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God's Involvement In American Politics (A Brief History and Present)

A Thesis Presented

by

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Abstract of the Thesis

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There are myriad ways God has been included in modern American politics, but where does that inclusion stem from? The parallels between the Bible, American history, and modern day American politics are numerous. Once it can be seen that God has always been essential to America, and God has always been necessary to most Americans, we can find more avenues to identify God's roots in American political discourse and political activism, and legal literature. God is foremost necessary in the Bible and that idea was brought forth into the realm of American politics. He means everything and is everything to the characters of Biblical Narrative, and that attitude, although it became less weighted over time in America, was still important to the framers of the US Constitution. Biblical kings and citizens could not see themselves diverting from God's path with freedom or without fear, and in many cases American politicians and citizens face the same issues because Biblical rhetoric of freedom and fear is such an integral part of American culture and legal process. By looking at how different presidents, actions groups, and legal literature reference the Bible, and then delve into the Bible itself to see the

similarities and prove the connection, we will see how America's forefathers secured an inclusion of the Biblical God that the majority of the American people would find acceptable, and that still exists today.

Dedication Page

This thesis is dedicated to my mother, who passed away when I was 11 years old. I may not be summa cum laude like you, but I made it through an MA!

Frontispiece



Table of Contents

Introduction - 1

Chapter 1 – 6

Chapter 2 – 33

Chapter 3 – 51

Conclusion – 80

Works Cited – 87

God's Involvement In American Politics (A Brief History and Present)

A Brief Introduction

Voters' minds are affected in many different ways in America: TV commercial campaigns, picket post signs on highways and suburban lawns, as well as on website advertisements. Other powerful ways voters are affected in America are the religious messages of local pastors and other pious figures. Religion is intertwined into the American state so much that it is often hard to find where one begins and the other ends. Upon diving into the history, we can see that the early American colonists wanted God to have a powerful effect and place in American culture and had certain beliefs of what God should be to America. Later, that changed when the founding fathers believed the word "God" should be open to multiple interpretations and worked at building that idea into American law (Meacham 22-24). Either way, the word "God" and its ability to influence politics didn't change from the colonial era to the post-revolutionary era.

America today, and in the past, is veritably tied up with, for better or worse, the rhetoric of God's involvement in politics, whatever meaning that word has to an individual. God's definition in America's past and present is moreover bound up with Biblical tradition. American presidents have been speaking of God in their addresses to the nation since the inception of the nation, sometimes to justify events, or to invoke safety, comfort, and righteousness, and many have been of different sects of faith. As time has gone on, the amount of this "God-Inclusion" Rhetoric has only grown, again, regardless of specific faith. The biblical roots of this rhetoric came from before America itself was a defined nation. The early Puritans settlers tilled God-Inclusion into the New World and its politics just as much as they tilled the earth, although there were some sects that pushed for more separation, as well as Protestants and Quakers (Lambert 40-122). They all brought God's Rhetoric from the Old and New Testament into American

politics, and the roots of that rhetoric were so strong, that even though there seem to be many ways in which the American state, in its legal framework, is not meant to be a Judeo-Christian state by any means, but a civil state (Meacham 22-24), God's Judeo-Christian sense and definition still continued to be an integral part of American politics.

To express that God and the Bible are a part of American history is not enough to justify why God Rhetoric is still a potent force today. To answer the question of why politicians and political groups in the U.S. today feel they must include the Judeo-Christian God in the sense of their rhetoric, regardless of the interpretation, we must look at the Bible and the characters of the Bible to understand the impression God leaves on those who don't follow His way. This may come more from the Puritan American tradition, as Frank Lambert demonstrates in his scholarship, but it can also come slightly from the Protestant tradition, also shown in Lambert's work. Regardless of sect or interpretation, a close reading of the Bible can reveal that because God sets up, pulls down, and takes away, the characters He affects must ever be cautious of offending God lest He punish them. That sense of fear and of reverence, I will argue, has been transferred into the American religio-political sphere by those who made America, even in the midst of a Declaration of Independence stating America was a land of a God of many interpretations, not strictly Christian. (Meacham 19)

The characters in the Biblical narrative incorporate God on two levels. First, they include Him in their daily lives and daily thoughts. He must be a part of what the Biblical characters do and they must be ever aware of His presence or else they risk losing sight of His direction, risking punishment. Secondly, knowingly or not, the characters of the Bible must follow God's narrative. God has a plan set out, and the best and 'most righteous' characters of the Bible not only include God, but follow His narrative to a tee. This Judeo-Christian sentiment s also

borrowed in America politics, as we will see. For example, although not a religious man, this sentiment is echoed in Abraham Lincoln's statement, whose religiosity was questioned frequently, (Meacham 13-14) "for I know that the Lord is *always* on the side of the *right*. My constant anxiety and prayer (is) that I and *this nation* should be on the Lord's side." (Abraham Lincoln: Speeches and Writings) In the Bible, Saul and David's lives, two of the first "Kingly" characters of the Bible, are bound up by God and in God. By being bound up, they must follow His narration to receive rewards else they receive punishment. Although the Founding Fathers "evolved" out of this Judeo-Christian "dependence" rhetoric, there were still traces of it in their speeches, writing, and actions. The Biblical narratives of Saul and David also include the fact that they know they will experience retribution if they fail to meet certain standards set by God and we will see this sentiment in American political rhetoric as well.

Those who push for this retribution rhetoric to be employed in America today don't just want civic life to be civic, they want America to return to the Christian nation of the early colonies and be ultra-religious (Meacham 18-19). These would be the people on the religious right of today's America. They want the citizenry to be aware of God's Narrative. They also want the citizenry to be tied up with and follow God's narrative for the fear (and joy) of the consequences of what will happen if they do.

These "action groups," as I will call them, especially on the religious right, are on the fringe of the political sphere and can speak more freely than a politician can. The action group serves to levy the consequences of following or not following God's narrative to the American public. The members of these groups hope that, by explaining, upholding, and disseminating the tradition of the two sides of the Biblical rhetoric, the Inclusion of God into the political sphere

for his guidance, and the narration, by which citizens come to understand His will, they can lead the American population to act for God and restore the Christian nation.

The consequences of not being God-centered for the religious right are not just private, they are wholly public. In many examples in the Bible, a whole city of non-believers can cause ruin for the few believers, so those who lead religious right action groups work towards “awakening” Americans to acting religiously in their political decisions out of fear that the masses will bring down the righteous. An example in the Bible of the masses bringing down (or trying to bring down) the righteous is the story of Lot in Sodom and Gomorrah, which will be briefly analyzed in Chapter 2. Lot, the “good one” tries to defend the angels who visit the city while the rest of the men of Sodom and Gomorrah try to “ravage” them. The action group then, who fears being brought down by the masses, is the group who is moving the God-Narrative out of the Bible and into American politics today because they already “saw the trouble coming.” Religious believers become not only spiritual guides in light of this fact, but political activists in today’s America in ways the early colonial Puritans did, for example, seeking to change public policy in accordance with what they believe to be God’s narrative for them. (Lambert 76-78)

Finally, although the God-Narrative of the Bible is exceptionally strong and was resisted by the founding fathers in being brought fully into the American legal framework, it is still there. Although there are many factors in which the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution themselves convey “deist” sentiments in expressing a single creator which has many appearances and grants natural rights to all, (Meacham 8,22) there is still much of the Old and New Testament to be found in these documents, just as there is much Old and New Testament to be found in the Founding Fathers. For instance, John Jay, the first Chief Justice, was “a traditional Episcopalian and one of the more orthodox believers among the Founders.” Samuel

Adams was a fierce advocate of independence, but was “a Puritan who looked askance at other faiths.” Jefferson’s belief included many sects of Christianity ranging from “elements of Deism, Anglicanism, and Unitarianism.” (Meacham 11-12) God and God Rhetoric in general are also embedded in American political writing such as the very framework of the Constitution, in its ideals and structure. As we will see, there is evidence that the Constitution itself is based on Old Testament forms. This further explains, aside from American religious history in general, why God-Narrative has such a hard time leaving the American political arena. God and God Narrative are built into America, and it is up to us to choose our interpretation of its being.

Chapter 1

God-Inclusion Rhetoric and Its History in the United States

A New Type of Rhetoric: Religious Liberty

There are many different theories as to what affects a voter's mind in America: morals, values, and religion. David Domke and Kevin Coe in their article, "The God Strategy: The Rise of Religious Politics in America," focus on all three: morals, values, and religion, calling the manipulation of them, "The God Strategy." Another term for this is "God-Inclusion." It is likened to a use of language, specifically by a president, communicated to a nation during times of crisis, celebration, or tragedy, when emotions are highest in the country. At these times it seems voters can be most affected because emotions are running high and people may be more vulnerable in their logic. The most important thing for this analysis though, is how God-Inclusion Rhetoric can sway a believer, mainly because they are the most affected by the use of God language. God language brings out a certain emotion in believers, and allows politicians to really connect with them. As Domke and Coe point out, religious conservatives are impacted the most. They write,

An ability to speak the language of religious believers can be especially powerful for a president, who is frequently in the spotlight, and is the political leader most commonly called upon to be America's 'high priest' in times of crisis, national celebration, or tragedy. Religious conservatives in particular pay attention to whether a president communicates in ways that connect with them. (57)

The words "high priest" make it clear that religious conservatives and the religious right can be swayed by this rhetoric because, since America does not have a National Church head or defining religion, the president can seemingly fulfill that role during troubled or joyous times. The filling in of the "high priest" role may be partly due to the anti-Catholic history of America, which included a resistance to the figurehead of the pope (Lambert 31-34, 36-39). In any case,

the rhetoric of God is used to connect with the people, because “All Men Need The Gods,” as Meacham writes (14).

As early America was trying to include God in it’s own rhetoric, it was also trying to escape a certain type of God-Rhetoric. There are many examples of how early America was a place for many to escape an English Church that was trying to be dominated by multiple factions (Lambert 36-41). Throughout Henry VIII’s and Mary I’s reigns, there were bloody battles over Catholic and Protestant representations of the Church of England, showing the problems with Federal Religion (Lambert 36-37). Because of that persecution and strife, religious freedom and liberty were desired by the founding fathers in America, especially in rhetorical terms. As Lambert notes, while arguing for Thomas Jefferson’s “Statue for Religious Freedom,” James Madison speaks of the fact that only reason could lead one to God and religion, not force or violence. This argument displays Madison’s dispute with the establishment of religion by the state. While escaping a certain type of God-Rhetoric in England, another was budding in Madison and America and the like. The God-Inclusion rhetoric of the founding fathers was the inclusion of freedom of religious liberty and the power of one’s own reason to understand God, not an understanding of God imposed on you by force (Lambert, 244).

The God-Inclusion Rhetoric of the founding fathers was designed to be open and not closed. Meacham describes it in Jefferson’s terms of “Public Religion” and “Private Religion.” (19, 23) This distinction is to show that instead of warring over what a state church should be, there should be a state that welcomes multiple interpretations of God. The way the American system is supposed work, especially for a president is like this: to allow the use of God-Rhetoric without causing offense. Meacham writes,

Public religion is not a substitute for private religion, nor is it a Trojan horse filled with evangelicals... It is rather, a habit of mind and heart that enables Americans to be at once

tolerant and reverent, for the Founders' public Religion is consummately democratic. When a president says 'God bless America' or when we sing 'America! America! God shed his grace on thee,' each American is free to define God in whatever way he chooses. (Meacham 23)

Public religion was meant to, the founding fathers believed, be that which could be spoken to all, and be everything to all. The word God was meant to be all-inclusive and have multiple meanings, not a singular meaning like the early colonials conjectured, as we will see. The founding fathers wanted the rhetoric of the American God, Meacham explains, to furthermore, be the rhetoric of "Nature's God." Thomas Jefferson believed this Nature God was one who transcended all boundaries, and was intrinsically democratic. Meacham writes, further explaining Jefferson's belief, "The nation's public religion... Jefferson called the 'Creator and Nature's God' in the Declaration of Independence. The God of public religion made all human beings in his image and endowed them... with sacred rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." (Meacham 22) The God-Inclusion Rhetoric of Nature's God was a "deist" concept, one Jefferson promoted as sacred to "all human beings," and the state surrounding that God was meant to allow for multiple interpretations and inclusions.

Political usage of God-Inclusion rhetoric had already been going on for ages in America before the founding fathers; in fact, religion and politics seem to be inseparable in America in general. Domke and Coe point out that, "For good or for bad, God has always been a part of American politics." (53) As we will see, down to the rhetoric of inaugural addresses, letters, and speeches, both the colonials and the founding fathers saw that religion and God were very important to political well-being; although the meaning was different for each group, the strategy was the same. Each group wanted to include rhetoric in politics in a way that ensured God should and would never be divorced from America. The colonials for the most part wanted strict interpretations and for the most part the founding fathers wanted open interpretations. The

founding fathers' vision won out, but without a clear-cut victory. Multiple sets of beliefs in such close quarters still cause much strife to this day, even without a defined state church.

God-Inclusion Rhetoric was hard to maintain in the "Natural God" sense, where the word God was open to multiple interpretations. Religious belief is strong and it breeds competition. There had already been one "Holy Experiment" before the founding fathers wrote the Constitution and it had failed, Pennsylvania. William Penn, a Quaker, started Pennsylvania and it was envisioned as a place that would have God-Inclusion Rhetoric that was open to all types of faiths. The colony itself would work to accept all faiths under one roof. Ultimately, the political divisions ruined the "Holy experiment," since "religious pluralism also meant interfaith competition," (Lambert 112) and when people of different faiths "wanted to make laws that conformed to their beliefs," (Lambert 115) it caused overarching internal strife, damaging the dreams of the colony. Of course, the founding fathers worked on a larger scale than did William Penn and under different circumstances, which may have caused the different end result. Let's look at some of the different sects of faith of colonial America that settled together time-wise and why conflict may have arisen between them in a place like Pennsylvania.

2.

Looking at different sects of colonial Americans to see what their God-Inclusion Rhetoric was gives a sense of how hard it was to include them all under one roof, and where the competition would have come from that made the founding fathers' dreams of religious liberty hard to maintain. One sect, for instance, is the Puritans, who believed so strongly in their God, that the type of multiple faith inclusion that the founding fathers were pressing seemed impossible to most of their members. Frank Lambert writes how their initial state charter was strictly to build a Christian Nation in the New World, one in which Government was in the hands

of the divine, as well as one that pursued purposes of the divine (Lambert 44). Again, keep in mind, that these were Puritan beliefs that were being pursued as well, which were different than those of the Quakers, or any other sect. Their God-Inclusion Rhetoric would have been different and hard to bring into close quarters. Lambert writes that in 1639,

a group of New England Puritans drafted a constitution affirming their faith in God and their intention to organize a Christian Nation. Delegates from the towns of Windsor, Hartford, and Wethersfield drew up the Fundamental Orders of Connecticut, which made clear that their government rested on divine authority and pursued godly purposes (1)

We see heavy God-Inclusion rhetoric, but Puritan. These Puritans “viewed themselves as a chosen people, an American Israel who had entered into a covenant with God to plant a Holy Commonwealth in the New England wilderness.” (Lambert 74) This notion alone would have put them in a different league than the Quakers who believed in individual revelation (Lambert 111). There were hangings of Quakers in Massachusetts by Puritans because of the Quaker notion of “Inner Light,” (Lambert 92) showing that the Puritans in particular wanted to have “their” God as a centerpiece of Government leadership is a good starting point to seeing the birth of the importance of God in the American state.

On the other hand, the Virginia Company group of Protestants landed that left England had developed their own concept of God that seemed to clash with what the Puritans and Quakers believed. There were close ties between Church and State, but seemingly looser morals than those of the Puritans, as well as a different sense of revelation. Upon comparing diaries of a Massachusetts Puritan and a Virginia Protestant, Lambert notes how lax the Virginia Protestant was when it came to things like “talking lewdly and drinking.” The Protestant man prayed humbly for his transgressions and believed God would forgive him immediately, whereas the Puritan man, when going through something like having a fire in his house, searched for the cause of his eternal damnation and sin on his soul (Lambert 64-65). The moral lives were

different and therefore the political and civic lives of each of these men were different due to the each one's level of God-Inclusion rhetoric. In early Protestant Virginia, there were state impositions on how citizens should live their Christian lives, "each inhabitant was to 'duly sanctifie and observe the same, both himself and his familie, by preparing themselves at home with private prayer, that they may be the better fitted for the publique, according to the Commandments of God, and the Orders of our Church.'" (Lambert 52) The level of prayer was heavy, having to pray both at home and in public, but not nearly as heavy as the Puritans. The Puritan code was that "every aspect of life must reflect the overarching goal of living as the primitive Christians had sought to live: residing in the world without being in the world." (Lambert 77) In the Puritan code, life wasn't just about going to prayer services, or being at church meetings, etc. To be a true Puritan, you had to live and breathe the Christian life. The Protestant life was more lax in comparison. Each sect had a different level of God-Inclusion and would have made it difficult for an overall sense of togetherness under the "deist" conception of God of the founding fathers.

