Money and the Kingdom of God
An Examination of Monetary History through the lens of Scripture
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The purpose of this white paper is to identify the root cause of our present monetary system’s shortcomings, and indeed how it has become an abomination in the eyes of God. This is a challenging task in light of our present monetary system and the perceived complexity that surrounds its construction and operation.

However, we must undertake this study. We cannot underestimate the importance of how important money is to our ability to disciple nations and build the Kingdom of God. And our study must begin with creation and Genesis 1:1.

- God spoke the universe into existence (Gen 1:3). “Fiat lux” (let there be light) are His first recorded words.

- He created the universe for and through Christ (Col 1:16)

- It is all held together by the word of His power (Heb 1:3).

Building God’s Kingdom on earth has been the primary mandate of mankind (Gen 1:26, Psalm 8) since the day Adam was created. Before the fall, the energy required to accomplish this building project was readily accessible for us to use. The 1st Law of Thermodynamics says energy is transferred from one form to another, yet remains in a steady state. What was built using that energy would have remained as it was without further input. It was our job to harvest energy from creation and transform it such that it manifest the Kingdom of God.

Under the 1st Law of Thermodynamics, building the Kingdom would have been a linear progression. The project was meant to be a collaboration between the laborers (mankind) and the Architect (God) – through direct fellowship Him.

After the fall, the 2nd Law of Thermodynamics entered the picture. Energy is more difficult to harvest and deploy to build the Kingdom. Systems built will naturally decay, and additional energy must be expended just to maintain what was accomplished.

Examination of the post-fall curses reveals that they are the natural consequences (results based reality) directly related to mankind’s disobedience and failed stewardship of the original mandate to build God’s Kingdom on earth. We must now till the ground (harvest economic energy) by the sweat of our brow. Childbearing (creating others to share in the task of building his Kingdom) is done with great pain. (Gen 3:16-19)
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Because of sin, building the Kingdom of God is not a linear progression, but is now exponentially more difficult. Mankind must apply energy to maintain systems and design new ones without the architect’s direct, uncompromised help. We have access to the Architect via the Holy Spirit, however, it is inefficient due to “noise.” (sin and spiritual warfare)

In God’s wisdom and mercy, He gave mankind the means post fall to conceive of the idea of money. God is, after all, the originator of all ideas. Money is no exception. Money enables us to more efficiently harvest, store, and deploy the economic energy necessary to build His Kingdom.

You are made in the image of God.

All of the concepts that will be presented in this paper can only be understood if we ground them on this fundamental truth. Being created in the image of God carries with it several key realities that tie it directly to the subject of money.

- You are God’s representation and likeness on the earth. (Gen 1:26)
- He knit you together in your mother’s womb. (Ps 139)
- With specific gifts and talents that represent His image. (Jer 1:5, 1 Pet 4:10)
- To be His ambassadors (2 Cor 5:20)
- For a specific purpose. (Eph 2:10)

That purpose is to take “the gospel of the Kingdom” to the world. (Matt 6:9-13, 28:18-20)

We are to disciple nations in order to accomplish the following:

- To bring people to know the King.
- To prepare to be ruled under the King’s (Christ’s) authority.
- To participate in building His Kingdom.

Thus, your labor (physical, mental and spiritual) is precious in God’s eyes! You are His image bearer on earth. Your labor is the incarnation of His Image on earth for the purpose of joining Him in the work of building His Kingdom. This is a key reality in order to understand the role of money in the Kingdom of God.

The Holy Spirit multiplies the value of your labor when it is in direct alignment with the Architect’s building plans. Stewardship of our harvested and stored energy is extremely important, which is why stewardship is one of the primary teachings in Scripture.

With a proper understanding of the value and purpose of our labor, who designs money, creates it, and manages the system it is used within is of vital importance.
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Building God’s Kingdom is an Enormous Task

Consider the economic energy needed to build Nebuchadnezzar’s earthly kingdom. It is tiny in both scope and geography, yet it required enormous human labor/energy. How much more energy is required to build the Kingdom of God? In order to accomplish this, we have no choice but to create systems based on God’s principles that are capable of ruling over the entire earth. And we must do this while fighting an enemy in Satan that is opposed to us in every way.

Money is a gift from God

Before we can understand money from a Kingdom perspective, we have to have a proper understanding of the definition of money. Most people think of it as an item, like dollars, yen, Euros, or even gold and silver. However, that is not the fundamental definition of money. 

Money is an agreement within a community to use an object to facilitate the exchange of value between individuals. This a gift from God! It is therefore our responsibility to create money that facilitates and incentivizes this basic process. For believers in Jesus, money is simply a system to build and manage that will assist us with that goal. There is no other purpose for it.

The right kind of money helps us overcome the effects of the curse. The wrong kind of money does the opposite. It feeds the effects of the curse. This means that money is NOT value neutral. It will either promote incorporation of biblical principles in a culture or it will inhibit them. Case in point:

At its core, our present system is debt-based (more on that later). As a result, our culture now accepts building your life around accumulating debt. The consequence is, the world is awash in debt. The Bible says very clearly that debt is slavery. Thus, our present monetary system promotes a value system and manifests that system.

In order to win a war, you need two primary advantages over your enemy – superior strategy and superior resources. Money is a means to gather and deploy resources necessary to fight and win a war. This is why money is one of the primary battlegrounds in the war between the kingdom of darkness and the Kingdom of God.

In order to understand monetary history from a kingdom perspective, it is helpful to know the primary actors in His story. There are the main characters - God and His children. There are Satan and his followers. Then, there is the story arc. What is the goal of the story? When examined from this perspective, monetary history isn’t about Caesar, or Pharaoh, or Allen Greenspan, or Janet Yellen. It’s about the mandate we have – to build a Kingdom - and the battle we are engaged in to live out that mandate.
We are all familiar with the saying, “follow the money.” Well in this paper, we are going to follow the *image* on money because as you will learn, Jesus told us to do just that.

**Key Principles**

We’ll start by reviewing the key principles that apply to money and which will create the lens through which we will examine monetary history. John Kenneth Galbraith helps us focus the lens. He made a very revealing statement in a paper he wrote in 1975 called “Money: Whence it Came and Where it Went.” He said, “The study of money above all other fields in economics is one where complexity is used to disguise or evade truth, not reveal it.”

If complexity concealed truth, then it stands to reason that simplicity will reveal it. Thus, this paper will focus on the three primary principles that will reveal the truth about money.

They are:

1. **Trust:** The primary principle that must be applied to money is that of honest weights and measures (Deut 25:13-16/Prov 11:1); do right when you are transacting business with one another.
2. **Localism:** The impact of economic activity and money being a major part of that should primarily benefit the local communities.
3. **Jurisdiction.** Who has the proper jurisdiction to oversee money and its creation defining the system that is used within and defining the value system that it promotes?

