



## World Christian Fellowship

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### Romans 118 Christian pays your tax! Romans 13:6-7

**Romans 13:1-7**, *Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. <sup>2</sup> Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves. <sup>3</sup> For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. <sup>4</sup> For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil. <sup>5</sup> Therefore you must be subject, not only because of wrath but also for conscience' sake. <sup>6</sup> For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God's ministers attending continually to this very thing. <sup>7</sup> Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour.*

Christian's responsibility to government.

All our problems stem basically from two things.

- Sin
- Satan.

The Bible is very clear about this.

**Romans chapter 1-3**, man is hopelessly engulfed in sinfulness. Because of his sinfulness that he does the things he does.

It is because he is bound to fallenness, a depravity that has reached the very base part of his existence, the deepest, profoundest part of his humanness, that he is what he is. Sin is the problem.

Satan provokes sin. He has a way of exciting the senses by design in the world to cause men to step into sin.

**Ephesians 2** says when that men are victims of the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that works in the children of disobedience.

The problems in our world are related to sin and to Satan.

Because man is a sinner, he finds himself in the domain of Satan.

Man's sin is excited by everything that Satan can do to excite that sinfulness. He then is an incorrigible rebel.

Satan dominates the world of man, the problem is not just human, but it is supernaturally intensified.

Man is a product of fallenness and satanic activity.

We know Satan is in control in our world.

**Matthew 4:8-9**, *Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. <sup>9</sup>And he said to Him, "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me."*

Satan possessed the various kingdoms of the world.

How else could he say he would give them to Jesus?

The kingdoms of the world are in the possession of Satan.

**1 John 5:19**, *We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one.*

**Luke 4:6**, *And the devil said to Him, "All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish.*

Satan is in charge of the kingdoms of the world and has the prerogative to give them to whomever he will.

**John 12:31**, *Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out.*

Satan is called the prince of this world.

Jesus, with His own mouth, affirms that Satan has over this world.

**John 14:30**, *I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me.*

**John 16:11**, *of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.*

Keep this in mind, because it is an important balancing point to what we are going to learn in Romans chapter 13.

Satan is the one who basically is in charge of the kingdoms of the world, and he has the right, by his own testimony, to give them to whomever he chooses.

Daniel chapter 10, a very interesting incident takes place that gives us good insight into the matter of Satan's dominion.

**Daniel 10:10-12**, *Suddenly, a hand touched me, which made me tremble on my knees and on the palms of my hands. <sup>11</sup> And he said to me, "O Daniel, man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak to you, and stand upright, for I have now been sent to you." While he was speaking this word to me, I stood trembling.*

*<sup>12</sup> Then he said to me, “Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words.*

Daniel has been praying a prayer. That prayer has been lifted to God in **Daniel 9:1-23**.

He prayed to God on behalf of his people. The answer comes that there will be a response on the part of God.

A messenger from heaven is sent with an answer to Daniel.

**Daniel 10:13**, *But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia.*

Here is the picture of an angel come from God to bring a response to Daniel, and that angel is stopped in his process of coming to Daniel in heaven by the prince of the kingdom of Persia.

This is some demonic agent who works for Satan who is assigned a special role in the nation of Persia, so that when Daniel is the one who is the object and the target of this mission from a holy angel is stopped.

This angel who is identified somehow with the nation of Persia holds up this holy angel for 21 days until, "Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me," he says.

This tells us is several things.

Angelic conflict.

Certain demons identify themselves with certain nations.

By Satan's design, they function in generating evil within a certain nation as this one did who is called the prince of the kingdom of Persia.

**Isaiah 14:11-12**, *Your pomp is brought down to Sheol, And the sound of your stringed instruments; The maggot is spread under you, And worms cover you.'*<sup>12</sup> *"How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations!*

Satan with the king of Babylon, which is to say that satanic forces were involved in the Babylonian Empire.

**Ezekiel 28:1-2**, *The word of the Lord came to me again, saying,*<sup>2</sup> *"Son of man, say to the prince of Tyre, 'Thus says the Lord God: "Because your heart is lifted up, And you say, 'I am a god, I sit in the seat of gods, In the midst of the seas,' Yet you are a man, and not a god, Though you set your heart as the heart of a god.*

Satan is identified with the king of Tyre.

Lucifer was identified with the king of Babylon.

Another prince of Persia is identified with the underworld of demon hosts.

This lets us know that Satan is a pervasive influence in the nations of the world.

