



CAPITOL
ministries®

APRIL 29, 2024

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Genesis 1:1

FROM OUR FOUNDING FATHERS

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FOCUSED ON THE WORD

Genesis: Basic Immutable Truths for Public Servants



Genesis is foundational to a biblical worldview. As a public servant, you should know the passages that follow, recognize their connection and integration, and allow that knowledge to guide and convict your thinking and actions.

I trust this study will prove to be practical and helpful. My prayer is that together, God will grant us a movement for Christ among public servants nationwide in the years to come. Toward that end, we labor.

Read on, my friend!

Ralph Drollinger

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WEEKLY BIBLE STUDIES

Governors: Fridays 9am (EST), Zoom

Former Cabinet Members / White House Senior Staff: Fridays 9am (EST), Zoom

Senate Members: Tuesdays 8am, rotating offices, hot breakfast served

House Members: Thursdays 8am, AG Hearing Rm., Longworth 1302, hot breakfast served

The views expressed in each Bible Study are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the position of any individual Bible Study sponsor.



MINISTRY UPDATE

Jon Strain

Idaho Ministry Leader



Jon Strain, CapMin’s ministry leader to members of the Idaho Legislature has one objective whether he is speaking with a mature Christian, a new believer, or a skeptic: “I invite people to take the next step toward God,” he said. With a heart for evangelism and discipleship, Pastor Strain has been leading the weekly Capitol Ministries Bible study to an average 8-12 senators and representatives since 2015.

“In the Capitol, I reach out to legislators and when I get a meeting, I offer my compelling question which, I hope, is wide enough and inviting enough that they want to answer. That question is, ‘Does God have anything to do with your being here at this Capitol as a senator or a representative? People give you all kinds of answers. Most of them have a serious awareness that God has put them in that role. I hear some amazing stories. But some don’t, and I ask that question because I want to learn what they think about spiritual matters. Based on the answer, I have another question. I call it the platinum question because it is rare, valuable, and enduring. I ask, ‘Let’s assume there is a God,

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I. INTRODUCTION

The book of Genesis is foundational for developing a biblical worldview. This book sets the stage for the 65 following books of the Bible. Herein the big issues of life are answered. Questions regarding the meaning of our existence cannot be answered satisfactorily apart from revelation regarding the origins of life. But the opening chapters of Genesis are not limited only to that subject. Genesis has much to say about various complex issues that face public servants today.

I will attempt to highlight some of those cogent passages that have much to do with the foundation for policies that lead to a healthy nation. Herein is God’s blueprint that reveals the basics of a strong nation. If public servants enact what follows, God will bless a nation. Conversely, violation of these timeless principles leads a nation to ruin. Genesis is the opening section of our Owner’s Manual, so read it carefully and do not prove resistant to what it says.

II. COMMUNICATION AND PERSONABLENESS

Before launching into passages that God has given us for guidance in the formation of civil government policies, we should not overlook several manifest attributes of God Himself that spring from the first passages of Genesis.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth (Genesis 1:1).

It is important to note that God existed eternally in three different personages of the same numerical essence *prior* to the *beginning* of His creative acts in 1:1. This passage marks not God’s beginning

but rather the *beginning* of the universe in historical time and space.

In the New Testament (NT) book of John, verses 1:1–3, we learn that Jesus, the second member of the Trinity, existed before the *beginning* of the world (cf. Hebrews 1:10; Colossians 1:16–17; 1 Corinthians 8:6). God was already existent in three persons before what is recorded in Genesis 1:1 (cf. Genesis 1:26; 3:22; Isaiah 6:8 for the use of “us”). Prior to God’s creative acts, He already *eternally* exists, and intrinsic to His triune nature are His attributes of communication, personableness, love, and respect. This nature has important theological implications for public servants: if God’s nature is personable, communicative, and loving, then it follows that God-fearing legislators need these traits also.

You might not feel compelled to engage others across the aisle, but God did so with you!

To manifest these attributes is to be godly. God in His triune being was sufficient and fulfilled in and by His own nature, but He nonetheless reached out and *created*, meaning He volitionally engaged others. So should you and I—even if those we engage are in rebellion to the person of God and His worldview. God’s creative acts were certainly not predicated on man’s responsiveness. Genesis 1:1 reveals pre-creational attributes of God that are to be emulated by man.