Other principles apply, however these three primary principles define what should be applied to any monetary system that promotes the Kingdom of God. As such, this is the lens through we will view monetary history.

**Types of Money Used Throughout History**

Because money is an agreement within a community, the agreement is subject to change, and it has changed throughout history. Communities have agreed to use many different items as money. The following list is not comprehensive, but rather representative of the most common items used as money.

Commodity money: That is, any *physical object* that a community agrees has value, and decides to use as money. This has included objects from cows to cowry shells – from tobacco to tally sticks – and of course gold and silver.
Labor-based money: Money that has comes into creation as you expend your labor. That is an interesting concept isn’t it? I don’t know if you knew that kind of money existed but it has on occasion throughout history with some interesting results.

Fractional Reserve Money: The object that the community agrees to use as money is stored in a warehouse, for example a bank. Receipts are traded in the community that represents access to that money. However, there are more receipts trading than there is actual money stored in the bank. As problematic as that is, it’s not as bad as what we have today, which is…

Debt based money: When the item (paper currency, coins, digital money) comes into existence when a new debt instrument/loan is created. The money then is “backed” by the issuer of the debt instrument’s ability to collect that debt plus interest. This is what our present system is based on.

The purpose of outlining these various forms of money is two-fold.

First of all, to show that money indeed is a social construct and that it has dramatically changed in communities and cultures throughout time. The second is to point out that there is a general trend in the items used as money throughout history, and that trend has been decidedly against the very basic principles of money – honest weights and measures, localism and jurisdiction.

Early forms of money were generally defined within a local community structure. That meant that they were very flexible. The local community could change what was used. It wasn’t very efficient however. At this time, items that were chosen included things like grains and cattle and cowry shells.

Because it was not efficient to store or transport this type of money, they were limited in the geographic location in which they could be used. This in turn limited the reach of economic trade and constrained economic growth.

Naturally man wanted to create a more efficient system in order to generate more economic activity. For Christ-followers, the system should have been designed in order to facilitate expanding the Kingdom of God. Unfortunately, that’s not what happened.

Instead, the guiding social construct defining and redefining money over time increasingly became based on a pagan philosophy driven by the love of money. In order to see why that happened we have to step back and examine a key passage in scripture.
Satan Declares His Intent

Isaiah 14:13-14 is a critical passage in understanding money from a Kingdom perspective.

*For you have said in your heart: “I will ascend into Heaven. I will exalt my throne above the stars of God. I will also sit upon the mount of the Congregation on the farthest sides of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds. I will be like the Most High.”*

The Hebrew word for “heart” sets the context of this declaration. It is “Lebab,” and it means the “inner part – resolution, determination of will, as a seat of emotions and passions.”

This wasn’t a simple wish list – something Satan hoped to achieve. This declaration comes from Satan’s innermost being. *It is the resolved determination of his will – his passion.* He very clearly intends to usurp:

- **The position of God:** His ascent into Heaven, and establishing his throne above that of God’s where the nations will gather to worship him.
- **The person of God:** “I will be like the Most High.”

His last statement, “I will be like the Most High” exposes the end game of his previous declarations. The Hebrew word for “be like” is “Damah.” It is a verb, not an adjective.

We cannot miss the importance of this. In this list of “I wills” Lucifer is declaring that he will actively pursue the goal to attain the position and person of God - *to take on His image.*

The mandate God gave to mankind was to build His Kingdom on Earth by the proper harvesting and stewardship of their labor. *In the war between the two kingdoms Satan must gather and deploy more resources than God’s people in order to win this war.*

As such this becomes a war fought first and foremost in the economy.

This is an enormous undertaking. Satan must enlist recruits, harvest and deploy economic energy, and architect and construct systems – all on a scale large enough to build a kingdom that encompasses the entire Earth and displaces the Kingdom of God. It is tempting to read Isaiah 14, and say, “Satan could never do that.” Guess what. We’re right! However, that does not mean that he is not *100% committed to giving his best effort to win the battle.*

Satan declared his intent to “be like” the Most High *in every way.* But he cannot usurp God’s image *directly.* He doesn’t have access to it. So, he has developed and deployed a brilliant strategy. That is, to usurp the image of *God’s people* who are His image bearers here on Earth. He has done this by redirecting their resources - their economic energy - to build his kingdom.
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How was he going to accomplish this? Ezekiel 28 gives us a clue.

V4 “With your wisdom and your understanding You have gained riches for yourself, And gathered gold and silver into your treasuries; 5 By your great wisdom in trade you have increased your riches, And your heart is lifted up because of your riches),”

Satan is skilled in trade! And what is the one thing required for trade to take place? Money.

Therefore, control of money became Satan’s primary strategy to expand his trade and gather the resources necessary for him to make a run at taking over the position and person of God.

The remainder of this paper will be dedicated to exposing how he has executed on his strategy and what it means to us today.

Control of Money Becomes the Battle Between Two Kingdoms

God provided guidance on how to apply the principles necessary to ensure His gift of money was protected from the heart of fallen men. In the midst of the creation account, God took an interesting turn in the narrative when he specifically told Adam where to find gold, which He went out of His way to call “good,” using the same Hebrew word as in the original creation account. (Gen 2:12)

Gold is a natural element that God Himself created. The next mention of it in scripture is in Genesis 13, where Abram is said to be “rich in gold and livestock and silver.” Between the time God showed Adam where it was, and Abram’s storing his wealth in it, gold and silver became items that were an accepted form of money.

They were such an effective store of value that they enabled the Israelites to redeem a portion of the economic energy Egypt stole from them during 430 years of slavery by plundering their gold before leaving. (Exodus 12:35-36) This is a point that is worth noting, because it means that if the form of money we use adheres to God’s principles, He can use it to bring about a transfer of wealth into the hands of His people on a massive scale. If it does not, then the stored economic energy is subject to utter destruction and loss. This has enormous implications for the massive economic energy stored in our present monetary system.

Around a 1000 B. C. money began to standardize in various metallic forms. The first base metal coins began to appear and were made of copper and bronze. This enabled a more efficient means of expanding economic output. However, a major development occurred around 600 B.C. that would literally change the “face” of money forever.
The King of Lydia created the world’s first precious metal coins, which were made from a mix of silver and gold called “electrum.” It is interesting to note the geographic location where this happened. Lydia is what is known today as Turkey, a nation strategically located on the trading routes between Mediterranean and Asia. This meant that ideas that originated there would have cultural impact and influence throughout those two vast geographic territories.

The coins minted in Lydia were the first coins to have an image stamped on them. These images were generally of animals and they were used to identify different denominations. Stamping an image on them identified a consistent quantity of money which solved a major problem. It produced a standard that could be transportable both geographically and culturally, which greatly increased trade over a broad geographic area and across borders.

