



# SINFUL SILENCE

WHEN CHRISTIANS  
**NEGLECT**  
THEIR CIVIC DUTY

---

Ken Connor and John Revell

*"... a wonderfully readable, convicting book...  
the kind of equipping the Church desperately needs."*

CHARLES COLSON

Ken Connor has been a real stalwart in countless political battles, standing up for the dignity of human life and for the interests of families regardless of the obstacles. In this book, he and John Revell lay out the principles for Christian engagement in the public square and challenge believers to live up to their principles of social justice and good stewardship when determining their political responsibilities. A much-needed book.

—Sam Brownback, *United States Senator*, Kansas

In *Sinful Silence*, Ken Connor and John Revell explore the responsibilities of Christians in a civil society, and make a strong case for renewed faith and accountability among us all. Their work reminds us that we each have a role in government, and encourages us to honor that commitment in our actions every day.

—Jeb Bush, *Governor*, Florida

For years I have appealed to Southern Baptists to join me in earnestly praying for revival to sweep our land. Yet I believe one serious obstacle to revival is our collective failure to obey the Lord’s command to act as “salt” and “light,” particularly in the area of civil government. I strongly urge you to examine and apply the biblical principles in this book, principles that call us to reflect God and His priorities, even in the civil arena.

—Morris H. Chapman, *President*, SBC Executive Committee

A wonderfully readable, convicting book, challenging Christians to be, as Augustine put it, the best of citizens. This will be a useful guide for Christians to engage the culture faithfully and thoughtfully; it’s the kind of equipping the Church desperately needs.

—Charles Colson, *Founder and Past President*,  
Prison Fellowship Ministries

Ken Connor and John Revell have produced a very relevant and desperately needed new book entitled: *Sinful Silence: When Christians Neglect Their Civic Duty*. The book shares in a most engaging fashion the need for Christians to be active in every phase of our culture. This is a “must read” for every Christian who does not wish to see our nation sink any further into the mire of godlessness.

—D. James Kennedy, *Pastor*, Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church,  
Fort Lauderdale, Florida; *Founder of “Evangelism Explosion”*

From the pen of Ken Connor and John Revell comes a particularly timely and insightful work that looks to God’s perspective on ancient Israel’s fascination with her neighbors coupled with critical New Testament teachings on Christians’ obligation to engage the culture. *Sinful Silence* pulls no punches: Christians bear liability for the moral values promoted by their government. God expects Christians to be involved in their nation’s civic affairs and He calls them to make election year decisions according to their understanding of His values.

—Richard Land, *President*,  
SBC Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission

Ken Connor and John Revell have written an engaging and compelling book about the obligations of Christian citizenship. Their work provides the evidence for Daniel Webster’s observation: “Whatever makes men good Christians makes them good citizens.”

—Mel Martinez, *Former U.S. Secretary for Housing  
and Urban Development*

Our civilization stands not only at a critical moment of decision—it stands on the brink of crisis. The intellectual, ideological, moral, and political fault lines of our contemporary conflict all point to a fundamental spiritual problem. Far too many Christians fail to bring Christian conviction into the public square and fail to speak out when silence is indeed sinful. Ken Connor and John Revell have issued a manifesto that should awaken the church, embarrass the silent, and embolden a new generation of Christians to courageous truth telling. Every Christian should read this book.

—R. Albert Mohler, Jr., *President*,  
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky

At first sight of the impending release of *Sinful Silence* I made a note, “Get this book now!” Both authors are personal acquaintances and dynamic Christians with whom I have had the privilege to serve the Lord. Outside of the fact that Christians neglect their obligations to do personal soul winning, nothing needs more concern than our civic duty before God. “Get this book now!”

—Bobby H. Welch, *Pastor*, First Baptist Church, Daytona Beach,  
Florida; *Originator* of the “FAITH” evangelism strategy

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0-9754120-0-0

Published by Ginosko Publishing, Inc.  
Nashville, Tennessee

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Cover design by John Revell  
Cover art by Andy Beachum



**Table of Contents**

Introduction.....9

Shared Responsibility, Shared Guilt.....11

Wasted Worship.....28

Raising The Standard.....51

Razing The Standard.....70

Restoring The Standard.....88

Choosing Death Over Life.....110

More Pressing Issues.....128

What Now?.....157

Appendix.....170

With Gratitude.....171

About Ginosko Publishing.....173

About The Authors.....175



## Introduction

Many Christians in the U. S. appear to have a poor understanding of what God expects regarding their participation in the civil process—and that’s understandable because they have been told so many things. Some have concluded that voting and civil involvement is optional. Others seem to view involvement as a necessary evil at best, and “dirty” or wordly at worst. A few years ago, one popular book even suggested that Christian political organizations are misguided and perhaps even harmful.