**Romans 13.**

Satan is a pervasive world power influencing individuals and systems of men.

The paradox: National governments, while they are ordained by God.

**Romans 13:1**, *"The powers that be are ordained of God."*

National governments while they are ordained of God, are nonetheless expressive of and infiltrated by Satan's system of influence and activity.

They are filled with demonic activity.

It is kept in bounds by those governments. Yet the governments themselves are under some controls of Satan.

It is an interesting paradox.

God has ordained government for the preservation of man. But because man is basically evil, and everything about man is evil.

Satan is active and aggressive in human government. Yet, man is limited by God who has set the boundaries of government to maintain a preserving influence in human society.

While the government are ordained by God and not saying that they are necessarily being run by God or are reflective of God's will.

God has ordained it to restrain the inherent satanic activity that is within a national group of people.

**Genesis chapter 6**, we read about the Flood.

The wickedness of man had reached an absolute limit, and God drowned the whole world. There were some limited elements of social order before the Flood.

There were no national governments as we know them. But there were families, and they were responsible for holding society together.

But basically, it wasn't sufficient.

The whole world went amok, and God had to drown the entire world in the Flood.

After the people came back out of the Flood and began to repopulate the earth, the Lord instituted capital punishment, which is the first major emphasis of human government.

Because it was proven by man's sinfulness that a social order based upon man's control within a family couldn't handle it.

So, God instituted a governmental authority with the right to take a life of one who took a life.

As we approach **Romans 13** again, while government is an institution of God, it is ordained to confine the activity of sin, which is almost limitless in man, the activity of Satan, which is equally limitless in terms of its potential for evil.

God ordains government, and He call us to submit. We are to support.

We submit to government because it is ordained of God. That doesn't mean that it isn't satanic. That doesn't mean that it reflects the will of God.

It simply means that God has ordained it to hold in check the rather limitless evil of Satan, his demons, and men.

**V 1**, "For there's no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God."

**Numbers 16<sup>th</sup> chapter**, where God is laying down the guidelines for governments and how men are to respond.

Little picture of how God feels about rebellion. It is a very serious sin.

Moses was designed by God to be the ruler of this entity of government in which the people of Israel existed.

He was the judge of the nation.

He was the ruler.

But there were some people who wanted to lead an insurrection against Moses.

There were people who wanted to overthrow Moses.

**Numbers 16:1-2**, *Now Korah the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, with Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, and On the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took men; <sup>2</sup>and they rose up before Moses with some of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty leaders of the congregation, representatives of the congregation, men of renown.*

Korah, Dathan, and Abiram really pulled together a coup to try to throw Moses out as the leader.

They enlist about 250 key leaders who are famous men of renown.

They gather themselves together.

**Numbers 16:3**, *They gathered together against Moses and Aaron, and said to them, "You take too much upon yourselves, for all the congregation is holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them. Why then do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the Lord?"*

They complained that Moses had too much authority.

They did not like the fact that he had unilateral authority, at least in some degree, and they wanted it differently.

They complained about his authority.

They began to undermine Moses.

**Numbers 16:13**, *Is it a small thing that you have brought us up out of a land flowing with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness, that you should keep acting like a prince over us?*

It is no big thing that you brought us out of Egypt, the land where we had everything, to let us die in the wilderness.

They began to undermine Moses and question what he had done.

Small thing that he had done, and they say he did it to elevate himself, so that he could be their leader.

**Numbers 16:16**, *And Moses said to Korah, “Tomorrow, you and all your company be present before the Lord—you and they, as well as Aaron.*

The whole rebellion ended suddenly when Moses proposed they all come before the Lord.

We will let the Lord choose whether He wants me to be the leader or whether He wants you to be the leader.

The Lord chose Moses, and the ground opened up and swallowed up everybody else.

**Numbers 16:31-33**, *Now it came to pass, as he finished speaking all these words, that the ground split apart under them,<sup>32</sup> and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, with their households and all the men with Korah, with all their goods.<sup>33</sup> So they and all those with them went down alive into the pit; the earth closed over them, and they perished from among the assembly.*

That is a frightening scene.

The ground opened up, and they went right down to death in the grave.

**Numbers 16:34-35**, *Then all Israel who were around them fled at their cry, for they said, "Lest the earth swallow us up also!"<sup>35</sup> And a fire came out from the Lord and consumed the two hundred and fifty men who were offering incense.*

The whole rebelling group was just literally consumed in a moment of time. God was giving a good illustration of what He thinks about rebellion.

