportionate to suffering
2. Non-combatant immunity – no innocent life targeted, save lives of enemy
3. Intention – don’t intend to demoralize the enemy or kill the innocent
4. Proportion – use only force necessary to win, not revenge
5. Judging war crimes – judge conduct of soldiers and commanders through *civil* means

### C. Extremes to avoid... - both extremes use the premise that Jesus was opposed to all force as evil

1. **Pacifism** - opposition to war in all cases (the means justifies the end or result)
2. **Realism** - war and evil can be used to accomplish good (the end justifies the means)