It however, introduced two major problems:

1. It created an increased incentive to centralize the creation and control of money.
2. This in turn, led to increased corruption by those in control of the system as they bent it to enrich themselves.

Satan certainly is interested in trading routes, so it is no wonder that this is where he took his opportunity to strategically position himself in the battle to control money, and thus the value system that money promoted. Stamping coins with pagan gods and other images was the opening salvo in a very long game that he has played in corrupting the global monetary system to become one that increasingly bore his image – his likeness and values. It was a major strategic move to garner the resources necessary to become “like the Most High.”

An interesting note is that these first imaged coins were minted in the city of Sardis. Sardis was a center for the trafficking of goods, ideas, trade and in conducting trade in Mesopotamia and the Greek settlements. The church that arose in Sardis was said to have a good reputation, however it was spiritually lifeless (Revelation 3:2). It was filled with people going through the motions of religion and trapped by the traditions of men. This is what plagues nearly every city and nation that enjoys abundant material prosperity. The church just didn’t become vibrant. Could it be because of a stronghold over the city set there by Satan himself to birth image-bearing money?

**Creating a Foothold**

Due to their popularity in expanding trade, the spread of image-based coins went viral. They established Lydia as one of the most economically dominant empires in Asia Minor. These coins
spread very rapidly throughout all of Greece and Egypt. This is important because in the centuries that followed, these trade routes greatly expanded in geographic reach.

Now, along with trade cultural connections were being made between the nations of the region. There were religious beliefs that were shared, along with an increase in knowledge and new inventions. There was a major cross-pollination amongst these cultures, and a huge influence was the economic activity enabled by standardized image based money.

Soon, those minting the coins began the practice of stamping the images of their gods and government leaders on the coins. The image on the coin spoke to the value system and the power structure of the city-state or the region who struck that coin. The power of the nation states began to grow in influence and control, and it is no coincidence that it was during this time that the images on their money paid homage to their gods and rulers.

Despite the trend toward consolidation, money at this point was still relatively locally created and managed. This led to many different types of coins with differing weights and measures. This gave rise to the earliest form of banking through what was then known as the “money changers.”

The money changers set up shop to exchange the many different coins for local ones so that they could be used for local trade. Even though the purity of the coins was not in question, the weight, and thus the true value of the coin was in question. Without a standard of weights and measures, there was a lack of trust. The money changers became the trusted intermediary.

The first money changers were found in the ancient Greek city of Corinth. Corinth was known as a commercially prosperous city, but also it had become a synonym across the entire civilized world for evil and debauchery. It is worth considering once again that when the enemy is setting up a global stronghold over a system, one that is going to take hundreds of years to develop, any place that is central to his activity is going to have the residue of his presence. In this case the residue is strong and appears to be directly related.

The practice of putting images on money steadily grew. During the reign of Alexander the Great, the use of image-stamped coins in the region of Greece and Asia Minor continued to rapidly expand. His conquest required that he vastly expanded his treasury. He did this by minting coins with the images of pagan Greek gods stamped on them.

Because of the influence and dominance of his empire, Alexander the Great firmly established the practice of stamping coins with pagan gods. He also established the idea of a dominant
national currency. This threw the door wide open for Satan to solidly insert himself into the process of writing the social contract that defines what a community decided to use as money.

Money is power. Money is energy. Money is the ability to build kingdoms. Man’s love of money, (1 Tim 6:10) enabled Satan to further centralize control over money. Because of the huge influence money has on the culture, Satan’s image quickly began to reflect his values. People began to “worship” money by giving credit to the images on the coins for the increased economic activity and prosperity.

The spread of the nation-state brought with it centralized control and authority over the people. It was natural then for the rulers of those nations began to assert not only the right to issue money but the exclusive right to issue money that bore their image or the image of their favorite gods. This practice introduced a whole new set of consequences.

**Jesus and the 1st Century “Monetary Crisis”**

Before we look at these consequences, we need to understand that Jesus gave us a warning about what was happening – and the way to avoid it. The development and spread of image-based coin money and the expansion of it throughout the developed world occurred during the time of Jesus’ ministry. This is important, because it gives context to some very important events recorded in the gospels.

Jesus knew exactly what was happening to money. Sometimes we forget that He bookmarked His ministry by taking on the money changers. In the book of John, he picked his disciples and then He went to a wedding. And then He went on to Jerusalem and took on the money changers in the temple. During the last week of his life, He went to the temple and did it again. Why twice? We can’t simply dismiss this. It warrants a further examination into what is happening in the culture in the context of what was happening with the money.

All Jewish men over the age of twenty were required to pay a half-shekel tax to the temple. Money changers were needed because that half-shekel temple tax had to be paid with a specific coin. Many scholars believe that Jesus was upset because the money changers were making a profit from the need to pay the temple tax. However, this reason alone does not explain why Jesus took on the money changers twice, and more importantly, was the only time He demonstrated violence against another human being.

There had to be more going on. And there was.
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What Jesus witnessed went all the way back to Genesis 1:1. The Light of the World created this earth and mankind in order to build the Kingdom of God and to glorify the Father. God’s people were specifically commanded to avoid graven images of any kind:

Yet right there in the temple the money changers were exchanging forms of money that had the graven images of gods and men. These graven images were worshiped as pagan gods and represented stored economic energy used to build a pagan secular kingdom which included all of its unrighteous priorities.

_Meanwhile King of the entire world was standing right there._ Where was the money that was going to build His Kingdom? Jesus was fed up with the graven images and the kingdoms it was building. And He sent a message loud and clear that this was an abomination that he was not going to stand for.

This is a critical point in this paper. The encounter with the money changers happened one day before Jesus was approached by the Pharisees asking Him about paying taxes. With this new context set, let’s look at this Scripture again in detail, because connecting this to Satan’s declaration in Isaiah 14:13-14 forms the foundation for understanding the battle for money in the war between the two kingdoms.

Remember:

- You are created in the image of God.
- Money is a means to harvest, store, and redeploy the power manifest power of God expressed through you as His image bearer on earth in order to build His Kingdom.
- God forbade the creation and worship of graven images.
- Satan declared his intent to usurp the position, power, and purposes of God – to usurp His image – to build the dominant kingdom on earth.
- Satan directed a pagan culture to stamp their money with graven images of pagan rulers and gods.
- Man was using this money – bearing man’s/Satan’s image - to build their kingdoms instead of the Kingdom of God.