Seemed as though the people didn't learn too well.

**Numbers 16:49**, *Now those who died in the plague were fourteen thousand seven hundred, besides those who died in the Korah incident.*

Because the very next day after the ground had swallowed these people up, and after the fire had come and consumed the 250, the people started complaining against Moses.

They complained about the previous day's holocaust.

They complained about what had happened the day before, and so the Lord just came down and killed 14,700 of the complainers.

Now God was getting a message across, and the message was simply this:

You don't rebel against the authority.

Moses went back to ruling after that.

The message is very clear. We are to submit.

- We understand that Satan is very active in the nations of the world, even though they are ordained by God, governments are, to keep things in some level of control.
- We learn that God looks very, very seriously on rebellion as illustrated in the rebellion of Korah from Numbers chapter 16.

### **Romans 13.**

We have been learning that then we are submitting in the first five verses, and then in verses 6 and 7.

- We are to support the government.
- We submit.
- We support.
- Both are very essential.

**V 6**, *For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God's ministers attending continually to this very thing.*

The principle is pay your taxes. It is an unqualified command.

Sanctified citizenship involves paying your taxes, and that is a result of justification.

The great theme of justification beginning in chapter 3, ending in chapter 11.

The great section of dedication in chapter 12 leads us to good citizenship as Christians and that involves paying our taxes.

**V 6**, *For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God's ministers attending continually to this very thing.*

We are to pay our taxes for the reason, the purpose that these who collect it are God's ministers.

**V 4**, *For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil.*

Those who are in authority are either ministers of God for good, or ministers of God for wrath, depending on how you handle them.

But they are ministers of God.

**V 1-5**, is that public servants who exercise authority in a national government are in a very unique sense serving God.

It is an act of religious service. Because government is ordained by God and resistance to government, then, is resistance to God.

We are to support government in paying our taxes because they are serving God.

Government is ordained by God for the preservation of life and property, and those who serve in it to collect our taxes, to keep the government going do so as ministers of God.

Now that isn't to say they are all Christians.

That isn't to say they all do everything they ought to do.

It is to say that, in the design of government, they serve a divine purpose.

As soon as the principles of government are detached from God, and it is not seen as a reflection of the divine mind, then justice weakens.

We have seen justice weaken.

Crimes are defined not anymore as crimes, but as antisocial behaviour.

The Bible says that you commit a crime, you pay a penalty. Whether or not you are psychologically sound is not an issue. But it is an issue now, because we see crime as antisocial behaviour rather than a reaction against a holy law, because we have, no longer, a holy standard.

We have no longer a God behind our law. As a result, punishment seems to be the result of the majority ganging up on the minority, and then everybody wants to fight for the rights of the criminal.

Every principle of justice and social order must be based on a creed, on a foundational rock bed of righteousness.

When that foundation of what is right and wrong is gone and removed, and all you have got is majority opinion, the result is a loss of justice.

Government really should be government, not only as a service to God, but government by the standards that God has established.

Because of this divine purpose behind government, we ought to do all we can to maintain a godly standard.

Even when government abandons the divine and biblical foundation, our orders are the same, and they are to submit and support with our taxes.

So, the apostle Paul pulling Christianity right out of the insurrectionist, Judaistic attitude that says we are going to rebel against the government.

Christians are bound together by a common commitment to be models of order and peace.

Early church in spite of hostile and persecuting governments, the Christians maintained a marvellous testimony of integrity in submitting to the government and paying their taxes.

We give our worship to God, but we will support our government also.

Even in a time when the empire was hostile toward Christians. Toward the end of the first century, a leader in the Roman church, remembering Nero's persecution, prayed in a way as to reveal the attitude of Christians at that time.

The spirit that Paul did reside in these leaders of the early centuries of the church and should reside in us as well.

Paul says what Jesus taught and we are to respect the government. Paul adds, "Because they are the ministers of God."

We must keep in mind that all authority held by anybody in government of any kind is delegated from the Lord.

**Psalm 92-99.**

A recurring theme through these Psalms 92 through 99, testifying to the nations that God is the only true sovereign. God is the one true king, and all other authority is simply delegated from Him.