When the founding fathers of the US wrote the constitution, they wanted to do so out of a mostly secular tradition to push for open space that would give political room for religious freedom. As Lambert says, "Unlike the work of the Puritan fathers, the federal constitution made no reference whatever to God or divine providence, citing as its sole authority, 'the people of the United States,' " (2) who in turn, were the ones that could define God for themselves. The Puritan Fathers wanted their God and His "wise disposition" to lead, not just any citizens definition of God. A piece of the Puritan Constitution that highlights this sentiment of singular God focus reads:

Forasmuch as it hath please the All-mighty God by the wise disposition of his divine providence so to Order and dispose of things... well knowing where a people are

gathered together the word of God requires that to mayntayne the peace and vnion of such a people there should be an orderly and decent Government established according to God, to order and dispose of the affayres of the people. (Living Documents of American History)

This piece of writing evokes the sense that one God is required for a union to be maintained among people, the Puritan God. On the other hand, the founding fathers' Constitution reads in the Preamble, "We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty." (Preamble) This piece is about the people, and the union of religious beliefs, as well as how those religious beliefs together are supposed to support a working state. Altogether, a much different idea of where governance's strength comes from can be found in each, showing an evolution of religio-political thought and level of God-Inclusion rhetoric in a little over 100 years.

In his first act as president, George Washington expresses this evolution. By improvising his inauguration, saying "So help me God, speaking to his personal God (Meacham 14), he acknowledges the American ideal of open God-Inclusion rhetoric of his fellow founding fathers. By saying it publically, he acknowledges that it is ok to interpret in the public sphere. Furthermore, by improvising the infamous "kiss" of the Bible (Meacham 14), Washington shows respect for where he draws his religious inspiration from, drawing on the Puritan, Protestant, and Quaker traditions of the colonists (among many others), but does not preach superiority of one belief.

3.

After the colonial period and after the American Revolution was in many ways the "formal" start of God-Inclusion Rhetoric in United States politics. In particular, the year 1789 showcased how "the almighty Being" was brought into American political discussions. Later in

their article, Domke and Coe argue modern God-Inclusion rhetoric formally started with George Washington's, inaugural address (53). Upon looking at Washington's actual inaugural address, we can see their point. Washington says, referencing his post and how it would be improper not to include God, especially in a nation that fought for religious freedom.

Such being the impressions under which I have, in obedience to the public summons, repaired to the present station; it would be peculiarly improper to omit in this first official Act, my fervent supplications to that Almighty Being who rules over the Universe, who presides in the Councils of Nations, and whose providential aids can supply every human defect, that his benediction may consecrate to the liberties and happiness of the People of the United States. (Transcription: Washington's Inaugural Address, par. 2)

Washington makes clear that in his first “official act,” “a fervent supplication,” should not be devoid of God or that “Being who rules over the universe,” showing some evidence of God-Inclusion. God is at the core of American politics in this address, although there is no state religion. That being said, God, according to Washington's rhetoric, rules over him, gives him guidance and all of his rights. This is a more traditional colonial idea of God-Inclusion, that the greater power is of necessity required to be involved in Washington's new position showing private religion in public life. Washington then makes it clear that it is in “obedience to the public summons,” that he does this, which is also an homage to traditional forms of God-Inclusion rhetoric, but also to new forms of the founding father's ideals. He includes his personal God not just in his speech as cosmological epithet, but as a public political grounding, to showcase his personal “almighty Being” “presides in the Councils of Nations... and [that] his benediction may consecrate...the liberties and happiness of the People of the United States” alongside everyone else's God. With these words, Washington starts to show how passionate he is about this newer type of God-Inclusion in politics, since his personal almighty Being is desired to rest inside the Nation's Council and help them provide for the civic happiness of the people at

large. The beginning of the United States to Washington, therefore, was also the beginning of the inclusion of that private “almighty Being” in public civic life.

Mixing the private and public raises questions. What was Washington’s degree of religiosity? What type of God was he talking about and drawing on? Was he a truly religious man? What of some of the other founding fathers of America, what was their degree of religiosity and Christianity? Regardless of the answers to these questions, which I don’t have sufficient space to tackle here in this thesis with any real depth, they can be measured to a certain degree from some of the letters and writings of the founding fathers. These pieces of literature show how important religiosity, specifically of the traditional Judeo-Christian type, seemed to be to their civic sense and what they thought about this new type of inclusive religion. In his letter from 1790 to the Hebrew Nation Congregation in Newport, Rhode Island, Washington wrote,

May the Children of the Stock of Abraham, who dwell in this land, continue to merit and enjoy the good will of the other Inhabitants; while every one shall sit in safety under his own vine and fig tree, and there shall be none to make him afraid. May the father of all mercies scatter light and not darkness in our paths, and make us all in our several vocations useful here, and in his own due time and way everlastingly happy.
("Washington's Letter to the Hebrew Congregation of Newport, Rhode Island.")

The mention of the Children of Abraham is the first indicator of Washington’s Biblical sense, but we’ve already looked at a few examples of how Washington drew influence from the Bible. It is really the phrase “continue to merit and enjoy the good will of the other Inhabitants; while everyone shall sit in safety under his own vine and fig tree...” that displays Washington’s deist sentiments and drawing together of public and private religion. He is saying that everyone should enjoy each other’s company under “their own fig tree,” the fig tree could be likened to a personal definition of God. The other metaphor Washington is playing with here that is alluding to public and private religion is “everyone sitting safely.” This could mean not to worry about living in a land with multiple beliefs. In another piece of the letter, Washington asks “may he

make...our several vocations useful,” conveying shows Washington’s use of a more Judeo-Christian religious context as a call for political and civic aid. This may be likened to a more traditional colonial epithet, and I will touch more on why this is the case in Chapter 2. Overall, it shows the carry over of the ideal of “being led” by God from the Bible into American politics.

We can read these above two phrasings from the letter as “separate but equal” and perfect symbols of God-Inclusion; on the one hand we have something deist, but on the other hand something Judeo-Christian due to the “act of fervent supplication” it’s locution contains. We can read Washington’s inauguration in the same manner, as both an example of deist and Biblical God-Inclusion. In other words, the phrasing Washington uses in both cases is not just for public and private expression, but also for Judeo-Christian passionate prayer, entreaty, and petition for direction. These words, specifically the third, “petition,” showcase a desire from Washington to ask for God’s will, regardless of what religion he followed. Washington’s formulations also show how important God-Inclusion was thought to be to the well being of the state, something carried from the colonial period, mainly from the Judeo-Christian tradition, again its logic something I will cover more of in Chapter 2. The sentiment could be boiled down to this: Washington stated how it would be “peculiarly improper” to leave out this supplication. How could he leave out the one he asks direction from?

The other founding fathers had their biblical roots as well, although they embraced freedom of religious expression. As Jon Meacham explains in “American Gospel,” most, if not all of the founding fathers were devoted to the idea of religion as a stabilizing force, but some of them had unconventional personal faiths that made it seem like they were ok with leaving God open ended. George Washington would not kneel to pray and was not known to take communion (Meacham 11). Benjamin Franklin said, ‘I believe in one God, creator of the universe. That he

governs it by his Providence...as to Jesus of Nazareth... I think the system of morals and his religion as he left them to us, the best the world ever saw or is likely to see... and I have some doubts as to his divinity.” (Benjamin Franklin Reader) Even Abraham Lincoln’s second Inaugural address was filled with much Christian wisdom. (Noll 6-7) “Why did Lincoln, though never a church member, use the Bible more freely in this speech and also address questions of theological significance more directly than his near-peers...?” (Noll 7) The answer seems to be because of the connection the Judeo-Christian God has had and always has had to America’s culture, regardless of the deist sentiments of the founding fathers.

The idea of needing God for guidance, of believing in His providence, is an idea the Kingly books of the Old Testament were heavily built upon and which were directly carried into the start of American political/presidential rhetoric in lieu of freedom of religious liberty. Although Franklin questions Christ, it does not stop the fact that the Judeo-Christian God’s framework was still brought into American politics as a force for guidance. This idea cannot be stressed enough more than the story of the first prayer before Congress. During the first session of the Continental Congress, in Philadelphia 1774, Thomas Cushing, a Boston Lawyer, petitioned that the proceedings start with prayer. Two other delegates, John Jay from New York and John Rutledge from South Carolina declined, stating that because they were so divided in religious sect and sentiment it would be best if they not join in the same act of worship, seemingly against the message of the deist ideals. Later though, Samuel Adams rose and said he would have no problem hearing from a “man of piety” who was also a “friend to his country.” A Mr. Duché, an Episcopalian clergyman, was asked to lead the Congress in prayer the next morning. (Meacham 65-66) When he did, he used Psalm 35, and the second President, John Adams, was “stunned and tingling” from the reading and the drama of the moment, saying that

he “never saw a greater effect upon an audience...it seemed as if Heaven had ordained that Psalm to be read on that morning...it had an excellent effect on everybody here.” (Meacham 66-67) With that, prayer and the power of it became a part of the openings to Congressional meetings, as well as American politics.

Modern Presidential God-Inclusion Rhetoric

Not only was the desire for God’s will brought from the Old Testament into American politics with events like the latter, but it continued to be a part of American politics. As Domke and Coe note, since that first inauguration, “presidents have regularly spoken of a higher power, prayed and been prayed for, sought divine favor for the nation, and expressed gratitude for providential outcomes.” (53) Whatever God was invoked, the statistics can be baffling: “Our reading of every word of these speeches revealed that presidents from Roosevelt to Jimmy Carter (1933-1981) included God-talk in roughly half of their addresses to nation,” Domke and Coe write (61). If in the American state of the founding fathers it was originally up to the people to find God, why were modern presidents acting as though they needed to give the people of the American state God? It may have been for the nation’s moral sense, as a whole, as we will come to see.

Half of the speeches given by modern presidents refer to God and showcase how in modern times the trend of including God in civic affairs in America has been substantial. This God-Inclusion, or “God-talk” according to Domke and Coe, refers to "Explicit invocations of a higher power." The explicit invocations are not just mention of God for flare or emotion, but for the seeking of “divine favor for the nation.” (61) Thus, when Washington and later presidents reference God, they, in effect, "invoked" or invited God to join the conversation either as a means of furthering the deist message, to keep the traditional Biblical Rhetoric of God-Inclusion

alive, or both. Modern US presidents seem to be more inclined towards invoking the God of the Judeo-Christian tradition.

After Carter the statistics of God-Inclusion rhetoric increased. What is more staggering than that fact, is that starting in 1981 with Reagan until 2006 with G.W. Bush,

invocations of God no longer were just common among presidents - they became omnipresent. In their presidential addresses to the nation, Reagan invoked God ninety-six percent of the time; G.H.W. Bush did so at a ninety-one percent clip; and Clinton and G.W. Bush (through 2006) both explicitly referenced a higher power about ninety-three percent of the time. (63)

These omnipresent invocations, was everyone as dazzled by them as John Adams? What was the purpose of this increase? The answer seems to be a religious necessity for the state and for the individual. The definite change and increase in God-Inclusion Rhetoric helps to prove that theory, which will be further explored. To start with an example of minimal God-Inclusion and then move to something more intense, we can look at President Roosevelt in 1941. After Pearl Harbor was bombed on December 7th, 1941, president Roosevelt's words referenced a divine entity. He said,

We are going to win the war and we are going to win the peace that follows. And in the difficult hours of this day - through dark days that be yet to come - we will know that the vast majority of the members of the human race are on our side. Many of them are fighting with us. All of them are praying for us. For in representing our cause, we represent theirs as well - our hope and their hope for liberty under God. (Franklin D. Roosevelt: "Fireside Chat")

There is much political talk here, about war and peace, about difficult hours and dark days. There is also talk about the human race and being on each others' sides, as well as people fighting with or against each other. At the end of the speech God is mentioned, but slightly, and it is a God that seems like it can be extrapolated to any interpretation. But is that the case?

Roosevelt is articulating two different ideas this speech. One is a politics of good human beings, and of hope for liberty under God, referencing constitutional literature. This message is

akin to the message of the founding fathers, because it sticks to the idea of religious liberty. The other idea of Roosevelt's message aligns more with a type of "state-church" mentality. This is because of the mention of those praying being on the side of the good, the 'good side,' or are "with them." Roosevelt uses God-Inclusion Rhetoric to showcase the other side as well, that those who are not praying like Americans are, in a sense bad or less than human, or at the very least, less than Americans. This part of Roosevelt's message is less like the founding fathers', which becomes a pattern as American Presidential history progresses and the rate of God-Inclusion rhetoric increases.¹ This rhetoric gives religio-political reason and purpose to go to war; it is not just liberty Americans are fighting for, but "liberty under God," reinforcing the idea that there is a battle between state-churches, taken from the time of Mary 1 and Henry VIII. Again, Roosevelt's speech above is from the period of 1931-1981 were there was a fifty percent increase in God-Inclusion rhetoric in American Presidential Speeches and we will see how this rhetoric changes as time moves forward, as well as the intensity and purpose of the invocations.

The main increase of God-Inclusion rhetoric after Roosevelt starts with the "redemption" presidents. Not only their presidencies, but their elections utilize increased traditional God-Inclusion rhetoric. Balmer notes that from 1960 to 2004 Americans saw some strange elections, including impeachments, close calls, and landslides. Two other strange elections have been those of "redeemer" presidents who have "promis(ed) to cleanse the temple of the White House of the sins of their predecessors." (Balmer 2) The word "sin" is important here, as it locates traditional Judeo-Christian God-Inclusion rhetoric in the White House. One of these presidents was Jimmy Carter, who "offered himself as a redeemer president, reintroduced matters of faith and belief

¹ As Randal Balmer writes, the John F. Kennedy paradigm of "indifference" towards a candidate's religious beliefs is only active from 1960-1974. Before and after that, these things matter. (Balmer 2,6)

into the arena of public discourse.... Carter's election in 1976 represented an attempt to purge the nation of Nixon-era corruptions." (Balmer 2-3) The other example is George W. Bush. His victory in the 2000 election, in the same breadth can be seen as an attempt by voters to cleanse the "transgressions" of the Clinton era in the White House (Balmer 3). In both cases, God-Inclusion rhetoric is used in the way the Presidents presented themselves to the nation, as well as the way they brought Judeo-Christian faith into the nation to solve its problems. In this case, the God-Inclusion rhetoric centered on "redemption."

Jimmy Carter's presidency is when the use of God-Inclusion rhetoric started to skyrocket. This is mainly because of Carter's tactics of being a "redemption president." After "the political chicanery of Richard Nixon and his minions," and after the corruption of the Watergate scandal, Carter was a presidential candidate who came onto the political scene at just the right moment when Americans were "searching for a kind of savior," "someone to guide them out of the wilderness of shame and corruption (of the Nixon Era) to the promised land of redemption and rehabilitation." (Balmer 79) The language Balmer is using here is all of "redemption." Due to the "sinful" nature of the Nixon presidency, the country was awash with feelings that a president like Jimmy Carter who used God-Inclusion rhetoric would be able to rise and utilize his position and religion to bring the language of the Judeo-Christian God back into American politics and save them. Many of Carter's supporters were in fact, evangelical Christians, a large number who had not been active until that time (Balmer 79-80). "Carter's declaration that he was a 'born again' Christian caught their attention." (Balmer 80) Part of the reason they may have been so taken by Carter's "born again" declaration was that to be born again generally meant the belief that the Bible was the literal revelation of God to humanity and should be taken very seriously (Balmer 81). The idea of sticking so close to the Bible in all matters would have made Carter a strong

candidate in America at that time to anyone with traditional and/or similar Judeo-Christian leanings.

Another example of the increased level of God-Inclusion in Presidential rhetoric is from the second “redemption” president, George W. Bush. This president not only represented redemption for the American people, but inside of himself. Bush’s history as a reformed alcoholic made his story amenable to those who could understand redemption through Christ (Balmer 143-145). As Balmer writes, “If Bush could, with Jesus’ help, effect his own reclamation...perhaps he could rescue the nation from the tawdriness of the Clinton years. Salvation by proxy.” (Balmer 146) George W. Bush was a man who was very open about his faith during his candidacy and beyond. He is known to have said, “right now I should be in a bar in Texas, not the Oval Office. There is only one reason that I am in the Oval Office and not in a bar. I found faith. I found God. I am here because of the power of prayer.” (Mansfield 73) Bush in other words, came to politics and was able to be political because of Jesus. He expressed this personal faith, and wanted that faith to be understood by the voting public (Balmer 145). Furthermore, he was not expressing an open interpretation of his God, but rather a display of a certain type of faith, which was more traditionally Judeo-Christian. Although many journalists overseas looked down on Bush’s explanations of his faith to the public, Bush got a favorable reaction to his sharing (Balmer 146), which among other factors, is thought to have won him his first election (Balmer 146-147).

Bush’s private God-Inclusion rhetoric became public as he used his God when defending his claim to invade “the evil enemy” of Iraq in 2003 after the 9/11 attacks (Balmer 149). On the day of the Twin Tower attacks, September 11th, 2001, he cited Psalm 23 to include the Christian God in his political address to the nation. It was a continuation of “the persona he was eager to

present to voters.” (Balmer 145) Since the public knew Bush’s personal faith, when he spoke the words, “God Bless America,” at the end of his speech, most would have understood he was referring to the God of Jesus and not any other formulation. If we take a look at part of the September 11th speech, we can see Bush’s use of the theme of good versus evil, specifically with the use of a Psalm in the address to the nation, really showing Bush’s “redemption” and generally Judeo-Christian invoking presidency at work. This piece of the speech also showcases Bush favoring one religion over another in public discourse.