With that, let’s examine Mark 12:13-17:
13 “Then they sent to Him some of the Pharisees and the Herodians, to catch Him in His words.”
14 When they had come, they said to Him, “Teacher, we know that You are true, and care about no one; for You do not regard the person of men, but teach the way of God in truth. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?
15 Shall we pay, or shall we not pay?” But He, knowing their hypocrisy, said to them, “Why do you test Me? Bring Me a denarius that I may see it.”
16 So they brought it. And He said to them, “Whose image and inscription is this?” They said to Him, “Caesar’s.”
17 And Jesus answered and said to them, “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” And they marveled at Him.

The Pharisees no doubt knew what happened at the temple. It is doubtful that they cared at all about paying taxes to Caesar. Jesus saw through their hypocrisy and called them out on it. It is more likely that the Pharisees asked Jesus about paying taxes to Caesar because they didn’t want to be exposed for being concerned about Him turning over the tables and getting in the way of them collecting their tax.

Jesus responded by asking them to bring Him a coin. He was going to get right down to the root of the issue. It says He looked at – he examined the money itself. This was more than just merely gazing at it. It was more than identifying an object. The Greek word for “looked at” is horáō – properly, “see, "to see with the mind" [spiritually see], i.e. perceive (with inward spiritual perception).

Jesus then drew our attention to the image on the coin. He wanted us to look at it through spiritual eyes! The Greek word for image is eikôn (from 1503/eikō, "be like") – properly, "mirror-like representation," referring to what is very close in resemblance (like a "high-definition" projection, as defined by the context). Image (1504/eikôn) then exactly reflects its source (what it directly corresponds to). For example, Christ is the very image (1504/eikôn, supreme expression) of the Godhead (see 2 Cor 4:4; Col 1:15)

Remember - Satan declared he would “be like” God. The image on the coin Jesus was examining was a mirror reflection of the kingdom that the stored energy of that coin would build, and its value system! It was Caesar’s kingdom – Satan’s Kingdom, not God’s.
Jesus told the Pharisees, and by extension us, that we are to look at our money with spiritual, perception and discernment. Understand the image stamped on it and that the image represents a value system the money will promote and the kingdom it will build!

What do today’s monopolistic national currencies have on them? Images of the leaders of the national government. Whose value system does the money reflect? Whose kingdom does it build?

“Render unto Caesar what is Caesars and render unto God’s what is God’s.”

Was Jesus giving us clear direction to create and use money that takes on God’s image? One that promotes God’s values? That builds God’s Kingdom? The answer seems clear.

If the above Scriptures don’t quite have you convinced of Jesus’ intent, Isaiah also prophesied about the dangers of imaged money.

“To whom will you liken Me, and make Me equal And compare Me, that we should be alike? They lavish gold out of the bag, And weigh silver on the scales; They hire a goldsmith, and he makes it a god; They prostrate themselves, yes, they worship.” Isaiah 46:5-6

The word “liken” used here is the same Hebrew word used in Isaiah 14 in Lucifer’s “I will” declaration. There is no mystery.

- Satan has and continues to use money that has taken on his image and likeness to do incredible harm to the people of the world.
- It renders unto Caesar what is Caesar’s - a value system increasingly built on Secular Humanism.
- It renders unto him the power to confiscate our wealth and our labor and redirect it to build his kingdom.
- It is a tradition of men, and in so many ways makes the word of God “no effect” (Mark 7:9-13)
- It violates the first two commandments.
- It thwarts the efforts of God’s people to build His Kingdom.
- It is one of the primary reasons we continue to suffer under the oppression of pagan rulers and kings.
- It is a primary reason the culture deteriorates around us.
- It has spread through the entire earth.
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Is it any surprise that the issue of images on coins began in the heart of the very region where God decided to plant His chosen people? It’s there where the battle over the control of the stored energy (incarnated image) of God’s people began. It’s there where Satan laid the groundwork for a system of money that he could manipulate, and ultimately control through the hearts of men who succumb to the love of money.

Historical Examples

How the Traditions of Men Were Established in Money

For the remainder of this paper, the use of the word “image” will not refer to the graven image on money which violates the 2nd commandment. Unless otherwise noted, it will instead be used in the context that Jesus asked us to examine it – identifying the value system it represents and the kingdom it will build.

We did not connect Lucifer’s declaration in Isaiah 14 to the economic reality of gathering and deploying the resources necessary for him to succeed in his plan to establish the dominate kingdom on earth. We missed Jesus’ warning of what was happening in Mark 12, and the consequences have been incalculable. Therefore, the use of money bearing the image of man and his gods has only increased over the last 2000 years.

This means the evil that has manifest in the system of money that has developed over 2000 years has left the church with a fraction of the resources necessary to build the Kingdom of God. Satan has used this system to deal with setback after setback to the church, as his system grew stronger and stronger. Today, it is one of the largest, if not the largest single global stronghold that he has over control of mankind. There are countless examples in history which expose this truth. However, two examples will be sufficient for the purposes of this paper.

The Roman Empire

The rise and fall of the Roman Empire is a case study of what happens when a monetary system takes on the values of the pagan leaders of a nation, and can be manipulated by them to build their kingdom.

Rome had established a monetary system largely controlled by the central government. They were experiencing the positive effects of the standardization of money. The economy grew, and they were able to fund expansion of their empire. Government officials increased funding for the
army to protect and continue to expand their growing empire. Simultaneously, they undertook new public works projects in order to keep the people happy.

Public works projects and a growing army drastically increased government expenditures, and the Roman government was forced to raise taxes. A universal reality is that there is a limit to the degree in which taxes can be raised before the people begin to rebel or to evade paying them. High taxes also discourage economic activity. Consequently, tax revenue began to diminish as expenditures rose. As a result, the needs of the Roman Empire exceeded the taxing ability of the government.

Faced with decreasing revenues and growing obligations, the Roman government resorted to debasing their coins during the reign of Marcus Aelius around 140 A.D. By adding copper and other base metals to the silver coins.

At first, the effects of debasement seem positive. The government is able to spend more coins into circulation and fund both the army and the public works projects. However, once a government begins to debase their money, it is very difficult to stop. The illusion of prosperity lures those creating the coins to add increasing amounts of the base metals.

Debasing coins is a violation of the social compact that the community agreed to define as money. In this case it was a certain weight and purity of gold and silver. The government unilaterally changed the contract without informing the people through debasement.

This can only be described as institutionalized, government-sanctioned theft. Doing so violated all three primary principles that must apply to money.

Trust: The government had debased the money and engaged in theft by creating a dishonest weight and measure.

Localism: The central government controlled the system. They directed it to serve their needs and they were too powerful to hold in check by the people.

Jurisdiction: People lost the ability to direct the stored labor that their money represented in a manner that reflected their values and for their purposes.

What was the result of the violation of the three key monetary principles?