In addition to these communicable attributes of God, this profound first verse unveils at least six broadly qualifiable characteristics of God that should not go unnoticed.



III. SIX BASIC ASPECTS OF GOD'S NATURE REVEALED IN WHAT HE IS NOT

A. GOD IS NOT ATHEISTIC

This passage provides no philosophical argument pertaining to God's existence. Rather, it boldly presupposes His presence, and everything is viewed from that premise.

B. GOD IS NOT POLYTHEISTIC

The main verb *created* (*bara* in Hebrew) is singular, meaning Moses (the author of Genesis) was inspired by God to write that there is only one true God (cf. Deuteronomy 6:4) as opposed to a plurality of gods or *polytheism*.

C. GOD IS NOT MATERIALISTIC

For God to have *created* assumes the idea of *ex nihilo* or "out of nothing." That is to say, this passage indicates nothing of preexisting material that evolved upward in terms of sophistication and intelligence. Conversely and declaratively, God is the One Who brought all matter into existence.

D. GOD IS NOT PANTHEISTIC

In this passage God is clearly separated from what He has *created*. That is to say, God is not *in* or *a part of* what He *created*. He is not *pan-* ("in all") *theistic* in nature.

E. GOD IS NOT NATURALISTIC

Naturalism, the theory that scientific laws can account for all phenomena, is the opposite of *supernaturalism*. This passage boldly exclaims a supernatural origin of the universe.

F. GOD IS NOT HUMANISTIC

The verifiable ancient time stamp on the penning of Genesis, in conjunction with this bold, contrasting statement from a people of very recent postexilic Egyptian culture (of opposite beliefs), makes untenable the idea that these few words of profound implication were of human origin.

Unpacking these six insights serves to qualify the very character and nature of God in the minds of His followers both then and now. Grasping them is a prerequisite to examining and properly understanding the major expounded themes of the eleven chapters that follow. Select distinctive biblical worldviews are as follows.

IV. SPECIAL CREATION

In Genesis 1:26 we read the following:

Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

Genesis 1:1 and 1:26 are both determinative passages that draw lines in the sand. They represent stark contrasts between creation and evolution in terms of man's origin and meaning in life. How the public servant navigates, accepts, or rejects these passages will soon demarcate his or her ideology and policies.

Creation and evolution represent worldviews at separate ends of the spectrum. Whereas Darwinians believe everything evolved from a preexisting cell, creationists believe in intelligent design. The for-

VERSE OF THE WEEK

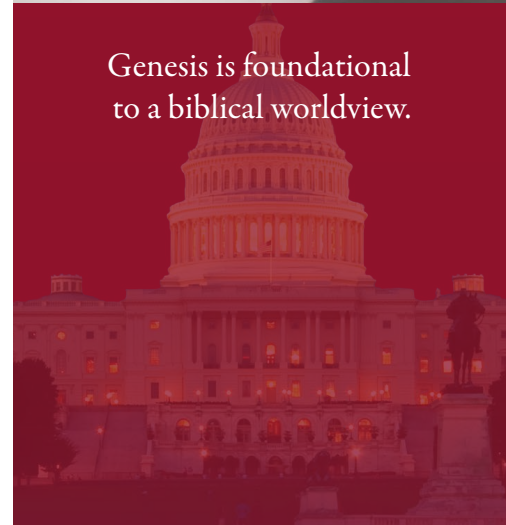


Genesis 1:1

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.



Genesis is foundational to a biblical worldview.





Continued from page 2

and you can ask any question you want and get a response, or you can challenge God on an issue. What would your question or topic be?”

Lively discussions ensue, especially with skeptics, and the conversations always lead to an invitation to our weekly legislative Bible study. The Bible study is held in the Senate Majority Caucus Room and is hosted by Sen. Chuck Winder who serves as president pro tempore of the Idaho Senate and has previously served as the majority leader. “I wanted to join with Capitol Ministries because we are unique in that we base everything on the Scriptures,” Pastor Strain said. “Our mission states, making disciples of Jesus Christ in the political arena throughout the world. We have an international scope, and to be a helper of public servants is a big honor. And I am watching and marveling at the expansion at every level—international, federal, state, and local government—because that is tough ground.”