Tonight I ask for your prayers for all those who grieve, for the children whose worlds have been shattered, for all whose sense of safety and security has been threatened. And I pray they will be comforted by a power greater than any of us, spoken through the ages in Psalm 23: “Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me.”

This is a day when Americans from every walk of life unite in our resolve for justice and peace. America has stood down enemies before, and we will do so this time. None of us will ever forget this day. Yet, we go forward to defend freedom and all that is good and just in our world.

Thank you. Good night, and God bless America. ("Statement by the President in Address to the Nation")

Bush does have some deist sentiment in speaking of “Americans from every walk of life uniting in resolve,” because it brings multiple faiths and creeds under one canopy. The undertone of this phrase is striking though in spite of that fact. Out of this phrase comes Bush’s use of Judeo-Christian God-Inclusion Rhetoric, firstly with the use of a Psalm in a public declaration, seemingly favoring one religion over another, but also with the allusion to a specific state God in calling his personal higher power to bless his country more so than any other. Bush takes on the role of a “high priest,” as mentioned earlier, seeming to offer a funeral sermon or give a blessing to his “congregation.” This phenomenon is especially true for the first paragraph of the quotation where Bush says, “And I pray they will be comforted by a power greater than any of us,” as well as when he says, “Tonight I ask for your prayers for all those who grieve,” as though he is

leading a prayer service and trying to gather the spiritual forces of a people. It is almost as though he is King Henry, the head of the English Church, now in America hundreds of years later, making a state religion or state church. This seems to be against the ideals of the colonials and the founding fathers. His tone, more importantly than anything else, is traditional God-Inclusion Rhetoric at its highest form.

Not only in times of crisis or joy do we see presidents using God-Inclusion rhetoric, but also in elections. In John F. Kennedy's case, in 1960, God Inclusion Rhetoric was used to sway a state of Protestant voters in West Virginia to accept his Catholicism (Balmer 7-19). To do this, Kennedy takes into account the founding father's message of religious liberty, and of including multiple faiths, but also includes the singling out of one faith group and speaking directly to them. Kennedy says in 1959, "Whatever one's religion in his private life may be, for the officeholder nothing takes precedence over his oath to uphold the Constitution and all its parts-including the First Amendment, and the strict separation of church and state." ("The Catholicism Issue") This does little to stop those who believe Kennedy will be an instrument of the Catholic Church and that the Catholic Church will use him to take over America, or that Kennedy will appoint all Catholics to his cabinet and make Catholic policies (Balmer 19-20).

To alleviate the concerns over his Catholicism, Kennedy uses God-Inclusion Rhetoric during a television speech, trying to bridge the gap between civic and religious life. "Looking directly into the camera, (he) talked about the oath a president makes to uphold the Constitution, including the first Amendment." (Balmer, 19) Kennedy goes on to say, "if he (the president) breaks his oath, he is not only committing a crime against the Constitution, for which the Congress can impeach him-and should impeach him- but he is committing a sin against God." (White) This sentiment could have been a set up for the redemption presidents that came up later.

As we saw, both Nixon and Clinton led to eras of impeachment and, what the majority of the populace thought of to be the “sins” of the White House. While trying to black out religion from politics, Kennedy have actually been re-involving it. Kennedy wins the West Virginia poll, claiming that he “buried the religious issue once and for all.” (Balmer 19) He does this by use of God-Inclusion rhetoric, and by speaking to multiple faiths, and talking about Judeo-Christian concepts across borders.

God Inclusion rhetoric seems to have evolved over the past 100 years with our modern American presidents, especially within the past 44 years as Balmer notes. Domke and Coe argue that this rhetoric started with America’s first president and continued to progress and increase in intensity and specificity as time went on. But what made Washington refer to God in the improvised inauguration? How did he and the presidents that followed him know that God-Inclusion would function as an effective political strategy? To answer these questions, we should look deeper into their precursors, the colonials and analyze more of the Judeo-Christian roots of American politics as they relate to colonial America.

Colonial God-Inclusion Rhetoric in two Examples

(The Beginning of Church/State Debates)

It seems that God-inclusion started in George Washington’s inaugural address and with the inception of the United States as a country, but history suggests that it started long before. In an article entitled “Separation of Church and State” published in the Boisi Center Papers on Religion, we see that many colonists before the American Revolution were split over how to go about including God in early government. It also seemed as though regulation of Church and

State was a major issue for the emerging colonies. As soon as they left the Church of England, there was freedom to develop new ideas about the relation between politics and God.

Mark Noll, in “America’s God” writes those new ideas were a mix, or “synthesis” of “a compound of Evangelical Protestant religion, republican political ideology, and commonsense moral reasoning.” (Noll 9) They were also a newly crafted mix of the ideas of fear and reverence. This synthesis was most easy to notice in public life. (Noll 9) Having synthesis occur in public life as opposed to the governmental sphere gave religio-political decisions a chance to become rooted in the citizenry of the American colonies, possibly to defer any chance that there would be any state enforced Government. Government was severely delayed in catching up with the public. The roots of God were so deep in Massachusetts for instance, that it took almost 200 years for Massachusetts government to ban a church establishment dealing with public worship of God for the prosperity of the people and the security of the republican government (Noll 10). What were some of the roots of the beliefs themselves, who wrote them, and how did they start?

The main rights though to encapsulate each new colony were centered for the most part on “the being, prerogatives, and actions of God, although this central affirmation was construed in different ways.” (Noll 19) One of these new constructions in new colonies to express God’s being and the citizens’ relations to Him was the Protestant allegiance to written confessions, a sign of the break away from the Catholic Church and the authority of traditional confession to a Priest. The written confessions showcased how colonial Protestants were looking for a universal ideal of church authority that the public could find for themselves, instead of the idea of all of the power being located within the Catholic Church (Noll 19-20). This is just one small example of new religious ideas in the colonies.

To engage with more specific writings of the colonial times, I will look specifically at the ideas of two thinkers who were formulating and recreating new religio-political ideas for colony life, Roger Williams and Samuel Willard. Doing so will identify different tracts of thinking that faced the question of how the colonies should combine church and state as well as how to envision the populace's relation to God in the political sphere. Although these writers do not represent the entire colonial outlook, they can open a small window to the closeness of God and morality of society and daily life in colonial times the settlers tried to manifest. Roger Williams was a Puritan and later a Baptist who believed that although God should be central to political life, it did not give the people in power automatic capability or competence to try and enforce unity of religion, (Noll 40), especially because God did not want it that way. He also seemed to believe in the freedom of religious expression, which may have influenced the founding fathers (Gaustad). Samuel Willard was a Puritan preacher from Boston who emphasized how human nature was morally damaged by original sin, and that society should work towards God's sovereign action of salvation in all of its affairs (Noll 21). He also believed in promoting how important a leader's role was in governing a good religious public.

Williams was on the fringe of Puritan belief and followed the "wall of separation" carefully ideology, advocating a separation of Church and State much different than his Puritan brethren. He wrote, "The pure 'garden' of religion and the 'wilderness' of worldly affairs was meant to be split." (*BCP Church/State pg. 5*) Roger Williams' book, *The Bloudy Tenent of Persecution, for the Cause of Conscience, Discussed*, offers further examples of his stance on Church/State relations as well as how God-Inclusion Rhetoric should be used to argue separating religion from Government. If God was included too much in State affairs, according to Williams,

it could lead to civil war, a message very closely related to that of the founding fathers. Williams articulates this idea in a provisional list of statutes:

Fifthly. All civil states, with their officers of justice, in their respective constitutions and administrations, are proved essentially civil, and therefore not judges, governors, or defenders of the spiritual, or Christian, state and worship... **Eighthly.** God requireth not a uniformity of religion to be enacted and enforced in any civil state; which enforced uniformity, sooner or later, is the greatest occasion of civil war. (1-4)

The idea of God “not requiring a uniformity of religion to be enacted in any civil state” is specifically reminiscent of the founding fathers because it deals with religious acceptance. Sooner or later, he also notes, if uniformity were to be enacted, there would be civil war, which Williams understood all too well from English history. His reasoning in enforcing this ideal would be that God understood there was no need for uniformity, and would have allowed multiple faiths to coexist for the sake of humanity’s well being, again reminiscent of the founding fathers and their deist concepts. Williams uses this logic to reiterate how important it is that leaders need not impose religious uniformity.

In the Fifth statute we see Williams stating the officers of the state are meant specifically to be officers, “essential(ly) civil, not judges, governors, or defenders of the spiritual.” This declaration is where Williams separates church from state and uses his private understanding of God for the betterment of his nation, something the founding fathers probably would have been happy to see. Williams separates the two realms, civic from spiritual, reminiscent of his splitting the “worldly affairs” and the “garden” of religion he wrote of earlier. Using this logic, he promotes the idea that state leaders are state leaders, and wants to remind colonists that no state leader should ever rise to Henry VIII status and head a colonial church.

In the Eight Statute, “God requireth not an uniformity,” is where he reminds the reader that God does not need a state to enforce His religion on anyone, and therefore any state imposed religion is misguided. The precursor ideas to the founding fathers can be seen here, although

words like “garden” mentioned earlier bring up traces of traditional Judeo Christian rhetoric. Although Williams includes God in the formulation of the state, he wants to prove that his conception of God desires to not be involved in all realms of people’s lives, very different from the Puritan ideal of which Williams split from.

The Puritan preacher Samuel Willard shows the other side of the God-Inclusion Rhetoric of the early colonies. His writings showcase a desire for God and government to be as close as they can be despite the fears the colonists had associated with the recent break with the Church of England. Willard’s writings encapsulate the feelings the Puritans had to keep God included in all of their affairs, including the political, despite the fact that this God-Inclusion Rhetoric was still uneasy for many, again, because of the recent split from the English Church (BCP Church/State 5). A distilled version of this belief would be, “church and state were both ordained by God, but set serve separate ends; [and] thus should remain distinct but still ‘close and compact’ with one another.” (BCP Church/State 6) The Puritan ideal that Willard unfolded was indeed different from Williams’ in that it was sought God’s place in politics, as well as a religious uniformity in politics, a usage we have seen some modern American presidents follow.

To see more of the Puritan ideal of being church and state “close and compact,” we can look at the Willard’s ideal of the necessity of civil government and how civil government is deeply connected with the Judeo-Christian concept of the “fall of man.” Willard references the fall of man in his writing as the reason people are perverse and chaotic and thus in need of political rule to legislate both the social and the spiritual realms of their lives. God therefore uses the rulers to help man with his condition. Willard writes,

But since the unhappy Fall hath Robbed man of that perfection, and filled his heart with perverse and rebellious principles, tending to the Subversion of all Order and the reducing of the World to a Chaos; necessity requires, and the Political happiness of a People is concerned in the establishment of Civil Government. The want of it hath ever

been pernicious, and attended on with miserable Circumstances. When there was no Governour in Israel, but every mail[sic.](male) did what he would, what horrible outrages, were then perpetrated, though Holy and Zealous...Government is to prevent and cure the disorders that are apt to break forth among the Societies of men; and to promote the civil peace and prosperity of such a people, as well as to suppress impiety, and nourish Religion. For this end there are to be both Rulers, and such as are to be Ruled by them: and the Weal or Wo of a People mainly depends on the qualifications of those Rulers, by whom we are to be Governed. (Samuel Willard, The Character of a Good Ruler)

The fall is Willard's reason why God is and should be connected to between politics; that mistake made by Adam and Eve makes their posterity need government, and need God in government. In other words, Willard shows us simply, that politics is needed because of religion, not vice versa. Since people "tend to the subversion of all order," the "political happiness of a people" is based on the establishment of government and the "qualifications of those Rulers." It is up to the people to set up the Government and it is up to the good Ruler to guide the lost people. The Good ruler is one who follows God and is righteous God is not going to do it for him/her. God already tried to setting up and leading the rulers in the Kingly books of the Bible, as we will see in Chapter 2. To Willard, happiness is based government's role "to prevent and cure the disorders" that come from the Fall. It is reminiscent of the original Puritan goal which seems similar in "curing disorders," as well as save themselves from the corruptions of evil. The goal was, to "improve...lives and doe more service to the Lord [and] comferte [sic.] and increase the body of christe whereof we are members, that our selves and posterity may be the better reserved from the Common corruptions of this evill [sic.] world to serve the Lord and worke out our Salvation," according to John Winthrop (Lambert 74). This suggests that throughout Puritan thought there was a history of politics and religion working together to "fix" one another. Willard and others like Winthrop hoped politics and religion in America would be "the cure," and work for the life of mankind to somehow atone for the Fall, an attitude some of the modern American presidents may have capitalized on.

To promote peace in colonial Puritan ethics and morality, there must be an establishment of civility, which relies on the “suppression of impiety” as well as the “nourishment of religion.” This promotes the idea of “one religion,” antithetical to the ideas of the founding fathers. Why did the Puritans feel that way they must press one religion? The answer will come more in Chapter two, but as I will try to express, it is because of the fear of God, because God is the ruler of all rulers and the king of all kings, and those who don’t follow his will in the traditional Judeo-Christian ideology are punished. In the Puritan sense of God-Rhetoric, there is also rhetoric of fear and reverence intertwined.

Samuel Willard’s compositions express that Puritan fear and reverence of God from a ruler’s point of view. He writes, “it is of highest Consequence, that Civil Rulers should be Just Men, and (as such) Rule in the Fear of God” (Samuel Willard, *The Character of a Good Ruler*). It is an ideal that comes up with modern presidents as well. In the conclusion to Balmer’s “God in The White House,” he judges the merit of the presidents he covered throughout the book by the measure of what good of men they were (158-161). We can see from this example that the Puritan categorization of what a “just ruler” should be has not totally left the American political arena, especially since we have seen how many view modern presidential candidates the same way, specifically by their “faith” and “honesty.”

In Willard’s writing we see that not only should the rulers be just, but they should also fear God, suggesting that “just men” are necessarily religious in Puritan terms (you are good if you are religious, and you are religious is you fear God). Willard puts civil rulers and traditional God-Rhetoric next to each other, suggesting that they should be dependent on each other. This juxtaposition and need for dependence in the case of a ruler and God, is because God can take away what is initially entrusted. God can give paradise and take it away just as fast as it was

given. God can flood the earth if the inhabitants do not act according to his will, rules, and the values He espouses, according to Genesis, and it is up to the Ruler to find God's will and enact it in the populace. With examples like these in mind, we can understand why Willard found it so imperative to use God-Inclusion Rhetoric to express how important it is for rulers to not only fear God, but also, be connected with Him. Rulers lead the rest of the society towards God's will, so a non-religious ruler would mean chaos for society, and possibly a further "fall." Willard expresses this all when he writes,

With Reference to Rulers themselves. It is, as we before Observed, a Dignity put upon them, to be preferred to Government over their Brethren; to have the oversight, not of Beasts, but of Men. But as there is a great Trust devolved on them, so there is an answerable Reckoning which they must be called unto: And however they are settled in Authority by men, yet GOD, who Rules over all, hath put them in only Durante Bene Plecito: they are upon their good Behaviour; they are Stewards, and whensoever GOD pleaseth, He will call for a Reckoning, and put them out. God sets up, and he pulls down; and he hath a respect to men's Carriages in his dealings with them. (Samuel Willard, The Character of a Good Ruler)

Willard relies on the traditional Judeo-Christian rhetoric of fear and reverence when he speaks of the "answerable reckoning" of the rulers. Because "God sets up and he pulls down," the rulers must act according to God or else God will take away what has been given. This answerable reckoning is because rulers "have the oversight, not of Beasts, but of Men... a great trust Devolved on them." The trust mentioned here brings reminders of the original Puritan mission and the trust God placed in them for the good of mankind. To a Puritan, a ruler must rule well, for the mistake of the ruler is also the mistake of the people. For those mistakes, God could send retribution down upon all. At this point is where the idea of fear comes into play in Willard's passage. Because the fear of God should inspire, the ruler must act in a certain way. It is why those of the religious communities judge modern presidents like Bill Clinton and seek redemption presidents as their answer. In early America, the God-Rhetoric stemmed from a fear

of not doing what was asked, for fear of retribution, which we can also see, is still heavily involved in our legal system today, and it all stemmed from the narrative of the Bible itself.

Chapter 2

Closer Analysis of God Inclusion Rhetoric in The Bible Itself

“The Great historical narrative extending from the creation of the world in Genesis to the destruction of the kingdom of Judah at the close of the Book of Kings - can be read not only as a work of reason, but as a masterpiece in the history of political philosophy.”

