

### **Greed: Good or Bad? (part ten of a twelve part study)**

There are two secular proverbs with which we are all familiar. Proverb #1 – “two things of which we can be certain: death and taxes.” Proverb #2 – “two things which we should never talk about: religion and politics.” If you are a believer in those two pearls of wisdom, you may want to stop reading and wait for next week’s segment. Here’s why. As Christians, we can be certain of the veracity of the Word of God and how it speaks authoritatively to all matters of faith and practice. With that said, can there be any doubt among Christians that the necessary role of human government demands the establishment of justice and fairness for all, not just a few? When human government fails to fulfill that role, it is just that; a failure!

Under the Mosaic Covenant, the theocratic nation of Israel was accountable to God for fulfilling that role. When they failed, they eventually fell under God’s judgment in the form of the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities. Samplings from the prophetic oracles of both Isaiah and Jeremiah make that abundantly clear. There is no better example of this than what is written in Isaiah 10:1-3 –

**“Woe to those who enact evil statutes and to those who constantly record unjust decisions, so as to deprive the needy of justice and rob the poor of My people of their rights, so that widows may be their spoil and that they may plunder the orphans. Now what will you do in the day of punishment, and in the devastation which will come from afar? To whom will you flee for help? And where will you leave your wealth?”**

Had enough of religion and politics? Time to stop reading? Then please do so right now. If Isaiah 10:1-3 “bothers” you, then what Jeremiah shares with King Shallum, may very well keep you up at night, where we read this in 22:13-17 –

**“Woe to him who builds his house without righteousness and his upper rooms without justice, who uses his neighbor’s services without pay and does not give him his wages, who says, ‘I will build myself a roomy house with spacious upper rooms, and cut out its windows, paneling it with cedar and painting it bright red. Do you become a king because you are competing in cedar? Did not your father eat and drink and do justice and righteousness? Then it was well with him. He pled the cause of the afflicted and needy; then it was well. IS NOT THAT WHAT IT MEANS TO KNOW ME?’ (emphasis added) Declares the Lord. ‘But your eyes and your heart are intent only upon your own dishonest gain, and on shedding innocent blood and on practicing oppression and extortion.’”**