**Psalm 92:8**, *But You, Lord, are on high forevermore.*

**Psalm 93:1-2**, *The Lord reigns, He is clothed with majesty; The Lord is clothed, He has girded Himself with strength. Surely the world is established, so that it cannot be moved. <sup>2</sup>Your throne is established from of old; You are from everlasting.*

**Psalm 94:1-2**, *O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongs— O God, to whom vengeance belongs, shine forth! <sup>2</sup>Rise up, O Judge of the earth; Render punishment to the proud.*

**Psalm 94:10**, *He who instructs the nations, shall He not correct, He who teaches man knowledge?*

**Psalm 95:3-7**, *For the Lord is the great God, And the great King above all gods. <sup>4</sup>In His hand are the deep places of the earth; The heights of the hills are His also. <sup>5</sup>The sea is His, for He made it; And His hands formed the dry land. <sup>6</sup>Oh come, let us worship and bow down; Let us kneel before the Lord our Maker. <sup>7</sup>For He is our God, And we are the people of His pasture, And the sheep of His hand.*

**Psalm 96:3-10**, *Declare His glory among the nations, His wonders among all peoples. <sup>4</sup>For the Lord is great and greatly to be praised; He is to be feared above all gods. <sup>5</sup>For all the gods of the peoples are idols, But the Lord made the heavens. <sup>6</sup>Honor and majesty are before Him; Strength and beauty are in His sanctuary. <sup>7</sup>Give to the Lord, O families of the peoples, Give to the Lord glory and strength. <sup>8</sup>Give to the Lord the glory due His name; Bring an offering, and come into His courts. <sup>9</sup>Oh, worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness! Tremble before Him, all the earth. <sup>10</sup>Say among the nations, "The Lord reigns; The world also is firmly established, It shall not be moved; He shall judge the peoples righteously."*

Affirms the sovereignty of God.

**Psalm 97:1**, *The Lord reigns; Let the earth rejoice; Let the multitude of isles be glad!*

**Psalm 97:5-6**, *The mountains melt like wax at the presence of the Lord, At the presence of the Lord of the whole earth. <sup>6</sup>The heavens declare His righteousness, And all the peoples see His glory.*

**Psalm 98:2**, *The Lord has made known His salvation; His righteousness He has revealed in the sight of the nations.*

**Psalm 98:6**, *With trumpets and the sound of a horn; Shout joyfully before the Lord, the King.*

**Psalm 98:9**, *For He is coming to judge the earth. With righteousness He shall judge the world, And the peoples with equity.*

The essence of that whole section of the Psalms is to affirm the world that God is the ultimate sovereign.

**Psalm 83:1-18**, *Do not keep silent, O God! Do not hold Your peace, And do not be still, O God! <sup>2</sup>For behold, Your enemies make a tumult; And those who hate You have lifted up their head. <sup>3</sup>They have taken crafty counsel against Your people, And consulted together against Your sheltered ones. <sup>4</sup>They have said, "Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation, That the name of Israel may be remembered no more." <sup>5</sup>For they have consulted together with one consent; They form a confederacy against You: <sup>6</sup>The tents of Edom and the*

*Ishmaelites; Moab and the Hagarites; <sup>7</sup>Gebal, Ammon, and Amalek; Philistia with the inhabitants of Tyre; <sup>8</sup> Assyria also has joined with them; They have helped the children of Lot. Selah <sup>9</sup> Deal with them as with Midian, As with Sisera, As with Jabin at the Brook Kishon, <sup>10</sup> Who perished at En Dor, Who became as refuse on the earth. <sup>11</sup> Make their nobles like Oreb and like Zeeb, Yes, all their princes like Zebah and Zalmunna, <sup>12</sup> Who said, "Let us take for ourselves The pastures of God for a possession." <sup>13</sup> O my God, make them like the whirling dust, Like the chaff before the wind! <sup>14</sup> As the fire burns the woods, And as the flame sets the mountains on fire, <sup>15</sup> So pursue them with Your tempest, And frighten them with Your storm. <sup>16</sup> Fill their faces with shame, That they may seek Your name, O Lord. <sup>17</sup> Let them be confounded and dismayed forever; Yes, let them be put to shame and perish, <sup>18</sup> That they may know that You, whose name alone is the Lord, Are the Most High over all the earth.*

God is the ultimate sovereign.

**Daniel 4:32,** *And they shall drive you from men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field. They shall make you eat grass like oxen; and seven times shall pass over you, until you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses."*

Nebuchadnezzar thought he was invincible. He thought he got his own kingdom by his own power and wisdom. He was going to learn a lesson by being a raving maniac, living like an animal. His hair growing like a bird's feathers, and his claws, his fingernails, like eagle's claws.

