

Chapter 12

Amendment 2: Constitutional vs. Biblical Self-Defense

A well-regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.

Authority

Few Americans are more strident about their constitutional rights, particularly the Second Amendment guarantee to keep and bear arms, than are hunters and gun enthusiasts. Some of the most powerful Washington special-interest groups are organizations (such as the National Rifle Association and Gun Owners of America) formed to protect these rights. As a gun owner and hunter, I am very concerned about my “right” to keep and bear arms. However, as the Christian head of my home, I am much more concerned about my God-required *responsibility* to keep and bear arms for the protection of my family, home, and possessions. I am *not* a Second Amendment advocate. Americans who tout the Second Amendment as their authority to keep and bear arms may ultimately do more harm than good to their so-called right.

Because this is a “right” codified by the United States Constitutional Republic and thereby brought under its jurisdiction, the Constitutional Republic can divest its citizens of this right – something it has been doing incrementally for some time. On June 26, 2008, in *District of Columbia v. Heller*, 554 U.S., the Supreme Court decided, five to four, that the Second Amendment protects an individual’s right to own and bear firearms. Although gun owners hailed *Heller* a victory, this battle (which is far from over) concerning the *constitutional right* to bear arms has diverted our attention from the larger and more consequential battle. Disconcerting as many Americans may find the erosion of the Second Amendment guarantee, what is even more disturbing is that five people have the power to decide whether United States citizens have the right to protect themselves and their families, to what degree, and with what weapons. The Supreme Court has ruled that Americans have the right to bear arms, *but only until they say otherwise*. Many Americans who celebrated *Heller* overlooked the fact that it can – and likely will – be overturned by a future court, just as its decision overturned *United States v. Miller*, 307 U.S. 174, rendered in 1939. If you look to the Second Amendment for your authority to bear arms, that authority is contingent upon the fickle nature of nine fallible human beings.

The constitutional right to bear arms is in jeopardy since the Second Amendment could be overturned at any time by future amendment. This was attempted as recently as March 11, 1992, by Democratic Congressman Major Owens of New York, who proposed “...an amendment to the Constitution of the United States repealing the Second Amendment to the Constitution.”¹ The well-regulated militia, provided for by the Second Amendment, was, for all practical purposes, terminated long ago.²

Some Constitutionlists admit that the Second Amendment did not grant a new right but rather acknowledged an existing right. Although this assertion contains some truth, it does not alter jurisdictional overtones, especially because the constitutional framers did not provide any Biblical basis for this Amendment. Others maintain that the Second Amendment protects our God-given right to self-protection. If this is so, the framers must have believed Yahweh³ was impotent to protect what He gave to us, and that our God-given responsibilities require the Constitution’s sanction and guarantee.

Robertson v. Baldwin, 165 U.S. 275 (1897), affirms that “the ‘Bill of Rights,’ were [sic] not intended to lay down any novel principle of government, but simply to embody certain guaranties and immunities which we had inherited from our English ancestors” – rather than from Yahweh. Whereas Yahweh’s law does not prohibit a man from carrying a concealed weapon (a precaution that is sometimes warranted), *Robertson v. Baldwin* goes on to declare, “the right of the people to keep and bear arms (Art. [Amendment] II) is not infringed by laws prohibiting the carrying of concealed weapons....” The framers could have acknowledged the Scriptures as the foundation for this right, which would have alleviated any possibility of edicts prohibiting concealed weapons, but they did not. Instead, they allowed any given Congress to implement firearms restrictions as it sees fit.

Because the *responsibility* to keep and bear arms is God-given, no one except Yahweh can withdraw or limit their use. If you are a Christian⁴ (and particularly if you are the head of your home), you were given the responsibility to keep and bear arms long before the ratification of the Constitution:

Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand; to execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people; to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; to execute upon them the judgment written: this honour have all his saints. Praise ye YH.⁵ (Psalm 149:6-9)⁶

Constitutionalists often point out that the Second Amendment was added to deter and protect individuals from tyrannous governments. Why do Christian men need the Second Amendment to provide this entitlement when they already have Psalm 149?

State Licensing

Why do Christians think they need the state to sanction self-defense or any other God-given responsibility? This is a question that should be asked not only by gun owners, but also by anyone who seeks the state’s approval to be married and by preachers who seek the government’s 501(c)(3) tax exempt incorporation status. What Yahweh ordained and commanded does not require the state’s permission or license. If Yahweh’s commands need to be authorized by the state, then Yahweh is subservient to the state.

