"Let Every Soul Be Subject"

Settling Romans 13:1-7 and What "Ordained of God" Actually Claims

Tests Romans 13:1-7 against its own context, its Greek words and the rest of Scripture: what "ordained of God" claims, where submission stops, and the weight of every argument.

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Author: John Lobota

Research Assistant: Claude Cowork

papertiq@bellsouth.net

Anchor Passage

> **Romans 9:17** *For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.*

Table of Contents

Introduction.....3

The question, the three claims inside it, how every argument is weighed, the opposing cases at full strength, and what changed in this edition.

Chapter 1 — Not a Change of Subject.....7

Romans 12:17-21 and 13:1-8 read straight through, and the words Paul carries across the chapter break.

Chapter 2 — What the Text Says, Word by Word.....10

Authority, rank, arrangement, servant, sword, tribute and conscience, and why "the powers" are not unseen spirits here.

Chapter 3 — What "Ordained of God" Does and Does Not Claim.....13

Nebuchadnezzar, Pilate, Pharaoh, Israel's kings in Hosea, and the devil's boast, weighed together.

Chapter 4 — The Limit Scripture Supplies.....17

Where submission stops, the examples Scripture commends, and the harder question of resisting a ruler.

Chapter 5 — Written Under Nero.....21

Date, place, the early years of Nero's reign, and Peter and Titus on the same subject.

Chapter 6 — What This Settles.....22

The reading stated plainly, its weight, and what would change it.

Appendix A — The Weight of Every Argument in This Study.....24

Every argument tabulated with its rating, its direction, and what the opposing reading fairly answers, including what this edition withdrew or corrected.

Copyright.....26

Terms of distribution.

Sources Consulted.....26

Texts, lexicons, cross-references and historical sources, and how each was used.

Introduction

A. The question, and the three claims inside it

Romans 13:1-7 can look out of place on a first reading. Romans 1 to 11 teach doctrine: sin, justification, grace, Israel, and the mercy of God. Romans 12 turns to how believers live, and it opens at the highest level: **"present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God" (Romans 12:1)**. It goes on to love without pretence, blessing persecutors, and refusing to take revenge. Then, with no warning, chapter 13 begins:

> **Romans 13:1** *Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.*

Read alone, this looks like a sudden turn from the life of the church to the business of the state. And its flat claim, "the powers that be are ordained of God," looks as if it could be stretched to approve any ruler who seizes and holds power, however he got it and however he uses it. That stretch has been used to silence Christians under tyrants, and it is used today by political movements that want God's name on their side. This study tests what the passage actually claims, from the passage itself, its Greek words, and the way the rest of Scripture uses the same kind of language.

The question breaks into three claims. They are named here and referred to by these names throughout.

- **Claim C — Continuity.** Romans 13:1-7 is not a change of subject. It continues the argument of Romans 12:17-21: believers must not avenge themselves, because God repays, and in this present age civil government is one of the means by which He does it.
- **Claim O — Office, not approval.** "Ordained of God" means that governing authority as such stands under God's ordering of history. It is not God's approval of the man who holds the office or of what he does with it.
- **Claim L — Limit.** Submission to government is real and owed for conscience' sake, but it stops where a ruler commands what God forbids or forbids what God commands. The limit is in Romans 13 itself, not only in other passages.

Here is where the study comes out, so that no reader is kept waiting. Claim C is a **strong inference**: Paul carries the same words across the chapter break, and the Treasury of Scripture Knowledge draws the same link. Claim O is a **strong inference** from the way Scripture uses this kind of language of Nebuchadnezzar, Pilate, Pharaoh and the kings of Israel. Claim L is a **direct statement** in its first half (Acts 5:29) and a **strong inference** in its second (that Romans 13:3-4 itself contains the limit).

Weighing it: Framing only — takes no side on any of the three claims.

In short. Three questions: is chapter 13 a change of subject, does "ordained" mean approved, and does submission have a limit. The answers are no, no, and yes.

B. How arguments are weighed in this study

Every argument carries a stated weight, in five terms, used with exactly these meanings throughout. Appendix A gathers every one in a single table.

- **Direct statement** — Scripture says it in so many words. The only question is what the words mean.
- **Strong inference** — It follows closely from what Scripture says. The alternative has to strain against the text.
- **Reasonable inference** — It is the more natural reading, but an honest and careful reader can take it otherwise.
- **Corroboration only** — It agrees with this study's position, but it agrees roughly as well with the opposite one. It may be stated; it may not be leaned on.
- **Neutral** — It is often cited by one side or the other and settles nothing.

Every section ends with a short note headed **Weighing it**. Its bold first line says how strong the point is and which claim it bears on. The sentences after it say what the other reading can fairly answer. A section that argues nothing says so, with a label such as *Framing only*, *Opposing case*, *stated* or *Concession*.

Weighing it: Method, not argument.

In short. Every point is labelled with how strong it is and which claim it supports, so the reader can weigh it for himself.

C. The opposing cases, stated first

This passage is read wrongly in two opposite directions, and a third reading takes it somewhere else entirely. Each deserves to be set out at its full strength before anything is said against it.

From one side: "ordained" means approved, and submission is unconditional.

1. **The words are absolute.** "There is no power but of God." "Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation" (Romans 13:2). Paul names no exceptions.
2. **Peter goes further. "Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward" (1 Peter 2:18)**. If submission is owed to harsh masters, it is owed to harsh rulers.

3. **David would not touch Saul.** With Saul in his power, David said, **"The LORD forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the LORD's anointed" (1 Samuel 24:6)**, though Saul was trying to kill him.

From the other side: some power is not of God at all, and a tyrant may be resisted.

4. **Hosea 8:4.** Of Israel's kings, God says: **"They have set up kings, but not by me: they have made princes, and I knew it not" (Hosea 8:4)**. Here are kings God plainly says He did not set up. How then is there "no power but of God"?
5. **The devil's boast.** Showing Jesus the kingdoms of the world, the devil said, **"All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it" (Luke 4:6)**. In Revelation, **"the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority" (Revelation 13:2)**. Both use the same Greek word for "power" (*exousia*) that Romans 13 uses. Some power, on this view, comes from the adversary.
6. **God's people struck down tyrants.** God raised up Ehud as a deliverer, and Ehud killed Eglon, the king of Moab who ruled Israel (Judges 3:15, 21). God anointed Jehu and told him, **"thou shalt smite the house of Ahab thy master" (2 Kings 9:7)**. If God commissioned the overthrow of rulers, Romans 13 cannot forbid all resistance.

A third reading: "the powers" are spiritual powers.

7. Paul uses "principalities" and "powers" elsewhere for unseen spiritual beings: **"against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world" (Ephesians 6:12)**; also Colossians 2:15. On this view, Romans 13 is really about spiritual authority, of which human rulers are only the visible face.