He would learn that God gives and takes the Kingdom according to His will.

**Daniel 5:21**, *Then he was driven from the sons of men, his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild donkeys. They fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till he knew that the Most High God rules in the kingdom of men, and appoints over it whomever He chooses.*

If a person is in a position of authority, it is by God having delegated that right to him. It is a divine privilege, and divine occupation.

We are to submit to government.

Government has got to wake up to what its calling is.

**Divinely appointed representation of God.**

They need to know that. That's a heavy responsibility.

All rulers, then, have authority delegated from God.

**V 6**, *For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God's ministers attending continually to this very thing.*

The service of ruling, the service of leading people, protecting them, collecting their taxes, doing their duty. all civil matters for the public good.

When we have a chance and an opportunity to choose officials, we need to choose those who are competent and committed to that.

But if I had my choice between a nice Christian and good, unsaved heart surgeon, I had taken a good, unsaved heart surgeon. The Christian might mean well, but I'd rather survive.

There may come a point in government where our choice is between a competent person and an incompetent person.

There may be times, even, when the Christian is the incompetent person, and unfaithful to what he should be doing. We must be careful that we understand who it is we are selecting.

We want those people who do attend themselves continually to this matter, who understand something of the dilemma of Moses.

**Exodus chapter 18**, who couldn't get all the work done. He looked at everything that he had to do in judging Israel, and he just couldn't handle it.

That is when his father-in-law came along and said, "You got to divide the responsibility up."

Moses gave himself to his father's advice and selected people to handle all the varying responsibilities, divided up the load, and was able to do it and do it well.

Government is called upon to do what it does well, to attend itself continually to the responsibility of ruling and protecting its people.

To recognize that they are what they are because God has put them there, and they need to know that.

They are delegated to that responsibility by divine authority, and they certainly should take stock of a divine standard in their function, and they ought to be faithful, knowing their accountability is to God in that sense.

Scripture is explicit about the kind of people they are to be who are in leadership in government.

When we read about all those prophets in the Old Testament, we find that they spoke not only to Israel, but to all the nations around Israel.

They were calling for leaders of all different nations to conform to a divine standard. It wasn't just Israel, not at all.

**Jeremiah 1:9-10**, *Then the Lord put forth His hand and touched my mouth, and the Lord said to me: "Behold, I have put My words in your mouth. <sup>10</sup> See, I have this day set you over the nations and over the kingdoms, To root out and to pull down, To destroy and to throw down, To build and to plant."*

Jeremiah's message went far beyond just Israel. God required things of all national leaders, not just those in Israel.

**What does God require of the rulers of nations?**

**God requires them to know that they serve a divine purpose.**

It was God who said to Nebuchadnezzar, you are going to learn the hard way that God is the Most High Ruler who gives the kingdom to those He wills.

Any ruler from the president down to a local assemblyman needs to know that his responsibility is a God-given privilege. They need to know that.

The prophets made it very clear that God gives the kingdom to whomsoever He will.

It's at least three or four times in Daniel.

It's repeated in Jeremiah.

The prophets call leadership to is to be humble, serious, diligent, loyal to truth and justice.

If they really know they serve a divine purpose, they ought to serve in a manner that reflects that knowledge.

**Isaiah 13:9-11**, *Behold, the day of the Lord comes, Cruel, with both wrath and fierce anger, To lay the land desolate; And He will destroy its sinners from it. <sup>10</sup>For the stars of heaven and their constellations Will not give their light; The sun will be darkened in its going forth, And the moon will not cause its light to shine. <sup>11</sup>"I will punish the world for its evil, And the wicked for their iniquity; I will halt the arrogance of the proud, And will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.*

**Isaiah 14:4-6**, *that you will take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say: "How the oppressor has ceased, The golden city*

*ceased! <sup>5</sup> The Lord has broken the staff of the wicked, The sceptre of the rulers; <sup>6</sup> He who struck the people in wrath with a continual stroke, He who ruled the nations in anger, Is persecuted and no one hinders.*

God has come in in sweeping judgment against the king and the leaders.

### **Why?**

**Isaiah 14:11**, *Your pomp is brought down to Sheol, And the sound of your stringed instruments; The maggot is spread under you, And worms cover you.'*

No place in government for ambition and pride and self-seeking.

Daniel rebuked Nebuchadnezzar for his pride.

