

# MOURNING UNDER WICKED RULERS

Proverbs 29:2

## INTRODUCTION

- Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán said last year *“we Hungarians believe that Christian culture is the cornerstone that holds the architecture of European civilisation in place”*
- He is prepared to defend that nation against the onslaught of secularism and Islamisation which has taken most of Europe
- What a contrast with Australia’s federal and state governments
- There is no question that the wicked bear rule in Australia
- Our Prime Minister stated that he is “glad” that the Marriage Act was changed to allow sodomites to “marry”
- Our state government has made it legal to kill babies until birth for any reason
- They will soon legalise the murder of many more people (euthanasia)
- We are heading into perilous times, especially for Christians
- It is now regarded as “hate speech” to simply state what the bible says
- In time, these “Progressives” will have Christians sent to special camps for “re-education”
- God views rulers and governments morally – either as righteous or wicked

- The kings of Israel and Judah are all evaluated as either doing that which was *right* in God's sight, or that which was *evil* in his sight
- God in his providence raises up evil rulers as a form of punishment (Hosea 13:11; Isaiah 3:4; 10:5)
- As we see the age drawing to its close, with governments both here and internationally becoming increasingly evil, what should be our response as God's people?

## **I. WE SORROW FOR THIS WICKED GOVERNMENT**

A. People generally are miserable under wicked rulers and political systems

1. The more godless a nation is, and the more their laws violate Scripture, the more miserable the population become
2. A humanist worldview devalues human life
3. Godless rulers love and serve themselves, and have no real love for the people they govern
4. Though some may appear prosperous and happy under ungodly governments, it is a superficial and temporary mirth that ends in heaviness (Proverbs 14:13)
5. Socialism makes people equally poor and miserable
6. But the more a nation honours the Lord, and adheres to Scriptural laws, promotes genuine happiness among its people (Psalm 33:12)

B. Christians particularly mourn under wicked rulers and political systems

1. Christians should not be indifferent to the state of the nation and world we live in.
  2. God was grieved in his heart when he saw the great wickedness of the antediluvian world (Genesis 6:6)
  3. Lot, notwithstanding all his shortcomings, was vexed (distressed) with what he saw and heard in Sodom, with their filthy conversation and unlawful deeds (2 Peter 2:7-8)
  4. The Psalmist wept because the people kept not God's law (Psalm 119:53,136,158)
  5. Jeremiah wept for his people, their sins and the destruction they had brought upon themselves. (Jeremiah 9:1)
  6. How often was Jesus moved with compassion for the people (Mark 6:34; Luke 19:41)
  7. We mourn because evil leaders influence others to evil (Isaiah 3:12)
- C. A wicked ruler is one that ignores or transgresses God's directives for kings
1. He must fear God (Deuteronomy 17:19)
  2. He must submit to Jesus Christ (Psalm 2:10-12)
  3. He must keep the law of God (1 Kings 2:3)
  4. He must be just and rule in the fear of God (2 Samuel 23:3)
  5. He must study the Scriptures (Deuteronomy 17:19)

6. He must maintain the cause of the poor and needy (Proverbs 31:8-9)
7. He must be diligent in his searching out of matters (Proverbs 25:2)
8. He must not drink alcohol (Proverbs 31:4)
9. He must not pervert judgment (Proverbs 31:5)
10. He must punish evil (Romans 13:1-4)
11. He must promote freedom of conscience, speech and religion (1 Timothy 2:2)

## **II. WE ARE SUBJECT TO THIS WICKED GOVERNMENT**

(Romans 13:1-7)

### A. Government is ordained by God

1. The institution of civil authority that maintains order is good and necessary
2. Without such government, lawlessness and anarchy prevails, with no restraint to the evil that men can do
3. *“Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God”*

### B. Government is intended to punish evil and reward good

1. The fear of punishment serves as a deterrent to would-be criminals
2. The government uses force and “bears the sword” (which includes the death penalty)

3. While Christians are commanded *not* to avenge ourselves (Romans 12:19), governments are ordained “a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil” (13:4)

C. Government is intended to have a limited function

1. They are to serve as a restraint and punisher of evil
2. God has not ordained governments to provide services such as welfare, medical, education, etc.
3. In many instances, government has usurped roles which God intended for the family or church
4. “*Government should do for people only what they cannot do better by themselves, and no more.*” (Abraham Lincoln)
5. The Scriptures support a *protectionist* role of government, not a *perfectionist* role
6. We are required to not only submit to government in this role, but to support it by paying taxes (Romans 13:6)

D. Our obedience to God must come before our obedience to human government

1. When man’s law is contrary to God’s law, we “ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29)
2. There are many instances in the Bible where the saints refused to submit to the laws of governments that would have required them to sin
  - a. The Hebrew midwives refused Pharaoh’s command to kill the male children (Exodus 1:17)

- b. Shadrach Meshach and Abednego refused to worship Nebuchadnezzar's image (Daniel 3:16-18)
  - c. Daniel continued to pray in defiance of Darius' law (Daniel 6:13)
  - d. Esther violated the law by approaching King Ahasuerus unbidden (Esther 4:16)
  - e. The apostles disobeyed the Sanhedrin's command not to speak or teach in the name of Jesus (Acts 4:19-20)
3. Christians ought not go looking for trouble (Romans 12:18)
  4. But if you are living for God, it will come looking for you (2 Timothy 3:12)

### **III. WE CAN SWAY THIS WICKED GOVERNMENT**

- A. Christians can influence government through prayer
  1. We are commanded to pray that our leaders would maintain peace and freedom (1 Timothy 2:1-4)
  2. In our prayers for the gospel to have free course, we ask to be "delivered from unreasonable and wicked men", many of whom are in positions of power (2 Thessalonians 3:1-2)
  3. We should pray for our political representatives by name
- B. Christians can influence government by becoming directly involved

1. With electronic communications, it is easier than ever to lobby politicians, to persuade and influence their decision-making
2. Note that we should ensure our speech is “always with grace” (Colossians 4:6), that we should not “despise dominion” or “speak evil of dignities” (Jude 8), and we should “honour the king” (1 Peter 2:17)
  - a. Paul used respectful language when addressing the authorities (Acts 26:25)

### C. Christians can influence government by speaking out publicly

1. The prophets of old were called by God to “Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins” (Isaiah 58:1)
2. We are commanded to reprove the unfruitful works of darkness (Ephesians 5:11)
3. John the Baptist openly rebuked Herod’s adultery (Mark 6:18)
4. Too many professing Christians remain silent for fear of repercussions if they speak out for righteousness (Matthew 10:28; Mark 8:38)

## CONCLUSION

1. While we grieve for the ungodliness of our earthly leaders, it is not all despair
2. God reigns as King from heaven (Psalm 10:16); Jesus Christ is the Prince of the kings of the earth (Revelation 1:5) – the Righteous *is* in authority, therefore we rejoice

3. We must never put our trust or confidence in men or princes, but in the LORD (Psalm 118:8-9)
4. As this world becomes darker, the opportunities to shine the light of the gospel become greater (Matthew 5:16; Philippians 2:14-16; Titus 2:12)
5. The Great Commission which the Lord left to his church (Mark 16:15) does not change according to evil or goodness of the government we live under
6. The hope of any nation lies not in replacing its leaders, but in the gospel of Jesus Christ
7. Though we desire a righteous government and liberties to facilitate the spread of the gospel, whether “in season” or “out of season” we are to be earnestly preaching the word (2 Tim 4:2)
8. Before seeking to reprove ungodly secular rulers, the churches must first look to themselves and their own failings – “judgment must begin at the house of God” (1 Peter 4:17)
9. The churches are depicted as burning candlesticks whose purpose is to send forth a penetrating light of righteousness into the world (Revelation 1:20)
10. Too few churches and individual Christians are fulfilling this role, and darkness is prevailing
11. *“Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness”* (Luke 11:35)
12. *Are there no foes for me to face?  
Must I not stem the flood?  
Is this vile world a friend to grace,  
To help me on to God?*
13. Are you a soldier of the cross?