A fourth reading: the passage does not belong where it stands. A few scholars have thought Romans 13:1-7 so unlike its surroundings that it must be a separate piece of teaching dropped into the letter. Chapter 1 answers this.

Weighing it: Opposing case, stated. Points 1, 4 and 5 are the strongest. Point 1 rests on Paul's own words. Point 4 is God's own statement that some kings were "not by me." Point 5 uses the same Greek word. Each is answered in the chapters that follow, and none is dismissed.

In short. The passage is read as a blank cheque for rulers, as having exceptions so wide it means little, as being about spirits, or as not belonging where it is. All four are answered.

D. The crux

The opposing cases from both sides turn on one question: **when Scripture says a ruler's power is "of God," does it mean God approves of him, or that God rules over history and nothing happens outside His permission and purpose?** If it means approval, Hosea 8:4 contradicts Romans 13:1, and every tyrant has God's blessing. If it means God's sovereign ordering, both passages can be true together: God can permit and use a king He does not approve of. Chapter 3 tests this question directly.

Weighing it: Framing only — names the question on which Claim O depends.

In short. Does "of God" mean approved by God, or ruled over by God? Chapter 3 answers.

E. What changed in this edition

This is the third edition of this study. The second edition changed only its formatting. In keeping with this library's rule that error is not left standing, the corrections in this edition are listed here and in Appendix A rather than made silently.

- **The opposing cases are now stated in full.** The earlier edition did not mention Hosea 8:4, the devil's claim in Luke 4:6, Revelation 13:2, or the overthrow of Eglon and the house of Ahab. Introduction §C now states them, and Chapters 3 and 4 answer them.
- **A Latin and Greek slip is corrected.** The earlier edition said that *machaira*, the Greek word for "sword," was "the same word Roman writers used" for the magistrate's right of capital judgment. Roman writers wrote Latin, and their word was *gladius*. The point stands in its corrected form: the sword stood for the power of capital punishment, which the Romans called *ius gladii*, "the right of the sword."
- **"The same act" is now "the same kind of language."** The earlier edition said God's giving the kingdom to Nebuchadnezzar was "the same act Romans 13:1 calls 'ordained.'" Daniel is written in Aramaic, and the word is not Paul's Greek word *tasso*. The comparison is between the same kind of language, not the same word.
- **"Never" is narrowed.** The earlier edition said Scripture's examples of disobedience to rulers were "never" anything but refusals to sin. Rahab's hiding of the spies and the hiding of the infant Moses are now faced in Chapter 4.
- **Tradition is marked as tradition.** The earlier edition said Nero's persecution "would eventually claim Paul's own life." That comes from early church tradition, not Scripture, and is now labelled so.
- **Overstated words are replaced by stated weights.** Words such as "decisive," "settles" and "rules out" are replaced by the weights defined in §B.
- **New evidence is added for Claim C.** Paul carries two more words across the chapter break: "wrath" (12:19; 13:4, 5) and "dues" and "owe" (13:7, 8). Titus 3:1 is added to Chapter 2, Hosea 13:11 to Chapter 3, and 1 Samuel 24:6 to Chapter 4.
- **Internal notes are removed.** The earlier edition ended with suggested changes to another study in this library. Those changes have been made, and the notes are gone.
- **A small correction.** Daniel 4 says "seven times" shall pass over Nebuchadnezzar, not "seven seasons."

None of these corrections changes the study's conclusion. Several of them make it stronger; some change how strongly a point may be stated.

Weighing it: Concession — every item corrects, narrows or adds to the earlier edition.

In short. The conclusion stands. The earlier edition left out the other side's best verses and made a few slips. They are corrected here in the open.

Chapter 1 — Not a Change of Subject

A. The whole unit, read without the break

Chapter divisions are not part of what Paul wrote. They were added to the Bible about twelve hundred years later, and they are useful for finding a place, never for deciding what a passage means. So the first question is whether Romans 13 really begins a new subject, or whether a chapter number has been put in the middle of a single argument.

Here is the end of chapter 12:

> **Romans 12:17** *Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.*
>
> **Romans 12:18** *If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.*
>
> **Romans 12:19** *Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.*
>
> **Romans 12:20** *Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.*
>
> **Romans 12:21** *Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.*

And here is what follows it:

> **Romans 13:1** *Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.*
>
> **Romans 13:2** *Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.*
>
> **Romans 13:3** *For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:*
>
> **Romans 13:4** *For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.*
>
> **Romans 13:5** *Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.*
>
> **Romans 13:6** *For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.*
>
> **Romans 13:7** *Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.*
>
> **Romans 13:8** *Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.*

Romans 12:1 to 13:14 is one long stretch of practical teaching. It runs from worship (12:1-2), through gifts in the body (12:3-8), to a dense run of commands about love and enemies (12:9-21). Then come rulers (13:1-7), then love of neighbour (13:8-10), then the coming day (13:11-14). Romans 14 turns to a

new question, food and disputed matters among believers. Read this way, civil government is not an island. It is one part of a single section about how a believer stands toward other people: enemies, rulers, and neighbours.

Weighing it: Reasonable inference — for Claim C. The section runs naturally from enemies to rulers to neighbours. The other reading can fairly answer that a writer can change subject within one practical section, so the flow alone does not prove a link.

In short. Read without the chapter number, chapter 13 sits inside one long section on how believers treat other people.

B. "Vengeance" and "revenger"

The strongest link is in Paul's own words. In Romans 12:19, quoting Deuteronomy 32:35, he writes, **"Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord" (Romans 12:19)**. The Greek word for "vengeance" is *ekdikesis*:

> **Strong's G1557** — *ekdikesis; from 1556; vindication, retribution: (a-, re-)venge(-ance), punishment.*

A few sentences later, describing the ruler, Paul writes, **"he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil" (Romans 13:4)**. The Greek word for "revenger" is *ekdikos*:

> **Strong's G1558** — *ekdikos; from 1537 and 1349; carrying justice out, i.e. a punisher: a (re-)venger.*

The two words share one root. A reader of the Greek hears the echo at once; a reader of the English, crossing a chapter number, does not. Paul has just told the church in Rome that vengeance belongs to the Lord and they must not take it themselves. In his next paragraph he names the ruler, by the same root word, as the one who carries out that vengeance on evildoers in the present age.

Weighing it: Strong inference — for Claim C. The shared root is a fact of the Greek text, and it falls exactly where the chapter break hides it. The other reading can fairly answer that a shared root can be coincidence when the two words are common, though these two are not common and stand only a few sentences apart.

In short. "Vengeance" in 12:19 and "revenger" in 13:4 are the same word-family in Greek. Paul is answering his own command not to take revenge.

