

ROMANS 48 – SUBMIT TO GOVERNMENT FORCE

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ROMANS 13:1-7

PROLOGUE: NO RULES TO LIVE BY...

- NEW CHRISTIANS, AND IMMATURE BELIEVERS, SEEK RULES TO GOVERN BEHAVIORS AND SIMPLIFY CHOICES BUT RULES ULTIMATELY FAIL, JUSTIFYING THE FLESH; MOVEMENT YEARS AGO POPULARIZED THIS THIRST FOR RULES, "WHAT WOULD JESUS DO?" (WWJD) (COL 2:20-23)
- GOD'S MORAL LAW AND THE JEWISH RESPONSE SHOWED THAT FOLLOWING A RULE-BASED PHILOSOPHY DOES NOT BRING SALVATION, OR GODLY WISDOM; RATHER, IT STRENGTHENS THE FLESH TURNING ONE AGAINST GOD BY ELEVATING SELF: ESSENCE OF WORKS (PS 51:16-19, RD 4:11)
- CHRIST'S SERMON ON THE MOUNT SHOWED HOW THE MORAL WAS DESIGNED TO LEAD ONE TO GOVERN ONE'S BEHAVIOR BY DISCERNMENT; EXPERIENTIALLY RECOGNIZING AND REJECTING EVIL WHILE CHOOSING GOOD; THAT IS WHAT JESUS DID VIA THE SPIRIT (MT 5:17-48, HE 5:11-14)

PROLOGUE: GENUINE AGAPE IS DOING, NOT SAYING

- PAUL CONTINUES TO DESCRIBE HOW HATING THE EVIL AND BEING GLUED TO THE GOOD LOOKS IN ONE'S LIFE; NOTICE, BEING GLUED TO GOOD IS IN THE PASSIVE VOICE, IT OCCURS OUTSIDE OF SELF, IT IS THE CHARISMA OF THE SPIRIT THROUGH US
 - WHAT FOLLOWS IS A SERIES OF DIRECT OBJECTS THAT FLOW FROM THE ACTIVE REJECTION OF EVIL; DO NOT BE OVERCOME BY EVIL, BUT BE INSTRUCTED IN GOOD BY THE SPIRIT (RD 12:21, 1CO 2:14)
 - IN ENGLISH THESE ARE PRESENTED AS BULLETS; IN THE GREEK THEY ARE SEPARATED BY COMMAS
 - THUS, GIVING HONOR (TIMH) TO OTHERS IS POSSIBLE ONLY BY THE CHARISMA OF THE SPIRIT AND LEADS THIS LIST OF WHAT CHRISTIANITY LOOKS LIKE, ESPECIALLY AS ONE MATURES

PROLOGUE: PAUL ENDS WITH A WARNING

- PAUL'S CONCLUSION HARKENS BACK TO THE BEGINNING OF THIS SEGMENT, HATE EVIL AND BE GLUED TO GOOD; "DO NOT BE OVERCOME BY EVIL BUT OVERCOME EVIL WITH GOOD"
 - IF ONE TAKES UP THE WEAPONS OF THE BEAST, ONE IMITATES THE BEAST BECOMING THE ANIMAL THAT ONE WAS BEFORE SALVATION: SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST; VIOLENCE AND DEGRADATION
 - EVIL CAN ONLY BE OVERCOME BY GOOD AS IT SHOWS THE STARK CONTRAST BETWEEN GOD'S GOODNESS AND EVIL'S ABSOLUTE CORRUPTION
 - USING VIOLENCE TO BRING PEACE IS THE ILLOGIC OF SINNERS; LIKE CLAIMING THAT WAR, DESTRUCTION, BRINGS ECONOMIC PROSPERITY, GROWTH; INSANITY (JA 3:13-18)

SO WHY WERE GOVERNMENTS INSTITUTED?

