

ROMANS

*A Daily Devotional
Study Guide*



Monday

Study: Romans 13:1, Ezra 1:1-11, Daniel 2:20-23

Reading: Exodus 3:1-22

Memory: Matthew 5:25

Romans 13:1

What are you supposed to be “subject to”?

What does it mean to be subject to?

****The word means to obey, submit, to bring under control. The Greek word was a military term that referred to troops falling into their proper military order.*

Who is the One who gives all authority?

****This verse clearly indicates that God not only allows authorities to be in place, but He Himself is the one who puts them in authority.*

Ezra 1:1-11

****Background: In 722 B.C. the northern tribes of Israel were destroyed by the Assyrians because of the great wickedness of the people of Israel. God spared the nation of Judah for a little longer, but their wickedness finally led to their destruction which began in 605 B.C. when Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonian empire first invaded Judah. In 586 B.C. the Babylonians completely destroyed Jerusalem and decimated the land of Judah. Around 70 years later, after the Medo-Persian empire defeated the Babylonian empire, king Cyrus took the throne.*

What was being fulfilled by the declaration of Cyrus (vs 1)?

****Jeremiah 25:12 and 29:10 both state that after 70 years of exile, the people of Judah would be allowed to go back to Jerusalem to begin the rebuilding process. Jeremiah lived and wrote around the time of the destruction of Judah.*

Who was God using to fulfill His Word (vs 1)?

****Cyrus was not a godly king, yet God was working in his heart, moving him to do what He wanted to be done.*

What did Cyrus realize about his ability as a ruler (vs 2)?

What had God revealed to Cyrus (vs 2)?

What command did Cyrus give (vs 3)?

What was the response to the command of Cyrus (vs 5)?

What did God do to help assist the Israelites in the rebuilding of the temple (vs 6)?

What did Cyrus also do for the Israelites (vs 7-10)?

****For a king to give up so much wealth and to help rebuild a kingdom that wasn't his own was virtually unheard of before this.*

Daniel 2:20-23

****In this passage, God had revealed the meaning of Nebuchadnezzar's dream.*

Why did Daniel praise God (vs 20)?

What did Daniel declare about kings (vs 21)?

What does verse 22 reveal about the knowledge and working of God?

Why was Daniel thankful to God (vs 23)?

Personal Application

What can you learn about God from this passage?

What difference can this make in your everyday life?

Tuesday

Study: Romans 13:2, Daniel 1:1-21

Reading: I Samuel 26:1-25

Memory: Matthew 5:25

Romans 13:2

When you choose to resist your earthly authority, who are you choosing to resist?

What will be the result for choosing to resist earthly authority?

What do you think it means to resist (ESV)?

****The Greek word means to oppose, to be hostile toward, to show hostility towards.*

Daniel 1:1-21

When did Daniel live (vs 1)?

****You read yesterday how the kingdom of Judah was invaded by Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonian empire. He first invaded Judah in 605 B.C. This was in the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim.*

What did God do to Israel (vs 2)? Why?

****Israel had been involved in great wickedness and failed to repent after repeated warnings, God raised up Nebuchadnezzar to come and defeat Israel.*

What did Nebuchadnezzar command to be done while taking valuables from Judah (vs 3-4)? Why do you think he did this?

What was the plan for these boys (vs 5-7)?

What did Daniel decide that he did not want to do (vs 8)?

****Some of the food that was offered would have been against the Jewish dietary laws and it would have been wrong for Daniel to eat this. Most likely, the food was also offered to idols which would have been an offense to the Israelites and against God's law. Daniel didn't want to compromise any area of his obedience towards God so he made the difficult choice not to have part in any of the king's food or drink.*

How did Daniel deal with the situation (vs 8b)?

How does this give you insight on the first step of dealing with your authorities when you don't agree with their policies?

What did God do for Daniel in this situation (vs 9)?

Why was the chief of the eunuch's fearful of giving into Daniel's request (vs 10)?

What plan did Daniel come up with (vs 11-13)?

****It does need to be noted that a "healthy" person in those days was viewed a little differently. In today's society, a person who lived on water and vegetables would be considered very healthy and in most cases, the person who sticks to that diet is very thin and slender. This was not considered healthy in those days. Most people were thin because they only had vegetables and water to live on. Those who were more filled out (not fat) were considered more healthy.*

What did the prince of the eunuchs agree to (vs 14)?

What was the result (vs 15-16)?

What did God do for Daniel and his friends who took a stand with him (vs 17-21)?

What lesson about not resisting your authority can you learn from Daniel?

Personal Application

What can I learn about God from this passage?

How can I apply what I have learned to my everyday life?