Pastor Strain earned a Master of Divinity degree from Western Conservative Baptist Seminary, which is now simply known as Western, in Portland, Oregon. He and Pam will have been married for 40 years this summer and have four adult sons and five grandsons. “My heart for my ministry is to make disciples and invite people to investigate Jesus through His Word and to enter into a relationship with Him, so that He is their Good Shepherd, and they hear His voice as He is speaking to them about all of their life including their voting and decision making. This is a major battle front for them. They probably feel the most vulnerable and raw in that Capitol Building than anywhere else in their life. What a place to learn the Word of God!”

mer is the seedbed of attitudinal pride, and the latter of humility. While belief in special creation breeds ensuing reverence and dependence on God, belief in evolution is foundational to anthropocentric thinking and supposed solutions—which according to the Bible is fallen thinking. The two worldviews lead to vastly different convictions in public policy.

It should come as no surprise that a country bent on jettisoning its Judeo-Christian worldview in favor of humanistic secularism would have problems agreeing on issues in its representative chambers.

Legislators end up trusting in either Bible-centered or man-centered solutions to most issues imaginable and are often worlds (worldviews) apart. This analysis identifies the real problem in Washington. Special creation is a basic, immutable truth that must be valued at all costs.

V. CREATED IN HIS IMAGE

Implicit in Genesis 1:26 is the additional significant idea that man, unlike the remainder of God’s creation, was and is created in His image and likeness. Mankind is thus at the top of God’s creative order. (No other aspect of His creation was created in *His image*.) Extending from that idea are the stewardship responsibilities incumbent upon mankind relative to taking care of His creation. The biblical idea of *rule* (literally “to have dominion”) is commanded by God prior to the Fall of man (Genesis 3). This is an important distinction to make since the Fall warps the stewardship of

man. Nonetheless, God desires for mankind to add value to the natural resources He has entrusted to them for their own benefit and blessing. But now, post-Fall added value and prosperity will only result from hard labor. States 3:17–19 in this regard:

Then to Adam He said, “Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, ‘You shall not eat from it’; cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; and you will eat the plants of the field; by the sweat of your face you will eat bread, till you return to the ground, because from it you were taken. For you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”

Being created *in His image* (*imago dei* in Greek) does not give man the right to a bulldozer mentality. Mankind is to steward the earth with respect for the Creator’s creation. However, Genesis more than suggests that man should not merely conserve, but rather develop the many natural resources God has given him to cultivate for his own benefit and advancement. The Sierra Club (during its early years, but no longer) used to state this balance in a wonderfully succinct way: “Not in blind opposition to progress, but in opposition to blind progress.” That sentence is a good way for public servants to hold in tension the truths of Genesis 1:26 with 3:17–19.

VI. HETEROSEXUALITY AND MONOGAMY

In Genesis 2:21–25 we read the following:



So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that place. The LORD God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man. The man said, “This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.” For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

God’s deliberate creation of Adam and Eve has much to say to the public servant regarding marriage laws.

First, God did not create two males or two females. Secondly, He did not bring a male to Adam or a female to Eve. And third, the passage speaks to an order in creation. The wife is to submit to the authority of her husband prior to the Fall. This hierarchical authority in any institution is not a remedy for the Fall but a timeless principle to keep order in His creation. Both the husband and wife have equivalent value but differing roles. Again, these biblical principles are foundational for public servants regarding biblically sound policies.

VII. THE FALL OF MAN

We are familiar with the story in the garden of Eden and man’s Fall (Genesis 3). This passage serves the legislator in explaining the dual nature of man. His goodness stems from being created in the image of God, whereas his penchant for sin is biblically explained due to the Fall. The Genesis account explains the duality of man’s nature as does no other

philosophical explanation. And the implications of the Fall are vast. When man fell, he became separated from God and meaninglessness set in. The following questions: *Who am I? Where did I come from? What is my purpose?* remain unanswered apart from the Genesis account.