The Biblical Case For Limited Government - Yoram Hozony

Further Back - God-Inclusion to God-Inclusion-Narrative

We have to go further back to see how important religion is to politics, to see where these God-Inclusion beliefs stem from; to answer the question of why politicians and political groups in the U.S. feel they must include God, we must look at the Bible. We will do that by looking at different books of the Bible, specifically the Old Testament, to see how God interacts with Biblical leaders and their political decisions. There is some overwhelming and clear evidence of God-Inclusion Rhetoric in the Bible, especially in the Old Testament: the precedent for the type of God-Inclusion rhetoric that both early Puritans and later US presidents relied on. The sense of reliance on God in the Old Testament runs deep, especially when it comes to governance, and it seems that sentiment was never really lost in America. The difference between the rhetoric of the Bible, and that which we have looked at already, is that it already includes God as an active character in the narrative. This changes God-Inclusion Rhetoric to God-Inclusion Narrative. There is no need to pray for a silent God's will like George Washington did in his inaugural address. In other words, the Bible sets the precedent for God-Inclusion Rhetoric, but the book itself offers a God-Inclusion Narrative because God is an active character who speaks directly to the rulers rather than one whose name the rulers passively invoke. This sense of God not being passively invoked but rather being known as an active character with ultimate power and a leading/directing nature is seen as Gideon says in Judges 8:23, when asked to be King, “I will not rule over you, and my son will not rule over you; the LORD will rule over you”

(BibleGateway - ESV). This statement reveals God as the ‘true king’ in the political hierarchy, a figuration that we will further explore in the God-Inclusion Narratives the rest of this chapter will consider.

To start, we can look at the God-Inclusion Narrative in the Old Testament and how it comes up in the books of Samuel, specifically in relation to “dynastic succession.” The authors of Samuel stress how important, through the use of narrative, God’s will and character was in influencing the human figures and their actions. For example, in Steven McKenzie’s “Elaborated Evidence for the Priority of 1 Samuel 26,” he writes that the authorship of Samuel, Chapter 24 and 26 “were written by the same author, who... highlight[ed] the keystone tale of David’s encounter with Abigail (Ch. 25) which anticipat[ed] the dynastic promise (2 Samuel 7)” (438). The movement of events that McKenzie notes here shows a direction by the hand of “fate” towards a pre-ordained outcome. David’s encounter with Abigail leads to the fulfilling of God’s dynastic promise for him. Although subtly mentioned here, God’s leading role is very important in this part of the narrative, and shows the Old Testament’s God-Inclusion Narrative at work. David becomes King because God wants it that way. Fate is God, and the narrative exposes that fact. McKenzie does not refer to God directly in the above quotation, but the words “dynastic promise” do imply the intervention of God’s hand. Dynastic succession is a matter of politics, which today is thought to be in the hands of men and politicians, but in the Biblical narrative, was lead very much by God.

The promise of this succession issued by God even earlier, and it shows how God affects the political part of the narrative. We can first see this in Samuel 24, when Saul speaks to David of his gratitude and recognition that David has not killed him, as well as how God will reward David for keeping Saul safe.

18...[Saul says,] “today you have explained how you have dealt well with me, in that you did not kill me when the LORD put me into your hands. 19 For who has ever found an enemy, and sent the enemy safely away? So may the LORD reward you with good for what you have done to me this day. 20 Now I know that you shall surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in your hand. 21 Swear to me therefore by the LORD that you will not cut off my descendants after me, and that you will not wipe out my name from my father's house.” 22 So David swore this to Saul. Then Saul went home; but David and his men went up to the stronghold. (“The Bible - New Revised Standard Version”)

The Dynastic promise is that David will take Saul’s place and Saul shows his belief and understanding that David will become the successor. The hand of God’s will is embedded deeply into the narrative, guiding it, and rewarding those who follow it. God’s entreaty to David is important because it displays how God determines the narrative and leads those in it to their conclusions about what is good or bad. He determines the narrative because He decides the succession of rulers. God is therefore bound up in politics in this fundamental way of deciding who will be the leader. It is an example of God-Inclusion, but more importantly, God-Inclusion Narrative. Saul’s and David’s lives, politically and otherwise, are bound up by God and in God, and by being bound up, they must follow the narrative God creates for them to receive rewards. If they do not follow it, there will be consequences. The same idea was used in the God-Inclusion Rhetoric of the Puritans. To them, it was the fear of God that should propel the rulers forward. That idea of God instilling fear in particular was a carry over from this section of the Bible.

The other side displayed by God-Inclusion Narrative is the negative consequences that befall those who do not follow God’s narration, or choose to question it. We see this in the story of Abigail, David, and Nabal. David comes after Abigail’s husband, Nabal; Nabal does not accept David because David wants food stores from Nabal, angering God and causing consequences because he questions David’s legitimacy as a ruler. It is written in the NRSV that these legitimacies are “insults.” In 1 Samuel 24 it is noted that, “But one of the young men told

Abigail, Nabal's wife, 'David sent messengers out of the wilderness to salute our master; and he shouted insults at them' ” (1 Samuel 24:14). These insults are enough to infuriate God even though Nabal expresses what seem to be logical reasons for his dislike. However, these reasons do not matter to God because they go against His narrative. Nabal explains his reasons,

‘Who is David? Who is the son of Jesse? There are many servants today who are breaking away from their masters. 11 Shall I take my bread and my water and the meat that I have butchered for my shearers, and give it to men who come from I do not know where?’ (1 Samuel 25:10-11)

Nabal does not know David, and possibly does not have as deep of an understanding of God’s narrative as others, but he is punished nonetheless. When Nabal dies, David confirms it was so because the Lord judged Nabal for his insult of not believing in the Dynastic succession, “39When David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, ‘Blessed be the LORD who has judged the case of Nabal's insult to me, and has kept back his servant from evil; the LORD has returned the evil-doing of Nabal upon his own head’ ” (1 Samuel 25: 39). The “evil doing” of Nabal was to not include himself in God’s narrative, and therefore, God saw it fit for him to die. This is just one of the myriads of negative consequences shown in the Old Testament for those who do not follow God-Inclusion Narrative.

McKenzie’s point about how central Dynastic Succession is to this section of Samuel pinpoints God-Inclusion Narration. Going step by step, we see the confluence of power from Saul to David, David trying to enforce his power by relying on God to punish those who do not include themselves in God’s ordained narrative. This is heavy God-Inclusion. With this idea in mind, we can see why later generations of politicians may want to “fervently supplicate” before God. They may end up like Nabal, or any other examples that can be found of the negative consequences for those who do not go along with God-Inclusion Narrative. Why one would want to include God in their politics like the Puritans? Fear.

Psychology of God-Inclusion Narrative

From examples like the one above, we can see how Nabal's thinking is "wrong," according to God-Inclusion Narrative in other examples from Samuel; for instance, where David cannot kill Saul, we can, on a very basic level learn more about the psychology of God-Inclusion Narrative. God directly affects the actions of major political "players," and by looking at their thoughts and actions, we can see more deeply how they choose to follow or not follow God; what goes on in their minds as they make Narrative Inclusion decisions? McKenzie points this out in 1 Samuel 24:4-7, the scene in which David cannot kill Saul, who is "God's anointed." McKenzie writes, "He [David] said to his men, 'The Lord forbid that I should do this thing to my lord [Saul], the Lord's anointed, to raise my hand against him; for he is the Lord's anointed'" (441). He McKenzie then focuses on the fact that there is a feeling that "David expresses his absolute refusal to harm Yahweh's anointed," a feeling of obedience, of observation, and of steadfastness (441). In other words, because of God's decree, David must act a certain way towards Saul. He cannot hurt him. God's Inclusion in the narrative affects the political decisions of the characters in a very deep way. God's Narrative directs David's actions, especially because David knows the will of God, which is omnipresent to David who knows not to kill Saul because he is special to God. In the modern cases of U.S. presidents like George Washington, on the other hand, there is no direction, no pre-ordained narrative. Because there is no established God-Inclusion narrative such as those recorded in the Bible, American politics cannot rely on God-Inclusion Narrative, but rather draws on Biblical precedent by relying on God-Inclusion Rhetoric. In other words, America still needs to invoke God to justify certain political decisions as predestined, but because there is no direct narrative from God, politicians must invoke him to create one. David knows exactly what God wants and needs. The Lord's words forbid David to

raise his hand in violence against Saul, and that is exactly what David does, because he is naturally inclined to include God in such a way, especially since he is already told what to do. In contrast, presidents like Washington had no direct knowledge of what God wanted, so they invoke the rhetoric of God-Inclusion Narrative to suggest that God has a plan, and that the plan can be beneficial to the voting public.

Other psychological examples we see in God-Inclusion Narrative revolving around Saul and David are very focused on specific character traits, and may show what compels one to include God in their own personal narrative. To expand upon this, we can look at the article “‘Too Tall by Half’ - King Saul and Tragedy in the Hebrew Bible,” by Rabbi Howard Cooper. When looking at Saul, the first King of Israel’s character, Cooper wonders if it is Saul’s own demise, or if it is something outside of him that causes him to fail as a King. Cooper writes that the narrative seems not to explicitly answer the question of whether:

the fate of the first king of Israel [is] a consequence of his own human weaknesses, flaws and failings - for which he is responsible - or [is his] his demise... indeed determined by outside forces (which include the character of God) in the face of which no human being could have succeeded(5-6)

Cooper here looks at Saul’s “own human weaknesses, flaws, and failings, for which he is responsible,” giving a sense of ownership to Saul’s life and life events. On the other hand, Cooper also looks to those “outside forces (which include the character of God)” as things that are present in the narrative of these biblical books of the Kings, and always pressing them to act in specific ways. Can Saul’s tragedies and misgivings really be his fault? This question makes us look at the power God has over people in the Judeo-Christian tradition.

If God does have that power to cause tragic misgivings, it can be another cause for the fear mentioned earlier that compels people to invoke God in their narratives. By invoking God in

his speech after September 11th as we saw in Chapter 1, George W. Bush also constructed that fear of God, specifically with the words,

This is my reminder of lives that ended, and a task that does not end. I will not forget this wound to our country or those who inflicted it. I will not yield; I will not rest; I will not relent in waging this struggle for freedom and security for the American people. The course of this conflict is not known, yet its outcome is certain. Freedom and fear, justice and cruelty, have always been at war, and we know that God is not neutral between them.

Fellow citizens, we'll meet violence with patient justice — assured of the rightness of our cause, and confident of the victories to come. In all that lies before us, may God grant us wisdom, and may He watch over the United States of America. (George W. Bush's Address to Congress After 9/11)

The construction of the fear of God is in Bush's construction of an enemy. Bush's enemy, the ones who wounded American soil, or, "those who inflicted it" are the enemy because "God is not neutral." Bush wants to push that he knows what side God is on, and that is America's side. The fear is to be invoked in the enemy, but also those in the American population who don't line up with other "good" Americans. The enemy is akin to Nabal in this sense because the enemy will be punished for not agreeing with and/or threatening to harm the legitimacy of the American power, which is in God's favor because the American power is on the side of "freedom," assured of the rightness of its cause.

Cooper continues to develop his idea of Saul as a tragic character in his own right, showing how in many ways it looks like God not only sets him up as a King, but sets him up to fail, for the sake of His own narrative. "Whatever reservations there might be about [his] kingship - Saul is God's choice," Cooper writes (11). There is no doubt that God chose Saul. The moment Samuel sees Saul, God tells Samuel that His appointed King has arrived: "When Samuel saw Saul, the Lord told him, 'Here is the man of whom I spoke to you. He it is who shall rule over my people'" (NRSV 1 Samuel 9:17). God's words to Samuel are a clear sign of God's narrative powers, guiding the events of the people below him. God sets up Saul to be King, to be

sure, but that does not make him perfect. Saul's giant size is looked at by Cooper, which is a "strong" quality, but on the other hand, God's narrative is analyzed by Cooper as setting up Saul to be ridden with "anxiety, fear, and born of a sense of inadequacy" (10). These qualities are not 'God-like,' not fit for a true ruler, even though Saul is ordained. The true ruler is God himself who the people of Israel had recently again rejected in the narration (1 Samuel 8:7-8). God's way of showing His narrative strength and humanity's failings are embedded in this prior example of Saul's strengths and faults.

Cooper points to 1 Samuel 9:17 in order to analyze how God's choice of Saul displays God's misgivings of Saul as a character and of His reservations of Saul being King, showing God's narrative of producing a King, but also withholding Kingship. The narrative tells us that, "When Samuel saw Saul, God said: Behold the man of whom I said to you: This one shall have authority over my people," continuing on to explain what God says to Samuel, "tomorrow I will send you a man out of the land of Benjamin and you shall anoint him prince/captain(nagid) over Israel."(1 Samuel 9.16) In neither case does God use the word "King." Cooper argues that God tries not to mention that Saul is supposed to be a King. He writes, "in both cases it is as if God cannot bear to say Saul will be *king*, so we get these circumlocutions - as if not saying it, it may not have to happen, it is not made real" (10). If Cooper is right, then why would God construct His narrative this way, as if He regrets his decision to make Saul king? It is reminiscent of the moment in Genesis when God regrets His choice to make people and animals because they have turned out badly and sends the great flood of Noah. It may have been to test David, to make an example of Nabal, or generally show the failings of a human King. God only knows.

Regardless, I will explicate in the remainder of this chapter how in the Old Testament, God seems to be in control of the fate of the lives of the Biblical figures, as well as the fate of

politics. The misfortune that we have today is that most would not hope to end up like Saul or Nabal. They would rather know the path they are supposed to be on and follow it, as opposed to being confused and helpless, as well as prone to punishment. That is why today we have debates over the accuracy of religion and how political figures interpret it, **just like in colonial times.** Political figures, like Saul and Samuel in today's world, namely on the religious right, seek to know what God's will is and how to follow it, because of the belief that actions on earth, regardless of the political climate, affect God's thoughts about us and leave us open to punishment.

God's Political Narrative Extends to Culture, Law, and War

Going further back, we can see that in Exodus for example, God's role was mainly as a leader, a giver of tradition, as a ruler and warrior: one who gave direction to a once enslaved people, one who gave custom and face to a "lost sheep." However, God's role changed when Israelite rulers reigned over the people of Israel. But first before Israelite rulers started to take the helm, God created the narrative for the Israelites to follow. In other words, before Israelite Kings could try to make narrative, rules, and customs for their people, God had that function. God's narrative of the Israelites reveals Him as their first guide and ruler of which all the subsequent ones must follow, even in today's religious climate, specifically, religious America.

An example of God as first ruler and culture giver of which all subsequent ones must follow is in Exodus 12: 2-12. In this example, God tells Moses and Aaron when the beginning of their calendar year will be (NRSV, Exodus 12:2). This sets the stage for every future event in the Israelite community. God then goes on to tell the two of them, in very specific details, how to go about the Passover ceremony.

The Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, (2) "This month shall be for you the beginning of months. It shall be the first month of the year for you. (3) Tell the whole

congregation of Israel that on the tenth of this month they are to take a lamb for each family, a lamb for a household. (4) If the household is too small for a whole lamb, it shall join its closest neighbor in taking one; the lamb shall be divided in proportion to the number of people who eat of it. (5) Your lamb shall be without blemish, a year old male; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. (6) You may take it until the fourteenth day of this month, when the whole assembled congregation of Israel shall slaughter it at twilight. (NRSV Exodus 12:2-6)

The description continues, but here we see clear directions for culture; not only does God give them a calendar, which basically maps out the Israelite narrative but God also gives the Israelites directions on how to perform a ceremony, one that will become integral to their heritage.

Ceremonies are narratives in their own right, expressing meaning. This is one of the first of many ceremonies that God gives the Israelites and this fact is important to our overall argument because giving culture, and representing culture is what later American presidents will do later in their cultural ceremonies, as seen briefly in Chapter 1.

As God continues to give the Passover ceremony narrations, He also describes His own role as warrior judge and ruler of not just the Israelites, but of all creatures. God uses narrative in the language of a warrior, using words that have been translated in English as “strike down” and “execute judgment,” and finally, “strike the land.” These are actions that will become mainstays in God’s narrative as seen in later books of the Old Testament, like Samuel. God hopes, it seems, that these rituals will get passed down, but also that his power will not be forgotten.

(11)...And you shall eat it in hurriedly. It is the Passover of the Lord. (12) For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike down every firstborn in the land of Egypt, both human beings and animals; on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the Lord. (13) The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live: when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague shall destroy you, when I strike the land of Egypt. (NRSV Exodus 12: 11-13)

In God’s narrative, it is clear who and what He will “pass over,” and who He will have a direct influence on. Any who question it, like Nabal, will be punished. Later, even though God steps out of this direct role of the narrator, where He functions as the direct ruler of people and culture,

God's guidance is still needed. The narrative assumes that the world can function with human rulers, but that the world is still operating within His narrative, because these rulers act according to His divine will, as we will see in the next section.

**The Disparity of a God In Heaven/God King on Earth
(God's Voice Leaves the Political Sphere - Humans Take Over)**

As God moves farther away from direct influence in the political and cultural narrative, human beings begin to take a more active role. There is a movement from three different styles: from the Priestly, to the Judge, to the King class. Aside from the political struggle that encompasses the changing roles between God and his citizens, there is an inner change in the human characters themselves as well as in God himself. The human characters that encompass this change are both Samuel and Saul, who represent the transformation of the three classes. On the other hand, as new types of human representatives come about because the Israelites are not satisfied with God's kingship and desire human "Kings," a new struggle emerges in God himself. God becomes less active in His own narrative and must, as a result, find a true "interpreter" of His law who can transmit it to the people successfully. This interpreter must also be a stalwart leader, warrior, and play out the narrative God desires because He no longer acts out the narrative Himself since the human beings have become the active players in day to day events. By examining this, we can see the subtle changes that occur from the early God-Inclusion Narrative where God is a direct influence, to the changed God-Inclusion Narrative of Samuel and Saul, to the more modern God-Inclusion narrative we have today where God is almost missing from His active role of guiding political leaders directly towards His will and law.