By 270 AD the silver content on the Roman coins had dropped to a small fraction of its original level. This resulted in a sharp increase in the number of coins in circulation. This caused a dramatic increase the prices of goods and services. Rather than admit that debasing the money caused higher prices, the emperors blamed it on the greed of the merchants.
The deception embedded in the image of the money reflected what was occurring in the empire as a whole - a broad-based moral decline in the culture. This shows that over time, the culture takes on the image of the money. In this case, money became a dishonest weight and measure controlled by men who sought to expand their power and wealth at the expense of the people.

Dishonesty is at the core of weakening trust. Trust is the very fabric that holds communities and cultures together. When the Roman government broke its social compact with the people, it started a process which has repeated throughout history. And that is, the people lose trust in both the government and the money. People began to reject the debased coins as payment for goods and services. With no other alternative to use as money, the economy collapsed in 476 A.D.

Exceptions That Prove the Rule

Centrally managed monopolistic currencies and money that bears the image of man are an abomination to God. They violate the basic principles that are given to us in scripture on how to create and steward the economic energy we harvest from creation in order to build the Kingdom of God.

The image of the money used by the Roman Empire established the trend line that has carried through to today, and dominates the global monetary system. However, there are well-documented exceptions in history that ran counter to this trend. It is instructive therefore, to look at the results they produced and compare them to the system of the Roman Empire.

The Central Middle Ages

The Middle Ages encompassed the time period between the collapse of the Roman Empire in 476 AD and the Renaissance Period, which began in the late 1400’s. Most of this period is referred to as the Dark Ages. History books teach that this time period was characterized by widespread dismal poverty and primitive lifestyles.

This view is justified for the time period that followed the collapse of the Roman Empire and through the 8th century A.D. It is also an apt description for the late middle ages, which encompasses the 14th and 15th centuries which was dominated by the impact of the black plague.

There was however, an overlooked two and a half century period during the middle of the Middle Ages, known as the Central Middle Ages. This time period was characterized by an unusual prosperity. There are a number of contemporary medieval historians that have concluded
that the quality of life for ordinary people in the 12th century may very well have been the highest in all of European history. It is even comparable to present day conditions (without of course the technological advances that we have today).

Guy Bois is a medieval economic historian who noted, “In the agricultural sector for the first time the small landowners as a group became much more productive than the seigniorial [government] holdings.” In short, he said, “Europe becomes more and more a world of small producers with the family unit as its fundamental engine.” ¹ This is exactly the way God designed it. The family unit is the oikos, the fundamental engine of the economy.

Other medieval historians noted that increased private ownership was accompanied by the largest increase in cultivated agricultural land in the entire span of the medieval period.² Not only did the land available for harvest expand, but in many cases, the average yields more than doubled.

Yet another historian noted that between the 1200 A.D. and 1400 A.D. Europe’s population doubled, which is unprecedented growth during this period in history. One reason for the growth is the ability to feed the entire population with plenty of nourishing food.

It is also estimated that by 1300 A.D. there were almost 1000 Cathedrals built in Western Europe as well as 350,000 Churches.³ The total population was estimated at around seventy million. That translates to an average of one church for every two hundred people. That’s a rather astounding number.

Another item of note is that this building phenomenon occurred when there was not a central authority over the church or government with Europe. A central authority was not responsible for funding the construction of all these Cathedrals. Certainly, the local nobility and the royalty and the church made contributions to having them built. However, they were generally owned and financed by the people of the local communities where they were built.

Where did the resources come from to fund building a thousand Cathedrals and 350,000 churches? These weren’t small construction projects. Cathedrals are generally complex structures. We cannot attribute this explosive growth to faith and devotion itself. There had to be a form of money to produce the level of prosperity necessary to fund the construction of these buildings.

¹ Bois, La Grande Depression, p. 16
² Bois, La Grande Depression, p. 15
³ Europe des Cathedrales: 1140-1290, Georges Duby, 1966
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Historical evidence gives us the answer. During the Central Middle Ages, there were two different types of currencies that functioned in parallel to one another throughout most of Western Europe. One of the currencies was the centrally controlled and issued royal coins, which as expected, bore the image of gods and kings. They were used to collect taxes and fund large projects undertaken by the government. They were also used for trade between governmental jurisdictions.

The second type of money however, consisted of an extensive network of local currencies. These currencies were used primarily for exchange within the local community. It’s the existence of these local currencies that produced the prosperity of the Central Middle Ages. This provided communities with the resources necessary to fund the initiatives and projects they valued. The local currency took on the image of the community, which was in contrast to the image of the central government.

One of the priorities of the communities was to build houses of worship. Local currencies can be structured to incorporate the principles of honesty, localism, and to ensure proper jurisdiction over who harvests, stores, and deploys the energy within the system. When applied to money, these principles empower the people to render to God what is Gods.

Unfortunately, this period of prosperity came to an end around the close of the 13th century. The plague, otherwise known as black death, is what is commonly blamed for causing misery to befall Europe. Recent findings however, indicate there may have been more to the story.

Between 1280 and 1295, there was a major economic crash. A majority of the population ended up being reduced to living at its basic survival levels. The deterioration of nutrition levels, unsanitary conditions, and lack of understanding of what caused disease, produced what you would expect - widespread famine, epidemics, and loss of life. It is becoming more widely accepted that the black death was not the cause of economic hardship, but rather the result of it. The question then becomes, what caused the economic collapse?

There was a historic power shift that occurred in Western Europe during the 13th century. The doctrine of “king by divine right” was taken to its extreme, and local governments and administrations were being overrun by a strong and a growing reach of central authorities. The kings conscripted large armies and were expanding their empires. They saw local currencies as a

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4 New Money for A New World, Bernard Lietaer
threat and abolished the dual currency system. In its place they imposed a monopoly of royal coinage.\(^5\)

King Louie the 9th of France specified only royal mints had the right to issue coins in the realm. This, along with the government’s empire building created a series of events very similar to what occurred in the latter stages of the Roman Empire. The money supply was not sufficient to meet the needs of the government. In preparation for war, in 1294 King Phillip the 4th resorted to debasing the royal money to fund his army.

The result was the same - massive inflation. With the government prohibiting local currencies to fill the gap, the economy collapsed. It is becoming more evident that this is what enabled the black plague to gain a foothold in the population and spread throughout all of Europe.

The economic history of the Central Middle Ages and the use of local currencies is not an isolated event. During the time of Joseph, Egypt also adopted a dual currency system. There is increasing archeological evidence that there was a grain-based wheat standard.\(^6\) This makes sense, due to the fact that grain was gathered and stored for seven years prior to the famine.

Along with silver and gold, Egypt used their storehouses of grain as money. They traded receipts for claims on the stored wheat which were written on pottery shards, and in some cases papyrus. The Egyptian dual currency standard lasted more than two thousand years. It is no coincidence that end of the Egyptian Dynasty coincides with the imposition of a single, national currency system on the Egyptians by the conquering Romans.