Wednesday

Study: Romans 13:3-4, Numbers 12:1-16

Reading: Numbers 16:1-50

Memory: Matthew 5:25

Romans 13:3-4

****As you read these verses you may want to argue a little with Paul and talk about how corrupt your government is today. Before you do that think about who Paul was writing to. He was writing to the Roman church who lived in the same city as the emperor of the whole Roman empire. He also wrote during a time period where persecution was common and emperors were often led by selfish ambition and personal glory.*

What are rulers not (vs 3a)?

What do you think "but to bad" (ESV) means (vs 3a)?

****God has ordained authority to help put fear in the mind of those who are bent on evil. Though there are a few exceptions, in general, those who do evil to others are kept in check by most governments, even wicked ones.*

How is a fear of authority a good thing (vs 3b)?

When you submit to your earthly authority, what is the end result (vs 3b)?

How are your earthly leaders described (vs 4a)?

Why is this hard to remember at times?

****We live in a society where people complain about everything. If you don't believe this, just eavesdrop on conversations around you at a restaurant. You will find much of the conversation with many people is based on complaining. It is easy to do this about your government officials and complain about what you don't like rather than focusing on the good that they are trying to accomplish. Even ungodly rulers who have a liberal agenda still push for some things that are good and wholesome.*

What should be your mind set if you are doing wrong (vs 4b)?

What is re-emphasized at the end of verse 4?

Why do you think Paul emphasized the fact that it was God's wrath that was being carried out on those who chose not to submit?

Numbers 12:1-16

What did Miriam and Aaron do (vs 1)?

****Miriam was the sister of Moses and Aaron was the brother of Moses.*

What reasoning did they use (vs 2)?

How was Moses described (vs 3)?

****The idea of meekness was humility with power. Though Moses was in charge, he did not lord his power and authority over the people. He led with love and compassion.*

What did God say to the three of them when He called them to stand before Him (vs 4-8)?

How did God punish Miriam (vs 10)?

****It is not clear why only Miriam received this, but it is assumed that she led the complaint against Moses.*

What did Aaron do (vs 11-12)?

What did Moses do (vs 13)?

What was the end result (vs 14-16)?

Personal Application

What can I learn about God from this passage?

How can I apply what I have learned to my everyday life?

Thursday

Study: Romans 13:5, I Peter 2:13-17, I Timothy 2:1-4

Reading: Acts 5:17-42

Memory: Matthew 5:25

Romans 13:5

What is emphasized again at the beginning of verse 5?

What will you avoid if you submit to your earthly authority (vs 5)?

What do you think the end of verse 5 means?

****God has created all men with a conscience to help them have an awareness of what is right and what is wrong. This conscience is not the ultimate determining factor of right and wrong since the conscience can be corrupted (I Timothy 4:2). For a believer, the Holy Spirit works together with the conscience to help direct us to do what is right. The verse describes how choosing not to submit to authority will cause your conscience to flare up and leave you with that nagging feeling of guilt.*

I Peter 2:13-17

What are you to be subject to (vs 13)? Why?

****While Paul revealed that you are to be subject for the sake of your conscience, Peter says that you are to be subject for the sake of the Lord. Not only will you avoid the wrath of the Lord and live free of guilt as Paul does, but you will also be a testimony for your Lord when you choose to live in submission. Part of the ability to submit comes from the proper perspective of why you are submitting.*

Who are we to submit to (vs 13-14)?

Why does Peter say that God ordained government (vs 14)?

What does Peter make clear about obeying your authorities (vs 15a)?

****There are many people who struggle in life, wondering what God's will is and, though I do understand that this struggle is often related to His plan for their future, there are many things in Scripture where it is clear what God's will is for all believers every day.*

What will your choice to submit to your authorities do (vs 15b)?

What does it mean to live as people who are free (vs 16a)?

****As a follower of Christ, you are not to view your Christian life as a trap or something that suppresses you. Even your choice to submit to your government should not make you feel trapped in having to follow laws. Obeying God's commands with the proper attitude actually gives you spiritual and emotional freedom.*

What should you not use your freedom for (vs 16b)?

****There are some people who think that freedom in Christ means they can do whatever they want, but true freedom actually comes from full submission to the will of God.*

What does verse 17 remind us to do?

I Timothy 2:1-4

What did Paul urge (vs 1)?

Who specifically did Paul mention for you to pray for (vs 2a)?

Why did Paul see this as a necessity (vs 2b)?

What does Paul say is pleasing to God (vs 2-3)?

Do you pray for your leaders or complain about your leaders?

Personal Application

What can I learn about God from this passage?

How can I apply what I have learned to my everyday life?

Friday

Study: Romans 13:6-7, Matthew 17:24-27, 22:15-22

Reading: Titus 3:1-11

Memory: Matthew 5:25

Romans 13:6-7

What are you to do as a citizen of this earth (vs 6a)?

Why are you to do this (vs 6b)?

****You have been repeatedly reminded through the reading this week that it is God who ordained authority. I believe the Bible emphasizes this because it is very easy to forget that God is the one who places kings, presidents and rulers in their positions.*

What are you instructed to pay (vs 7a)?