C. "Wrath," three times

The link does not rest on one pair of words. Romans 12:19 says, "give place unto wrath." Romans 13:4 says the ruler is "a revenger to execute wrath." Romans 13:5 says, "ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake." All three are the same Greek word, *orge*:

> **Strong's G3709** — *orge; properly, desire (as a reaching forth or excitement of the mind), i.e. (by analogy), violent passion (ire, or (justifiable) abhorrence); by implication punishment: anger, indignation, vengeance, wrath.*

The believer is told to "give place unto wrath," to step aside and leave it to God. The next paragraph says where that wrath goes: the ruler executes it on the evildoer, and the believer submits partly because of it. The thread of "wrath" runs straight across the chapter break.

Weighing it: Strong inference — for Claim C. The same word in three verses on both sides of the break is hard to explain as chance. The other reading can fairly answer that "wrath" in 12:19 may be God's wrath at the last judgment and in 13:4 a ruler's punishment now, so the word is the same but the referent may differ. This study grants that, and holds that Paul's point is exactly that the one is carried out in part through the other.

In short. "Wrath" appears in 12:19, 13:4 and 13:5. Leave wrath to God, Paul says, and then shows where it goes.

D. "Dues" and "owe"

The other edge of the passage is joined the same way. Romans 13:7 closes the section on rulers: **"Render therefore to all their dues" (Romans 13:7)**. Romans 13:8 opens the next: **"Owe no man any thing, but to love one another" (Romans 13:8)**. In Greek, "dues" is *opheile* and "owe" is *opheilo*, the noun and the verb of one word:

> **Strong's G3782** — *opheile; from 3784; indebtedness, i.e. (concretely) a sum owed; figuratively, obligation: debt, due.*

Paul does not close one subject and open an unrelated one. He takes the language of debt he has just used for taxes and honour, and turns it at once to the one debt that is never paid off: love.

Weighing it: Strong inference — for Claim C. Noun and verb of the same word stand in back-to-back sentences. The other reading can fairly answer that this joins 13:7 to 13:8, not 12:19 to 13:1, so it shows the passage is bound to what follows rather than to what precedes. This study agrees, and uses it only to show that 13:1-7 is woven into its setting on both sides.

In short. "Dues" in 13:7 and "owe" in 13:8 are one word in Greek. The section on rulers is joined to what follows as well as to what precedes.

E. The same link in the Treasury of Scripture Knowledge

The Treasury of Scripture Knowledge, this library's standing cross-reference tool, makes the same connection from the English side. At Romans 12:19, "Vengeance," its first cross-reference is Romans 13:4, followed by Deuteronomy 32:35. A tool compiled from the English text and an old tradition of cross-references draws the same link this chapter found from the Greek.

Weighing it: Corroboration only — for Claim C. It confirms the link; it does not add a new argument. The other reading can fairly answer that cross-reference tools link many verses that share an English word.

In short. The Treasury of Scripture Knowledge links "vengeance" in 12:19 to the ruler in 13:4, just as the Greek does.

F. What this shows about the "change of subject"

Romans 12:17-21 raises a practical question. If a believer may never repay evil for evil, and vengeance belongs to God alone, what restrains evildoers now? Romans 13:1-7 answers it. God's repayment of evil is not only at the last judgment. In this present age, in the ordinary course of His providence, it is carried out in part through civil authority, which Paul calls by the same words he has just used for vengeance and wrath. So chapter 13 does not leave spiritual matters behind. It names the means by which one spiritual command, "leave vengeance to God," is carried out in a fallen world. This also answers the fourth opposing reading (Introduction §C), that the passage does not belong where it stands: it is joined to its setting on both sides by Paul's own words.

Weighing it: Strong inference — for Claim C. Three pairs of words cross the break, and the Treasury of Scripture Knowledge draws the same link. The other reading can fairly answer that this shows a link of thought, not that Paul had nothing new in mind; and that is true, since the passage does add something new, an account of government.

In short. Chapter 13 is Paul's answer to chapter 12: do not avenge yourselves, because God does, and for now He uses rulers to do it.

Chapter 2 — What the Text Says, Word by Word

A. The passage in full

> **Romans 13:1** *Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.*
>
> **Romans 13:2** *Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.*
>
> **Romans 13:3** *For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:*
>
> **Romans 13:4** *For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.*
>
> **Romans 13:5** *Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.*
>
> **Romans 13:6** *For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.*
>
> **Romans 13:7** *Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.*

B. "Higher powers" — authority, not raw force

"Power" in verses 1 to 3 is the Greek word *exousia*:

> **Strong's G1849** — *exousia; from 1832 (in the sense of ability); privilege, i.e. (subjectively) force, capacity, competency, freedom, or (objectively) mastery (concretely, magistrate, superhuman, potentate, token of control), delegated influence: authority, jurisdiction, liberty, power, right, strength.*

Greek has another word for raw might, *dynamis*, and Paul does not use it here. *Exousia* is the right to act, authority given from somewhere, rather than mere strength. Paul is not telling the church to submit to whoever is strongest; he is speaking of authority. "Higher" is a form of *hyperecho*, "to hold oneself above," used as an adjective for "superior." It speaks of rank, not of the character of whoever holds the rank.

Weighing it: Strong inference — toward Claim O, that Paul speaks of authority as an office. The word's meaning is plain from Strong's. The other reading can fairly answer that *exousia* is also used of the devil's power (Luke 4:6) and of spiritual powers (Ephesians 6:12), so it does not by itself mean lawful human government. Chapter 2 §G and Chapter 3 §F take this up.

In short. "Power" here means authority, a right to rule, not mere strength.

C. "Ordained," "ordinance," "resisteth" and "be subject" — one family of words

"Ordained" in verse 1 is a form of the Greek verb *tasso*:

> **Strong's G5021** — *tasso; a prolonged form of a primary verb; to arrange in an orderly manner, i.e. assign or dispose (to a certain position or lot): addict, appoint, determine, ordain, set.*

This is the language of putting something in its place, of order and rank. It is not a word that carries praise for the person placed. The King James translators' own margin, recorded in the Treasury of Scripture Knowledge at this verse, gives the other rendering: "ordained. or, ordered."

The same root runs through the passage. "Be subject" in verse 1 is *hypotasso*, "to subordinate," literally to arrange under. "Resisteth the power" in verse 2 is *antitassomai*, "to range oneself against." "The ordinance of God" in verse 2 is *diatage*, "arrangement, institution." The ruler is arranged into his place; the subject arranges himself under it; the rebel ranges himself against the arrangement. The passage's vocabulary is about order: how authority is arranged under God.