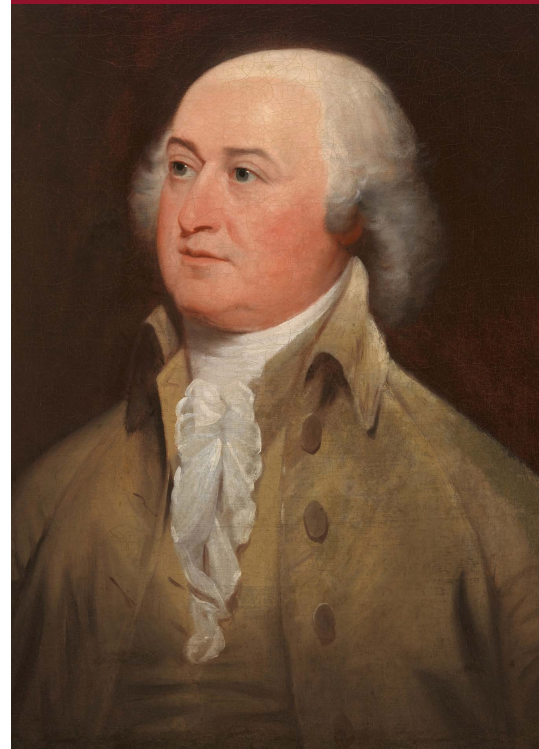
Post-Fall, Man has no infinite and personal reference point; he is void of the answers to life’s most important questions.

Post-Fall, even though man remains physically alive, he is spiritually dead (cf. Ephesians 2). As a result, he needs a Savior to be reconciled to God. Without this reconciliation, man lives in meaninglessness, alienated from the infinite, personal God of the universe. This disconnect affects even his ability to think straight—and in the case of a legislator, to legislate in ways that are not only good for the state but also glorifying to God. In his rebellion, man often arrogantly snubs God’s solutions to societal problems. The Fall results in alienation not only from God but also from self and others. Man is incomplete. These disconnects make for extremely rough waters throughout life.

Given this biblical truth about the Fall, and in a nation where the Church is institutionally separate from the State (which is biblically proper), what is the public servant to do? He or she is to defend (in an American context) the First Amendment!

When the Church is structurally differentiated from the State, she has her best opportunity to prosper and win the lost to Christ. Man’s alienation stemming from the Fall can only be remedied by

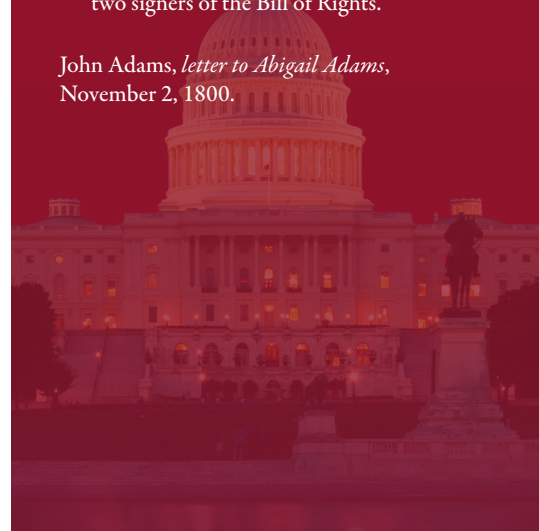
John Adams



“I Pray Heaven to Bestow The Best of Blessing on THIS HOUSE, and on ALL that shall hereafter Inhabit it. May none but Honest and Wise Men ever rule under This Roof!”

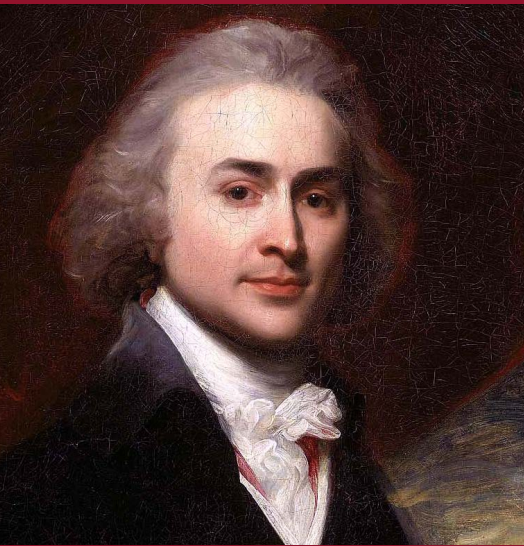
— John Adams, second president of the United States, signer of the Declaration of Independence, judge, diplomat, one of two signers of the Bill of Rights.