So, once again we see that a dual/localized currency system enabled prosperity. The imposition of a monopoly system controlled by the government and bearing its image brought the end to an era of prosperity.

There is a profound lesson here that we cannot overlook. Acceptance of a monopoly monetary system controlled by and bearing the image of kings and gods forces us to render unto Caesar what is not rightfully his. It keeps us from rendering unto God what is God’s. Unfortunately, this is the system that Satan has architected for centuries, and is largely in place today.

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\(^5\) New Money for a New World, Bernard Lietaer.
\(^6\) Ibid.
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**The Birth of Our Present Monetary System**

The industrial revolution began in the early 1600’s at the time modern-day nation-states were becoming more deeply entrenched. These nation states were controlled by pagan kings and dictators, and thus were open to influence by the enemy, who happily built his kingdom right alongside theirs.

The need to generate increasing resources to build their kingdoms led to the invention of more sophisticated types of centralized investments and monetary agreements. In 1668 the Sweden Central Bank introduced “legal tender,” which is simply the currency accepted by the government in payment for taxes. In exchange for a commitment to provide loans whenever they needed money, banks were given the exclusive right to create paper money as legal tender.

Two decades later, the Bank of England was founded on a very similar model. And from there, as John Kenneth Galbraith said, “It spread throughout the world.” He said, “The bank of England is in all respects to money as St. Peter is to the faith. The reputation is deserved, because most of the art as well as much of the mystery associated with the management of money originated there.”

It was upon this monetary system that the goldsmiths began issuing receipt money as currency for gold and silver, and thus it was upon on this system which “Fractional Reserve Banking” was born.

Fractional Reserve Banking is when the receipts issued against the gold and silver stored in the banks exceeded the actual quantity of physical gold and silver. This is still in practice today. Banks are given the exclusive right to “to coin the money of the realm” in exchange for providing for the needs of the government first and foremost. *The needs of the common citizen are secondary.*

Legal tender laws discourage or outright ban the use of complementary or local currencies. The result is a system that is centralized and ripe for corruption. It violates the basic principles that have been shown to promote Kingdom based money and values. Localism, jurisdiction and honest weights and measures are all at risk in such a system.

We had the opportunity at the birth of our nation to make major changes to the very nature of money and monetary system. Unfortunately, it didn’t happen, and that became...

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The Constitution’s Fatal Flaw

Our founders studied the government structure and the political and legal system in Scripture and they used it to form our representative republic form of government. However, the constitution left in place the basic monetary system of the Bank of England with just a few modifications.

The sad reality is that our founders were close to adopting a multi-currency system. Under the articles of the Confederation, states were given free rein to create their own money. Had it succeeded, it would have established a diverse and resilient monetary system.

Unfortunately, in 1690, Massachusetts succumbed to the temptation to create paper money based on a fractional reserve banking. Rather than design a system based on honest weights and measures with proper jurisdictional oversight. By 1750, all other states had followed suit and issued their own paper currency. It ended in disaster, with high inflation and failed state currencies and economic devastation. As a result, that experience is what the founders took into the Constitutional Convention during the summer of 1787. They wanted no part of paper money, and they lost their trust in the state’s ability to manage currencies.

Article 1 section 10 of the Constitution says, “No state shall… coin money or emit bills of credit, make anything of gold and silver coins a tender in payment of debts.” The language and intent is clear. The founders wanted no paper money on the national or state level. Unfortunately, Section 8 of article 1 of the Constitution has been used by politicians and bankers to claim that they have the right to change our form of money. Section 8 reads in part, “Congress shall have the power to coin money to regulate the value thereof, and of foreign coin and to fix a standard of weights and measures.”

The original intent of this statute could be the subject of another entire paper. However, for our purposes, we will focus on the results based reality of how its misinterpretation has led us to where we are today.

The Founders attempted to give us a monetary system that would protect the people. The safeguards they created in the Constitution worked for a while. However, they were not explicit in creating an entirely new system of money that was built to match the government that they just created. Our governmental system is decentralized and relies on the separation of powers. This system of government adheres to the principles of honesty, localism, and proper jurisdictional oversight.

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However, the monetary system did not, and that discrepancy is the Constitution’s fatal flaw.

It is noteworthy that several of the men involved in drafting the Constitution were in favor of a strong central government, and some, including Alexander Hamilton, would have preferred a monarchy. Hamilton is considered one of the most influential of the founding fathers. So, it’s no surprise that a door was left open for the central government to gain power over time. And that is exactly what has happened.

Thomas Jefferson recognized the threat that the banking system posed to the new republic. In a letter that he wrote to William Giles just eight months before his death, he stated,

“But this [banking system] opens with a vast accession of strength from their younger recruits, who, having nothing in them of the feelings or principles of ‘76, now look to a single and splendid government of an aristocracy, founded on banking institutions, and moneyed incorporations under the guise and cloak of their favored branches of manufactures, commerce and navigation, riding and ruling over the plundered ploughman and beggared yeomanry. This will be to them a next best blessing to the monarchy of their first aim, and perhaps the surest stepping-stone to it.” (emphasis mine)

John Adams also saw the threat of central bank created money. In 1810 (during the reign of our nation’s first central bank), he stated his concerns in a letter to Benjamin Rush,

“Our whole system of banks is a violation of every honest principle of banks. There is no honest bank but a bank of deposit. A bank that issues paper at interest is a pickpocket or a robber. But the delusion will have its course… An aristocracy is growing out of them that will be as fatal as the feudal barons if unchecked in time…” (emphasis mine)

Jefferson and Adams knew that those who desired to centralize power would only need to institute a permanent central bank and a “virtual monarchy” would eventually arise. As we look around today, and what do we see? They’ve succeeded. We’ve seen the fatal flaw of the constitution manifest over the last 200 years.

The provisions in the Constitution were inadequate to protect us from a national monopolistic monetary system. Jefferson and Adams warned, us just as Jesus warned the people 1800 years earlier. If you allow money to take on the image of kings, gods, and yes – presidents, it will eventually render a disproportional amount unto Caesar, as it steals from those who wish to render unto God what is God’s.

Throughout history, monetary systems that carry the image of man and build the kingdom of darkness are never allowed to stand. All systems that violate God’s principles are destined to fail.
And the failure of our system will leave us with the same consequences that people have dealt with throughout centuries.

**The Failure of Money Bearing the Image of Man**

When centralized national monetary systems become highly unstable, people revert to using both national and local currencies. In the last 100 years alone, these nations experienced catastrophic failures of their monetary systems.