Weighing it: Strong inference — for Claim O. The meaning of *tasso* and its family is plain in the lexicon, and the margin gives "ordered." The other reading can fairly answer that being placed by God may still imply God's favour, and that word meanings alone do not settle that question. Chapter 3 tests it against Scripture's own usage.

In short. "Ordained" means arranged or put in place. The whole passage speaks of order: the ruler set in place, the subject placed under him.

D. "Minister" — a servant of an office

Verse 4 twice calls the ruler "the minister of God," using *diakonos*:

> **Strong's G1249** — *diakonos; probably from an obsolete diako (to run on errands); an attendant, i.e. a waiter (at table or in other menial duties); specially, a Christian teacher and pastor (technically, a deacon or deaconess): deacon, minister, servant.*

It is the word used for a deacon. The ruler is God's servant in the sense that a deacon is the church's servant: he works under an assigned task and answers for how he does it. He does not own the authority. In verse 6 Paul uses a second word, *leitourgos*, "a public servant," for the same men: **"they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing" (Romans 13:6)**. Both words make the ruler a servant, not a master in his own right.

Weighing it: Strong inference — for Claim O and Claim L, that the ruler holds a task he is answerable for. Both words mean servant. The other reading can fairly answer that calling a ruler God's servant could be read as honouring him, which it does; this study's point is only that a servant is under orders.

In short. The ruler is God's servant, the same word as "deacon." He holds a task, not a possession.

E. The sword

Verse 4 names the instrument of the ruler's task: **"he beareth not the sword in vain" (Romans 13:4)**. The word is *machaira*:

> **Strong's G3162** — *machaira; a knife, i.e. dirk; figuratively, war, judicial punishment: sword.*

The sword stood for the ruler's power of judgment, up to death. The Romans had a Latin name for a governor's power of capital punishment, *ius gladii*, "the right of the sword." Paul is speaking of the real, everyday power of a Roman magistrate, not of an idea.

Weighing it: Strong inference — that verse 4 speaks of real civil punishment; this bears on Claim C and against the spiritual-powers reading. Strong's gives "judicial punishment" as a figurative sense of the word. The other reading can fairly answer that the sword may stand for force in general rather than capital punishment only. Either way it is civil power.

In short. "The sword" is the ruler's real power to punish, up to the power of death.

F. Tribute, custom and conscience

Verses 6 and 7 stay concrete. "Tribute" is *phoros*, "a tax (properly, an individual assessment on persons or property)." "Custom" is *telos*, used here of a toll or duty on goods. These are the two kinds of Roman taxation. "Fear" and "honour" are owed as well. And verse 5 gives a reason for submission beyond fear of punishment: "but also for conscience sake." "Conscience" is *syneidesis*, "co-perception, i.e. moral consciousness." The believer pays and honours not only because he will be punished if he does not, but because he knows before God that it is right.

Weighing it: Direct statement — that believers are to pay taxes and give honour, for conscience as well as for fear. The other reading can fairly answer nothing against this; it is plainly stated. Its bearing on the claims is that it keeps the passage on the ground of ordinary civil government.

In short. Taxes on persons, duties on goods, fear and honour: Paul is speaking of everyday government, and believers pay for conscience' sake.

G. Why "the powers" are not unseen spirits here

The third opposing reading (Introduction §C, point 7) deserves a direct answer. Paul does use "principalities" and "powers" of spiritual beings in Ephesians 6:12 and Colossians 2:15. But he also uses the same pair of words for human rulers: **"Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates" (Titus 3:1)**. There, "principalities and powers" stand side by side with "magistrates," and believers are told to be subject to them, which no one reads as submission to evil spirits.

And Romans 13 does not stay abstract for a single verse. By verse 3 it speaks of praise for good works; by verse 4, a sword; by verses 6 and 7, taxes and duties on goods. This library reads Scripture literally wherever the literal sense is true to fact, and turns to a figurative reading only where the literal sense fails. Here every detail fits ordinary Roman government, and none of it fits spirits who do not collect taxes.

Weighing it: Strong inference — against the spiritual-powers reading. Titus 3:1 uses the same words of human rulers, and the passage's details are all civil. The other reading can fairly answer that human government may still stand in some relation to unseen powers (Daniel 10:13, 20 hint at this), and this study does not deny that; it denies only that Romans 13 is speaking of them.

In short. Paul uses "principalities and powers" of human rulers in Titus 3:1, and Romans 13 talks about swords and taxes. These are men, not spirits.

Chapter 3 — What "Ordained of God" Does and Does Not Claim

A. The question

Chapter 2 showed that "ordained" is the language of order and placement. This chapter tests that against how Scripture uses the same kind of language elsewhere. When Scripture says God raised up, set up or gave a kingdom to a ruler, does it ever mean God approved of the ruler's character or conduct? If it does, Romans 13:1 approves whoever holds power. If it does not, Romans 13:1 says something narrower: that governing authority as such stands under God's ordering of history, and no ruler holds power outside God's permission and purpose. The examples below use different words in different languages. The comparison is between the same kind of language, not the same word.

Weighing it: Framing only — sets the test for Claim O.

In short. Does "God set him up" ever mean "God approves of him"? Scripture's own examples answer.

B. Nebuchadnezzar

Daniel says of God:

> **Daniel 2:21** *And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding:*

And of Nebuchadnezzar, the pagan king who destroyed Jerusalem and its temple, the decree from heaven says:

> **Daniel 4:17** *This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men.*

The judgment that follows drives Nebuchadnezzar from men to eat grass as oxen, and "seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will" (Daniel 4:32). The whole chapter is God humbling the king because he did not govern humbly. Its point is not that Nebuchadnezzar deserved his throne. It is that God gives kingdoms, even to "the basest of men," and that giving is not a verdict on the one who receives it.

Weighing it: Strong inference — for Claim O. Scripture says God set up a king it also humbles for his pride, and says outright that God may set up "the basest of men." The other reading can fairly answer that Daniel is speaking of God's sovereignty over a pagan empire, not of Christians' duty to it; Jeremiah 27 (§C) speaks to the duty.

In short. God gave the kingdom to Nebuchadnezzar and then humbled him for his pride. Giving a kingdom is not approving the king.

C. Jeremiah 27 — submission commanded to a conqueror

God went further than giving Nebuchadnezzar his throne. He told the nations, Judah among them, to submit to him:

> **Jeremiah 27:5** *I have made the earth, the man and the beast that are upon the ground, by my great power and by my outstretched arm, and have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto me.*
>
> **Jeremiah 27:6** *And now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant; and the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him.*
>
> **Jeremiah 27:7** *And all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son, until the very time of his land come: and then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him.*
>
> **Jeremiah 27:8** *And it shall come to pass, that the nation and kingdom which will not serve the same Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, and that will not put their neck under the yoke of the*

> *king of Babylon, that nation will I punish, saith the LORD, with the sword, and with the famine, and with the pestilence, until I have consumed them by his hand.*

God calls a pagan conqueror "my servant" and commands submission to him, at the height of his conquests, on pain of judgment. It is the nearest Old Testament parallel to Romans 13:1. Verse 7 also sets a limit in time: "until the very time of his land come." God's giving of power to a ruler is for His own purpose and lasts as long as He wills.