List the four things Paul says we are to give and explain how you can do each:

1.

2.

****This is the idea of a toll or a customs tax.*

3.

4.

Why is it not easy to do all these four at times?

Why is it important that you do all of these?

Matthew 17:24-27

What did the tax collectors ask Peter about (vs 24)?

****It is not clear what tax these men were referring to, but this was most likely the yearly tax that each Jewish male was required to pay to help maintain the temple.*

What did Peter answer (vs 25)? Do you think Peter was sure?

****From the question that Jesus asked Peter, it appears that he was unsure of what Jesus thought about paying a tax.*

What question did Jesus ask (vs 25)?

****Jesus was declaring that He was the Son of God by saying that rulers don't ask their children to pay them taxes.*

Why was Jesus going to pay this tax (vs 27)?

How can your paying of taxes and submitting to your government avoid offending others?

Matthew 22:15-22

What were the Pharisees attempting to do to Jesus (vs 15)?

What question did they ask Jesus (vs 17)?

****Many of the Jews despised having the Romans govern over them and they did not like having to pay taxes to a nation they hated.*

What did Jesus ask when they showed Him a coin (vs 19-20)?

What did Jesus teach about taxes (vs 21)?

How does this reveal that you as a heaven bound creature should live here on this earth?

Personal Application

What can you learn about God from this passage?

How can you apply what you have learned to your everyday life?

“The Importance of Rules”

Study: Romans 13:1-7

Reading: I Peter 2:13-25, I Timothy 2:1-6

Memory: Matthew 5:25

My wife and I facilitated our first parenting class when our first child was only 6 months old. We didn't know much about parenting at the time, but taking this class before we started raising our children was immensely helpful. The video series we went through emphasize the need for parents to expect children to obey, and to obey right away. This lesson is something we attempted to put into practice, and though we had some difficulties at times, teaching our children to respect and obey authority reaped wonderful benefits as our children grew.

Today, we are going to see how we as believers need to be different than the world. We need to teach our children to obey and this is modeled by our obedience to God.

What Does the Bible Say?

The Roman church was right in the middle of the seat of power for the whole Roman empire. A Roman empire that wasn't always kind to Christians and often persecuted them. It would be very easy for new converts to think that they were at liberty not to obey the government because they were now under the authority of God. As Paul wrote to them, he wanted to let them know that their earthly authority was given by God. It is God that has allowed every earthly leader to be placed into their positions and God expects His children to obey the authorities that He has given them. When we choose to disobey our earthly authority, we are choosing to disobey God, unless those commands are in violation to God's Word (vs 1-2).

In most governmental situations, those who choose to obey will win favor from their leaders. God established government to help correct those who are doing what is wrong, not to punish those who do what is right. God knows the nature of man and knows that men needs some type of order in their lives. He knows that left alone without rules, the natural man will

cause havoc and continual problems. Though not everyone likes rules, God knows that they are one of the best things for us (vs 3-4).

As believers, we need to follow the laws that are given to us not just to avoid punishment, but because it is what God desires us to do. God has given every man a conscience to assist them in determining right and wrong. The Holy Spirit often works through that conscience to help us make the right choices and understand when we are making the wrong choices (vs 5).

The same arguments used above are also true of the taxes that the government asks us to pay. Since the government is ordained by God, we need to give our share to help uphold the God ordained institution of government, even if we don't agree with what they are doing. Not only are we to pay our taxes, but we are also to show honor and respect to those God has placed over us (vs 6-7).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Do you sometimes find it hard to obey your government when they make up rules that you don't like? In general, the majority of governmental leaders are not believers and therefore don't make decisions that are always favorable to Christians, but that is no excuse for disobedience. Paul wanted his readers to step back and look at the bigger picture of life. He wanted them to understand that God sovereignly placed leaders into leadership positions to help fulfill His plan and purpose. God wants men to understand that He was in control and that He wants us to be an example of Christ to their government. You as a believer are to bring glory to God in all that you do. Your obedience to your authorities will bring glory to God. Christians should be the best citizens. Believers should be the ones who treat their government with love and respect. Do you?

Suggestions for Prayer

- * Thank God for your governmental leaders.
- * Ask God to help you be a testimony to your government.
- * Praise God because He is in control of all things.

Thought for the day

Sunday

Reading: Romans 12:14-21

(Take time to read this passage again, letting the truths you have studied this week sink into your mind. You are encouraged to go online and read it through a few times in different versions.)

www.biblegateway.com

Bible Memory

Matthew 5:10 "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 "Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you. 13 "You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet. 14 "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. 17 "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. 18 For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. 19 Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20 For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. 21 "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.' 22 But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, 'You fool!' will be liable to the hell of fire. 23 So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, 24 leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. 25 Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison.