

**GOD AGAINST SLAVERY: AND
THE FREEDOM AND DUTY
OF THE PULPIT TO REBUKE
IT, AS A SIN AGAINST GOD**

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God Against Slavery: And the Freedom and Duty of the Pulpit to Rebuke It, as a Sin Against
God by George B. Cheever

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GEORGE B. CHEEVER

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BY

GEORGE B. CHEEVER, D.D.

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PREFACE.

FOR the privilege of having been permitted to deliver these discourses without interruption, and with a cordial answering sympathy on the part of the public, I thank God and take courage. Seldom have I found a heart more thirsty for divine truth, more attentive under it, and more manifestly responding to it, and grateful for it, than in the great congregations whom God in his good providence brought out to listen to these sermons. I commenced them, much questioning as to the result, but determined to leave consequences to God, and to proclaim, out and out, the whole truth in his word in regard to the great reigning and destroying sin of our country. I endeavored to do this to the best of my ability. The event was, that instead of driving men away in anger, the assertion of the freedom of the pulpit, and the proof of it from the prophets and apostles, and the use of it in demonstrating the sinfulness of slavery, brought thousands on thousands to hear. They came, desiring to learn what God had really said in His word in regard to slavery. The church could not contain the multitudes that thronged, night after night, to listen to a simple, plain exhibition of God's own truth, in regard to the guilt of this iniquity in His sight, and the inevitable consequences of it, if persisted in.

Undoubtedly, Old Testament truth is a strange thing to many; they are not aware how it burns, how it cuts, how it probes and pierces, as a discerner and reprovcr of sin, and how the mighty Hebrew prophets, ever living, ever new, seem to hold a grand inquest over our organic iniquities, and to walk among us with the writer's ink-horn, and the measuring plumb-lines of the Mosaic laws. The people, generally, are glad to witness these operations. The people love to hear God's word demonstrating and rebuking the iniquity of slavery; and it is only crooked politicians, and political Christians, and preachers standing in awe of them, who cry out against it, and call it political preaching. This vulgar watchword is losing all its terrors, and begins to be, as it deserves to be, thoroughly despised.

The people prefer freedom, and are glad to find that God's word not only does not sanction slavery, but is against it, wholly and utterly, from beginning to end. But those men who prefer slavery along with freedom, slavery for others and freedom for themselves, and whose plan is to combine both, and give them the same sanction and the same rights everywhere, would be glad to find some support of slavery, some shield for it in God's word; and, if any one could demonstrate from God's word that slavery is right, he might do *that* from the pulpit *ad infinitum*, and they would not regard it at all as political preaching, but as simply the genuine meekness of wisdom preaching peace by Jesus Christ, and the very perfection of gospel conservatism. There are many who, without the least wincing, will hear you preach about the slavery

of sin, but not one word will they endure about the sin of slavery.

I have been delighted to find a great enthusiasm among young men, for the freedom of God's word in dealing with the iniquity of oppression. They feel that it is no necessary part of religion to put down, or conceal, or crucify, our native impulses in behalf of freedom, or our native sense of justice against cruelty and wrong. They have but little sympathy with those who make political or commercial expediency, in regard to great questions of right or wrong, the Urim and Thummim of their divinest consultations.

The series of discourses began with an examination of the dreadful influence and consequences of UNRIGHTeous LAW, as illustrated in the history of the Hebrews, under the light of the prophets. Now, in consenting to throw several of them into a volume, I have taken the liberty of breaking them up into twenty chapters, both for the sake of introducing some details into the argument, which could not be condensed in speaking within compass of the time given to a sermon, and also to relieve and sustain the attention of the reader, and give greater prominence to the principles developed in the discussion.

I am more than ever convinced of the right and duty of every preacher of God's word to preach on this subject, as contained in His word, and to show the people how He regards it; and the providence that directs and overrules all things is manifesting more clearly than ever the wickedness of the attempt to shield slavery from the reprobation of God's word, by denouncing every mention of it as

political preaching. That outcry is more likely to cover up a jealousy against *religion in politics*, than any real hatred of *politics in religion*. To the law and to the testimony: should not the people seek unto their God? And if their leaders speak not according to His word, it is because there is no light in them.