- GOVERNMENT'S TWO-FOLD PURPOSES AND ITS BEGINNINGS:
 - PURPOSE (1): TO ESTABLISH A WORLD GOVERNMENT WITHOUT GOD – REBELLION AGAINST GOD (KT 4:8; RT 16:13-14; 19:19-21; 20:7-10)
 - PURPOSE (2): TO CONTROL DEGRADATION AND VIOLENCE OF SINNERS BY LAWS, PROMOTING SIN, AND PUNISHMENT, THAT DOES NOT DETER SIN; REBELLION IS HEART OF SINNERS (JE 14:13-14; EZ 28:15-17; JO 8:44; RO 7:7-12; 8:7-8)
 - CAIN DEVELOPED GOVERNMENT WHEN HE WANDERED FROM GOD TO THE LAND OF NOD (WANDERERS) BECOMING THEIR LEADER AND BUILDING THE FIRST CITIES; SOCIETY REQUIRED LAWS (GE 4:14-22)
 - UNRID GOVERNMENT REINSTITUTED AFTER THE CATAclySM THOUGH GOD BROKE IT UP UNDER NIMROD INTO MULTIPLE COMPETING GOVERNMENTS VYING FOR DOMINANCE (GE 10:6-14; 11:1-9)

HEBREWS REJECT GOD'S DIRECT GOVERNANCE

- BIBLE DEFINES GOVERNMENT BY HOW IT TREATS ITS CITIZENS, THOSE IT CLAIMS TO PROTECT AND NEEDS FOR ITS OWN EXISTENCE; NO CITIZENS, NO GOVERNMENT (ISA 64:9; PE 14:28)
 - AFTER HUNDREDS OF YEARS OF LIVING UNDER GOD'S DISCIPLINE AND LEADERSHIP VIA JUDGES, TRIBAL LEADERS CALLED FOR A KING LIKE THE SURROUNDING EMPIRE NATIONS
 - THIS CALL IS TAKEN UP BY THE PEOPLE DEMANDING THAT SAMUEL, PRIEST, PICK A KING FOR THEM FROM AMONG THEIR NUMBER; SAMUEL PRAYS TO GOD FOR GUIDANCE AS HE IS AGAINST THIS
 - GOD TELLS SAMUEL TO WARN THEM ABOUT THE WAYS OF KINGS APPLIES TO ALL GOVERNMENTS REGARDLESS OF GOVERNANCE, DIFFERENCE IS IN DEGREE OF FORCE USED
 - GOD TOLD SAMUEL PEOPLE HAD REJECTED HIMSELF AS LEADER; USUAL FOR HEBREWS (SINNERS)

OLD HABITS DIE HARD

- HEBREWS SHOWED THEIR DESIRE TO NOT HAVE A DIRECT RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD (EX 20:1-21)
- WHEN GOD SPOKE HIS TEN WORDS AT MOUNT HOREB THE PEOPLE TREMBLED AT HIS BOOMING VOICE AND DISPLAYS OF JUDGMENT IMPLIED BY VIOLATION(S) OF THIS LAW
- THEY WANTED A SUBSTITUTE TO INTERCEDE BETWEEN THEM AND GOD HOPING TO REDUCE THE IMPACT OF JUDGMENT UPON THEM; THIS WAS MOSES' ROLE (PRESAGING CHRIST'S ROLE) (11:23-4)
- NOW THEY WANTED A MONARCHY FOR THE SAME REASON, TO COME BETWEEN THEM AND GOD'S JUDGMENT HOPING TO MITIGATE THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEIR SIN(S)
- HIS SISTER MIRIAM (REBELLION) JUST DIED; HOWEVER, PEOPLE'S REBELLION LIVED ON AT MERIBAH (STRIFE) AND MOSES ALSO REBELLED MAKING HIMSELF EQUAL TO GOD; REFUSED ENTRY TO ISRAEL (EX 17:1-7; NU 20:1-13; DE 32:48-52; 34:1-8)

GOVERNMENTS TAKE, NOT GIVE

- GOVERNMENTS DO NOT GIVE BUT TAKE FROM PEOPLE IN MULTIPLE VENUES FOR ITS OWN PURPOSES; BECOMES A NEW ENTITY WITH POWER AS ITS LIFE-BLOOD OBTAINED VIA TAXES
- GOVERNMENT TAKES SONS AND DAUGHTERS, FRIVOLOUSLY WASTING THEM IN PURSUIT OF ITS OWN COMFORTS AND POWER EXPANSION CONFLICTS (ISA 6:10-18)
- GOVERNMENTS TAKES CROPS AND GOODS FOR ITS OWN DESIGNS
- GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE TO TAKE UNTIL ITS CITIZENS BECOMES ITS SLAVES, LIKE IN EGYPT (GR 41; 47:13-36; 12:14-22)
- THOSE IN GOVERNMENT BECOME MORE POWERFUL THAN THOSE WHO WANTED GOVERNMENT; GOVERNMENTS ARE RUN BY SINNERS, EXPECTING GRACE IS ILLOGICAL AT BEST (1KI 13:1-20)

GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP FAILS – SAUL

- ADAGE: "POWER CORRUPTS, ABSOLUTE POWER CORRUPTS ABSOLUTELY" DESCRIBES SINNERS
- SAUL, ISRAEL'S FIRST KING, WAS ELECTED BY TRIBAL LEADERS BECAUSE HE CAME FROM A WEAK TRIBE, EASILY CONTROLLED, AND OUTWARDLY HANDSOME, DESIRED BY THE PEOPLE (ISA 9:1-2; 5:10; 10:21; 2:10-27)
- AS SAUL WAS ELECTED, HE NEVER FELT CONFIDENT IN POWER MAKING HIM INDECISIVE, FICKLE AND VINDICTIVE AGAINST ANYONE PERCEIVED AS A THREAT TO HIS POWER; SUCH AS DAVID
- WHEN SAUL RULED IN GOD'S POWER, THEN HE WAS POWERFUL, THOUGH STILL WEAK (ISA 11:2-9)
- WHEN GOD TOLD SAUL TO DESTROY ALL THE AMALEKITES, HE DISOBEYED SPARING AGAG AND THE BEST OF THE GOODS; WHEN CONFRONTED BY SAMUEL, SAUL BLAMED THE PEOPLE – GOD SAID HE WOULD ANOINT ANOTHER TO BE KING; DAVID, HE HAD TO BE PROOFED FOR A TIME (ISA 15:1-22)

GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP CORRUPTS – DAVID

- DAVID WAS A TEEN SHEPHERDING HIS FATHER'S FLOCKS WHEN GOD TOLD SAMUEL TO ANOINT HIM AS THE NEXT KING OF ISRAEL; HOWEVER, HE WAS NOT GIVEN KINGSHIP UNTIL AFTER SAUL'S DEATH; SUPPOSEDLY BY AN AMALEKITE (1SA 16:1-3, 17-23; 2SA 1, 5:1-2)
 - AS GOD'S SPIRIT CAME ON DAVID, IT LEFT SAUL WHO WAS TORMENTED BY A DEMONIC SPIRIT (1SA 16:14-23)
 - DAVID REFUSED TO REBEL AGAINST SAUL, GOD'S ANOINTED; GOD **HATES** REBELLION (1SA 15:23)
 - WHEN DAVID BECAME A POWERFUL KING, HE HAD A SOLDIER KILLED IN BATTLE SO HE COULD TAKE HIS WIFE SOLELY BECAUSE HE COULD; GOD LIMITED THE POWER OF HIS THEOCRATIC KINGS (2SA 1:1)
 - GOD REBUKED DAVID BUT HIS IMMORALITY MARKED THE END OF HIS UNITED FAMILY; REBELLION (2SA 12:1-7)

GOD IS LORD OVER ALL GOVERNMENTS

- MAJOR THEME THROUGHOUT THE OLD TESTAMENT: GOD IS LORD OVER EVERYONE
 - GOD DID NOT LEAD A REBELLION AGAINST PHARAOH BUT AFTER GOD UNMASKED HIS WEAKNESS PHARAOH (GOD) RELEASED THE HEBREWS VOLUNTARILY (EX 3:14-22; 12:29-36)
 - GOD USED NEBUCHADNEZZAR TO PUNISH JUDAH LEADING THEM INTO CAPTIVITY (SIN) (2K 1:2)
 - VIA NEBUCHADNEZZAR GOD REVEALED HIS PLAN TO REPLACE MAN'S, SATAN'S, GOVERNMENTS WITH HIS OWN ETERNAL GOVERNMENT BASED ON CHRIST (2K 9:4-7; DA 2)
 - GOD HUMBLING NEBUCHADNEZZAR BRINGING HIM TO SALVATION (MERCY) (2K 4)
 - GOD RAISED UP CYRUS TO RESTORE THE JEWS TO JUDAH, ONLY AS A PROVINCE, AND PREPARING THE NATIONS FOR THE COMING MESSIAH (2K 45; EZRA 1; 1P 1:7-10)