**Daniel 4:25-27**, *They shall drive you from men, your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make you eat grass like oxen. They shall wet you with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over you, till you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses. <sup>26</sup> "And inasmuch as they gave the command to leave the stump and roots of the tree, your kingdom shall be assured to you, after you come to know that Heaven rules. <sup>27</sup> Therefore, O king, let my advice be acceptable to you; break off your sins by being righteous, and your iniquities by showing mercy*

*to the poor. Perhaps there may be a lengthening of your prosperity.”*

- He rebuked Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 4:27 for oppressing the poor.
- He pronounced judgment on Belshazzar for pride and failure to glorify God.

God indicts the leaders beyond Israel.

While we submit to our rulers and our rulers are called to an accountability before God also.

- We are going to be faithful.
- We are going to be the right kind of citizens.
- We are going submit.

But when it is a question of morality, evil, vice, wickedness, self-seeking, and so forth.

The prophets teach that they should maintain order by a just and firm enforcement of the law.

The prophets indict the nations for failing to enforce the law.

**Jeremiah 34:8-11**, *This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord, after King Zedekiah had made a covenant with all the people who were at Jerusalem to proclaim liberty to*

*them:<sup>9</sup> that every man should set free his male and female slave—a Hebrew man or woman—that no one should keep a Jewish brother in bondage.<sup>10</sup> Now when all the princes and all the people, who had entered into the covenant, heard that everyone should set free his male and female slaves, that no one should keep them in bondage anymore, they obeyed and let them go.<sup>11</sup> But afterward they changed their minds and made the male and female slaves return, whom they had set free, and brought them into subjection as male and female slaves.*

There was no enforcement of the law. Because there was no enforcement.

**Jeremiah 34:16,** *Then you turned around and profaned My name, and every one of you brought back his male and female slaves, whom you had set at liberty, at their pleasure, and brought them back into subjection, to be your male and female slaves.'*

**Jeremiah 34:22,** *Behold, I will command,' says the Lord, 'and cause them to return to this city. They will fight against it and take it and burn it with fire; and I will make the cities of Judah a desolation without inhabitant.' "*

One of the reasons for the terrible captivity that came was because of the fact that they were not enforcing the law. They

were not enforcing the covenants that they had made. Leaders are responsible to enforce the law, firmly and justly.

**Leaders are not to seek their own welfare.**

They are not to be concerned and preoccupied with their own welfare, their own position.

**Jeremiah 22:13-17**, *“Woe to him who builds his house by unrighteousness And his chambers by injustice, Who uses his neighbour’s service without wages And gives him nothing for his work, <sup>14</sup> Who says, ‘I will build myself a wide house with spacious chambers, And cut out windows for it, Panelling it with cedar And painting it with vermilion.’ <sup>15</sup> “Shall you reign because you enclose yourself in cedar? Did not your father eat and drink, And do justice and righteousness? Then it was well with him. <sup>16</sup> He judged the cause of the poor and needy; Then it was well. Was not this knowing Me?” says the Lord. <sup>17</sup> “Yet your eyes and your heart are for nothing but your covetousness, For shedding innocent blood, And practicing oppression and violence.”*

Where you have a leader who is covetous and self-seeking, violent, oppressive, the judgment of God falls.

They are not to seek their own welfare at the expense of others. There are leaders around the world that do that. They are under the condemnation of Scripture.

### **Leaders are to sympathize with the needy.**

It should be a mark of those who are in official capacity that they care for people who have needs.

All throughout the message of the prophets, a great concern with people in need.

**Isaiah 10:1-2**, *“Woe to those who decree unrighteous decrees, Who write misfortune, Which they have prescribed<sup>2</sup> To rob the needy of justice, And to take what is right from the poor of My people, That widows may be their prey, And that they may rob the fatherless.*

Israel had leaders that were unbelievably brutal, taking things away from people who had absolutely nothing, depriving the poor and the needy and so forth.

**Amos 2:6-7**, *Thus says the Lord: “For three transgressions of Israel, and for four, I will not turn away its punishment, Because they sell the righteous for silver, And the poor for a pair of sandals.<sup>7</sup> They pant after the dust of the earth which is on the head of the poor, And pervert the way of the humble. A man and his father go in to the same girl, To defile My holy name.*

### **What is a faithful leader to do?**

1. To know he serves divine purpose.

2. To be humble, serious, diligent, and loyal to truth and justice.
3. To be sure that he maintains order with a just and firm commitment to law enforcement.
4. He must not seek his own welfare.
5. He must sympathize with the needy.