John Adams, *letter to Abigail Adams*, November 2, 1800.





John Quincy Adams



“The hope of a Christian is inseparable from his faith. Whoever believes in the divine inspiration of the holy Scriptures, must hope that the religion of Jesus shall prevail throughout the earth. Never since the foundation of the world have the prospects of mankind been more encouraging to that hope than they appear to be at the present time. And may the associated distribution of the Bible proceed and prosper, till the Lord shall have made ‘bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God,’ Isaiah 52:10.”

— John Quincy Adams, sixth president of the United States, diplomat, secretary of state, U.S. senator, U.S. representative, “Old Man Eloquent,” “Hell-Hound of Abolition.”

William H. Seward, *Life and Public Services of John Quincy Adams* (New York: C.M. Saxton, Barker & Co., 1860), 249.

the evangelism of the Church, which best occurs when it, as an institution, is separate from the State (as history more than illustrates). The public servants’ upholding of the First Amendment is the proper application of these Genesis 3 truths. Keep in mind that when man is individually reconciled to God, he or she has the potential to become the State’s best citizen and contributor (all else being equal).

VIII. THE FLOOD

Genesis 7–9 records the Noachian Flood. What can the public servant learn from the flood? Reverence and fear of God. Any society that runs contrary to God’s precepts is subject to His judgment. The flood serves to remind us all that God is not only loving and patient but also just and wrathful regarding the violation of His principles. In the NT book of Romans, chapter 1, we learn of God’s wrath—not in the form of a flood—but in terms of abandonment. He gives over individuals to their own sinful ways, and the nation experiences the outcomes of those sowings.

Whereas God made a promise never to flood the earth again (Genesis 9:11), He has made no promise not to abandon those who habitually sin.

At some point God removes His restraining grace. These truths should serve to adequately motivate public servants to continue to fight legislative battles for biblical principles and to work earnestly to elect men and women who uphold them.

IX. THE DISPERSION

After the flood, in both Genesis 9:1 and 9:7, God repeats the command to man-

kind first given in Genesis 1:28, to “*Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth.*” Keep this command in mind. After the Fall of man (Genesis 3), God’s prized creation displays an ongoing proclivity to disobey God—even His simplest commands. This overt and ongoing rebellion necessitated the flood. *But inundation did not put an end to insubordination!* Soon thereafter, man’s defiance of God surfaces again in this way: rather than *scatter* from the region of Ararat (per Genesis 11:8–9 and in concert with His earlier command to “*fill the earth*”), the descendants of Noah willed to do exactly the opposite. They desired to stay put and build a monument, not to God’s greatness, but to their own! That monument is known as the Tower of Babel. Note how God reacts to this plan in Genesis 11:6–8:

The LORD said, “Behold, they are one people, and they all have the same language. And this is what they began to do, and now nothing which they purpose to do will be impossible for them. Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language, so that they will not understand one another’s speech.” So the LORD scattered them abroad from there over the face of the whole earth; and they stopped building the city.

The applicable takeaway for public servants intent on studying the theology of Genesis is this: *God wants a diversity of nations.* It is rudimentary to understanding the mind of God as it relates to subjects such as immigration policy. The sin nature *in* man necessitates the geopolitical separation *of* man in contrast to the accumulation of man and his power.

The veracity of the axiom, “Power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts ab-



solutely,” (paraphrased) is underscored by this passage. This principle of Scripture—the necessity for diversification due to the Fall—informed our Founding Fathers relative to the separation of powers within our specific government. The Tower of Babel illustrates that one result of man’s fallen nature is pride and an overestimation of his own importance. This congratulatory sense of self-prominence is the seedbed for man’s desire for the accumulation of power.

All this power structure was in play at Babel: in its all-out quest for a one-nation-in-the-world form of government wherein man worships his own greatness rather than God’s, Babel serves to illustrate man’s continuing open defiance of God. Its modern-day manifestation goes by the name of *secular humanism*. Further evidence of God’s opposition to a one-nation world is the establishment of such by the Antichrist in the future.