GOVERNMENTS DO SUPPORT GOOD; AT TIMES

- THERE IS ONLY ONE STANDARD OF GOOD AND GOVERNMENTS ARE COMPULLED TO SUPPORT GOOD FOR SELF-PRESERVATION (PR 25:26; 25:2-3)
 - THROUGHOUT HISTORY IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN WRONG TO KILL, STEAL, ADULTERY AND COVET (PR 29:4)
 - WHEN THESE ARE VIOLATED GOVERNMENT SOON SUCCLUMBS TO INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL COLLAPSE (JUDGES; ISRAEL OBEYED, PEACE, WHEN IT DISOBEYED, OVERCOME BY EVIL) (PR 8:12; 16:12)
 - WHEN GOVERNMENTS, ACTING IN THEIR OWN SELF-INTEREST, DO GOOD THEY INADVERTENTLY DO GOD'S WILL (PR 21:1; HAB 1:6-11)
 - GOVERNMENT HAS One AIM: INCREASING POWER OVER EVERYONE – "THERE CAN BE ONLY ONE"; ESSENCE OF DIALOGUE BETWEEN PILATE AND CHRIST, WHOSE KINGDOM WAS NOT YET COME (MT 8:10; JO 19:11-16)

WHY THEN MUST WE OBEY GOVERNMENT?

- IF GOVERNMENTS ARE EVIL, INSTRUMENTS OF SATAN, WORKING AGAINST CHRIST, WHY ARE WE COMMANDED TO OBEY THEM?
 - PEOPLE ARE MADE IN THE IMAGE OF GOD AND HIS INTERNAL WITNESS IS THE MORAL LAW IMPRINTED ON EACH PERSON DESPITE THEIR SIN NATURE (ps 1:27, 27, 14, 21-22, 40 1:18-23)
 - THOUGH SINFUL, MAN REJECTS GOD AND SUBSTITUTES HIS OWN REASONING TO ESTABLISH HIS OWN GOOD, IT MUST BE BASED ON GOD'S MORAL LAW AS MAN KNOWS NO OTHER GOOD
 - ALL AUTHORITY COMES FROM GOD WHO ALLOWS CERTAIN GOVERNMENTS TO GOVERN AT CERTAIN TIMES SHOWING MAN BOTH HIS SINFULNESS, ALLOWING SINNERS TO LIVE THEIR SIN, AND GOD'S GRACIOUSNESS, BY THOSE WHO ARE SAVED; ULTIMATELY, ALL GOVERNMENTS DO GOD'S WILL, EVEN SATAN, THOUGH ALL ACT ACCORDING TO THEIR OWN NATURE

OBEYING GOVERNMENT IS OBEYING GOD

- AS THE HUSBAND EXPECTS THE WIFE TO HONOR SCRIPTURE AND SUBMIT TO HIS LEADERSHIP, SO ALSO DOES CHRIST COMMAND THE HUSBAND TO SET THE EXAMPLE BY SUBMITTING TO GOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITIES AS TO GOD (ep 5:22-33)
 - THOSE WHO RESIST GOVERNMENTS ARE, IN FACT, RESISTING GOD AND WILL INCUR NOT ONLY THE GOVERNMENT'S WRATH BUT ALSO GOD'S JUDGMENT
 - REFERS TO ALL GOVERNMENTS REGARDLESS OF FOUNDATIONAL PHILOSOPHIES; AS AN EXAMPLE IT WAS WRONG FOR DIETRICH BONHOEFFER TO CONSPIRE TO ASSASSINATE HITLER AND CLAIM THE BIBLE AS HIS MORAL AUTHORITY; GOD NEVER CONDONES REBELLION
 - IF ONE DOES WRONG, ESPECIALLY REBELLION, ONE CAN EXPECT PUNISHMENT

TAXES – LIFE BLOOD OF GOVERNMENT

- GOVERNMENT PRODUCES NOTHING AND THEREFORE HAS NO MEANS OF GENERATING WEALTH EXCEPT BY COLLECTING TAXES FOR SERVICES RENDERED, OR DEMANDED
 - GOVERNMENT CREATES THE CONDITIONS WHEREBY CITIZENS MAY GENERATE WEALTH WHICH THEN COLLECTS TAXES TO PROJECT POWER
 - ANCIENT KINGDOMS PLUNDERED CONQUERED KINGDOMS TO PAY FOR THE WAR AND REWARD THOSE WHO HELPED PROJECT GOVERNMENTAL POWER
 - SUBSERVIENT PEOPLES HATED PAYING TAXES TO FOREIGNERS; JEWS IN THE GOSPELS (mk 20:23-25)
 - CHRIST SUPPORTED THE PAYING OF TAXES FOR THIS REASON: DO NOT MUZZLE THE OX THAT TREADS THE GRAIN; PAYMENT FOR SERVICES RENDERED (mk 25:4, 1CO 9:8-12)