On the other hand some seem to think that supporting and participating in a political organization or party meets most of God’s expectations. Some even act as if God has given His unique endorsement to their particular candidate or party.

The tragedy is that too many of us have formed our opinions and carved out our convictions without looking to God for *His* direction—and where do we find that direction but in His Word?

*Sinful Silence* presents biblical principles that will remove any doubt as to God’s heart on the issue of civil involvement. We have attempted to present a compelling case from the writings of the mighty prophet Isaiah—a case that will likely alarm you—but a case that will hopefully draw you into a closer walk with God. And, after reading this book, we pray you will be far more motivated to participate in the civil processes of our great nation.

You need to understand that the message in this book is likely to offend and convict members of both major political parties. The goal of this book, however, is not the success of any political organization, party, or candidate, but rather the application of salt and light in a dark and decaying society. We encourage you to read it carefully and prayerfully—if you do, and if you follow through, and if others do the same, the resulting spiritual impact upon our nation could be dramatic and profound.

—Ken Connor and John Revell, June, 2004



## Chapter 1

# SHARED RESPONSIBILITY, SHARED GUILT

The shades on the two east windows were open, and beams of morning sunlight flooded the Executive Office—yet his mood was dark. An overstuffed chair held his weary body while a handcrafted desk of Philippine mahogany supported his arms and heavy head. Matching mahogany paneling surrounded the room, covering the lower half of the walls and reaching down to a floor blanketed with deep pile carpet. The drapes adorning each of the three windows cost the state more than its average employee’s annual salary. Portraits of past statesmen who had gone on to serve inside the nation’s Beltway rested against heavily flocked wallpaper, keeping silent and sympathetic sentry over an office where power and money were brokered daily.

These types of surroundings have fed the dreams of most young, aspiring politicians. Indeed, many have fantasized about sitting in this very office, in this very chair, at this very desk. However, the rocky road to his office was littered with the broken lives and battered families of those who faltered on their dream-driven quest to become governor of this great state. Few, if any of them, recognized that after reaching the office, a mere thread separated the dream from a nightmare. This morning that thread had broken once again, and the

## SINFUL SILENCE

Honorable Peter James (P.J.) Bates was fighting to survive yet another nightmare.

Throwing his head and weight back into the chair, he lifted his gaze to the ceiling, focusing on nothing in particular. "Is it possible? How could it be? How could it happen again?" he asked the empty room. According to the morning edition of the *Tribune*, which lay on the desk before him, another of his executive level appointees had been indicted.

The person and position were different, but the horror had become all too familiar. This time it was John Billings, the Secretary of Housing, and the charge was racketeering. Nancy Jenkins, the senior investigative reporter for the capital's daily paper, reported on evidence that Billings had been funneling state-funded, low-income housing contracts to his old construction company through a minority-controlled shell corporation.

"How could Billings have come this far and still be so stupid? There are ways to walk in 'gray' areas safely. If he hasn't learned that by now, he deserves what he gets. But why should I have to suffer for his ineptness? Why should my reelection be jeopardized by some fool who didn't listen to his dime-store attorney?"

Three years earlier Bates had trusted his campaign aides to provide names for appointments. They had done a stellar job in managing his campaign, and their network of resources was enviable. Certainly they could provide the names of qualified individuals for these posts while he concentrated on the early draft of the budget. Unfortunately, their management skills had fallen short in the area of background checks. Now, for the fourth time in three years, Bates had to focus his attention on separating himself and his position from the accused.

## SHARED RESPONSIBILITY, SHARED GUILT

Lowering his head somewhat, he propped his right elbow on the arm of his chair and lifted a pencil to his mouth, placing the eraser on his lower lip (his staff had seen the habit countless times and would have known that it signaled a forthcoming strategy). Could Tommy Johnson, his press secretary—and perhaps his most valued asset—pull it off again?

When asked about the frequency of indictments in this administration, could he go back to the good folks of this state and remind them that, “Gov. Bates could not and should not be held responsible for the actions of another. No innocent party should bear the burden of another’s guilt, and no fair-minded person would impose that burden on our governor. After all, Governor Peter Bates has repeatedly, emphatically, and publicly decried this kind of behavior, especially from a steward of the public’s trust.

“Mr. Billings is innocent until proven guilty, of course, and Gov. Bates has absolute confidence that our justice system will be both effective and efficient. Besides, some members of the opposition party may have exaggerated the claims that led to the investigation in the first place. But, regardless of the outcome, the citizens of this great state must remember that this is not about the governor; it’s about John Billings.”