Note the following in Revelation 13:7:

It was also given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them, and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him.

At this point in time, God grants Satan and his pawn, the Antichrist, temporary control over all civil government as the Antichrist rules over a one-nation world. Accordingly, both Genesis 11 and Revelation 13, in different ways, serve to underscore this biblical truth and rudimentary principle in the formation of policy on immigration:

Presently, God desires the world to be inhabited by numerous independent nations.

It follows that nations, by God’s design, are to have different languages, cultures, and boundaries. As a remedy for the Fall, the power-hungry presence of sin, and the proclivity for evil today, Scripture necessitates the principle of the separation of man’s power. This timeless legislative principle needs consideration in all policy formation. With the separation of power as a principle, God is more apt to receive glory from His creation than if, like the prideful world-conquering empires of history (Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome, the dream of Hitler, or that of the coming Antichrist), mankind becomes caught up in self-worship and uses his unchecked hubris to abuse others. This is the witness of history when the diversification-of-nations principle has been violated by world conquerors. God has created many innocent people in His own image and likeness, and this principle is the way He intends to limit their abuse. ***So the LORD scattered ...*** is a guiding principle for legislators.

Does this principle apply to the crisis in Ukraine?

In God’s sovereign dispersion and diversification of nations found in Genesis 11, it seems to follow, stemming from this principle, that *one* nation, does not have the right to unilaterally take over another. I should also add, stemming from this principle, that if one nation threatens the sovereignty of another, the threatened nation has a biblically justifiable right to autonomously protect itself and to ask and recruit other nations to aid them.

At times God uses coalitions of other nations (as was the case, for instance, in WWII) to achieve His ends. But if there is no acceding coalition, it is doubtful



NOW AVAILABLE

The book of Acts records how a small band of men—the apostles—in very short order ***turned the world upside down*** (Acts 17:6, KJV) during the first century in which they lived. This small team of uneducated, common men were not elite leaders, so how were they able to saturate the world with the gospel—changing lives, changing culture, and eventually changing the Roman Empire?

Scripture provides the answer: not only did they fulfill the Great Commission one soul at a time through a ministry of geometric evangelism and discipleship, but they succeeded *by concentrating on and impacting a particular element of society, specifically kings and all who are in authority* (1 Timothy 2:1–4).

All in Authority: Reigniting the Bible’s Top-Down Missions Strategy provides the biblical exegesis for this missional strategy that is found in both the Old and New Testaments. The book provides a clarion call for the Church to make political public servants a priority mission field in our nation today. Request your complimentary copy at capmin.org.



He has called only *one* nation to be His righteous surrogate as intervening judge over the sins of another nation.

The Scriptures emphasize repeatedly that God is the One Who ultimately judges nations for their atrocities. God is certainly capable of due recompense! Nations also eventually and always reap what they sow.

Often assumed by legislators, but somewhat arrogantly so, is that God has assigned America to be His watchdog over the world. Considering our passage under study, Genesis 11, God unilaterally and sovereignly dispersed and diversified all nations. Why, in another example among many, would America not insist and demand that Arab nations police their own part of the world?

The biblical principle of a compassionate response needs to also be mentioned in regards to the Ukraine invasion. En-

couraging fleeing innocent citizens to immigrate to our nation or other nations seems to be in keeping with the dispersion of nations to quell evil as per the principle of Genesis 11.

Such policies and actions serve to manifest the above biblical principle in formulating a proper biblical response to national crises.

X. SUMMARY

Genesis chapters 1–11 are fascinating! The principles therein provide much wisdom for the public servant who desires not only to please God but also to form policies that are immutable and beneficial to the overall health of a nation. May God bless you as you increasingly attempt to underscore all policy decisions with scriptural truths. Rest assured: in upholding any of the aforementioned precepts from Genesis, you will never be guilty of championing bad policy. Amen.



*Making Disciples
of Jesus Christ
in the Political Arena
Throughout the World*



Capitol Ministries provides Bible studies, evangelism, and discipleship to political leaders. Founded in 1996, Capitol Ministries has started ongoing ministries in more than forty U.S. state Capitols and dozens of foreign federal Capitols.

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