LIMITS TO GOVERNMENTAL OBEDIENCE

- YET, THERE ARE LIMITS TO GOVERNMENTAL OBEDIENCE EVEN IN THE OLD TESTAMENT
 - SAUL PERFORMED PRIESTLY OFFERINGS TO PREVENT THE ARMY FROM DESERTING HIM AND IN SO DOING WAS TOLD BY GOD THAT ANOTHER MAN, AFTER GOD'S HEART, WOULD REPLACE HIM (1SA 13:8-14)
 - UZZIAH, GOOD KING OF JUDAH, BECAME POWERFUL AND PRIDEFUL DARING TO ABSORB PRIESTLY FUNCTIONS AND RECOMBINING KING AND PRIEST INTO ONE HEAD (NIMROD); GOD STRUCK HIM WITH LEPROSY FORING HIM INTO ISOLATION FOR REMAINDER OF HIS REIGN (2CH 36:1-5, 16-21)
 - PETER AND JOHN DEFINED THE LIMITS OF GOVERNMENTAL OBEDIENCE FOR ALL: IF GOVERNMENT DEMANDS VIOLATE SCRIPTURE THEN ONE MUST OBEY GOD OVER GOVERNMENT, SUFFER FOR DOING GOOD (AC 4:19-20; 1PE 4:12-14)

AVOID HYPERLITERALISM

- FUNDAMENTAL EVANGELICALISM HAS TAUGHT BLIND OBEDIENCE TO GOVERNMENT USING THESE VERSES; THIS HYPERLITERALISM IGNORES ABUNDANT SCRIPTURAL TEACHINGS
 - NORMATIVE HERMENEUTICAL APPROACH TO BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION SEEKS TO DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE BODY OF GUIDING KNOWLEDGE ACCORDING TO ALL BIBLICAL TRUTH
 - BIBLE IS CLEAR: CHRISTIANS ARE TO OBEY GOVERNMENT AS IT DOES GOOD AND PUNISHES EVIL, AS DEFINED BY GOD; THIS APPLIES TO ALL GOVERNMENTS
 - PEOPLE ARE TO PAY TAXES FOR SERVICES RENDERED BY THAT GOVERNMENT
 - PEOPLE ARE NOT TO REBEL AGAINST THEIR GOVERNMENT, THEY MAY GO TO ANOTHER IF ALLOWED; HOWEVER, THEY ARE TO LOOK TO GOD TO SUCCOR THEM IN THEIR TROUBLES (ROM 13:1-2; 1PE 5:4-11)

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HOW DOES AMERICA COMPARE WITH SCRIPTURE?

- ARE THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE AND CONSTITUTION BIBLICAL AS SOME CLAIM?
 - DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE – BORROWED FROM JOHN LOCKE – NOT THE BIBLE
 - LIFE – CHRISTIANS HAVE BEEN BOUGHT AND ARE NOT THEIR OWN (1CO 6:19-20; 7:21-24)
 - LIBERTY – CHRISTIANS ARE ENSLAVED TO CHRIST BUT CONSIGNED TO THEIR GOVERNMENTS (RO 6:16-18)
 - PURSUIT OF PROPERTY – CHRISTIANS KNOW HOW TO BE SATISFIED IN WHATEVER STATE THEREIN (PH 4:10-13)
 - CONSTITUTION – FRAMERS IGNORED THEIR MANDATE AND DEVELOPED CONSTITUTION CREATING A STRONGER CENTRAL GOVERNMENT THEY, STATES, COULD CONTROL; YET, UNDER LINCOLN CENTRAL GOVERNMENT FORCEBLY REMOVED RESTRAINTS TO ITS POWER (REVOLUTION OF 1913*)
 - USED OF GOD, AS ALL NATIONS, AMERICA NEVER A BIBLICAL GOVERNMENT; REBELLIOUS BIRTH AND HISTORY & USED RELIGION JUSTIFYING FORCEFUL HEGEMONY – AMERICA NOT A BIBLICAL NATION

*Constitutional Amendments: Popular Election of Senators and Authorization of Personal Income Taxes; Creation of Federal Reserve Bank
Each of these increased federal power leading to development of national socialism and unrestrained, continuing warfare

Romans 48 - Submit to Govt Force Syllabus