Peter Bates leaned forward and pushed the intercom. “Liz, get ahold of Tommy and send him over right away.” He leaned back in his chair and glanced over at the eastern windows. Briefly irritated, he wondered if there were any way to get more light into the room.

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When the reporters finally press Tommy Johnson, should the good people of this fictitious state accept his response? Is it accurate to suggest that Gov. Bates is not responsible in any way for the

## SINFUL SILENCE

actions and failures of his appointees? While sympathetic politicians might hope so, in reality we know that Gov. Bates should be held accountable—to a degree—for the character and actions of his appointee, John Billings.

When the people choose a leader who is expected to make appointments, the activity of those appointees reflects upon the elected leader. If an appointee makes wise decisions that profit the people, it's proper for the appointing leader to share the credit. By the same token, when an appointee fails in his or her responsibilities, or when that appointee is involved in unethical and immoral activities, the people are justified in holding the elected leader accountable. In this situation, the one responsible for the appointment shares a level of guilt.

Few of us would have a problem with this principle. In fact, in the example of P.J. Bates, we might throw hearty support behind statements such as: "That's why they get paid the big bucks;" "If you can't take the heat, get out of the kitchen;" and the ever popular "Throw the rascals out!" We understand the responsibility placed on an elected leader to make wise decisions and appointments. We also understand that when an elected leader's appointee makes poor decisions or acts unethically, the leader is accountable and answerable to the ones who placed him or her in office.

But does this link between responsibility and accountability also apply on a larger scale to the state or nation that appoints leaders to office? When elected officials make unwise, unethical, and immoral decisions, doesn't that reflect on the citizens who chose them? If a nation shares the responsibility of choosing leadership, and if that nation elects unwise or unethical leaders, isn't it also true that the nation itself shares a level of their guilt and is held accountable for the far-reaching failures of those leaders? If it is true, then to whom are the citizens accountable and before whom do they stand guilty?

## SHARED RESPONSIBILITY, SHARED GUILT

These questions may seem strange, for we usually don't think along these lines. The answers may even make us a bit uncomfortable. If the account of Gov. Bates were an isolated event, the question would probably be irrelevant. However, over the last thirty-five years, some reporters have earned their paychecks and secured comfortable retirements by covering a growing number of similar cases.

Sadly, the stories have become so commonplace that they no longer shock us. Watergate stunned the American public and dominated the nation's attention. Today a similar situation may no longer be considered newsworthy. Because of this trend in our nation, perhaps it is time to seriously consider these questions and address the implications of their answers. Do we, the citizens, share accountability for the unbiblical policies and decisions of our leaders? If so, to whom will we answer?

The nation of Judah faced similar questions. When God first established Israel, Judah was part of the larger nation. But when King Solomon died, Israel and Judah divided into two independent nations. During the two hundred years following Judah's birth as an independent nation, she experienced the intense blessings of prosperity followed by the deadly curse of national arrogance, greed, and lust.

Judah's wickedness climaxed when King Ahaz exchanged the nation's religious and moral foundations for political gain (2 Kings 16:1-12). Because of God's special relationship with Judah, He had every right to ask for and expect her allegiance and obedience. When she stubbornly disobeyed Him and ignored His principles in government, God condemned her behavior through the prophets.

The most vocal of these men was the mighty prophet Isaiah. In his writings we encounter God's passion for the nation's civil responsibilities and His justified anger over their neglect. But we also find timeless lessons and principles for civil government—

principles that span the ages and cultural barriers and apply to us and our own government. As we consider a portion of God's message to Judah through Isaiah, we will discover the answer to our first question: Do we as U.S. citizens share accountability for the civil sins of our leaders, and if so, to whom must we render an accounting?

### GOD'S WORD

In Isaiah's first chapter the prophet removes any doubt about God's passion regarding national accountability for civil sins. In fact, Isaiah directly linked the people's guilt with the leaders' guilt. In dramatic style he candidly challenges the people of Judah, declaring, *Hear the word of the LORD, you rulers of Sodom; listen to the law of our God, you people of Gomorrah!* (Isa. 1:10). In that one declaration, the people of Judah were struck by the force of God's accusation.

Isaiah's reference to these two ancient cities may not mean much to us today, but to the citizens and leaders of Judah the comparison was dark and ominous. The mention of Sodom and Gomorrah produced vivid images in the minds of God's people, pictures of extreme wickedness and severe judgment. Long before the formation of Judah, God dealt with these cities and destroyed them because of their wickedness. In the Genesis story, we find an account of perversion, debauchery, and judgment that is unequalled in human history.