When the government requires a license, it does so to provide legality to what it has otherwise declared illegal. Since when did marriage, preaching the gospel, and self-defense become illegal? *Since the state chose to disregard Yahweh’s sanction of these activities and began licensing them.* Although the state is currently lenient with those who preach without government sanction, marry without a license, and own firearms without permits, it may not always overlook these “transgressions.” When that day comes, it will be imperative for Christian men to recognize their authority to keep and bear arms comes, not from WE THE PEOPLE, but from Yahweh.

Of even greater significance is the Second Amendment’s usurpation of *the power* to grant the right to bear arms. For Christian patriots to hang their “firearms hat” on the Second Amendment is an acknowledgement that WE THE PEOPLE is their god and that the Constitution, and not the Bible, is their supreme law. The battle over the responsibility to bear arms was *lost* in 1789 with the ratification of the Constitution. Until Americans recognize this, we will be forced to watch the 2008 Supreme Court drama again and again, with each and every decision determined by the prevailing “morality” of the then-standing Supreme Court’s deciding majority.

Firearms: Biblically Defended Self-Defense

Because many of today's pulpits are filled with antinomian, pacifistic, anti-gun pastors, most of today's Christians are unaware Yahweh ordered His disciples to arm themselves. Consequently, Christians have looked to the Second Amendment for their authority to keep and bear arms. Had they been following the Apostle Paul's instructions in 2 Timothy 2:15 ("Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth") instead of relying on such pastors, they would have found their authority in the Bible. The question regarding firearms is one of self-defense:

If the thief is caught while breaking in, and is struck so that he dies, there will be no bloodguiltiness on his account. But if the sun has risen on him, there will be bloodguiltiness on his account.... (Exodus 22:2-3, NASB)

The crime described in this passage is not theft, but burglary. *Bouvier's Law Dictionary* defines burglary:

The breaking and entering the house of another in the night-time, with intent to commit a felony therein, whether the felony be actually committed or not.⁷

A person who defends his family, home, or possessions by killing a thief in the dark of the night is not to be held accountable for murder. However, if an unarmed thief who has no intent to cause bodily harm is killed during daylight hours, the killer is to be held responsible for the thief's death.

Whereas theft is an [Eighth Commandment](#) ("Thou shalt not steal") violation, burglary is a [Sixth Commandment](#) ("Thou shalt not kill") violation and is, therefore, a capital crime. Stealing is a crime punishable by restitution *except* when a thief is caught breaking into someone's home under the concealment of darkness. Although not stated, the obvious reason for this distinction is the impossibility of determining an intruder's intentions in the dark of night. Under such conditions, you cannot quickly ascertain whether the intruder is an unarmed thief or someone with a more malicious intent. During a night raid, Yahweh gives the benefit of the doubt to the homeowner and allows him, regardless the intruder's intentions, to slay the intruder with impunity, just as if he were a known murderer or rapist. In principle, the same would be true if an assailant's intentions are dubious during daylight hours.

Because Yahweh's law clearly provides for self-defense, our Savior was also a proponent of self-defense. Although self-defense is not the primary focus of the following two statements, Jesus⁸ would have never used them as examples if He did not endorse self-defense:

...if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. (Matthew 24:43, NASB)

When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own homestead, his possessions are undisturbed. (Luke 11:21, NASB)

The better armed we are, the less likely someone will steal from us or harm us and our families. Jesus commanded His disciples to purchase weapons:

Then said he unto them ... he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one. (Luke 22:36)

Jesus never told His disciples to register their swords with the government. Fredrick Bastiat described self-defense as a natural right:

Each of us has a natural right – from God – to defend his person, his liberty, and his property. These are the three basic requirements of life, and the preservation of any one of them is completely dependent upon the preservation of the other two. For what are our faculties but the extension of our individuality? And what is property but an extension of our faculties?⁹

What Bastiat depicted as a natural right, the Apostle Paul described as a God-required responsibility:

...if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel. (1 Timothy 5:8)

After providing for his family's spiritual safety, a Christian man's next priority should be providing for his family's physical protection. Food, clothing, and shelter are of little benefit if you are unprepared or unwilling to defend your family against thieves, rapists, and murderers. It is not unchristian to practice self-defense – it is unchristian if you do *not*.

Defense of Others

Abraham and Moses provide Biblical precedents for taking the law into your own hands to thwart a crime in process. In Genesis 14, Abraham intervened to rescue his nephew Lot and in the process killed some of his kidnappers. In Exodus 2, Moses slew an Egyptian taskmaster who was assaulting a fellow Israelite. Vigilantism is Biblically required¹⁰ when defending or rescuing another person or to prevent or stop any other crime from occurring:

If the bystander has an obligation to render aid “with all lost things” of another man [Deuteronomy 22:1-3], he has an even more pressing obligation to help rescue the man. Thus, this principle of responsibility appears in Deuteronomy 22:24. A woman assaulted in a city is presumed to have given consent if she does not raise a cry, the origin of the hue and cry common law. At her cry, every man within sound of her voice has a duty to render immediate aid....¹¹

An eyewitness to a crime has an obligation to the victim and to society to intervene and stop the perpetrator. How many crimes would be averted if thieves, rapists, and murderers knew every able Christian man would do whatever necessary to stop them? How much more so, if every law-abiding man also carried a firearm, as per Psalm 149 and Luke 22, for his own protection and the protection of his family and neighbors? Armed citizens are much more likely to intervene and arrest lawbreakers than are those who are unarmed.

In cities such as Kennesaw, Georgia, where every household is required by law to possess a firearm, the need for police protection is all but eliminated. Unless an officer happens to be at the right place at the right time, the police are ineffective at stopping or preventing crime. Their presence in a community is more for investigative than preventative purposes:

General Sessions Court Judge Bob Moon said ... that crime in Chattanooga [Tennessee] “has become so rampant that it is no longer possible for the police department to protect our citizens.” He told a woman who had been pulled from her car and beaten in the head that she or her mother needed to “purchase a weapon, obtain a gun permit and learn to protect yourself.”¹²

A gun in the hand is better than a cop on the phone. In *Castle Rock v. Gonzales*, 545 U.S. 748 (2005), the Supreme Court ruled that police have no obligation to protect citizens. And yet, the United States federal and state governments have practically stripped their citizens of their inherent God-given responsibility for self-protection and intervention, with the exception of those who jump through government hoops to secure a concealed weapons permit.

By employing the term “assault weapons,” the anti-gun lobby associates all gun owners with criminal intent. But the vast majority of gun owners are not criminals and have no intentions of assaulting anyone. They do not own *assault* weapons; instead, they are armed with *defense* weapons. Regardless of the attempts by the government, the media, and even certain preachers to vilify self-defense, every Christian man is commissioned by Jesus and by the law of Yahweh to defend his family, his possessions, his fellow man, and himself. Every Christian woman without a man to protect her should likewise arm herself.

Where Does *Your* Authority Come From?

Now there was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel: for the Philistines said, Lest the Hebrews make them swords or spears: But all the Israelites went down to the Philistines, to sharpen every man his [plow]share, and his coulter, and his axe, and his mattock.... So it came to pass in the day of battle, that there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people that were with Saul and Jonathan.... (1 Samuel 13:19-22)

The effort to deprive us of our means of protection has been with us from nearly the beginning of time. It is imperative we understand the authority to arm ourselves comes from Yahweh.

Nearly all gun enthusiasts point to the Second Amendment as their authority for possessing firearms, which means their authority to keep and bear arms can be traced back to 1791. Where did the men living in America *prior* to 1791 get their authority to be armed? Do you suppose they might have gotten it from Exodus 22:2-3; Deuteronomy 22:23-24; Psalm 149:6-9; Luke 11:21, 12:39, 22:36; and 1 Timothy 5:8. Carrying a weapon was already lawful by Yahweh’s standards, so why, in 1791, did we need the authorization of the Second Amendment?

If your authority to keep and bear arms is derived from the Second Amendment – from the god WE THE PEOPLE – it is unlikely you will react any differently from the British and Australians who surrendered their weapons when required to do so by their respective governments. On the other hand, if your faith is in Yahweh’s sovereign authority, you will be far less likely to turn over your weapons to any civil government unauthorized by the omnipotent Supreme Ruler of the universe.

Click to order the *Bible Law vs. The United States Constitution* CDs:

- The e-book (on CD) *A Christian Perspective on the U.S. Constitution*
- The audio CD *The Bible vs. The U.S. Constitution* (Pts. 1 & 2)

End Notes

1. H. J. Res. 438.
2. “...the National Guard is not the ‘Militia’ referenced ... in the Second Amendment.... Congress had organized the National Guard under its power to ‘raise and support armies’ and not its power to ‘Provide for organizing, arming and disciplining the militia.’ The modern National Guard was specifically intended to avoid status as the constitutional militia, a

distinction recognized by 10 U.S.C.311(a).” Report of the Subcommittee on the Constitution of the Committee on the Judiciary, United States Senate, Ninety-Seventh Congress, Second Session, February 1982, Senate Document 2807.

3. YHWH (most often pronounced Yahweh) is the English transliteration of the Tetragrammaton, the principal Hebrew name of the God of the Bible. For a more thorough explanation concerning the sacred names of God, “[The Third Commandment](#)” may be read online, or the book *Thou shalt not take the name of YHWH thy God in vain* may be ordered from Bible Law vs. the United States Constitution, PO Box 248, Scottsbluff, Nebraska 69363, for a suggested \$4 donation.*

4. Not everyone claiming to be a Christian has been properly instructed in the Biblical plan of salvation. Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:36-41, 22:1-16; Romans 6:3-4; Galatians 3:26-27; Colossians 2:11-13; and 1 Peter 3:21 should be studied to understand what is required to be covered by the blood of Jesus and forgiven of your sins. For a more thorough explanation concerning baptism and its relationship to salvation, the book [Baptism: All You Wanted to Know and More](#) may be requested from Bible Law vs. the United States Constitution, PO Box 248, Scottsbluff, Nebraska 69363, for free.

5. Where the Tetragrammaton (YHWH) – the four Hebrew characters (or its abbreviated YH) that represent the personal name of God – has been unlawfully rendered the LORD or GOD in English translations, I have taken the liberty to correct this error by inserting YHWH or YH where appropriate. For a more thorough explanation concerning the names of God, “[The Third Commandment](#)” may be read online, or the book [Thou shalt not take the name of YHWH thy God in vain](#) may be ordered from Bible Law vs. the United States Constitution, PO Box 248, Scottsbluff, Nebraska, 69363, for a suggested \$4 donation.*

6. All Scripture is quoted from the King James Version, unless otherwise noted. Portions of Scripture have been omitted for brevity. If you have questions regarding any passage, please study the text to ensure it has been properly used.

7. John Bouvier, “Burglary,” *Bouvier’s Law Dictionary: A Concise Encyclopedia of the Law*, 3 vols. (Kansas City, MO: Vernon Law Book Company, 1914) vol. 1, p. 404.

8. Yeshua is the English transliteration of our Savior’s given Hebrew name, with which He introduced Himself to Paul in Acts 26:14-15. (Jesus is the English transliteration of the Greek Iesous, which is the Greek transliteration of the Hebrew Yeshua.) Because many people are unfamiliar or uncomfortable with Yeshua, I have chosen to use the more familiar Jesus in this book in order to remove what might otherwise be a stumbling block. For a more thorough explanation concerning the sacred names of God, “[The Third Commandment](#)” may be read online, or the book [Thou shalt not take the name of YHWH thy God in vain](#) may be ordered from Bible Law vs. the United States Constitution, PO Box 248, Scottsbluff, Nebraska 69363, for a suggested \$4 donation.*

9. Fredrick Bastiat, *The Law* (Irvington-on-Hudson, NY: The Foundation for Economic Education, Inc., [1848] 1987) p. 6.

10. For a study on *unlawful* vigilantism, the book [The Phinehas Hoods: A Biblical Examination of Unscriptural Vigilantism](#) may be read online, or the [book](#) may be ordered from Bible Law vs. the United States Constitution, PO Box 248, Scottsbluff, Nebraska 69363 for a suggested \$3 donation.*

11. Rousas John Rushdoony, *The Institutes of Biblical Law* (The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1973) p. 464.

12. "Judge Advises Crime Victim to Arm Herself After Attack: Moon Says No Longer for Police to Protect Citizens," 27 June 2008, www.chattanooga.com/articles/article_130537.asp.

*We are admonished in Matthew 10:8 "freely ye have received, freely give." Although we have a suggested a price for our books, we do not sell them. In keeping with 2 Corinthians 9:7, this ministry is supported by freewill offerings. If you cannot afford the suggested price, inform us of your situation, and we will be pleased to provide you with whatever you need for whatever you can send.