So, before human beings can become active participants in their own narrative of politics, the ones making and taking the action instead of having or asking God to do it for them - a transition must take place, with the human being in the center and God ruling from above. To

accomplish this human beings turn to prayer, which offers them direct access to God and His will. This transition process starts with Samuel, who functions as a Priest. Samuel makes his sons Judges, but the people ask him to appoint a King because his sons are not good enough to fill such a role because they “took bribes and perverted justice” in their role as Judges (NRSV, 1 Samuel 8:3). The justice they perverted was God’s, who was still a potent force outside of the narrative that humans would soon take more control over themselves. The Israelites did not look up to Samuel’s sons but rather, Samuel, and asked him to appoint them a King so they could be like the other nations (NRSV 1 Samuel 8:5). Confused and not wanting to make a political decision that would defy the will of God, Samuel reasons that asking God for help would be the best thing (NRSV 1 Samuel 8:6). God responds that the people’s desire for a King is a forsaking action - that the only thing they really need is Him (God). Even with this, God does plan to give the Israelites a proper King in the character of Saul. Prayer is used to connect to God, and it shows how political decisions are still made by God, not by the ruler. It is a step away from God taking the action Himself and giving the human being the chance to act on God’s will, but, at the same time, the human being still has access to God and thus can find God’s will easily. The closest thing to the ruler, Samuel, diverts to God before making any decisions.

George W. Bush’s speech referenced earlier shows God’s direct action missing in present day narrative and therefore a prayer is offered, just like Samuel, borrowing Samuel’s God-Inclusion rhetoric. Bush believes God is on his side, but still invokes Him for the safe passage of America in the midst of confusion, like Samuel. He says,

The course of this conflict is not known, yet its outcome is certain. Freedom and fear, justice and cruelty, have always been at war, and we know that God is not neutral between them. Fellow citizens, we’ll meet violence with patient justice -- assured of the rightness of our cause, and confident of the victories to come. In all that lies before us, may God grant us wisdom, and may He watch over the United States of America.
(George W. Bush’s Address to Congress After 9/11)

Bush's borrowed rhetoric in the form of the prayer is, "in all that lies before us, may God grant us wisdom, and may He watch over the United States of America." Bush is bringing God into a narrative that He started leaving long ago. On the other hand, the words "freedom and fear, justice and cruelty, have always been at war" refer to the same struggles of Samuel and his sons and Bush's borrowed rhetoric. The battle is between the just and the unjust, the ones who follow the law and those who don't.

Back in Samuel, God is facing rejection, but knows the supremacy of His law should be and must be adhered to. Samuel knows that his sons, as well as the general Israelite population should as well. God sees how Samuel's sons do not take into consideration their "duty," and how the people similarly do not take account of their "duty" to their King, God very seriously either. These circumstances taken together equal a rejection of divine law. God's choices are supposed to be followed, especially by the Israelites. It is now up to Samuel, to connect to God through prayer and show the terrible "ways of the King who shall reign over them," in God's stead (NRSV, 1 Samuel 8:11). God's voice, once again, has been lost on the Israelites, and the punishment is severe. Samuel has found God's voice and can transmute it to the people, but Samuel is not the King the people want, as Samuel is too old and not God's choice. The King will need to connect to, or be a part of God's narrative to lead the people successfully and avoid God's wrath.

God's voice, through Samuel, enters the political sphere; American presidents' invocation of God-Inclusion Rhetoric functions similarly, introducing God's voice into politics through their own. Ironically, there will be a lack of freedom with this human King. Samuel follows the command of God and expresses what this type of King will be to the Israelites. Samuel explains how this King will take Israel's sons for chariot drivers, as well as plow his

fields and reap his harvest, showing God's orders being given through a human figure and the adverse effects of having a human King (NRSV, 1 Samuel 8:10-12). Furthermore, this King Samuel speaks of will take Israel's daughters for personal cooks and bakers, etc. (NRSV, 1 Samuel 8:13). Samuel's King will also take the fields away from the citizens of Israel (NRSV, 1 Samuel 10: 14). The Human King is a punishing King, but still nonetheless expresses the will of God - a punishing God. Since God is not King, and there currently is no King, God's voice successfully penetrated the political sphere through the mouth of Samuel.

George Bush acts on the other hand, like a leader who would protect those freedoms and not be like that King aforementioned. He writes, in a speech Defending the Iraq War, "We know that freedom is not America's gift to the world; freedom is the Almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world." (Defending the War in Iraq) He is aligning with a will of God's that is the opposite of this un-Godly King mentioned above who would take the freedom away from families and citizens in the biblical text. Bush's uses God-Inclusion rhetoric here on two fronts, by involving God in the talk, and by making this reference to the lost freedom in Saul. Bush also espouses the rhetoric of wanting to fight for freedom, to endorse the God-Inclusion Rhetoric that it is God's gift to give, not his own. In the biblical text, the next stage of the transition of narrative action is for God to act directly through a King, or rather, for the King to directly interpret and act on God's will to and ensure His narrative.

Samuel Anoints Saul (More of God in Politics - God in the Soul)

To move forward from the narrative structure of Priest to a King, Samuel performs a ritual for Saul, anointing him King in front of God and the Israelites. Although the characters of God and King are still separate in Saul and God, the first act that God does is to have his spirit enter Saul to symbolize that Saul's actions are in fact, His actions or come directly from Him,

carrying out His will. Samuel leads the prayer, and explains to Saul that when the spirit of God enters him, he will become a different person. At that point, Saul is free to do whatever he deems necessary, because God rests within him, guiding his actions.

Samuel took a vial of oil and poured it on his [Saul's] head, and kissed him; he said, 'The Lord has anointed you ruler over his people Israel. You shall reign over the people of the Lord and you will save them from the hand of their enemies all around. Now this shall be the sign to you that the Lord has anointed you ruler over his heritage.... Then the spirit of the Lord will possess you, and you will be in a prophetic frenzy along with them and be turned into a different person. When these signs meet you, do whatever you see fit to do, for God is with you. (NSRV 1 Samuel 10:1-7)

Samuel's statement suggests that Saul is guaranteed to play out God's narrative without fault. He has God within him. There has been a blend of the two separate characters because God is now within man. This is the second step of the transition. In the third step, God withdraws from man in order to allow man to make more judgments on the best choices to play out God's narrative structure.

This sentiment is echoed in a speech from President William J. Clinton at a National Prayer Breakfast in 1993 when he writes,

We need our faith as a source of hope because it teaches us that each of us is capable of redemption...we need our faith as a source of challenge because if we read the Scriptures carefully, it teaches us that all of us must try to live by what we believe or, in more conventional terms, to live out the admonition of President Kennedy that here on Earth God's work must truly be our own. (Remarks at the National Prayer Breakfast)

When Clinton says, "God's work must truly be our own" it is a reminder of that moment when Samuel explains God will enter Saul's spirit and allow Saul's actions to be God's actions. In modern day political rhetoric, there are no ceremonies to connect God to man, it must be prayed for, and President Clinton seems to be offering a prayer for that phenomenon. Clinton finishes his statement with, "but perhaps most important of all for me, we need our faith, each of us, President, Vice President, Senator, Congressman, General, Justice... and even more, not only because we do wrong but because we don't always know what is right." (Remarks at the National

Prayer Breakfast) showcasing his belief that we all have the misgivings of a Saul in us, and how nice it would be to have God flow through us to drive us towards right action. By all written accounts, Clinton seemed to be a deeply religious man. He said, “My faith tells me that all of us are sinners, and each of us has gone in our own way and fallen short of the glory of God.”

(DeGregorio) With these words Clinton shows the audience that he had in a sense “brought God into him” in his early years. Clinton also writes that he “absorbed enough of (his) church’s teachings to know that (he) was a sinner and to want(ed) Jesus to save (him).” (Clinton)

Eventually, these ideals were brought to the White House when Clinton publically admitted that he had later sinned in office and asked for forgiveness, bringing his private beliefs into the public political sphere. (Balmer 140-141) Again, Clinton may have wanted to have a direct connection to God like Saul did to guide him towards right action.

The biblical narrative continues in Samuel to show God entering Saul’s physical body. Once God enters Saul’s body, Saul becomes a “ruler of his (God’s) heritage,” showing that he now represents God and the narrative of his domain moving forth (NRSV, 1 Samuel 10:1). The literal translation of the above phrase could generally be something akin to Saul’s taking over God’s role as ruler, or God and Saul’s sharing that role. With these words and with Saul’s being transformed into a person that has God within, the transformation is complete. He is ready to move God into the world of earthly politics, making the Human being the more active character with more God-like narrative agency.

We can see God acting inside of Saul’s body to evoke political change in 1 Samuel 11, showing God’s interaction in this different narrative structure; God is still active but through a Human body, giving the human being more narrative agency. The withdrawal of agency is shown in less direction from God and more reliance on Saul’s actions. The spirit of God comes

out and Saul acts. There is no direction from God, because Saul's actions are enough. An example of this is when Nahash the Ammonite threatens to gouge out everyone's eyes disgrace all of Israel, and he sends Israelite messengers to bring this message to Israel to find "a savior" for the Israelite people, as if he was challenging the notion they would be able to find one (NRSV, 1 Samuel 11: 1-3). In the process, he would be inadvertently be challenging God's authority. When the messengers get back and Saul hears of Nahash's plans, he gets furious and makes war plans, but it is not really from Saul himself that his anger and resolve is provoked; it is from the God within him.

So they told him the message... and the spirit of God came upon Saul in power when he heard these words, and his anger was greatly kindled. He took a yoke of oxen, and cut them in pieces and sent them throughout all the territory of Israel by messengers, saying 'Whoever does not come out after Saul and Samuel, so shall it be done to his oxen!' Then the dread of the Lord fell upon the people, and they came out as one. (NRSV, 1 Samuel 11:5-7)

This is not the Saul who Cooper noted as ridden with "anxiety, fear, and born of a sense of inadequacy" (Cooper, 10). This is Saul overtaken by the Spirit of a God, angry at the thought of another culture harming the Israelites and not believing in His prowess. Saul is overtaken by God, but it is Saul who acts. Although at first read it may seem as though God is acting, overshadowing Saul, the lower-case "he" in the above quotation points to Saul's actions and not God's who would have been noted with a capital "He." It is Saul who cuts the oxen, who sends the pieces of them throughout the territories of Israel, threatens the Israelite population with a similar fate to their oxen, and drew them out as a united war force. It is Saul imbued with God, not a weak Saul alone, not a Saul watching God act before him, a Saul praying for direction and then acting on it, but a Saul having God's power and acting with it. We can gather that God does not have enough faith in Saul or humanity at this point to let Saul rule on his own. Although Samuel told Saul to do whatever Saul saw fit to do, it seems as though God was not thoroughly

ready for this. He has stepped back out of the narrative in an active way, and is still allowing Saul to act of his own accord, all with His approval because Saul is ordained. Saul has not been able to act truly on his own yet; it is a level of God-Inclusion Narrative the Bible did not reach in Saul and Samuel's story.

God's connection through Saul on earth was a way of establishing the first part of a true human Kingship, a last step before God could step out of the picture as he eventually does in the book of Job. In Saul, there is a direct connection between God and the political leader, so much so that God chooses to place himself inside of Saul and give power and to Saul's actions when there are tough decisions and actions to be made. Saul does not have to pray, and Saul is the conduit of God, but, still retains his agency. Saul becomes the earthly leader of the Jewish people, but also the physical representation of God as a King. It is hard to separate civic and religious duty here; God and politics are one. The next biblical King does not represent this though, King David goes back to prayer, and Saul showcases a possible failed experiment of God.

These questions linger today. If there are no priests telling our leaders that God is inside that will help guide them, how do they know what they are supposed to do to be included safely in God's narrative? Do our leaders even care about God's narrative, or do they invoke God to serve a political function? Which is in service of which? Politics in service of religion or religion in service of politics? The line is easy to draw in the bible, but not so in modern day America. A huge slice of modern day American politics is not the politics itself but what happens just outside the political arena. Although God is used to manipulate or justify decisions made by political leaders, He is no longer the basis of their determinations, and there are groups out there that are either gunning to have God more involved in modern politics or leave it just the way it is.

Chapter 3

Action Groups in America and Their Use of Prophetic God-Inclusion Rhetoric

Once upon a time, Americans were taught that religion was a private matter. But increasingly, around the world, and here (America) too, it is a political matter. Religious believers have become political activists, seeking to shape public policy or to seize state power, sometimes with, sometimes outside democratic and constitutional structures. It is obviously time to ask again: can there, should there be a radical separation between religion and politics? (Walzer, 1)

To Remain, or Not to Remain, Within God's Narrative. (Let's Choose, Remain)

Today, religious zealots become political activists, seeking to change public policy in accordance with what they believe to be God's will. They fear the consequences of what will happen if that narrative is not enacted, something acquired from the biblical tradition we looked at in the last chapter. This outlook has become known as the field of eschatology, or the study of those who believe that in the beginning of time, God laid out an exact and detailed plan for the end of time. All of these end times plans are unknown but can be deciphered through historical symbols and the symbols of the Bible (Boyer, Kindle Edition Location 29). One such major event in modern American history has been thoroughly interpreted through an eschatological lens has been the creation and use of the Atomic bomb, enkindling multiple outpourings of end-times speculation (Boyer, Kindle Edition Locations 1492-1500).

These eschatological and prophetic biblical traditions started in ancient times, reaching it's apogee in the Jews (Boyer, Kindle Edition Location 326), but have been carried over into modern America specifically from colonial times. As Paul Boyer writes in "When Time Shall Be No More: Prophecy Belief in Modern American Culture," "Increase Mather in 1676 speculated about America's prophetic destiny as a forerunner, or 'type,' of the New Jerusalem." Aside from Mather, who mentions "New Jerusalem," Boyer also talks about Boston political leader Samuel Sewall, who, writing in 1697, shared Mather's beliefs of America "being 'the seat of the Divine

Metropolis' in the Millennium.” (Boyer, Kindle Edition Locations 941-943) The idea of each colonial thinker is they saw the US not just as a religious opportunity, but also as a place to meld the religious with the civic, to bring a “Divine Metropolis” to the world is showcase of the prophetic beliefs of early America, where God would make his end-times kingdom on Earth. This Chapter will look at how some of these colonial beliefs gave America high standards that were hoisted upon modern America by present day eschatologists. Upon seeing how prominent prophetic beliefs are in America (Boyer, Kindle Edition Location 35), and how those beliefs can affect politics, Walzer questions if there can and should be a separation of religion and politics. It is almost as if Walzer looks back towards the time of the founding fathers, when Americans seemed to want more religious liberty and freedom to interpret the word “God” freely without uniformity of belief and religious structure.

Walzer’s question on the separation of church and state has resonance today. Most in present day America believe in the idea that God will act upon the world and bring the end. They also believe that human sin, as well as the Bible’s prophecies on sin itself are part of the cause of the end times. Speaking on polls that have identified American’s beliefs on prophetic beliefs, Boyer writes,

prophetic belief remains deeply rooted in the United States as the (20th) century ends. According to a 1983 Gallup poll, 62 percent of Americans had "no doubts" that Jesus will come to earth again. A 1980 poll by the same organization found that 40 percent of Americans regarded the Bible as ‘the actual Word of God, . . . to be taken literally word for word,’ while another 45 percent viewed the Bible as divinely inspired, if not literally inerrant. . . in (a) 1988 poll, 80 percent of the respondents expressed the conviction that they will appear before God on judgment Day. (Boyer, Kindle Edition Locations 102-108)

Furthermore, Boyer sees the origin and making of the prophetic culture of political activism coming from a core group of prophetic interpreters finding Biblical signs and symbols and then disseminating them out to the public. He writes,

the world of prophecy belief (is) a series of concentric circles, at the center of which is a core group of devotees who spend much time thinking about the Bible's apocalyptic passages and trying to organize them into a coherent scenario. These are the men and women who attend prophecy conferences; raise the topic in Sunday school classes and Bible study groups; (they) avidly devour the prophecy paperbacks, cassette tapes, and study aids that annually pour into the market. (Boyer, Kindle Edition Locations 109-112)

It is not as if everyone is making prophetic end times declarations, and Walzer sees this fact and takes the opposite side from those in the Sunday school classes and Bible study groups making end-times declarations, instead pointing towards those who fight against this prophetic God-Inclusion Narrative in present day America. Walzer asks the question, “should there be a radical separation between religion and politics?” taking that other side of the Church/State debate, showcasing the negatives of how religious believers can affect public policy and “seize” state power, instead asking if there “should” be a separation. In this chapter, we will look at those who have these prophetic beliefs and draw God into their rhetoric, trying to affect public opinion. We will also look at those who believe bringing God into American rhetoric is not helpful for the break of unity it causes within the American public.