### **A Shocking Sin**

When Isaiah equated the leaders and people of Judah with Sodom and Gomorrah, they should have been shocked into understanding God's fury over their sin. But what had they done that had made Him so angry? The men of Judah had not attempted to gang rape innocent young men—what would have justified such a radical comparison?

What behavior could be so horrid that God would compare His people to such an extreme level of wickedness?

Isaiah revealed their wickedness in 1:17, where he declared that the nation had failed to: *Seek justice, encourage the oppressed. Defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow.* Isaiah continued the indictment in verse 23, where he proclaimed: *Your rulers are rebels, companions of thieves; they all love bribes and chase after gifts. They do not defend the cause of the fatherless; the widow's case does not come before them.*

This alarming indictment was because of Judah's *civil* sin. The national leadership had failed miserably in three key areas of civil responsibility: justice, deliverance from oppression, and protection for the helpless. God explicitly identified this failure in verse 16 as "evil" and equated these civil sins with the depravity of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Civil sins weren't the only ones that concerned Isaiah, however. Later in his writings he identified additional national and individual rebellion that warranted God's severe judgment. We will consider some of those sins later, but in this portion of Isaiah's message, based on the immediate context, this *specific* equation with Sodom and Gomorrah is *directly* linked to civil corruption and failure.

### **An Ominous Association**

But why would a fair and just God include the general population of Judah in this indictment? These failures came from Judah's national leadership, not the average person on the street. In other portions of Isaiah's book, we find examples of individual sins that would justify such a rebuke, but the context of this passage directly connects the citizens with the sins of their leaders. Wouldn't it be unfair to punish all of the people of Judah for the civil sins and failures of the government?

## SINFUL SILENCE

If the people had been given no say in the choice and appointment of their leaders, these questions might have substance. However, when we look closely at Judah's broader history, we find that God had indeed given the people a key role in deciding their leadership. When Moses led the Jewish people out of Egypt to Mt. Sinai, he gave very clear and specific guidelines for the appointment of civil leaders.

In Deuteronomy 16: 18-20, Moses told the people God's plan for determining local leadership. He commanded them to: *Appoint judges and officials for each of your tribes in every town the LORD your God is giving you, and they shall judge the people fairly. Do not pervert justice or show partiality. Do not accept a bribe ... Follow justice and justice alone, so that you may live and possess the land the LORD your God is giving you.* He carefully instructed them that when they settled in the new land, they were to appoint for themselves civil leaders in each local area. These leaders were expected to uphold justice, to be completely impartial, and to absolutely avoid the temptation of bribes. This system of appointment should not be equated with modern democratic elections. Yet, as Kalland points out, God placed the responsibility for these civil expectations squarely on the shoulders of the people.<sup>1</sup> There is no evidence that God had canceled or rescinded this design for the Jewish nation during Isaiah's time.

The *people* were responsible for selecting qualified individuals who would then be approved and installed by the religious leaders. In addition, Moses' instruction was not addressed primarily to the future leaders but to all of the *people* of the land. In this command, he placed the responsibility for justice and civil morality upon the shoulders of the people, who were to fulfill the command through the appointment of qualified leaders.

## SHARED RESPONSIBILITY, SHARED GUILT

Further, Moses said in 17:14-15: *When you enter the land the LORD your God is giving you and have taken possession of it and settled in it, and you say, "Let us set a king over us like all the nations around us," be sure to appoint over you the king the LORD your God chooses.* Here he indicated that God would ultimately choose the king. Yet the instruction placed the burden of *confirming* future kings upon the people!<sup>2</sup>

These glimpses of Judah's earliest foundations demonstrate us that while the people didn't have *absolute* authority in the selection of leaders, they played a vital role in a leader's appointment. God's design gave His people a high level of responsibility in the appointment of local leaders and the confirmation of kings. For this reason, they had an equally high level of accountability for those leaders' actions.

According to Deuteronomy 16:20, if the people appointed qualified, moral leaders, the nation would share in the richest of God's blessings. On the other hand, the presence of unjust and greedy leaders would clearly show that the people as a whole had failed in their responsibility. While God promised rich blessings for those who obeyed, He also promised harsh punishment for those who disobeyed (Deut. 28:1-68). Because the people shared the responsibility in appointing leaders, they also were positioned to share the guilt and consequences of failed leadership.

