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Yuval Levin [observed](#) that America's founders united our disparate states and cultures around a constitutional system rather than autocratic rulers. As John Adams [stated](#), America is "a government of laws, not of men."

However, the founders knew that no nation could construct enough laws or employ enough police officers to legislate morality. Human laws cannot change human hearts, which is why, despite [enacting](#) some three hundred thousand federal statutes across our history (there are so many that no one knows the precise number), crime still persists.

It was the same in the biblical era. The Ten Commandments led to 613 recognized laws in Judaism. Written laws were later interpreted by oral laws that were eventually compiled into the sixty-three tractates of the Babylonian Talmud; the English version fills a shelf and a half in my library.

Much of what worries us in the world hasn't changed. As Paul Powell observed, "It's not that people are worse—the news coverage is just better."

This is why America's founders were so adamant that, in the [famous words](#) of John Adams, "Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other."