### **Leaders must treat others with kindness.**

There should be a spirit and an attitude of basic decency toward people. This, of course, is violated by the tyrants of the world, the murderous Idi Amins, etc.,

Amos has so much to say about that.

**Amos 1:13**, *Thus says the Lord: "For three transgressions of the people of Ammon, and for four, I will not turn away its punishment, Because they ripped open the women with child in Gilead, That they might enlarge their territory.*

They ripped up the women with child in Gilead. They found pregnant women and just ripped open their womb, their wombs. Horrible things. Not even basic decency.

### **Leaders must speak truth.**

God hates lying lips.

**Amos 2:4-5**, *Thus says the Lord: "For three transgressions of Judah, and for four, I will not turn away its punishment, Because they have despised the law of the Lord, And have not kept His commandments. Their lies lead them astray, Lies which their fathers followed. <sup>5</sup> But I will send a fire upon Judah, And it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem."*

Concerned with indicting the leaders for their lying. Their lying tongues.

**Leaders must enforce public morality.**

Leaders who serve continually in a delegated authority from God, in order to be faithful to the task, must enforce a public morality.

We see them failing to do that so much today. God sent Jonah over to Nineveh and said, "Cry against that city, for its wickedness is great before Me."

God indicted that city and all its leaders for tolerating wickedness, and God came with a promise of devastating judgment had that city not repented.

**Isaiah 13-chapter 23** that entire section is a cry against the leaders for a failure to call the people to a high moral standard.

The Scripture spells out some very specific things that leaders are to do and be involved in.

- To know they serve a divine purpose.
- To be humble, serious, diligent, loyal to truth and justice.
- To maintain order by a just and firm enforcement of the law.
- To not seek their own welfare.
- To sympathize with the needy.
- To treat others with kindness.
- To always speak the truth,
- To enforce public morality.

That's their responsibility.

We support government by paying our taxes, because we realize they are God's ministers, called to attend continually on this. If they don't attend continually on it, we are responsible to bring that to their attention.

**V 7, *Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour.***

“Render” means to give back something that you owe. You owe that.

It isn't a gift.

The word "render" is to pay back something that is a debt. That is how the word is used.

We owe the government.

It's a moral obligation.

**V 8, "Owe no man anything,"**

Includes the government.

There's no real gap in thinking between verse 7 and 8.

Pay your debt.

Taxes are debts owed.

If you don't pay, you are a robber.

*"Tribute to whom tribute."*

It's a poll tax.

It's a land tax.

They had another kind of tax called censos.

A head tax.

Every person paid that. It was a set fee for every person. That was the census. Every individual paid a flat rate.

Then they had this poll tax, which was like our income tax.

An assessment was made on your land and your property and your slaves, your capital.

The tax rate then figured out, and you were charged a certain tax. That was an income tax.

*"Custom to whom custom."*

Revenue raised by merchandise or goods. This would be duty or sales tax, anything attached to a commodity.

Pay your sales tax.

Pay your duty.

Don't smuggle things in and out.

They set tax collectors at all the crossroads, and when you were moving back and forth, and that's what Matthew did, sitting at the crossroads collecting taxes, duties, from people transferring goods here and there. Pay that.

*"Fear to whom fear."*

The word is **phobos** which we get phobia from.

It's a word that can mean anything from respect to sheer terror depending on how it's used.

Anything from terror to respect. You ought to have a healthy respect for the people who collect your taxes.

A healthy respect for your leaders, and that healthy respect translates into giving them what you owe them, realizing that they have a right to that for the service rendered.

**1 Peter 2:17**, *Honour all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.*

Fear God and honour the king.

Show them respect for the position of authority that they possess.

*"Honour to whom honour."*

Sometimes means money. "Give the money to whom the money is due,"

It can also mean respect again.

So, it's perhaps best to see here that he has two words.

One is tax.

The other is duty, income tax, duty, and then two words that demonstrate attitude.

*"Pay your taxes, pay your duty, and have respect and show honour."*

The honour here is an attitude, an attitude of respect. An attitude that says, "This is the right thing." It implies the payment of money.

**1 Timothy 5:17-18**, *Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially those who labour in the word and doctrine.* <sup>18</sup>*For the Scripture says, "You shall not*

*muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain,” and, “The labourer is worthy of his wages.”*