There are indeed cases where state power has seemingly been “seized” by the religious in present-day America, going way beyond the arena of Sunday schools and Bible studies. We have looked at “redemption” presidents, but not “prophetic” presidents. The case of Ronald Reagan showcases how a president’s public beliefs in prophecy could affect policy like nuclear war. Although Reagan said he never put his prophetic beliefs into work in the White House (Boyer, Kindle Edition Location 1841), there was concern over the extent of which it was intermingling with his policy. Boyer outlines some of Reagan’s prophetic beliefs, and taking them into consideration, it is hard to see how they weren’t implemented into policy. Boyer writes, “Reagan observed somberly: That’s (nuclear war) a sign that the day of Armageddon isn't far off ... Everything is falling into place. It can't be long now. Ezekiel says that fire and brimstone will be

rained upon the enemies of God's people. That must mean that they'll be destroyed by nuclear weapons.” (“The Serious Implications of a 1971 Conversation with Ronald Reagan: A Footnote to Current History,”) Several Regan aides also were known for their prophetic God-Inclusion rhetoric. “Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger, asked about the subject in 1982, replied, ‘I have read the Book of Revelation and yes, I believe the world is going to end-by an act of God, I hope-but every day I think that time is running out, ’” notes Boyer (Boyer, Kindle Edition Locations 1836-1837).

Presidents could speak of the Prophetic, but so could activists and preachers in general. Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson, and Billy Graham are three activist/preachers that had a big effect on America. Falwell in the 60’s and 70’s spoke of Russia’s battle with Israel and prophesized that Armageddon spawn there. He would also go to actual prophesized battle sites such as Megiddo near Haifa, and speak to the believers to elaborate the destruction that was coming in more than certain terms, certainly stirring their emotions, faith, and faith. Speaking most politically Falwell said that American citizens could have an effect on their destiny during the nuclear age as a collective through politics. By affecting public policy and how votes went, the American public could use their faith to “negotiate for peace with the Soviet Union and other nations,” avoiding war, as well as avoiding end times. (Boyer, Kindle Edition Locations 1789-1792)

Pat Robertson on the other hand had his hands not only in prophetic messages but new electronic media in the 1960’s. He founded the CBN, or Christian Broadcast Network, to spread prophetic messages to the American public and spoke of how Israel’s 1967 war was a signal of the end-times. This message was a call to any political minded eschatologist to vote with Robertson’s ideals in mind. (Boyer, Kindle Edition Locations 1792) Eventually, Robertson

backpedaled on prophecy when one of his big premonitions, that Armageddon was coming in 1982, didn't happen, and afterwards took a more peaceful stance in his preaching. When he then tried to run for president, most voters were a bit cautious of him and generally did not want to vote in his favor (Boyer, Kindle Edition Locations 1796).

Finally, Billy Graham was who had major influence and found himself on the boundary of eschatology and the general preaching of "good news." At one point, in reference to the atomic bomb, "speculated that the melting elements and "fervent heat" of II Peter referred to atomic fission, as God used nuclear means for Earth's "purification." ("Are the Last Days Here?") Later in his life, in 1990, in a televised sermon, Graham addressed the question "Are the Last Days Almost Here?" In this television sermon, Graham dealt with the impacts of how America's social and technological progress and process was bringing the destruction of the world closer, a theme of which many eschatologists would deal with, that technological progress spelt damnation, especially because it wasn't in line with God's will or narrative. (Boyer, Kindle Edition Locations 1821-1825). Graham said, "We've become so technological and so wicked at the same time, that we have been on the verge of destroying our world. But . . . God is going to step in and not allow us to have an atomic war. How will God accomplish this purpose? He will 'cleans the earth by fire' just as He 'cleansed' it by flood in Noah's day!" ("Are the Last Days Almost Here?") The idea that Graham was trying to express, according to Boyer, was that God will destroy the earth before "wicked mankind" had a chance to blow it up himself (Boyer, Kindle Edition Locations 1821-1825).

Religion therefore, is only a private matter in America today in limited terms; those involved in religious activism do have the ability to shape public matters and affect the private. According to Walzer, it is impossible to completely leave the private behind when coming to the

public, since those with convictions can't be expected to leave them at the door. He writes, "Liberal and left secularists may once have hoped for total exclusion... but no such exclusion is possible in a democratic society. Men and women with convictions can't be expected to leave them behind at the entrance to the political arena. Nor has the left consistently asked its own religious friends and comrades to do that." (Walzer 1) Exclusion from either side, religion or politics, seems completely impossible, because as people have discussions, they will bring their religious ideas and feelings to the table if they have them. *Especially in regards to prophetic beliefs, where so much is on the line, it is especially hard to let go of these ideals in discussions.* It may also be noted that generally, religious discourse is often taken as a matter of course, and in some instances even welcomed, which Walzer notes may be seen at the core of activists who are resisting the religious influence on current policy.

To elaborate on the inclusion of end-times religion-centered public leadership I will look more in-depth at some of the words of Jerry Falwell, who expresses his beliefs that the strength of America lies solely in God's narrative of the covenant with Israel. Spector writes of Jerry Falwell's perspective, and that of other evangelicals in *Evangelicals and Israel: The Story of American Christian Zionism*:

The United States has been blessed, many evangelicals told me, solely because it has blessed Israel and the Jewish people. And they fear that if America should ever turn against Israel, God will do the same to the United States. 'God has blessed America because America has blessed the Jew,' said Jerry Falwell, invoking this verse [Genesis 12:3] in 1980. 'If this nation wants her fields to remain white with grain, her scientific achievements to remain notable, and her freedom to remain intact, America must continue to stand with Israel.' (24)

Israel and the Jewish State are keys to prophetic belief, because many believe it to be the site of God's final judgment. Because God gave Judea to the Jews and because of hidden messages in the Bible, many look for signs of this coming to pass. One of the messages often cited by eschatologists is Isaiah 11:12, which talks about how God's ultimate will is to gather the

Jewish people together from all parts of the world to form Israel (Boyer, Kindle Edition Locations 2486-2487), "And [the Lord] shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth." (NKJSV) To other eschatologists, these words relate to other parts of the Bible such as Ezekiel's vision of dry bones springing to life, and Jesus' parable of the Fig-Tree in Matthew 24, all of which hint of Israel's eventual statehood and its relation to the end times (Boyer, Kindle Edition Locations 2488-2489). Matthew 24 specifically speaks to eschatologists and their end-time leanings when Jesus says, "This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." (Boyer, Kindle Edition Locations 2488-2489)

Certain historical events relating to Israel become huge emotional celebrations for prophecy believers. When Israel was made a nation on May 14, 1948, "prophecy believers responded with intense emotion, tempered by the gratified awareness that they had known all along that this event would take place." Furthermore, Israel's recapture of the Old City of Jerusalem on June 8, 1967, seemed to confirm centuries of prophetic speculation, stirred another tremendous wave of excitement and an outpouring of prophecy writing. Pat Robertson, for instance saw it as "a direct sign from God." Other eschatologists saw it "as of the most remarkable fulfillments of biblical prophecy since the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70." (Boyer, Kindle Edition Locations 2456-2465)

With these examples in mind, when Falwell speaks of America's relation to Israel, he is doing so in terms of aligning with God's end-time scenario for the world; his hope is to transmit this prophetic-religious message to Americans, believing that melding of religious and civic, God and politic, etc. will garner the best results for the country. It is a reminder to America of what Gideon confirms in Judges 8:23, when asked to be King: "I will not rule over you, and my son

will not rule over you; the LORD will rule over you.” In Falwell’s words, it is not the people and what they generally do that matters for America’s boon, it is what they do in relation to God’s narrative. When Falwell says, “if the nation wants her fields to remain white with grain,” it exhibits he is not concerned with the political organization of America and its workers, or the agricultural prowess of American society, but simply America’s stance towards Israel. Standing with Israel is ultimately God’s narrative for His people and aligning with that, first and foremost, will bring the US prosperity. If not, like Nabal, as we saw in Chapter 2, America will be punished. Falwell’s choice to pursue public life as a political activist, then, must be seen as his mandate to spread this message to all Americans and affect the country and its safety as a whole, not just one or two of its citizens. Falwell’s career seeks to shape public policy and inevitably impacts American citizen’s private lives, simultaneously garnering results towards God-Inclusion in the political sphere.

Falwell’s rhetoric makes clear that his idea of American exceptionalism is predicated by America’s position within biblical contexts, as well as its position within his end-times rhetoric, rhetoric he sees as mandatory for America’s continued success, showcasing his desire for America as a whole to remain within God’s narrative structure as seen in Chapter 2. Another example of this exceptionalism from the above quotation based on America’s position within biblical context is rooted in scientific achievements and Israel. Falwell says, for “her [America’s] scientific achievements to remain notable... America must stand with Israel.” This validates further the idea that Falwell’s stock in American achievement is not with the work of the country itself, but rather where the political lies within God’s end-times narrative. It is not the day-to-day toil of the scientists themselves that matter, but their outlook towards Israel, and the whole of the American populace’s position on Israel. Without that in place, Falwell expresses it would mean

nothing by using the conditional “must.” Another example of Falwell’s rhetoric that it is mandatory for American Exceptionalism to remain within biblical context and God’s end-times narrative is based around the concept of freedom in general. Falwell says, “for her freedom to remain intact... America must continue to stand with Israel.” Here, Falwell asserts that American freedom and the sanctity of its borders are dependent on its inclusion in God’s narrative. Again, using the condition “must,” we can see that Falwell’s concept of freedom is based on and subject to the nation’s angle when it comes to God’s will.

Falwell’s rhetoric of biblical context, American exceptionalism, and God’s end-times narrative structure conveys one side of modern day American political activism. This side, the religious right, wants to include God’s end-times narrative in American politics, while the other side thinks it has no place. In any event, as we have seen in Falwell, the message is sent out to the American public in hopes to rally them out of their private lives and into public life with a specific agenda. It is not simply civic life that Falwell wants to see Americans get involved in, but civic life with a sense of God’s overarching narrative. Falwell is in a sense like Samuel from Chapter 2, transmitting God’s message to the public in order to guide them toward right action, and the narrative form from the biblical story is copied onto Falwell’s.

Action Groups (Eschatology in Relation to Political Activism)

Bynum, Whitefield, and The Son of Man

Although Falwell is just one man (who is involved with an action group) we can also look to groups who as a whole unit work to express the same type of eschatological message that Falwell does. Without God guiding the politicians, leaders, and citizenry in a clear way, eschatological activist groups choose to interpret modern political events as well as historical

ones in relation to Biblical literature that display God as an active character. Some examples of this are, for example, Christian groups like IVoteValues.org whose main goal is to move people to vote for political candidates based on their faith (<http://www.ivotevalues.org>). The IVoteValues website has many facets to it, some of which seem openly faith based, others which don't seem faith based at all; overall, one can find pressing ideas of eschatological God-Inclusion Narrative. One such would be on their homepage where it says "Pray for the nation," which brings up thoughts of Falwell's rhetoric. Another, where it says "Pledge," brings you to a page urging readers to vote, saying, "too many American Christians never vote in local or national elections. With your help, we can change that." When you click on the button "pray," on the bottom left of the homepage, it brings you to a blog entitled Call2Fall (<http://blog.call2fall.com>), which offers different biblical readings in relation to political theory and events. This is where it is easiest to see IVoteValues.org interpreting and pushing the relation between Biblical literature, meaning and politics. It also bears out a place on their website where IVoteValues gets more in depth about why and how people should vote and act politically based on their biblical beliefs. They are urging people to act in favor of ideals like Falwell's for the safety of the American nation.

I will analyze two examples, both of which examine different levels of religious and political messages intertwining. The first deals with a pastor, George Whitefield, during the times of Benjamin Franklin and how his emotional prayers affected the citizens and soldiers whom he was in contact with. This pastor was not wishing to spread a political message, but rather sought to invoke emotion and empower people. As Mark Noll writes, "George Whitefield, who went everywhere...knew what (he was) after when (he) enlisted affective rhetoric to preach

about intractable human depravity and supernal divine grace. (He was) trying to reawaken the church for the sake of the church itself, to reassert the sovereignty of God’s love.” (Noll 13)

Whitefield’s emotion could have been used to promote a political message, but there is no evidence of it in his journals that are looked at in Call2Fall. Noll notes that despite that fact, Whitefield’s devotional message ended up turning people away from the church and towards the nation. Noll writes that the “awakeners,” a group who preached like Whitefield, had a higher, “more spiritual vision of the church, yet the result was the decline in the very notion of church and a transfer of religious commitment from the church to the nation.” (Noll 13) So although Whitefield didn’t intend to, he may have in the end promoted a political message. IVoteValues capitalizes on that. Drawing on Whitefield’s emotion, Pierre Bynum, the writer of the blog in question, mentions a movie that can stir people to Christian based political action. He even offers a prayer to call God into the picture, to ask Him to use the movie as a vehicle to inspire good politics in Americans who believe, all in the effort to promote an eschatological message.

The second example I will analyze is also a tract by Bynum which deals with homosexual marriage in present-day America, as well as how and why it goes against God’s narrative, specifically God’s end-times narrative, because in some eschatological circles, the Anti-Christ is believed to be coming in the form of a homosexual. An attack is made against lawmakers for foregoing their duties because they are disobeying not only American law but also God’s law, another end-times narrative because bad lawmakers can also signal the end to some eschatologists. Overall, both examples show how prominent the mixing of religious and political messages are in present day America. Each example places God’s interpreted end-time scenario in the Bible in present day America, copying some of the Narrative forms of Chapter 2 onto today.

The blog we will look at itself is dated February 27th, 2014 and is written by Rev. Pierre Bynum, who is the “National Prayer Director” for the Family Research Council, as expressed on their website (www.frc.org/content/pierre-bynum-chaplain). Bynum’s overall goal seems to be, like Falwell, to show how God, politics, and narrative unite. The unification of these three ideals is centered on teaching how God’s law should be followed, and that Americans can invoke Him to get involved in public and political, just like the Biblical leaders of old did.

In the first example, Bynum uses a biblical quote to frame the idea that sinful actions have more dreadful consequences than most may think, and that is why passionate prayer is important; in the end, this message is for all America, saying “we must battle the evil in our lands.” One of the evils Bynum refers to is not being religious enough to be in God’s narrative, the other is homosexuality. He writes, first, quoting Acts 3:19 “Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord...” (Prayer Targets, par. 1) This is to remind readers of the fear of not being included in God’s narrative, as well as the Judgment that will come at the end of days. Then, using the journals of George Whitefield, Bynum offers emotional hope to the “lost.” What Bynum does is use Whitefield’s source material to drive home a very political point: that America and its freedom needs to and can be saved from lack of its narrative inclusion. The journal entry of Whitefield reads:

Had near, if not more than, a hundred at morning exposition... many came to me weeping, telling me what God had done for their souls, desiring my prayers, and promising theirs in return. Others both gave and sent me tokens of their love, as cake, figs, wine, eggs, and other necessaries for my voyage, and seemed to want words to express their affection. The good Lord note their kindnesses in his book and reward them a thousand fold!

About twelve, went to church according to appointment, and made a farewell exhortation as God gave me utterance, to a great number of weeping soldiers, women, etc. After which, we kneeled down, and having recommended each other to the care of God, I left them... with near two hundred soldiers, women, officers, etc., who sorrowed at my

departure, and wished me good luck in the Name of the Lord. Surely I may now expect greater success abroad, having such an addition of intercessors on my behalf. O Lord put their tears into Thy bottle, and let their cry come unto Thee!

Sampson's riddle has been fulfilled at Gibraltar. 'Out of the eater came forth meat; out of the strong came forth sweetness.' Who more unlikely to be wrought upon than soldiers? And yet, amongst any set of people, I have not been where God has made his power more to be known... This is the Lord's doing and it is marvelous in our eyes. May he give a blessing to the books disbursed amongst them, and perfect the good work begun in their hearts, till the day of our Lord Jesus! May they be my joy and crown of rejoicing at the last day, and may God's mercies to me in every place make me more humble, more zealous, more thankful, and more steady to do or suffer whatever my dear Redeemer have allotted for me.

-([George Whitefield's Journals](#), March 6, 1738).

First I will analyze Whitefield's passionate rhetoric to see what Bynum looks to utilize in his political message. In this entry from March 6th 1738, we see Whitefield's spiritedness, a pastor more concerned with making a statement of the people's joy, as opposed to his affecting their political motives. One example of this is where he writes: "The good Lord note their kindness in his book and reward them a thousand fold!" I see this as a showcase of excitement for the power of Whitefield's religion; it seems to be a passionate expression of joy for the emotion that was stirred in those who he met at Gibraltar, and a hope that they find spiritual happiness, rather than a political plea or a pushing of end-times conversion/judgment. The grammar used in Whitefield's writing showcases fervor as well. His use of exclamation points conveys the excitement he takes at seeing, for example the "many com[ing] to [him] weeping, telling [him] what God had done for their souls, desiring my prayers, and promising theirs in return." (par. 1) He wishes the Lord would "perfect the good work begun in their hearts!" a message not so much political as it is purely spiritual. Whitefield's zeal and passion then, in his writing, showcases that being a pastor is not linked with being a political speaker by any means. Bynum will not have the same agenda.