When we return to Isaiah's scathing rebuke, we can now see that he was directly confronting this joint failure. According to verses 17 and 23, the leaders were unjust in their rulings, partial to the rich, and used their positions for financial gain. Their activities blatantly violated God's requirements for civil leadership. Therefore, because the people had been given a voice and because the leaders were civil and moral failures, the people shared the guilt of their leaders.<sup>3</sup>

## SINFUL SILENCE

When God indicted the civil leaders of Judah for their failures, the people who appointed these leaders (or *allowed* them by their silence to be appointed) were jointly accountable to God and stood equally guilty before Him.

### THE U.S. IN COMPARISON

In light of Judah's history, the logical question is, "What (if any) implications does Judah, 730 B.C., have for the United States, A.D. 2004?"

God held the people of Judah accountable for their leaders' sins, in part because He gave them a significant responsibility in selecting their leaders. But if we consider our own form of civil government in light of Judah's, we may find that the citizens of the United States are subject to an even stronger judgment.

#### **Our Structure**

The citizens of the United States elect the president, vice-president, and all the members of Congress. When we place these leaders in office, we expect the executive and legislative branches to set civil and social policies for our nation. Also, these leaders take a stand on a range of moral issues such as abortion, same-sex "marriage," euthanasia, assisted suicide, and so forth. Whether we like it or not, the decisions of these leaders directly impact the moral direction of our nation. Therefore, the people's vote (or failure to vote) ultimately determines our nation's civil, social, and moral direction.

Furthermore, the president appoints each member of the federal judiciary, who is then confirmed by the Senate. These judges are expected to interpret laws and make legal decisions that affect the entire nation. Therefore, the citizen's role in each election also sets

## SHARED RESPONSIBILITY, SHARED GUILT

the tone for the judicial branch of government. Each person's voice (or silence) directly impacts every level of government.

The people's role in selecting their leaders is neither an accident nor the product of societal evolution. Over two hundred years ago the framers of our constitution set out to design a governmental system that would be "of the people, for the people and by the people." As they labored for months, they were driven by recent and bitter memories of the Revolutionary War. Each bore vivid mental images of friends and family members who sacrificed dearly to secure freedom from tyranny. Therefore, the constitutional authors sought to establish a system that would provide the citizens a voice in government and protect this newborn nation from future threats of tyranny.

These governmental architects rejected the model of a pure "democracy," in which each individual has an actual vote on virtually every issue in the government. Instead, they opted for a "constitutional republic," in which the government would operate through elected representatives. Under this model, each citizen would be represented in government by individuals specifically chosen and placed into office by the citizens. Our founding fathers deliberately placed the responsibility of appointing leaders upon the shoulders of each citizen. Thus, a new government was born.

Because the American system is a representative form of government, there is an obvious relationship between an elected leader's actions and the citizens who elected the leader. While the people themselves do not govern directly (as is the case in a democracy), their representatives are the primary decision makers in matters of public policy.

In legal terms, our elected leaders are "agents" of the American people who act as "principals." Furthermore, it is well established in law that the actions of agents legally bind their principals. A principal is held liable and accountable for the actions of his or her agent, even

## SINFUL SILENCE

if the principal were not directly involved in the action. Therefore, we as citizens are liable for the decisions of our elected representative leaders, even if we are not directly involved in their activities.

If we do not agree with the direction of our elected leaders, we are free to replace those leaders through the electoral process. If leadership does not change, it is safe to assume that the leaders' actions accurately reflect the desires and priorities of the majority of the people. If we do not vote to change leaders, we send a message to our leaders—as well as to our nation, to our world, and to God—that we support the views and policies of existing leaders. As a nation, we the citizens have the corporate freedom and responsibility to choose our leaders, so we are corporately responsible for their civil, social, and moral leadership.

This historical review demonstrates that our governmental situation is similar to Judah's in at least one way: The people had a voice in the selection of their leaders. If a leader was irresponsible, unjust, or immoral, the people could only blame themselves for allowing this person to continue in such a role.

Nevertheless, there are some major differences between the two governments that we dare not ignore. First, the Jewish people were functioning as a theocracy under which God gave the people a voice in the selection of their leaders. We, on the other hand, function as a democratic republic where leaders are elected by the citizens to represent the citizens.

Second, the entire nation of Judah was seen as the chosen people of God, and their government was established from the very beginning to reflect that relationship.<sup>4</sup> At best, only *some* of the U.S. population claim to be God's people, and our governmental structure was not designed to show that theocratic relationship. The intent and overall structure of each government is completely different.

Third, there was a legal, covenant relationship between God and His people that *He* initiated (Deut. 29:9-15). This covenant had a direct bearing on their government, and in Isaiah's day that covenant had been broken by the people. While the covenant system strongly influenced the shaping of America's government, it simply can't be said that God initiated the same type of relationship between Himself and our government that He did with the nation of Judah.