Weighing it: Strong inference — for Claim O. A ruler Scripture never commends is called God's servant, and submission to him is commanded. The other reading can fairly answer that Jeremiah 27 was a particular word of prophecy for a particular moment, not a general rule; this study uses it only to show what "God's servant" can mean of a ruler.

In short. God called Nebuchadnezzar "my servant" and commanded the nations to serve him. A ruler can be God's servant without being a good man.

D. Pilate — authority "from above," at its worst use

> **John 19:10** *Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?*
>
> **John 19:11** *Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.*

Pilate claimed power to crucify or release. Jesus did not deny it or call it unlawful. He said it was "given thee from above." Yet in the same breath He spoke of sin, "greater sin" in the one who delivered Him up. The authority came from above; the use of it was still sin. Jesus kept the source of authority and the guilt of its user apart, at the very moment that authority was about to be used to condemn Him unjustly.

Weighing it: Strong inference — for Claim O. Jesus Himself says Pilate's power was given from above while Pilate was about to misuse it. The other reading can fairly answer that "from above" might refer to God's plan for the crucifixion in particular rather than to Pilate's office in general. Either way, it is power from God used wrongly.

In short. Jesus told Pilate his power came from above, and that using it against Him was still sin. Source and approval are not the same.

E. Pharaoh — this study's anchor

Four chapters before Romans 13, Paul writes of Pharaoh, the oppressor of the Exodus whom Scripture never commends: **"Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth" (Romans 9:17)**. Paul is quoting Exodus 9:16. So in the same letter, Paul himself has already said that God raised up a tyrant for His own purpose. No reader takes that as praise for Pharaoh. Romans 13:1 should be read in the light of what the same writer said four chapters earlier.

Weighing it: Strong inference — for Claim O. It is the same writer, in the same letter, saying God raised up a ruler Scripture condemns. The other reading can fairly answer that "raised up" in Romans 9 is a different Greek word from "ordained" in Romans 13; this study grants that, and uses it as the same kind of language, not the same word.

In short. In this same letter Paul says God raised up Pharaoh. That was never praise for Pharaoh.

F. "Not by me" — Hosea 8:4 and 13:11

Here is the strongest verse against Claim O as the earlier edition stated it, and it must be faced:

> **Hosea 8:4** *They have set up kings, but not by me: they have made princes, and I knew it not: of their silver and their gold have they made them idols, that they may be cut off.*

God says Israel set up kings "not by me," and princes "I knew it not." Does that contradict "there is no power but of God"?

Hosea itself answers, five chapters later, speaking of the same kings:

> **Hosea 13:11** *I gave thee a king in mine anger, and took him away in my wrath.*

The same God who said "not by me" also says "I gave thee a king." Both are true at once. "Not by me" means not by God's will, not with His approval or by His word: Israel chose its kings without asking Him, as it chose its idols in the same verse. "I gave thee a king in mine anger" means that even so, nothing happened outside His rule. He gave them what they insisted on, as a judgment, and He took it away. Far from contradicting Claim O, Hosea shows its very distinction inside one prophet: a king can be given by God in His sovereign rule and still be "not by me" in His approval.

Weighing it: Strong inference — for Claim O, and it answers the strongest opposing verse. Hosea itself says both "not by me" and "I gave thee a king" of the same kings. The other reading can fairly answer that 13:11 may refer only to Saul, the first king, rather than to the later northern kings of 8:4. Even on that reading, Hosea shows that God can "give" a king in anger, which is the distinction this study draws.

In short. God said Israel's kings were "not by me," and also "I gave thee a king in mine anger." Sovereign giving and approval are two different things, in one prophet.

G. The devil's boast and the dragon's gift

The devil told Jesus that the power of the kingdoms "is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it" (Luke 4:6). Two things must be said. First, the speaker is the devil, whom Jesus calls a liar and the father of lies (John 8:44); his claim is not to be taken at face value. Second, even taken at face value, "is delivered unto me" says someone delivered it. Scripture shows the adversary acting only within limits God sets: in Job, Satan does nothing to Job until God permits it, and then only as far as God permits (Job 1:12; 2:6). Jesus does call him **"the prince of this world" (John 12:31)**, but in the same breath says he "shall be cast out." Revelation 13:2 is the same: the dragon gives the beast power, but Revelation 13:5, 7 says of the beast that power "was given unto him," and the whole book shows God ruling over the beast's time and end.

So "there is no power but of God" holds even here. The adversary has real influence over the world's kingdoms, and rulers can be his instruments. But no power exists outside God's permission, and none lasts beyond the time He allows.

Weighing it: Reasonable inference — for Claim O, that even power the adversary holds lies within God's permission. Job 1-2 shows Satan acting only by permission. The other reading can fairly answer that Luke 4:6 and Revelation 13:2 show some rulers getting their power from the adversary, which must affect how a Christian regards them. This study agrees that it affects how he regards them; it does not cancel Romans 13's command for ordinary civil obedience, which Chapter 4 limits in its own way.

In short. The devil claims the kingdoms, but he is a liar and acts only on a leash. No power is outside God's permission, even when the devil uses it.

H. What this chapter shows

Daniel, Jeremiah, John, Paul's own Romans 9, and Hosea agree. When Scripture says God raised up, set up, gave a kingdom to, or ordained a ruler, it describes God's sovereign rule over the course of human government. In none of these cases is it a statement of approval of the ruler. Applied to Romans 13:1, "the powers that be are ordained of God" means that government as an institution stands under God's ordering, and that no ruler holds power outside God's permission and purpose. It does not mean that God approves of the character or acts of whoever holds the office.

Weighing it: Strong inference — for Claim O. Five passages across both Testaments use this kind of language of rulers Scripture plainly does not commend. The other reading can fairly answer that Romans 13:3-4 does describe rulers as good ("not a terror to good works"), which sounds like approval; Chapter 4 §D shows that this describes the office's purpose, and is what limits it.

In short. "Ordained of God" means ruled over by God, not approved by God. Scripture uses this language for Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar and Pilate.

Chapter 4 — The Limit Scripture Supplies

A. The question

Chapter 3 settled what "ordained" says about a ruler's authority. This chapter asks a different question: does "let every soul be subject" mean doing whatever a ruler commands? It then takes up a harder question the earlier edition did not face: may a ruler ever be resisted or removed?

