

Paul's Epistle to the Romans

The Rule of Love

Tevet 21, 5775; January 12, 2014

Lesson Eighteen; Romans 13

Romans 12

Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the Gentiles. (Romans 11:13)

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. (Romans 12:1)

- Rules of Conduct for Gentile Believers

Romans 13

Secular or Spiritual Authority?

Romans 13:1 Let every person be subject to the [Roman] governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God.

Cf. Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13–17; 1 Clement 61

Let every person be subject to the [Jewish] governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God.

Cf. Matthew 23:3; Deuteronomy 17

Respect for Authority

² Therefore whoever resists the [religious or secular] authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment.

³ For [generally speaking] rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval,

⁴ for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer.

⁵ Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience.

⁶ For because of this you also pay [secular and religious] taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing.

⁷ Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed.

Cf. Matthew 22:17 and parallels

The Greatest Commandment

⁸ Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law.

Cf. Mark 12:31, Matthew 7:12, etc.;

The Rule of Love (One to Another)

⁹ For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet," and any other commandment [in the Torah], are summed up in this word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

¹⁰ Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

Put On Righteousness

¹¹ Besides this you know the [present] time, that the hour has come for you to wake from [spiritual] sleep. For salvation [of the final redemption and the advent of the kingdom] is nearer to us now than when we first believed.

¹² The night [of spiritual darkness, sin, and ignorance] is far gone; the day [of redemption and spiritual revelation] is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness [consisting of sinful ways] and put on the armor of light [consisting of righteous deeds].

¹³ Let us walk properly as in the daytime [i.e. as is befitting for godly people], not in [typical Roman nightlife behaviors like] orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy.

Put On Messiah

¹⁴ But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

Cf. 1 Corinthians 15:53, 2 Corinthians 5:2; Galatians 3:27; Ephesians 4:24, 6:11-15, Colossians 3:10-14, 1 Thessalonians 5:8.