Although we only get a snippet of Whitefield's story here that pits him as having a spiritual message; Bynum on the other hand turns Whitefield's passion and spirit into power, and sets up a series of political prayers for the sake of end-times using them, starting with one for passion itself through popular media. The popular media Bynum chooses is the "Son of God," a movie, and mentions that it may be able to stir an Awakening in America, with God's help of course. Bynum writes, "*Son of God: The Movie* - What will God use in 2014 to stir Awakening in America? The young George Whitefield, before he was born-again at Oxford, studied plays and played roles in student productions. Later, he became known for his highly dramatic preaching." By noting that drama was an activity of Whitefield's, Bynum is trying to draw the reader into a relation with Whitefield's passion and hobbies. He then includes God narrative in relating the movie, "Son of God" to an awakening in America. Before Whitefield's personal awakening, came drama. Bynum is essentially telling his readers to follow Whitefield's path. God's desire to "awaken" America is through this popular source of media, which is in a sense, a direct connection to Whitefield's passion, his original love and study of drama. Bynum sees the movie, "Son of God" as a way to breach time to reach Whitefield himself to bring an awakening to present day America. "If there is any way to bring an effective end-times judgment, it is through the connection to an amazing preacher," seems to be the gist of Bynum's message here. There are of course, the end-times political message tied to this awakening, something not seen intended in Whitefield's original message.

After Bynum's provocative call for the awakening of American voters, he offers a prayer to God to use the movie as a vehicle, much like the tactics we saw Samuel use in the last Chapter. It shows the political activism of Bynum extending his end-times rhetorical interpretation of the Bible into the modern American political arena. Bynum prays that God may

use the movie as a tool to lead millions to Jesus, to an Awakening that will save the soul of America in time for the last judgment. Although he doesn't say where the Awakening take place or when, we know that he wants it to occur in America and for Americans, showcasing the political side of his desire to include God in the narration. He writes,

May Son of God be used by the Holy Spirit directly and as a tool by those who know Him, to lead millions of souls to a saving knowledge of Jesus. May this movie cause people everywhere, like George Whitefield's preaching did, to talk about Jesus in the public square and to be a catalyst to genuine Awakening! (Mt 24:14; Mk 4:33-34; Jn 1:1-14; Acts 1:8; 3:19; Rom 10:9-15; 2 Cor 11:3; 2 Tim 4:2-5; 1 Pet 1:18-25) (par. 8)

Bynum is not at a loss to express his desire for this Awakening to be lead by “those who know him” as a tool, leading to discussion of Jesus in the “public square,” clarifying his desire to connect religious and civic life as it was in biblical times, like Samuel, Saul, and David. This oscillation between private religious conversion should become a matter of public practice. Using this movie as a medium to channel Whitefield's passion is a purely end-times political message that shows Bynum's desire to conflate the religious with the political as well as his desire for Americans to want what he wants

Bynum's writings are reminiscent of Walzer's argument dealing with the tension of religious beliefs in American politics. The blog entry itself is a reminder of how some who are religious cannot be asked to divorce their beliefs from public opinion because those beliefs are so fundamental to the rhetoric of how their world operates and what their future will look like. That doesn't mean it is impossible to divorce those beliefs from public opinion though, as we saw in Whitefield. It is more of a conscious choice. Unfortunately today, the majority of the used rhetoric of the Bible in America is not such that it can be openly discussed without tension, given the democracy and adaptations of society. The heated nature of political debates points to the controversy of whether or not religious narratives have a valid place in the public political arena. When “hot” political issues are tackled from a religious perspective, there are those that argue, at

the sake of civil liberties, how and why religion and religious narrative should be brought into the “public square.”

Bynum and Homosexual Marriage

In the same article Bynum takes on the homosexual marriage, and does so in a way that shows his passion for religious beliefs to be heavily involved in political issues, especially in regard to the end-times of eschatologists. He looks at the many different facets of how “lawless” activists, elected officials, and judges are against the “truth” of the Bible. In this particular case, we will look at how Bynum sees homosexual marriage as unnatural, and because of that, he asks God to intervene with bad American politics to help him spread a message against homosexual marriage. Homosexual marriage, according to many with end-times beliefs, is thought to be one of the main reasons God is going to judge America harshly during the last judgment. “Set the Trumpet to Thy Mouth” written by David Wilkerson in 1985 spoke on themes such this, mentioning how God was going to judge America for “it’s flaunting of homosexuality and sadomasochism.” (Boyer, Kindle Edition Locations 3068-3069) Many other prophecy writers, such as Wilbur Smith, brought up the fact that “God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah solely for the reason of perpetrated homosexuality," bringing anyone in alignment with eschatological beliefs to also find American homosexuality as a threat to their personal safety in the last judgment. Furthermore, many other prophetic writers cited “a cryptic phrase in the Book of Daniel describing the coming Evil One” which said “Neither shall he regard . . . the desire of women" arguing that the Antichrist figure himself would come in the form of a homosexual (Boyer, Kindle Edition Locations 3064-3065). It is no wonder Bynum was speaking so harshly on Homosexuality and its ills, considering that many with eschatological beliefs thought it could cause so much damage to their personal faith; if the Antichrist may come in the form of a homosexual, there was a real threat to America’s, and the world’s safety.

Because Bynum's argument doesn't deal strictly with the act/stance on homosexuality itself, but rather America's policy towards it. A prayer is offered to God much like Samuel was shown to do for legal guidance in Chapter 2. The title of this section of Bynum's tract is "25 Pro-Marriage States Now Under Legal Assault." It is stated that there is a war going on, a war against natural marriage, being led by the Attorney General, Eric Holder, bringing out Bynum's end-times religious and political contention against modern American politicians and their lack of proper Christianity. Holder, who declared "in an interview that state attorney generals are not obligated to defend laws that they believe are discriminatory," (Apuzzo par. 1) has the opposite view of Bynum, showcasing an ability to separate religious beliefs from the political. Bynum's quest, although rooted in end-times scenarios, has civil underpinnings. He believes homosexual marriage in itself to be discriminatory to the Christian population, expressing a public issue. Bynum writes, "Pro-homosexual activists are also engaging in lobbying and legal action to force Christian businesspeople to provide services to homosexual "marriage" celebrations against their religious conscience (e.g., photographers, bakers, florists, marriage venue landlords)" (Prayer Targets, par. 9). To force Christians to do something against their religious conscious, against God's will, makes Holder an enemy to Bynum, not simply a political enemy, but a religious one as well. The civility of Bynum's argument washes away when it is remembered that the "religious conscience" of Christians is based on their fear of end-times scenarios and the sin of homosexuality.

Bynum explains who the enemy is that he is targeting and what the war he is "creating" is based on, displaying more of this conflation of the religious end-times rhetoric with the political. He writes, "The ACLU, HRC, other pro-homosexual rights groups and U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder have mounted a full-scale legal and public relations war on natural marriage" (par.

9). The enemy is Eric Holder and other pro-homosexual rights groups, and they are all making a war on three fronts in Bynum's eyes, the legal, public, and religious. The legal war is Holder's advising of other attorney generals not to follow state laws against homosexual marriage, and he has been achieving results in, even in the face of criticism of the right, like Bynum's. "Six state attorneys general — all Democrats — have refused to defend bans on same-sex marriage, prompting criticism from Republicans who say they have a duty to stand behind their state laws, even if they do not agree with them," writes Matt Apuzzo of the New York times. Then there is Holder's public relations war, which in Bynum's eyes is tied to the religious war. It is a war between democrats and republicans, religious vs. non-religious, all for the public to see and judge for themselves. Lastly, The underpinnings of Bynum's war are based on the idea unnatural marriage. Unnatural marriage is the type not ordained by God in Bynum's definition, making any other definition unacceptable and dangerous.

Boyer explains why Bynum might see Holder, pro-homosexual rights groups, and the other attorney generals as such drastic enemies. The lawlessness of leaders is a problem in Christianity, and had been talked about and written about by Christian writers for centuries, especially in relation to end-times. Bringing up examples of 250 A.D., Boyer cites Cyprian, who spoke of how certain legislators were thought to be signals of the end times because of their lack of morality, possibly "giving the Devil" more of a "way into the world." Also, it is highlighted by Cyprian that this lack of morality on the part of these lawmakers is due to the fact that Scripture is no longer an authority, again giving way to end-times. Cyprian writes,

Who cannot see that the world is already in its decline, and no longer has the strength and vigor of former times? There is no need to invoke Scripture authority to prove it. The world tells its own tale and in its general decadence bears adequate witness that it is approaching its end . . . There is less innocence in the courts, less justice in the judges, less concord between friends, less artistic sincerity, less moral strictness. ("Endtimes: The Doomsday Catalog")

Not everyone is as sure as Bynum or Cyprian that such tidings in government signal the bad, worse, or end. According to the modern day American federal government, these signs only lead to simple confusion. This is why Bynum feels he has to conflate the religious and the political, because today's leaders just don't see the importance or meaning of the wrongs they're committing in his eyes. In other words, because America's leaders need clear guidance from God, who has clear laws regarding such issues as homosexual marriage, Bynum feels he must remind the people in charge, or have the American citizens remind them of "who the real authority is." The Supreme Court had trouble deciding on this matter of homosexual marriage, as well as the states, which had yet to weigh in at the time of my writing. Apuzzo writes on this,

While the Supreme Court struck down the Defense of Marriage Act, it has not weighed in on whether same-sex couples have a constitutional right to marry. The legal battleground, for now, has shifted to the states, and the collective voice of several attorneys general refusing to defend their laws could help sway those cases. (par. 13)

The public and private come together in this example because of the fact that since the federal government could not decide, the decision regarding homosexual marriage in America was left to the states. Because the states couldn't be cohesive in their decision, it shows "less concord between friends" as mentioned by Cyprian as well as the lesser justice and morality he spoke of, keen signs of decline in an eschatologist's view. Bynum's answer to this indecisiveness then, is to bring God into the picture for guidance. Therefore, Bynum makes his side of the case known through his activism blogging. Bynum wants to remind his fellow Christians to push for God to come back into the picture and lead the case in light of lacking human ability and leadership. This is another borrowed example of the God-Narrative of Nabal not accepting David because he doesn't find David on his land to be natural from Chapter 2. Bynum pushes for the idea that the people in power today are going against God's rule and natural order. As a result, punishment

might be coming to these perpetrators, especially at the end of days. It shows the borrowing of Constitutional Rhetoric and God-Inclusion Rhetoric as well as political and religious integration.

Because of this possibility of the end of days judgment, like Samuel, and unlike Saul, Bynum offers a prayer to God for help and guidance in legislation, doing the utmost to bring the end-times religious into the realm of the political. Bynum believes he knows what God's will is but is unsure of why God is allowing these things to happen, except for the fact that there are the lawless like Eric Holder, a leader who is diffusing his dishonor to other leaders and the people at large. Unlike Saul, Bynum does not have the power of God within him to enact these changes himself, so he calls on God from above to change the narrative on earth in his prayer offered at the end of the blog:

Lord, intervene to prevent evil from overcoming what you have forever declared to be good! Help the U.S. Senate to pass the State Marriage Defense Act (S. 2024) to protect each state's right to define marriage as the union of one man and one woman and prevent the federal government from undermining a state's definition of marriage (Ex 18:21; 2 Sam 23:3; Ps 2:10-12; Is 10:1; 64:1-4; Mt 19:4-6; Rom 12:21; 2 Pet 2:1) (Prayer Targets, par. 11)

Bynum's entreaty is to prevent "evil" in the religious and the political sense from overcoming the "good" in the religious and political sense. Moreover, this good is what is "forever good" to Bynum. It doesn't matter what type of civic organizations or political theories have evolved over time. God's will and narrative is forever the right one, it is "inerrantly" spoken of in the Bible, as we have seen Boyer mention, and should be followed. Therefore, God's will needs to be inside the state or at least be able to define the state's view without 'those who are evil,' like Holder, intervening. At the end of days, people like Holder according to Bynum and other eschatologists, may only cause "the good ones" to be judged for things they didn't have an active part in.

Bynum uses biblical citations to defend his position against homosexual marriage, again intertwining the end-times religious with the political. It shows he believes God should come

first before the state. The first biblical citation from Mt 19:4-6 in the New King James Version reads:

4 And He answered and said to them, “Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning ‘made them male and female,’**5** and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’?**6** So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate. (Biblegateway)

Bynum uses this prayer not only to back up his end-times belief, but as simple proof of God’s political plans and desire for a man and woman’s union. He hopes this will help “awaken” Americans to both the religious and political truth that, to be “one flesh,” requires the “naturalness” of heterosexual marriage. It doesn’t matter what Eric Holder or the other attorney generals believe their state or federal Constitutions have to say; it is God’s will to have a man and a woman unite, and that is what law should be upheld. Bynum’s point of view is simply based on a different first assumption than theirs. Another quote Bynum uses, this time to defend his attacks on the lawlessness of Holder, the pro-homosexual rights activist groups, and the other attorney generals, is from 2 Peter, again with political and religious conflation.

2 But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them—bringing swift destruction on themselves. (Biblegateway, New International Version)

Here we can notice Bynum’s focus on how those in power will “even deny the sovereign Lord who bought them.” Although this doesn’t outright speak of end-times, we can reason an eschatologist may see “bringing swift destruction on themselves” as dealing with the end-times judgment of these people who go against “God’s will.” First and foremost, in Bynum’s reasoning, Holder, the activist groups, and the other attorney generals are going against the states that they represent by denying their laws, as well as the people who originally put them and the laws into place. To take another step further, we could even reason that Bynum and other

eschatologists would say the attorney generals are denying the “Lord who brought them,” meaning the ultimate sovereign God who gave them life. By not following their creator, they are again, “bringing swift destruction on themselves,” a strong example of political and end-times religious conflation because of this saying’s intertwining of God with today’s American politicians.

Before Bynum’s article is over there is a short blurb for a call to action for a multitude of other issues, like Obamacare. This is more display of Bynum’s work to meld the end-times religious and political, of putting God first, and his trying to change the civic to include God’s Narrative.

Much more prayer is needed! Electorally vulnerable Senators want the IRS to continue its crackdown on conservative groups; liberal activist groups don't. Obamacare is not only hurting private employers and employees, but public employees, too... thank you for praying! (Prayer Targets, par. 12)

Bynum ends by pointing to the vulnerable that need guidance. According to this message, Americans need to be “awakened” to stay on track as much as people did thousands of years ago on a multitude of social issues. There is not enough desire to act out God’s will that Bynum can see in modern day society, so he feels he must pray for it. Others believe this is against what the founding fathers wanted for the country, as we have seen. This is because of the uniformity of religious belief and doctrine that is cast on the American mold. In the next section, we will look at the pain of the non-religious who see tracts against their desire for religious anonymity the same way the religious feel when being forced to take part in ceremonies or rituals against their faiths. The non-religious desire is to exclude God-Narrative from politics because of the thinking that not following these beliefs will cause harsh judgment at the end of days, causing a certain type of emotional and political unrest.

The Other Side of Action Groups **No Place for God's Narrative, The Pain of the Non Believer**

Other activists argue for not following God's will in the American political sphere; they create arguments crafted to fight against the inclusion of God's direction in public space, especially when eschatology can push for cultural and religious uniformity. One argument that we will look at regards specific prayers in non-religious or public areas and how it forces those who don't believe to take part in certain ceremonies and is arguably pushing for "state religion." Groups like Americans United fight this God-Inclusion in the United States.

On their blog from May 19th, 2014, written by Simon Brown, we can see his counter rhetoric to Bynum's, hoping to untie the religious from the political. Brown writes how there shouldn't be a Christian prayer on a World War 2 Veterans memorial, focusing on how the lawmakers themselves push the connection between the religious and political. He writes, "Sometimes lawmakers just won't give up on a bad idea. This week's bad idea is brought to you by members of Congress who think it would be great to add a Christian prayer to the National World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C." ("War Over Words: Congress Still Trying To Add Prayer To National WWII Memorial" par. 1) Allowing a Christian prayer to go on a World War 2 Monument in Brown's eyes crosses a boundary between church and state, and is a sign of state-religion. Using the terms prayer and national in the same sentence give Brown the edge he needs to try and make that point stand out.

Maggie Garrett, the AU Legislative Director supports Brown's argument saying that the prayer is a bad idea to because it promotes the uniformity of the political and religious which does not promote the unity of Americans as a whole. She writes on this,

One of the main themes of the World War II Memorial is unity: 'The memorial serves as a timeless reminder of the moral strength and the awesome power of a free people united in a common and just cause.' Adding a prayer to the completed Memorial, however, does

not serve this theme. Instead, it introduces an element to the design on which many Americans disagree—religion. America’s military, like the nation itself, is extraordinarily religiously diverse. Our veterans, like our currently serving troops, come from many different religious traditions and some follow no spiritual path at all. Adding a prayer that represents some—but not all—veterans and members of the military defies the theme of unity and leaves many unrepresented. (H.R. 2175, “The World War II Memorial Prayer Act of 2013, par. 2)

Garrett draws on themes of the founding fathers of “unity with difference.” Her argument speaks to a vastly diverse modern America of religion and culture where immigration and emigration have led to a population including many different faiths and beliefs; the prayer to be included on the memorial wall would go against that diversity. The conflation of religion and politics in this scenario, would, according to Garrett, also oppose general unity as well. In her argument, many of the veterans the memorial is speaking to could have been from different religious or spiritual backgrounds, and to pinpoint a Christian prayer as representation of them on the wall harms the level of respect given towards those soldiers who wouldn’t identify. Garrett pushes for what she believes the founding fathers would have wanted in civic unity, by promoting religious liberty on the morality as opposed to specific God-Inclusion rhetoric.