Weighing it: Framing only — sets the test for Claim L.

In short. Must believers do whatever rulers say? And may a ruler ever be resisted?

B. Acts 5:29 — the limit stated

When the council in Jerusalem, the recognized ruling body of the Jews, commanded the apostles to stop teaching in Jesus' name, they answered plainly:

> **Acts 5:29** *Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.*

This is Scripture, spoken by the same apostles whose letters command submission to rulers (1 Peter 2:13-17). The limit is as plain as the command.

Weighing it: Direct statement — for Claim L. The other reading can fairly answer that the council was a religious body, not Rome; but it held real civil authority over the Jews, and the principle the apostles state is general: God rather than men.

In short. "We ought to obey God rather than men." Scripture states the limit in so many words.

C. The limit kept and blessed

Scripture shows the limit kept, not only stated. When Pharaoh ordered the midwives to kill the Hebrew boys:

> **Exodus 1:17** *But the midwives feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the men children alive.*
>
> **Exodus 1:20** *Therefore God dealt well with the midwives: and the people multiplied, and waxed very mighty.*
>
> **Exodus 1:21** *And it came to pass, because the midwives feared God, that he made them houses.*

When Nebuchadnezzar commanded worship of his golden image:

> **Daniel 3:17** *If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king.*
>
> **Daniel 3:18** *But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.*

Moses' parents hid him, **"and they were not afraid of the king's commandment" (Hebrews 11:23)**, and Hebrews counts it as faith.

Rahab's case is less simple, and the earlier edition did not face it. When the king of Jericho ordered her to bring out the spies, she hid them instead (Joshua 2:3-4), and Hebrews 11:31 and James 2:25 commend her. Her case differs from the others: the king's command was not itself a command to sin in the way an order to kill infants or worship an idol is. But Jericho stood under God's judgment, and she sided with God's people against it. Her case shows that the line is not always drawn as narrowly as "only when commanded to sin." It is drawn where obeying the ruler would mean acting against what God is doing.

In each case the person disobeyed a specific command, and Scripture commends it. In none of them did anyone refuse ordinary government as such: taxes, public order, or the punishment of crime.

Weighing it: Strong inference — for Claim L. Scripture commends these acts of disobedience. The other reading can fairly answer that Rahab's case widens the limit beyond refusing to sin, and this study grants it: the limit is obedience to God, which is wider than a list of forbidden acts.

In short. The midwives, the three Hebrews, Moses' parents and Rahab all disobeyed a king, and Scripture commends them. None of them refused ordinary government.

D. The limit is inside Romans 13 itself

The limit does not have to be imported from other passages. Romans 13:3-4 states the purpose of the authority it describes: **"rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil"**, and the ruler is **"the minister of God to thee for good" (Romans 13:4)**, **"a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil" (Romans 13:4)**. That is the job description of God's servant. A command to do what God calls evil, or to stop doing what God calls good, turns the job upside down. A ruler who gives it is acting outside the very task on which Paul rests his authority.

This also answers the first opposing case (Introduction §C, point 1). Paul's words are general, but they are not unconditional, because they are tied to a stated purpose. And they answer point 2: Peter's servants who submit to froward masters submit to harshness, not to commands to sin, and Peter in the same letter commands believers to "fear God" before "honour the king" (1 Peter 2:17).

Weighing it: Strong inference — for Claim L. The purpose is stated in the text, and a command to sin contradicts it. The other reading can fairly answer that 13:3-4 may be describing what rulers usually do rather than setting a condition. This study grants that it is a description, and holds that a description of a servant's task is also the measure of his authority.

In short. Paul says rulers exist to punish evil and reward good. A ruler who commands evil has stepped outside his own task.

E. May a ruler be resisted or removed?

The second opposing case (Introduction §C, point 6) asks more than whether a believer may refuse to sin. It asks whether God's people may overthrow a ruler. Scripture records that they did. Ehud killed Eglon, king of Moab (Judges 3:21), and Jehu destroyed the house of Ahab (2 Kings 9-10).

Both cases have something in common that must not be passed over. Each was a direct commission from God. **"The LORD raised them up a deliverer, Ehud" (Judges 3:15)**. Jehu was anointed by a prophet sent from God with the words, **"Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I have anointed thee king over the people of the LORD" (2 Kings 9:6)**. Both took place in Israel, under God's direct rule of His people, and both were God's own judgment on a named ruler. Neither is a general permission to rebel.

And Scripture also shows the opposite. David, anointed king himself and with Saul in his power, would not raise his hand against him: **"The LORD forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the LORD's anointed" (1 Samuel 24:6)**. He waited for God to remove Saul.

So Scripture does not forbid every act of resistance, but it records resistance only where God gave a direct commission. Without such a commission, the pattern for the believer is David's: refuse to sin, endure what follows, and leave the ruler's removal to God. That fits Romans 12:19 exactly: "avenge not yourselves."

This study does not try to settle every question of political resistance, such as a lawful government's own process for removing an unlawful ruler, or a people's defence against a foreign invader. Those questions lie beyond what Romans 13:1-7 addresses. What the passage and these examples settle is narrower: a believer may not take it upon himself to overthrow a ruler because the ruler is wicked.

Weighing it: Reasonable inference — for Claim L, that private believers may refuse to sin but may not overthrow a ruler without a commission from God. Ehud and Jehu were commissioned; David, uncommissioned, refused. The other reading can fairly answer that God's commissions in Israel show resistance is not wrong in itself, and that a believer may judge a ruler's wickedness without a prophet. This study answers that Scripture gives no example of the second, and Romans 12:19 forbids private vengeance.

In short. Ehud and Jehu removed rulers on God's direct command. David, without one, would not touch Saul. Refuse to sin, but leave the ruler to God.

F. Where the line falls

Put together, Chapters 3 and 4 draw one line, not two rules in tension. Romans 13:1-7 concerns government's ordinary task: taxes, public order, and the punishment of wrongdoing. That task is real, ordained by God, and owed real submission and honour, for conscience' sake. Acts 5:29 and the examples in §C concern a different case: a ruler commanding what God forbids, or forbidding what God commands. "Let every soul be subject" and "we ought to obey God rather than men" do not disagree. They answer two different questions.

Weighing it: Strong inference — for Claim L. The command and the limit address different cases, and the limit is grounded in the command's own terms. The other reading can fairly answer that the boundary between ordinary matters and commands to sin is not always easy to see in practice. This study agrees; Scripture gives the principle, and each case must be weighed by it.

In short. In ordinary matters, submit. When a ruler commands sin, obey God. The two commands do not conflict.