When we consider all of these contrasts (and there are more), we find that there are very few similarities between the two governments and nations. Since our setting and structure are so different from that of Isaiah's day, is it really fair to link the U.S. so closely with Judah's indictment? One could accurately point out that God had a unique relationship with Judah and that the history of His dealings with Judah's example and experience doesn't necessarily impact the United States. So, does the example of Judah have any true relevance for the United States?

### **The One True King**

If God's passion for government were restricted to His concern for the civil functions of Judah, this link would be unfair. However, the Bible is clear and emphatic throughout on this issue. Beyond His concern for Judah's civil structure and activities, God has specific expectations of, and absolute authority over, *all* governments. In fact, the Scriptures bluntly declare that all governments and civil leaders exist because of God and that He is their ultimate source of authority.<sup>5</sup>

Furthermore, the Bible teaches that God promises and delivers severe judgment upon governments that violate His civil standards. Throughout the Scriptures there are multiple examples of governments that defied God's civil standards and felt His wrath.<sup>6</sup>

## SINFUL SILENCE

God's expectations, authority, and judgment of civil governments were not reserved for Judah alone. He has clear expectations of *all* governments; He has absolute authority over *all* governments; and He is in a position to pronounce judgment upon *all* disobedient governments. So, while our situation and structure may differ profoundly from Judah's, the government of the United States of America is still subject to God's expectations, authority, and judgment.

The example of Judah illustrates a principle that has direct bearing on our own civil government: *When the citizens have a voice in the selection and direction of their civil leaders, God holds both the leaders and the citizens accountable for the civil sins of the government.* In Judah we find an example of people who had a voice in selecting their leaders and who were accountable to God for their leaders' actions—the fact that they had a special relationship with God does not invalidate the illustration. Their civil leaders and structure failed God's expectations, and they had to answer to Him for those failures. Judah serves as a powerful and sobering example of God's judgment upon a government in which greedy and unjust leaders were either approved by the people or were allowed into leadership positions through the apathetic silence of the people.

Furthermore, as we have seen, ours is a government “of the people, for the people and by the people.” In the U.S., the citizens are responsible for determining who will govern us. In effect, *we* decide who will lead us; therefore, the *citizens* are ultimately responsible for the activities of our elected officials.

Therefore, because of the example of Judah, and because of our own civil structure in the U.S., and in light of God's ultimate authority over all governments, it logically follows that God holds the citizens of the U.S. corporately accountable for the actions of our

## SHARED RESPONSIBILITY, SHARED GUILT

leaders. Because of our participation as citizens (or our *failure* to participate) in electing leaders to office and holding them accountable while in office, we share corporate responsibility for the actions and decisions of those individuals. It makes sense that when our nation's governmental actions continually and consistently defy God's priorities, He would hold us, the corporate citizenship of the United States, directly accountable.

Finally, those of us in the U.S. who claim to follow God's Word bear a higher level of responsibility than those who do not make such a claim. We may be citizens of God's Kingdom first, but we are still expected to function as responsible citizens in this earthly kingdom. Through the Scriptures we can determine God's expectations of our government. And, as we've already seen, each of us has direct access to the decision-making process in our states and in our nation. We have no excuse! If we are irresponsible in our voting or if we fail to vote, we cannot escape accountability before God. If we don't hold officials accountable (as best we can) after their election, we may indeed share the burden of guilt.

Each one of us has the ability to impact all of society in a positive way through our vote and then through our input to elected officials. When we choose to ignore this process, we reflect the same sin that plagued Judah during Isaiah's time. And as we have seen, God does not stand on the sidelines, a passive spectator in our nation's civil arena. Rather, He is passionate in His expectations of us as citizens who can make a positive difference.

## CONCLUSION

Because of God's position over and expectations of our governmental leaders, because our civil structure allows us to choose and direct our leaders, and in light of the example of

## SINFUL SILENCE

Judah's failure in this area, we must face the fact that the citizens of the United States of America share corporate accountability before God for our leaders' civil sins. When our government's policies defy God's Word, it's not merely "their" (the leaders') sin; it is "our" (the nation's) sin.

U.S. citizens have not only a civic duty but also a spiritual responsibility to vote. After voting, we have the same obligation before God to hold elected officials accountable to His standards for government. If as individuals we make an honest effort to elect qualified leaders, and if we are faithful to call our elected leaders to reflect our moral convictions on civil matters, there is no reason to expect God to hold us *individually* accountable. But, when we fail in this responsibility, we not only fail our government, we fail God; and we should not be shocked at the massive national consequences of these failures, consequences that the Christian community may indeed experience because of its corresponding silence at the polls. When Christians neglect their civil duty, they need not expect deliverance from the national consequences to follow.