THE VOLUME IS AFFECTIONATELY AND RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED TO THE YOUNG MEN OF MY OWN CONGREGATION, AND TO ALL LOVERS OF FREEDOM AND TRUTH IN ALL PLACES.

CONTENTS.

	Page
CHAP. I.—SHALL THE THRONE OF INEQUITY HAVE FELLOWSHIP WITH THOSE WHICH FRAMETH MISCHIEF WITH A LAW?.....	9
CHAP. II.—THE PREVAILING AND POWER OF UNRIGHTEOUS LAW, AND THE RUIN OF THE NATION IN CONSEQUENCE OF OBEYING IT.....	16
CHAP. III.—COMPULSION BY THE GOVERNMENT, ENACTING WICKED LAWS TO DRIVE THE PEOPLE INTO SIN; AND THE DAMNATION OF SUCH GUILT—THE INEQUITY OF PREACHERS DEFENDING OR EXCUSING IT... ..	26
CHAP. IV.—DAN AND REUEL IN NEW YORK, AND THE WORSHIP OF THE GOLDEN CALVES IN AMERICA—EXPRESSION AND CONCEALMENT OF TRUTH IN THE PULPIT AND CONSERVATION OF NATIONAL SIN.....	36
CHAP. V.—OBLIGATIONS OF THE PULPIT IN THE SIGHT OF GOD—HYPO- CRISY OF THE COURSE OF POLITICAL PREACHING—THE SINFULNESS OF CONCEALMENT AND OF SHIELDING MEN'S SINS FROM THE LIGHT OF THE GOSPEL—APPLICATION OF THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST AND HIS CRUCIFIED.....	46
CHAP. VI.—GLORY AND FREEDOM OF THE WORD OF GOD IN ITS UNI- VERSAL AND PERFECTAL APPLICATION—DEMONSTRATIONS FROM ITS HISTORICAL AND PROPHECIC PORTIONS, AS TO NATIONAL SIN—THE LIGHT THE TO BE APPLIED.....	63
CHAP. VII.—GOD'S WRATH AGAINST SLAVERY IN JEREMIAH XXXIV. 17— THE ILLUMINATION FROM THIS PASSAGE UPON OUR OWN SIN—THE SOLLEMNIY OF THE CRIME AND THE RESPONSIBILITY—NATIONAL DE- CISIONS BY INDIVIDUAL OPINIONS AND CHOICES—THE QUESTION TO BE SETTLED IS OF RIGHT OR WRONG, NOT POLICY OR IMPOLICY.....	73
CHAP. VIII.—OBJECTIONS URGED AGAINST THE MENTION OF THIS SIN— THE OPINION OF COLBRIDGE—THE EXAMPLE OF LORD KESWICK IN RESISTING AND REVERING OPPRESSION—THE WORD OF GOD OUR ONLY SAFE GUIDE.....	82
CHAP. IX.—DEMONSTRATION OF THE SINFULNESS OF SLAVERY—ARGU- MENT FROM THE LAW OF LOVE—ARGUMENT FROM THE LAWS AGAINST OPPRESSION—NO SUCH THING AS SLAVERY AMONG THE HEBREWS— LUDICROUSNESS OF THE CLAIM OF AFRICANS AS OUR PROPERTY BY REASON OF MOSE'S CURSE ON CANAAN.....	95
CHAP. X.—THE WRATH OF GOD AGAINST THE JEWS FOR THE ATTEMPTED ESTABLISHMENT OF SLAVERY—THE PENALTY OF DEATH AGAINST THE CRIME OF MAN-STEALING—COMPARISONS OF THIS LAW, AND ITS APPLI- CATION TO THE CLAIM OF CHILDREN AS PROPERTY.....	167
CHAP. XI.—DOING EVIL THAT GOOD MAY COME—THE GOSPEL OF SLAVERY—ITS GERMINATING AND PROPAGATING POWER OF EVIL— THE STEALING OF CHILDREN—FALL ON MAN-STEALING.....	116