Chapter 5 — Written Under Nero

A. Author, place and date

Paul wrote Romans to a church he had not yet visited (Romans 1:10-13). He was about to take a collection from Macedonia and Achaia to the saints in Jerusalem (Romans 15:25-26). He commends Phebe of Cenchrea, the port of Corinth (16:1), and sends greetings from Gaius his host and Erastus, "the chamberlain of the city" (16:23). These details point to Corinth, near the end of his third journey. Most scholars, conservative and critical alike, date the letter about A.D. 56-58. The date comes from history, not from Scripture, and is held here as corroboration only.

What is not in serious doubt is the emperor. Nero came to the throne in A.D. 54, so Romans was written in the first three or four years of his reign.

Weighing it: Corroboration only. The date is historical, not scriptural, and nothing in the study's argument depends on it.

In short. Paul wrote from Corinth, about A.D. 56-58, early in Nero's reign.

B. Nero's early years

Nero's first years, when he was guided by the philosopher Seneca and the praetorian prefect Burrus, were remembered by later Roman writers as a time of good government. A later writer, Aurelius Victor, reports that the emperor Trajan praised these years, and they are sometimes called the *quinquennium Neronis*, "Nero's five years." Nero's murder of his mother (A.D. 59), the great fire of Rome (A.D. 64), and the persecution of Christians that followed all came after Romans was written. Early Christian tradition, though not Scripture, holds that Paul himself was put to death at Rome under Nero.

One further detail from history fits verses 6 and 7 closely. The Roman historian Tacitus records that in A.D. 58 there were loud public complaints in Rome about the tax-collectors, and that Nero even considered abolishing the indirect taxes (Tacitus, *Annals* 13.50-51). If Romans was written about then, Paul's "tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom" was written when taxes were a live grievance in the very city he was writing to.

So Paul did not write in ignorance of what Nero would become, nor after Rome had shown its worst. He stated a general principle about government's God-given place, under a government that was not yet openly monstrous. That is the distinction Chapter 3 found in Scripture's own language: the office, not the future conduct of the man.

Weighing it: Corroboration only — consistent with Claim O. The history fits the study's reading, but the reading does not depend on it. The other reading can fairly answer that Paul's principle would apply equally under a bad ruler, which this study agrees with, and which 1 Peter shows (§C).

In short. Romans was written in Nero's good early years, and at a time when taxes were a sore point in Rome. Paul states a principle, not a verdict on Nero.

C. Peter and Titus say the same

Peter makes the same argument to believers scattered across the provinces (1 Peter 1:1), most likely a few years later and nearer the time of Nero's persecution:

> **1 Peter 2:13** *Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme;*
>
> **1 Peter 2:14** *Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well.*
>
> **1 Peter 2:17** *Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.*

Peter keeps "Fear God" and "Honour the king" as two commands, in that order: submission to government as an institution, held apart from and never replacing the fear owed to God. Paul says the same in a single line to Titus: **"Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work" (Titus 3:1)**. Neither softens the command. Neither turns it into obedience to whatever is commanded.

Weighing it: Strong inference — for Claims O and L. Two more passages give the same command in the same shape. The other reading can fairly answer that these confirm the command, not the limit; but Peter's order, God before king, states the limit in two words.

In short. Peter and Titus give the same command: honour the king, but fear God first.

Chapter 6 — What This Settles

A. The reading, stated plainly

Romans 13:1-7 is not a change of subject. The chapter number hides one continuous argument. In 12:19 Paul forbids private vengeance because "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." In 13:4 he names the ruler, by the same Greek root, as "a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil." "Wrath" runs through both, and "dues" in 13:7 runs into "owe" in 13:8. The Treasury of Scripture Knowledge draws the same link.

"The higher powers" are civil authorities with a right to rule, not raw force and not unseen spirits. The passage speaks of the sword, taxes and duties, and Titus 3:1 uses the same words of magistrates.

"Ordained of God" is the language of order and placement. Scripture uses the same kind of language of Nebuchadnezzar, Pilate and Pharaoh without approving any of them. Hosea shows both sides in one prophet: kings set up "not by me," yet "I gave thee a king in mine anger." So Romans 13:1 means that government as an institution stands under God's rule of history, and that no ruler holds power outside

God's permission and purpose. It does not mean God approves of any particular ruler or of what he does.

Submission to government's ordinary work, taxes, order and the punishment of crime, is real and owed for conscience' sake. It has a limit Scripture states (Acts 5:29) and shows kept and blessed (Exodus 1; Daniel 3; Hebrews 11:23). The limit is inside Romans 13 itself, because Paul grounds the ruler's authority in a task, to punish evil and reward good, that a command to sin contradicts. Scripture records the removal of rulers only on God's direct commission; without it, the believer's pattern is David's, refusing to sin and leaving the ruler to God.

Weighing it: Strong inference — for Claims C, O and L taken together. This is the study's summary. The other side's best evidence is Paul's general wording in 13:1-2, Hosea 8:4, and the devil's boast in Luke 4:6. None has been dismissed, and each has been answered.

In short. Romans 13 continues Romans 12. God orders government, but does not thereby approve every ruler. Obey in ordinary things; obey God first when they conflict.

B. What would change this study's mind

A reader should be able to go looking for the evidence that would overturn this study. Here it is.

1. **A passage where "God set him up" plainly means God approved of him.** If Scripture used this kind of language of a ruler and meant thereby to commend his conduct, Claim O would weaken. In the passages examined, it does not.
2. **A command to obey a ruler even in sin.** If any passage told believers to obey rulers even when commanded to do what God forbids, Claim L would fall. None does; Acts 5:29 says the opposite.
3. **A commended overthrow without God's commission.** If Scripture commended a believer for removing a ruler on his own judgment, without God's word, Chapter 4 §E would need to be revised. The examples found are all commissioned.

Weighing it: Method, not argument.

In short. Show a passage where "ordained" means approved, or one commanding obedience in sin, or one praising an uncommissioned overthrow, and this study would change. None has been found.

C. How this bears on the rest of this library

Christian Nationalism: Wrong Kingdom, Wrong Fruit rests its reading of Romans 13 on this study and carries a condensed form of it as its Appendix A. Wherever this library touches civil government, it follows this reading: government is God's ordering, not God's approval of a ruler; submission is real but limited; and the believer's weapon against a wicked ruler is obedience to God, not private revolt.

Weighing it: Framing only.

In short. Wherever this library speaks of government, it follows this reading.

Appendix A — The Weight of Every Argument in This Study

Every argument made in the body of this study, with its rating, its direction, and what the opposing reading can fairly answer. Ratings use the scale defined in Introduction §B. Arguments the earlier edition made and this edition withdraws or corrects are listed at the end and marked as such.

#	Argument	Where	Weight and direction	What the other reading fairly answers
1	Romans 12-13 is one section on how believers treat others	Ch1 A	Reasonable inference, for Claim C	A writer can change subject inside one section
2	"Vengeance" (12:19) and "revenger" (13:4) share one Greek root	Ch1 B	Strong inference, for Claim C	A shared root can be chance
3	"Wrath" (*orge*) appears in 12:19, 13:4 and 13:5	Ch1 C	Strong inference, for Claim C	God's final wrath and a ruler's punishment differ
4	"Dues" (13:7) and "owe" (13:8) are one Greek word	Ch1 D	Strong inference, for Claim C (joined forward)	Joins 13:7 to 13:8, not 12:19 to 13:1
5	The Treasury of Scripture Knowledge links 12:19 to 13:4	Ch1 E	Corroboration only, for Claim C	Cross-reference tools link many verses
6	Romans 13 answers the question Romans 12:19 raises	Ch1 F	Strong inference, for Claim C	The passage still adds a new subject, government
7	*Exousia* means authority, not raw force	Ch2 B	Strong inference, toward Claim O	*Exousia* is also used of the devil and of spirits
8	"Ordained" (*tasso*) and its family speak of order and placement	Ch2 C	Strong inference, for Claim O	Being placed by God may still imply favour
9	The ruler is God's servant (*diakonos*, *leitourgos*)	Ch2 D	Strong inference, for Claims O and L	Calling him God's servant honours him
10	The sword is the ruler's real power of judgment	Ch2 E	Strong inference, against the spiritual reading	It may mean force in general
11	Taxes, duties, fear, honour, for conscience' sake	Ch2 F	Direct statement	—
12	"The powers" are human rulers here (Titus 3:1; civil details)	Ch2 G	Strong inference, against the spiritual reading	Government may relate to unseen powers (Daniel 10)
13	God set up Nebuchadnezzar and humbled him	Ch3 B	Strong inference, for Claim O	Daniel speaks of sovereignty, not duty
14	God called Nebuchadnezzar "my servant" and commanded submission	Ch3 C	Strong inference, for Claim O	A particular prophecy, not a general rule
15	Pilate's power was "from above," and its use was sin	Ch3 D	Strong inference, for Claim O	"From above" may refer to the crucifixion plan

#	Argument	Where	Weight and direction	What the other reading fairly answers
16	God raised up Pharaoh (Romans 9:17)	Ch3 E	Strong inference, for Claim O	A different Greek word from "ordained"
17	Hosea: "not by me" and "I gave thee a king" of the same kings	Ch3 F	Strong inference, for Claim O	13:11 may mean Saul only
18	The devil's power is within God's permission (Job 1-2)	Ch3 G	Reasonable inference, for Claim O	Some rulers get power from the adversary
19	Scripture's language of setting up rulers never approves them in the cases examined	Ch3 H	Strong inference, for Claim O	13:3-4 describes rulers as good
20	"We ought to obey God rather than men"	Ch4 B	Direct statement, for Claim L	The council was a religious body
21	Disobedience commended: midwives, Daniel 3, Moses' parents, Rahab	Ch4 C	Strong inference, for Claim L	Rahab widens the limit beyond refusing sin
22	The limit is inside 13:3-4, the ruler's stated task	Ch4 D	Strong inference, for Claim L	13:3-4 may describe, not condition
23	Overthrow only on God's commission; otherwise David's pattern	Ch4 E	Reasonable inference, for Claim L	Commissions show resistance is not wrong in itself
24	The command and the limit answer different questions	Ch4 F	Strong inference, for Claim L	The boundary is hard to see in practice
25	Written from Corinth, A.D. 56-58, early in Nero's reign	Ch5 A	Corroboration only	—
26	Nero's good early years; tax complaints in A.D. 58	Ch5 B	Corroboration only, consistent with Claim O	The principle applies under bad rulers too
27	Peter and Titus give the same command; God before king	Ch5 C	Strong inference, for Claims O and L	They confirm the command more than the limit
28	Summary of the settled reading	Ch6 A	Strong inference, for Claims C, O and L	13:1-2's wording, Hosea 8:4 and Luke 4:6 remain the best opposing evidence
29	*Corrected:* *machaira* was "the same word Roman writers used" for the right of the sword	Earlier edition Ch2	Corrected	Roman writers used the Latin *gladius*
30	*Corrected:* God's giving the kingdom to Nebuchadnezzar was "the same act Romans 13:1 calls 'ordained'"	Earlier edition Ch3	Corrected to "the same kind of language"	Daniel's Aramaic is not *tasso*
31	*Withdrawn:* Scripture's examples of disobedience are "never" anything but refusals to sin	Earlier edition Ch4	Withdrawn	Rahab (Joshua 2)
32	*Corrected:* Paul's death under Nero stated as fact	Earlier edition Ch5	Marked as tradition	It is early church tradition, not Scripture

#	Argument	Where	Weight and direction	What the other reading fairly answers
33	*Demoted:* "decisive," "settles," "rules out"	Earlier edition, throughout	Replaced by stated weights	—

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Sources Consulted

Primary text. The King James Version is the base text throughout. Every verse block was generated by machine from the 1769 text of the King James Version, in the open-source edition of the aruljohn *Bible-kjv* project, and every inline quotation was checked against the same text.

Greek. Strong's Exhaustive Concordance (Greek dictionary) in this library's Sources folder supplied every definition quoted: *exousia* (G1849), *hyperecho* (G5242), *tasso* (G5021), *hypotasso* (G5293), *antitassomai* (G498), *diatage* (G1296), *diakonos* (G1249), *leitourgos* (G3011), *ekdikesis* (G1557), *ekdikos* (G1558), *orge* (G3709), *opheile* (G3782), *opheilo* (G3784), *machaira* (G3162), *phoros* (G5411), *telos* (G5056) and *syneidesis* (G4893).

Cross-references. The Treasury of Scripture Knowledge supplied the cross-reference from Romans 12:19 ("Vengeance") to Romans 13:4 and Deuteronomy 32:35; the marginal reading "ordained. or, ordered" at Romans 13:1; and the cross-references at Romans 13:1 on which Chapter 3 draws, including Jeremiah 27:5-8, Daniel 2:21, Daniel 4:32 and John 19:11, together with Titus 3:1 and 1 Peter 2:13-17 for "every soul."

History. The date of Romans, Nero's accession and early reign, the report of Trajan's praise in Aurelius Victor, and the tax complaints of A.D. 58 in Tacitus, *Annals* 13.50-51, are standard historical background, held here as corroboration only. The tradition of Paul's death under Nero comes from early Christian writers, not from Scripture.

This library's own studies. *Christian Nationalism: Wrong Kingdom, Wrong Fruit*, which carries a condensed form of this study as its Appendix A.

What was not used. No commentary was used to reach this study's conclusion.