Over the last thirty years, our states and our nation have provided far too many examples similar to that of Gov. P.J. Bates. In each instance, from Watergate to "Whatever-gate," we've been outraged that our public trust was violated. Those officials who have violated God's standards for civil government will one day answer directly to Him.

However, in each instance we must remember who was responsible for placing these individuals in office. Who allowed them the position and authority to make decisions and appointments that have contributed to our national moral crisis? Who empowered them to bring gradual destruction upon us? *We* are the ones. When we, the citizens, apathetically and haphazardly elect (*or, even worse, allow*

## SHARED RESPONSIBILITY, SHARED GUILT

*their election by not voting*) leaders who are personally and politically corrupt, *we* share corporate accountability before God for their civil failures. And one day, along with those leaders, we may be corporately forced to face God's judgment upon our land.

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1. Earl Kalland, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary, "Deuteronomy,"* vol. 3, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992), 112.

2. John Bright, *A History of Israel, Third Edition*, (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1981), 188, 196, 198. The implication was that until the people confirmed the king, his position and authority was not yet official. Consider the illustrations of Saul and David. Both had been anointed by Samuel, but neither was official until the people collectively recognized them. Also, because of his cruelty, the people of Israel rejected Rehoboam as their king and God honored that rejection. They confirmed Jeroboam as their king and God honored that confirmation. Both situations had been decreed by God, but He used the peoples' rejection and confirmation to execute His decree. Nevertheless, these demonstrate the people's legal ability to reject an unfit king and install another. All four of these were in keeping with the instruction of Deuteronomy 17:15. Also, see Kalland, *Ibid*.

3. Consider the fact that Isaiah's address in 1:17 is not directed primarily to the leaders but *jointly* to the people and the leaders. Also, the accusation of verse 23 is directed toward the people, chastising them because their rulers and leaders were corrupt. Isaiah further addressed this connection between the people and the sins of the leaders in 3:13-15; 5:7; 5:14; 5:23, 25. This clearly indicates a shared accountability on the part of the people for the civil sins of their leaders.

4. Deuteronomy 1:16-17; 7:6-9; 10:15; 29:9-15.

5. Consider Psalm 2; Proverbs 8:14-16; Daniel 4:19-37, especially verses 25 and 34; John 19:10,11; Romans 13:1-7; Ephesians 1:20-22; Philippians 2:9-11; 1 Timothy 6:13-15; Revelation 1:5; 17:14; 19:16.

6. In Amos 1:3-2:3, God promised His judgment through national destruction to six nations that neighbored Judah and Israel. In four of these indicted nations, the respective kings were specified as guilty. The crimes mentioned in each of these cases were committed by the governments of the nations, and the judgments were directly related to governmental depravity.

In addition to Amos, the prophesies of Jonah and Nahum were directed toward the kingdom of Assyria. History reveals that their kings and armies were ruthless and brutal in their conquests. Nahum 3:18,19 and Jonah 3:4-9 (especially v. 8) link God's judgment with this cruelty. (for additional passages showing God's judgment on kings and nations, see Ps. 2:10-12; Ezek. chapters 26-32 & 38; 39; Dan. 5:18-30; Rev. 6:15,16; 19:17-21.)

## **Appendix**

### **Organizational Resources for Engaging the Civil Process**

The Center for Reclaiming America, D. James Kennedy, president—  
[www.reclaimamerica.org](http://www.reclaimamerica.org)

- Provides training, and support “to all those interested in positively affecting the culture and renewing the vision of our Founding Fathers.”
- Provides special resources for pastors and churches

Concerned Women For America, Beverly LaHaye, founder—  
[www.cwfa.org](http://www.cwfa.org)

- Daily radio broadcast
- Publications and alerts

Eagle Forum, Phyllis Schlafley, president—[www.eagleforum.org](http://www.eagleforum.org)

- Publications and alerts
- Provides “Scoreboard” on key congressional votes

Family Research Council, Tony Perkins, president—[www.frc.org](http://www.frc.org)

- Daily email update
- Publications and alerts
- Witherspoon Fellowship
- “Score Card” on key congressional votes

Focus on the Family, James Dobson, president—[www.family.org](http://www.family.org)

- Daily Radio Broadcast—frequently addresses issues and welcomes guests who speak on key issues
- *Citizen Magazine*
- Citizen Link email—provides daily articles and updates on key issues