- Austria (1921-1922)
- Belarus (1994-2002)
- Bolivia (1984-1986)
- Brazil (1986-1994)
- Chile (1971-1973)
- China (1939-1950)
- Ecuador (2000)
- Germany (1923-1924, 1945-1948)
- Venezuela (2012-present)

- Greece (1944-1953)
- Hungary (1922-1924, 1944-1946)
- Nicaragua (1987-1990)
- Peru (1984-1990)
- Poland (1922-1924, 1990-1993)
- Russia (1921-1922, 1992-1994)
- Turkey (1990s)
- Zimbabwe (1999 - 2010)

There is always a period of tremendous hardship and suffering that accompanies these failures. In some instances however, the people banded together and took steps to mitigate the consequences of the failure of the national monetary system. Often, they were successful until as usual – the government stepped in to protect its monopoly.

**Examples of Local Currencies During Times of Financial Instability**
The German Wara

During the German hyperinflation of the early 1920s, a local currency system was birthed called the Wara. Up until the hyperinflation occurred in Germany, the largest employer in the community of Schwanenkirchen, had been the local coal mine. As the hyperinflation unfolded, it was forced to file for bankruptcy, and its operations were shut down.

A resident of Schwanenkirchen named Max Hebecker proposed a local currency system using coal from the mine as backing. He gathered all the miners, local shopkeepers, and all the people of the community that were going to be affected by the mine being reopened, and proposed his idea. He told them it would only work if they all were willing to accept the payment in the Wara script instead of the worthless national currency.

There was of course skepticism and a lively debate but most people agreed that there wasn’t much to lose, so they gave it a try. It turned out to be a good decision. During a time when other communities and businesses remained in survival mode, the Wara not only saved the coal mine but it revitalized the local economy. Its success drove its use beyond the local economy and it began to circulate nationally. Over 2000 businesses throughout Germany accepted and paid one another with Wara script. It was so successful that banks opened Wara accounts.

Its success turned out to be its downfall. The German Central Bank became concerned over its popularity. In October 1931 by legislative action the Wara and all other local currencies were declared illegal in Germany. They saw them as a threat to their power structure - their value system - which is centralized control power and greed.

The local economies that benefited from the Wara slipped back into poverty. The strong-armed power of the government caused widespread disillusionment among the people, and a dramatic shift began to take hold in the German political landscape.

This gave a voice to the Nazi party, and Hitler rose to power. Should the rise of Hitler to power be blamed entirely on the decision by the German government to ban local currencies? No. Did it play a more significant part than most people understand? Absolutely. Is it discussed at all in history as even a small part? No, it is not. *These blind spots in monetary history must be overcome before we can fully understand the importance of the value system that our money promotes.*

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10 Claude Million Ph.D. dissertation, Humboldt University, Berlin April 1998
The Swiss Weir

Switzerland enjoys one of the most stable economies and the highest standards of living in the world. It is no coincidence that it is also the home to one of the oldest continuously functioning local complementary currency systems in the Western world - the Weir.

This currency was also birthed during the Great Depression. Just like the Wara, the Wier was first viewed as a direct threat to the national banking system’s monopoly, and it prompted a similar response. The Swiss banks aggressively attempted to stop it from gaining a foothold. By providence their efforts failed.

Unlike the Wara, the Wier is a currency used exclusively between businesses. In the first three months of operation, the Wier attracted 1700 businesses to use it. Within one year that number grew to over 3,000 businesses.

The Wier helped to create stability in the local economy during the depression. What is most important to note about the Wier is this system remains fully operational today. There are now more than 65,000 members participating, which represents about a quarter of all Swiss businesses.

The existence of a complimentary local currency system allows the amount of money in circulation to expand and contract counter-cyclically with the national currency, the Swiss Franc. This enables the economy to mitigate the downturn and resume normal use of the national currency once the economic downturn eases. The Wier system has served Switzerland well for seventy-five years.

Present Day Local Currencies

Another local currency system that bears mentioning is Time Dollars. Time Dollars come into existence when you expend labor. As you harvest energy and labor from creation, you are paid for it using this type of currency. It’s a very simple idea but it really has powerful ripple effects in building community relations. There are several case studies in use today.

For example, in Brooklyn New York, a health insurance company allows 25% of premiums for its senior health programs to be paid in Time Dollars. People are paid in this currency when they take proactive, preventative measures to help the elderly prevent injury by fixing a broken bathtub rail, or install better lighting. These Time Dollars can then be spent in the community for other goods and services.
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Time Dollars are also used in Washington D.C. at a youth court founded for juveniles accused of non-violent offenses. Juveniles found guilty must apologize to the one they offended, agree to life skills counseling, and perform some community services. In return for their community service, they earn Time Dollars which can be redeemed for recycled computers, savings bonds for college education, special events, and other goods and services offered by the local community that will help rehabilitate these youth.

Because Time Dollars have historically been designed to specifically address the needs of a local community in disadvantaged and lower income areas, the IRS has ruled that Time Dollar based complimentary currencies are officially tax exempt in the United States.

The point of reviewing these examples of local currencies is to highlight the fact that complementary/local currency systems have been in effect throughout history.

- They produce real benefits that accrue to the local communities because they adhere to the principle of localism.
- They enable proper jurisdiction over the stored labor of the local citizens.
- They are an honest weight and measure that can be overseen by the local community.
- Trust is built into the system as the community experiences the benefits of stewardship their resources.

These currencies also draw a stark contrast between them, and a monetary system that consists of an exclusive national monetary system which is proven to be prone to corruption, abuse, and failure.

And it is the failure of national currency systems that will be the final subject of this paper.

Money That Bear’s the Image of Man Destroys Families

When monetary systems are built in the image of man, they ultimately fail. Failure of the system at times unfolds over years – sometimes decades. As it does, it creates many hardships for families that increase in intensity as the system approaches its final point of failure. We will use the progression of our own monetary system over the last 100 years as a case in point.

Healthy biblical relationships are the foundation of a free, prosperous, just, and generous society. Is it any wonder that the most beloved God-given institution has suffered the most from the use of money bearing man’s image? Debasement of money has been a primary factor in the destruction of the family unit for centuries.
At the turn of the 20th century the family unit in the West was generally biblical in structure. Traditional family roles included the father taking on the role of providing for his family and who accepted his role as family leader. The make-up of the traditional family began to change however, shortly after the United States began its experiment with Fractional Reserve Banking and fiat money. That experiment first failed in the 1930s, which led to the Great Depression.

Most people do not stop to think about how the Depression affected the family unit. Many fathers were forced to travel to find work, and they were absent for long periods of time. The brokenness and hardship permanently tore many families apart. However, as difficult as the Depression was, the damage to the family unit continued well after it was over.

In the relative stability of the WWII economy, it became evident that the dad’s paycheck did not go as far as it once had. He first responded by working longer hours, which meant he was absent many evenings. This reduced the time that he and his wife spent together bringing up their children in training them in the nurture and the admonition of the Lord (Ephesians 4:6).