To defend her claim against this type of religious and political integration, Garrett, as opposed to Bynum and the FRC, would use the Constitution as her defense instead of Biblical rhetoric and God’s narrative. Although Garrett doesn’t mention it, what would have helped her in her argument would have been the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment to the Constitution. The prayer itself shows the pressing unity of God/religion, which goes against the First Amendment’s Establishment clause. Words of the prayer to be added to the memorial that show this explicitly are, “Almighty God: Our sons, pride of our Nation, this day has set upon a mighty endeavor, a struggle to preserve our Republic, our religion, and our civilization, and to set free a suffering humanity.” (“Prayer on D-Day,” par. 3) To use the words “our religion” shows the pressing of the unity of religion this imposed prayer would be pressing and the

favoring of one religion over another. The Establishment Clause “not only forbids the government from establishing an official religion, but also prohibits government actions that unduly favor one religion over another.” (Establishment Clause, par. 1) It very well seems to be the case that this prayer is favoring one religion over another, or rather “one perspective of religion over another” at the very least. To bring this up would have helped Garrett’s defense against the intertwining of religion and politics in this memorial prayer.

Some see the prayer, regardless of its words as civic unity, not religious unity. According to one World War Two Veteran, it was an incense to see that the words, “So Help Us God.” were omitted in President Roosevelt’s speech on the wall. He writes in a letter to the government expressing his distaste with the situation,

This is to advise that I will not make any further contributions to the D-Day Museum or to the World War Two Memorial in Washington D.C. until they amend President Roosevelt’s famed December 8, 1941 speech quoted on the bronze plaque, Pacific side, of the World War Two Memorial, to include: ‘ SO HELP US GOD.’ We went to war with those words and won the war under those words. It is deceitful, dishonest and a slap in the face of all of us who fought that war-and simply outrageous! That any one person or organization should use the most famous speech of a President of the United States of America and deliberately omit the last four words! I, and millions of other WW-II Vets, are incensed. I think that all the politically correct bastards that now attempt to redefine history to their own liking should have their ass immediately sent to the firing line in Iraq or Afghanistan. Fed up! No more money from me. (24)

This veteran’s argument hits on themes of the founding fathers while pushing for specific God-Inclusion rhetoric. The word “God” in “so help us God” can be interpreted in many ways, as we looked at in Chapter 1. To miss the larger points of the speech mentioning “our religion,” may show the veteran’s lack of understanding of the uniformity that was pressed on this definition of God.

In another similar example, Constitutional defense is used in a lawsuit against Christian prayers in public space. The lawsuit is based on charges from Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) against the City Chaplain of Pismo Beach. The case is a small example of a

broader theme of American citizens not wanting specific religion included in their civic activities. In this case, the argument FFRF brings up is that a City Chaplain uses prayers, particularly Christian prayers, at City Council meetings. It is also brought up that the position of a City Chaplain itself according to FFRF, disparages those who are non-Christian. Like the other example, a City Chaplain performing Christian prayers at civic functions is argued to go against the Establishment Clause, showing the favoring of one religion over another. Some of the words from this lawsuit are,

63. The official appointment of a City Chaplain serves no secular purpose, and advances one religion over others and religion over non-religion. It also entangles the government with religion, in among other ways, by Jones' recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance at each City Council meeting at which he leads prayers.64. Jones uses his official position to proselytize for Christianity, advance that sect, and disparage non-Christians. 65. The Council practice of sponsoring sectarian prayers at meetings constitutes the custom and policy of the City of Pismo Beach. 66. Defendants have, under color of state statutes, ordinances, regulations, policies, custom, and usage, deprived Plaintiffs of rights secured by the California Constitution. (PLAINTIFFS' COMPLAINT FOR..." pg. 7)

FFRF wishes to lower the level in which in which a specific God is included in Pismo Beach political activities. The California Constitution is brought up, and the rights deprived by the City Chaplain's prayers that are in the Constitution, all for the purpose of untangling the specific religious from the political. What FFRF is doing is the complete opposite of Bynum's desire to bring the specific religious and political together. FFRF's lawsuit mentions that the City Chaplain's violation happened "under the color of state statutes." Unlike Bynum's belief, FFRF is arguing that the political is not a realm to be penetrated by any specific religious creed. The Chaplain is using his position as a springboard to promote Christianity, and that is unconstitutional in the eyes of FFRF. In Biblical rhetoric, the political and religious are not meant to be split, so it is understandable why the Chaplain may feel it is right to pray the way he does, but to FFRF, in American civil society, the founding fathers set up the government as a

place where Christian Biblical rhetoric is not to be used in the way the Chaplain is in the political arena, especially if there is uncomfot on part of the attendees.

The prosecution explains the unconstitutional process of the City Hall meetings due to the Chaplain's invocations themselves. They also express that the mayor herself takes part and asks everyone to rise for the Christian invocations. The words, "official capacity" are used in the lawsuit, again to show how the pushing of Christian prayer is under "the color of state statute." This is the total opposite of what Bynum says is the lawlessness of Eric Holder by not enforcing the laws against homosexual marriage. Here, the mayor is helping the state push Christianity's creed, and in the meantime, not enforcing the California Constitution's "No Preference and Establishment Clauses," according to FFRF. These clauses "guarantee free exercise and enjoyment of religion without discrimination or preference." Finishing their argument the FFRF lawsuit states,

At the beginning of every meeting after the call to order and taking of attendance of the government officials, Mayor Higginbotham, in her official capacity, asks all attendees, including Council members, government employees, citizens, and students, regardless of their religious beliefs or lack thereof, to rise for the invocation. These invocations, which are included on each official meeting agenda, are directed at the Council as well as at the citizens attending the meetings and those watching online. Non-Christians wishing to participate in their government are forced to endure this invariably Christian religious ritual at every meeting. (PLAINTIFFS' COMPLAINT FOR..." pg. 7)

FFRF tries to show the pain felt by those Non-Christians at the meetings, in order to ground the argument not just in Constitutional logic, but also in emotion and passion, akin to Bynum and Whitefield. To do this shows how negative specific God-Inclusion can be to the general population. The words "forced to endure" show the idea of being imposed to do something by coercion or physical strength. Here we can imagine that the coercion is the simple fact of the environment itself, the City Hall meeting, and the desire of the non-Christians that FFRF is representing who want to contribute to the civic meetings, despite their uncomfot with

being underrepresented. Finally, the word “endure” used here shows the patient suffering of the non-Christians who sit through the prayers, since they are “wishing to participate in their government.” The specific God-Inclusion rhetoric causes a rift between the citizenry, and causes immense strain.

Final Thoughts

The case has not been settled as of yet, but if it was, it might not stand. It might go to a higher court, the Supreme Court, and we have already seen how some eschatologists may react to the Supreme Court handling cases, especially if they fear the Supreme Court may be indecisive in their judgment. The legal system has more say than do the action groups that work within it, and that is why eschatologists and religious activists generally feel they need to bring God into the legal system to enact His already established morality. In the next chapter we will examine some of the legal framework of America. Doing this examination of the American legal framework will show that for all intents and purposes, although some action groups use Constitutional rhetoric in defense of religious narrative exclusion, there is evidence for deep connection and derivation between the Bible and the Constitution itself, as well as between the Bible and the entire American legal framework as a whole.

Conclusion

The Myriad Different Relations of the Bible to the American Legal System

As we have seen, there was a desire from the multiple sects of Colonials to keep to God close to political life, and even the driving force of political life. Puritans to keep God separate but still very close to political life in spite of the fact that their use of God-Inclusion Rhetoric was uneasy for many because of the recent split from the English Church. That desire influenced later Presidential Rhetoric, putting American Presidents in the role of “High Priest” during times of crisis. God language brings out a certain emotion in believers, and allows politicians to really connect with them. But is it just the God Rhetoric of the politicians themselves that is, and has always been at play in the American state, or is it something deeper within the American state that makes this rhetoric fundamental?

According to certain types of analysis and research, certain parts of the Constitution, borrow phrasing from Biblical structures. One of these, for example, are the words, “we the people,” which works on the same covenant type basis as the Bible: God and people, Government and people. Furthermore, some of the rabbinic teachings of the Bible are borrowed and translated to fit the conditions of American government, showing the deep roots of Biblical God Rhetoric inside of the American legal and political framework. The idea of the Biblical “One God,” for instance, who has three parts, Executive, Legislator, and Judge, is distilled into the form of “One Government,” in the American State, which also has three parts. This final piece of the thesis analysis, looking at American legal rhetoric from the inside out serves to ask us, as I did in Chapter 2, if politics in America is in service of religion or religion in service of politics? When looking at the Constitution more deeply and seeing the connections it has to the Bible, the answer seems to be that politics and religion serve each other.

Biblical Underpinnings

“The Constitution of the United States of America has its underpinnings in Jewish legal literature. That the loftiest ideals expressed in the Bible were consciously and unconsciously operative in the minds of the framers is well known and documented, but less known are the Rabbinic teachings that indirectly influenced the formulation of the Constitution.” (Zlotowitz 328)

Not only are the relationships among the characters of the Bible important when relating American politics to religion as well as the rhetoric of the Bible, but the ideals and rabbinic teaching as well. The framework of the Old Testament influenced the American Constitution and the structure of American law. One of American law’s most important documents has its format derived from the Bible, expressing the deep connection between American government and religion. In Chapter 1 I expressed how the ideas of the Bible and religion in general were on the minds and mouths of the early American forefathers like George Washington. These specific connections are deeper than coincidence or simple religious affiliation.

Firstly, the idea of a preamble, of something that states the purpose of the laws to be brought forth, is something Bernard Zlotowitz points out in his article “The Biblical and Rabbinic Underpinnings of the Bible” to be specific to the Bible’s form, but also brought out in American law.

the parallelism (between the Constitution and the Bible) is very striking and more than a coincidence.... The very idea of a preamble is possibly biblical. Most written laws do not have a preamble, but the Constitution does. So does the Bible. The bible is the constitution of the Jewish people and its preamble, the Ten Commandments, states its purpose, even though it does not come at the beginning of the Book. The Ten Commandments espouse one God, observance of the Sabbath, honoring parents, and forbid murder, adultery, bearing false witness and coveting (Zlotowitz 328)

We can see that parts of the preamble to the Constitution do borrow phrasing, such as, “We the people,”(328) which “is biblical in its declaring... that government derives its powers from the consent of the governed, that there is a covenantal relationship between those who govern and the governed. This idea stems from the covenant at Sinai between the God of Israel and the

People of Israel” (328). The words, “we the people,” work on the same covenant type basis: God and people, Government and people. Here it is the format that Zlotowitz is pointing out that is similar between the Bible and the Constitution, and the premise behind it. He is signaling to the relationship, the “covenantal” part of it: the declaration of trust between the governed and the governing body. With all that we have looked at so far, we can understand better why it is so important for the people of the United States to trust their government in acting out good morals if the government is to take the place of God in this analogy.

Secondly, some of the rabbinic teachings of the Bible do seem to be borrowed and translated to fit the conditions of American government; one of the most important of these borrowings is the theme of parenting and in a sense, governing. In the Constitution’s case, “parents” becomes “Government” and “dishonoring one’s parents” becomes “treason.” We can see this in Article III, Section III of the US Constitution where it is stated that,

Treason against the United States, shall consist only in levying War against them, or in adhering to their Enemies, giving them Aid and Comfort. No Person shall be convicted of Treason unless on the Testimony of two Witnesses to the same overt Act, or on Confession in open Court. The Congress shall have Power to declare the Punishment of Treason, but no Attainder of Treason shall work Corruption of Blood, or Forfeiture except during the Life of the Person attainted. (The Constitution of the United States: A Transcription)

This type of “treason” is the political form of an action against one’s parents. In Exodus 20:12 in the English Standard Version of the Bible, it is written, “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.” To honor means to respect, which in terms of parents means to respect their wishes and do what they ask. In biblical times, it could have been to help protect their lands and stores from others who had desires to covet from them. So to dishonor one’s parents in this case could also be considered treasonous, except it would not carry the same meaning in the Constitution as in the Bible because that treason carries a heavier legal sense. To “adhere to their enemies, giving them Aid and Comfort,”

as seen in Article III, Section III of the Constitution above, translated into the parental sense in Biblical times, would be to aid those who seek to give parents harm, or the family unit harm. The two are one and the same yet evolved for secular purposes.

As the parents are to the government, so can the government be likened to God. For example, this analogy of parents to government to God seems to be reminiscent of Sodom and Gomorrah where the men of the city “act against” the angels of God, which can be seen as dishonorable or treasonous to the “Father” or “Creator” figure of God. Again in the English Standard Version, Genesis 19:4-7,

“**4** But before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, both young and old, all the people to the last man, surrounded the house. **5** And they called to Lot, “Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us, that we may know them.” **6** Lot went out to the men at the entrance, shut the door after him, **7** and said, “I beg you, my brothers, do not act so wickedly.” (ESV Genesis 19)

Lot begs the men to “not act so wickedly” as they surround the house, a sign of defense of the angels. The angels can be related to the “parents” of the men of Sodom and Gomorrah since the angels are very closely related to God, who is the creator of mankind. Lot is showing honor of his “parents,” the angels, and God, by trying to protect the angels and pleading for them. In governance language, Lot is trying to avoid the “treason” of the men of the city by refusing to allow “aiding of the enemy” as stated in Article III, Section III of The Constitution. The “wicked” men of Sodom and Gomorrah, on the other hand show both treason and dishonor. This dishonor is the Constitutional act of treason against one’s parents, government, and God.

Lastly, there is the idea of “One God,” who has three parts, Executive, Legislator, and Judge, which is distilled into the form of “One Government,” which also has three parts that shows the borrowed ideas and form from the Bible to the US Constitution. In Isaiah 33:22 it is written that, “For the LORD is our judge; the LORD is our lawgiver; the LORD is our king; he will save us.” This shows that God has three parts: One part judge, who decides what is right and

wrong, and decides the results of given circumstances. Another part of the biblical God is a lawgiver; He sets the rules like the Ten Commandments for society to follow, and last, He is King, or the executive, the most important, the superior, the one who is looked to for guidance and direction and makes sure the other parts are following through with their duties. These three parts of God are reflected in the three branches of American Government.

The first, the judicial side of God, is represented in the American Supreme Court. In Article I, Sections I-II of the US Constitution, it says, “The judicial Power of the United States shall be vested in one supreme Court...The judicial Power shall extend to all Cases, in Law and Equity, arising under this Constitution, the Laws of the United States, and Treaties made, or which shall be made, under their Authority” (The Constitution of the United States: A Transcription). The words, “one supreme court” are reminiscent of the words, “one supreme being.” They are also reminiscent of the words “For the Lord is our judge” from Isaiah, especially since the word “our” connotes the Israelite society, and the Supreme Court is the supreme Judge over American society.

The second side, the legislative side of God, is represented in Congress. In Article I, Section I of the American Constitution it is written that, “All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.” (The Constitution of the United States: A Transcription) This side of the “One Government” is distilled into two branches, but as a unit, it has all legislative powers. Having all legislative powers is an extremely potent force, since the legislative make laws, parallel to God who makes laws. The idea is paralleled in the Ten Commandments, which is written about in Exodus 20:3, “You shall have no other gods before me.” No other branch of Government shall make law, just as no other God shall make law.

The third side of God, the executive side, is represented in the president of the United States. This is talked about in Article II, Section I of the US Constitution, which states, “The executive Power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America.” The word “executive” shows the idea of having the power to put plans, actions, or laws into effect. Another sense could be, “having the function of executing or carrying into practical effect,” (OED) as God’s purpose seems to be to bring things into the world and shape them, including laws in a practical way that people can do their best to adhere to. Also, another definition of the word executive that can draw a link between the political and the biblical is “to give complete validity to by performing what the law requires” (OED). This seems to be what a president does in modern day America, as well as what God does, for the most part. If the two were to not adhere to the law, the law would seem void and useless. God though, in a sense is above the law, where the President is not. A reminiscent theme from Chapter 1 of the Puritan fear of God then seems to be placed in the Constitution to back up the one obvious separation between President and God: God is above the law. The ruler, in Puritan idealism, is responsible for the good governance of the people and is answerable to God, and God’s punishment if he/she does not carry out the law/give validity to it. The same goes for an American President, but in this case it is impeachment that they face. In Article II section III it is written that, “he/(she) shall take Care that the Laws be faithfully executed.” If he/she does not do this he/she, as stated in Section III of Article II, “shall be removed from Office on Impeachment for, and Conviction of, Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors” (The Constitution of the United States: A Transcription). The fear is ripe from the Puritan days.

Altogether these connections between Biblical forms, themes, and teachings show how deeply embedded the Bible is in American culture. The connections between the legal rhetoric

and Biblical rhetoric give more meaning and reason to why the Bible is such a major part of political discourse today, and has been for centuries. This is a problem, because as we have seen, although God's will and law is fixed and unchangeable, ours in today's society is not. In American law, there is the same problem; the law is debatable and interpretable. It would be easy to have a God-Inclusion Narrative where everything was handed to us by an invoked Creator, but for some reason or another, He has been quite out of the picture on the large scale, (enough so that there is a lack of evidence to apply modern day God-Narrative with support from everyone, so that even the non-believers believer). What this means is that there will always be debate on the secular law and God's will, unless some miracle happens that settles the debate once and for all. All that we can say for now is that Biblical Rhetoric is powerfully lodged in American politics and life. My research ends here, but only time can tell what events will be in store for the future of America and its relation to God Narrative and God Inclusion.

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