For Faith and Family, Richard Land, president—SBC Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission—[www.erlc.com](http://www.erlc.com)

- Daily Radio Broadcast—frequently addresses issues and welcomes guests who speak on key issues
- *For Faith and Family Magazine*
- [IvoteValues.com](http://IvoteValues.com)—A nation-wide voter registration and information emphasis and tour

Prison Fellowship, Charles Colson, president—[www.pfm.org](http://www.pfm.org)

- Breakpoint Radio Broadcast
- Breakpoint email
- Wilberforce Forum
- Justice Fellowship

## With Gratitude

A work of substance is rarely accomplished by one or two people, but rather by a team of people committed to the same goal. This book would never have become reality if it were not for the people God brought into our lives, going back ten years when this project began, and even beyond.

Ken would like to thank:

- My wife, Amy, whose selfless sacrifices have enabled me to serve as an activist in the causes we both hold dear;
- My parents, Kay and Fay Connor, the best role models a son could have;
- Martha Sims, Jan Early, and Camille Godwin, friends and colleagues who have supported me in all of my professional endeavors.

John would like to thank:

- Debbie—my bride, my sweetheart, my dearest and deepest friend—who has put up with so much from me for 25 years, always supporting, encouraging, and loving me;
- My parents, Cliff and Sue Revell, who instilled in me a love for God and His Word;
- My colleagues—my dear friends at the SBC Executive Committee who have stood by me as I labored through the process;
- My brothers and sisters at Long Hollow Baptist Church, many of whom helped pray this project into reality;
- My Old Testament seminary professor, Robert Hubbard, who reminded his students that 2 Timothy 3:16 applies as much to the Old Testament as the New Testament;
- Bill Merrell, my boss, my writing coach, my brother, and my dear friend.

Together we would like to thank:

- George Poulos, for introducing Ken and John, and who challenged John to biblically evaluate our civil responsibilities as Christians—which led to this study;
- Fred Revell, who originally came up with the idea for the two of us to write this book;

*(continued)*

- Dr. D. James Kennedy and Dr. R.C. Sproul, who read early chapters and offered strong encouragement and rich counsel;
- The countless family members and dear friends who have labored through early manuscripts, offering wise counsel;
- Our editorial, design, and typesetting team—Karen Cole, Carolyn Gregory, Andy Beachum, and Leanne Adams. You all helped make this dream come true;
- Rachel McRae and Chris Rodgers at LifeWay, Larry Carpenter at FaithWorks, and Karl Huddleston at R. R. Donnelly—thank you for seeing the Lord’s hand in this and for believing in us enough to give us a shot.

And most importantly, our Heavenly Father, *who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.*

## About Ginosko Publishing

“**Ginosko**” (ḡi-nōs-kō) is the Greek verb for “knowing.” The concept embodied in the word extends beyond mere intellectual knowledge to include intimate and experiential knowledge.

Ken Connor and John Revell have established and embraced the following life goal:

“To know and love God and His Word as much as possible,  
and to help as many as possible do the same.”

Ginosko Publishing flows out of that goal. The logo is the Greek letter “Gamma,” the first letter in Ginosko, over an open Bible. The products developed and released by Ginosko Publishing will have the express purpose of drawing people into a deeper understanding and appreciation of God’s Word, and thereby a closer relationship with Him.



*Now this is eternal life: that they may **know** you,  
the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.  
(John 17:3)*

For more information and resources, go to:  
[www.ToKnowGod.org](http://www.ToKnowGod.org).



## About the Authors

**Ken Connor** is a civil trial attorney in the Washington, D.C. area. He has most recently served as president of the Family Research Council and as the National Chairman of Care Net, a network of crisis pregnancy centers sponsored by the Christian Action Council. His activities have been featured on *ABC's Prime Time Live*, the *MacNeil Lehrer News Hour*, and *CBS, ABC, NBC, FOX*, and *CNN News*. He has also been a frequent guest on the *Focus on the Family* radio broadcast, and he has written editorials for numerous newspapers, including *USA TODAY*, *The Washington Post*, *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, and *The Washington Times*. Recently Florida Governor Jeb Bush appointed Ken as lead attorney defending "Terri's Law," in the Terri Schiavo litigation.

**John Revell** has been Associate Editor of *SBC LIFE*, the official journal of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, since 1996. Prior to that he served in pastoral ministry for ten years in Long Island, N.Y., and in South Florida. His articles have been printed, reprinted, and cited in numerous publications, and he has been quoted in such publications as *Newsweek*, *The Los Angeles Times*, and *The Boston Globe*.