With Dad’s influence weakened, mothers were called upon to fill the gap. And they did so valiantly. However, Satan’s strategy of was taking its toll. Over the next several decades as money became further debased, the culture shifted away from valuing family, and toward accumulating things and being entertained rather than nurturing relationships. Increased economic output is the perceived positive effect experienced during the early stages when a government begins debasing the currency. This phase can last years or even decades. The perception of prosperity blinds both the people and the government to the reality of what is happening.

Satan’s leverage grew in the home as we lost accountability to others and amongst family members. Stewardship of our possessions was replaced by the pride of ownership and pursuit of the “American Dream.” Success began to be defined in the culture based on the number in a person’s net worth column rather than in the depths of close relationships in their life – including our relationship with the Lord. The people found security in material possessions rather than having our security found in Christ.

Within three generations, our nation was transformed from one of the greatest producers in the world to the largest consumer. Our excessive consumption was driven by the instant gratification of using what has now become debt-based money to buy everything from TVs to vacations. As a result, the entire nation is suffering under the bondage of an institution that we thought ended in the 1860’s - slavery.
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At first, this slave master only demanded the fathers work longer hours to earn more money to pay for more expensive groceries and a larger mortgage payment. As debt began to accumulate, mothers had to leave the home and enter the workforce to make ends meet. As this began to affect families, there were a few voices that said, “Wait a minute! When you remove one, and then both parents from the home there will be major, long-term consequences. We need to do something about this.”

Their voices were not heeded. The debt slave master is a harsh one, and the destruction of the family continued to grow as households sank deeper into debt and the prices for basic goods and services continued to outpace wage growth.

With mom and dad increasingly distracted by long work hours and chasing material possessions, Satan celebrated. Increasing numbers of young children were being raised in daycare centers. School-age children began to derive their worldview from teachers and peers who were rapidly embracing a secular/humanist worldview.

The evidence that money is not value-neutral now was undeniable. The image of the coins of the realm was manifest within nearly every family. Yet we remained blind to it and deaf to the watchmen on the wall who spoke out against it. Eventually our culture succumbed to Malachi 4:6b where the hearts of the fathers turned away from their children, and the hearts of the children, turned away from their fathers and their families. And our land was struck with a curse.

Government schools are funded in part with borrowed, debt-based money. Biblical principles have been intentionally stripped from the foundation of our children’s education. So now from the time they are five years old or younger, until when they are graduate college, they are taught everything from history, to economics, to biology, from a secular humanist worldview. That includes the idea that accumulating possessions through debt is a means of measuring success.

In the consumer-driven, dependency culture that has resulted, increased wealth and security comes with the accumulation of material possessions purchased with debt or reliance on government programs. Meanwhile the wealth that God highly values - relational wealth - is systematically destroyed. For many God has become distant, and friends have become superficial.

Furthermore, in our present system, interest rates (debt-based money) is used to manipulate human behavior by incentivizing or de-incentivizing economic activity that the controlling, centralized, collective-minded authority deems important, not individuals and local communities.
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The stark reality is:

- *In our present system, the secular/humanist centrally controlled image of our money is used to control our lives.*
- *It simultaneously binds families in debt slavery as it sacrifices the culture on the altar of mammon.*

Monetary systems that carry man’s image are used by Satan to steal mothers from homes, to steal relationships between husband and wife, and between parents and children. Most importantly it steals from our relationship with God.

What has been described up to this point is the suffering that we’ve experienced while using our present system of money. Eventually, monetary systems that are created in the image of man lead to the final and most devastating hardship wrought on the family.

The suffering becomes exponential when the monetary system fails. It is at this point when:

- The family is scattered as everybody seeks to generate income to pay for basic necessities like food and shelter.
- Primary breadwinners become so distraught over their situation and are so ashamed of their inability to continue to support their family that they turn to suicide as a means to escape the pain and the perceived shame.
- Husbands and wives turn to infidelity as they run to temporary pleasures to medicate their pain.
- Children are forced to work before they are ready spiritually, physically, or emotionally.
- Children are exploited sexually in order to earn enough money to eat.
- Human trafficking, disease, starvation and government tyranny all are the result of the failure of monetary systems that bear the image of a secular kingdom.
- When we reach this phase, not only is generational momentum destroyed, *but entire generations of families are destroyed.*

And that’s not all.

Consider what happens within the church when this begins to unfold. It spends a tremendous amount of its limited resources simply performing triage on broken families. The church works valiantly to hold together whatever resemblance of stability there is left in the family unit.
Satan absolutely loves that. He has destroyed untold quantities of economic energy that was stored in the system and intended to build God’s Kingdom. Simultaneously, he occupies God’s people while the culture self-destructs around them.

There is Hope

Before we can change our present monetary system, we have to understand that scripture is one hundred percent accurate when it says, the love of money is the root of all evil. Satan has established a global system based on his image, and he is gathering the resources necessary to make a serious run at establishing his kingdom on earth - just like he said he was going to do in Isaiah 14.

Satan has executed his strategy for thousands of years. He has played the long game. He has cheated God’s people through philosophy and empty deceit through the traditions of men. He is stealing the very manifest image of God on earth through the theft of the stored labor of God’s people. And he is using it to build his kingdom.

At the same time, our present debt-based monetary system is reaching the end of its life cycle. The world is close to the point of debt saturation. We have crossed the point of no return. The debt accumulated cannot be paid back. For decades, we have rendered to Caesar through this unjust and unrighteous system. Now, Satan has once again set the world up to pull the plug on the global monetary system and create chaos on a scale which we have never seen before in history.

However, it is also well established that throughout history local complementary currencies have been able to mitigate these hardships. That brings up new questions:

Should we continue to live with a monetary system dominated by national currencies and that carries the image of the kingdom of darkness?

Should we live with a system that exposes entire nations and cultures and millions, upon millions of families at risk of suffering?

The answer is no, we should not.

As the church, cannot stand aside and let this period of history unfold without engaging in the battle to define the next monetary system. If we do, we will have played directly into the enemy’s hands once again.
Instead, let us recognize that God has given us an incredible opportunity. If we are willing to examine history and to learn from it, we can use fresh understanding and today’s technology to create a monetary eco-system that lays a foundation and sets a new course for our nation and the world.

We have the tools to design and deploy a monetary eco-system that consists of:

- Reformed national currencies, such as proposed by Uli Kortch via the Chicago Plan.
- A network of local currencies that provide resources for communities to thrive.

Working together, this new system will restore the basic principles of localism, jurisdiction and honest weights and measures – bringing trust back into the system. It will enable God’s people to do as Jesus commanded 2000 years ago when he examined the money of the day, saw it for what it was and commanded us to take a different path - to render unto God what is God’s.

Imagine what a world with such a system would look like. It is possible. That system, and the world it can help create are the subject of another paper.