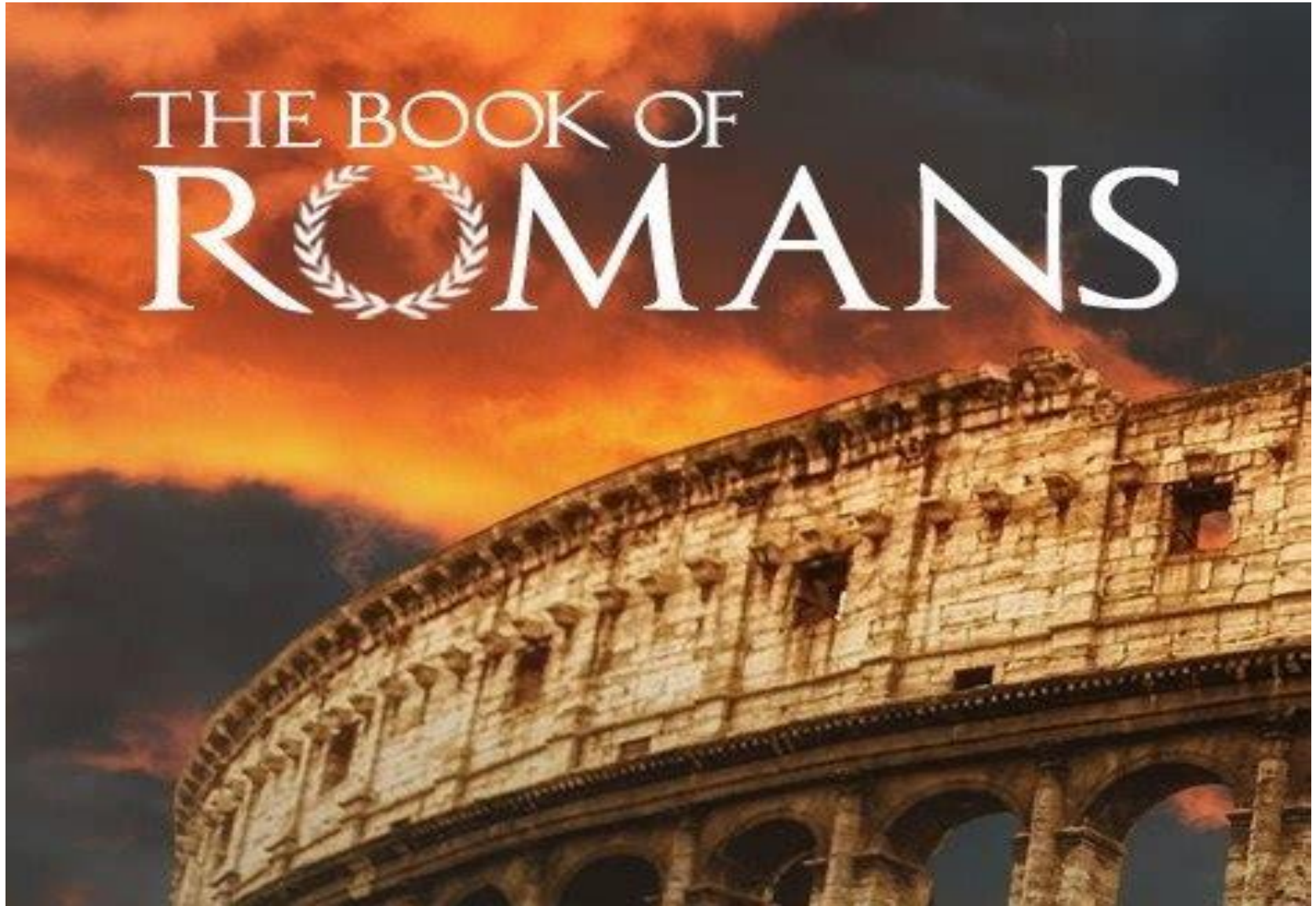


Rom 12:19-21 to 13:1-2  
Overcoming Evil Personally and Governmentally



## Contrast 12:17-21 vs 13:1-8\*



- Rom 12:17-21 Talks about how a believer relates to other men
- Rom 13:1-8 Talks about how a believer relates to civil authority
- Chapter 12 was about the wrongdoing on a personal level
- Chapter 13 is about the role civil authority has in controlling wrongdoing
- These two passages are in total contrast:
- In Rom 12 the theme is personal, private, and individual
- In contrast the theme in Rom 13 is judicial, public and governmental

# Today's Verses from Chapter 12



<sup>19</sup> Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of *God*, for it is written, “**Vengeance is mine**, I will repay,” says the Lord.

<sup>20</sup> But if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.

<sup>21</sup> Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

- verse 19 Never take your own revenge - vengeance is mine says the Lord
- verse 20 Meeting your enemies' needs and its results
- verse 21 The believer's relationship to evil

<sup>19</sup> Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay," says the Lord.



Stop avenging yourselves, beloved ones Wuest

**avenging** - *ekdikeō* – that which proceeds from justice

- [not] to execute justice, defend one's cause, maintain one's right Zodhiates

**but** – *alla* – strong contrast

[you] **leave room** - the idea is to “give place at once” Wuest

**for the wrath of God,**

- To give place to God's wrath means to leave room for it, **not to take God's proper work “out of” His hands.\***
- The idea is that instead of executing vengeance ourselves, we are **to abandon the offender to the more tremendous vengeance of God.\***

\*Wuest

19 Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of *God*, for it is written, “vengeance is mine, I will repay,” says the Lord.



two final statements:

**vengeance** [noun] *is mine*,

- a revenging, punishment\*
- God cannot be said to have vengeance in the sense that a person has vengeance.\*

**I will repay, says the Lord**

- **Repay** is *antapodidōmi* "to give back or requite."
- 1 Thess 4:6 and that no man transgress and defraud his brother in the matter because **the Lord is the avenger in all these things**, just as we also told you before and solemnly warned you. \*Wuest

20a But if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if he is thirsty, give him a drink;



**But** – *alla* - in a strong contrast to verse 19b

- Now Paul will say **meet the needs of your enemies** rather than taking your own revenge
- Verse 20a is a quote from Proverbs
- Prov 25:21 If your enemy is hungry, give him food to eat; and if he is thirsty, give him water to drink; 22 For you will heap burning coals on his head, **and the LORD will reward you.**
- But Paul adds a different result:
- **20b for in so doing you will heap burning coals on his head**
- The next slides will answer this:

## Heaping coals of fire on the head\*

- In Bible times a person needed to keep his hearth fire going all the time in order to insure fire for cooking and warmth.
- If it went out, he had to go to a neighbor for some live coals of fire.
- These he would carry on his head in a container, oriental fashion, back to his home.
- The person who would give him some live coals would be meeting his desperate need and showing him an outstanding kindness.
- If he would heap the container with coals, the man would be sure of getting some of it home and still burning.



## Heaping coals of fire on the head\*



Another interpretation, takes the burning coals as a figure of God's judgment that will come on the enemy if he persists in his antagonism.

The figure of "coals of fire" in the Old Testament consistently refers to God's anger and judgment (cf. 2 Sam. 22:9, 13; Ps. 11:6; 18:13; 140:9-10; Prov. 25:21-22).

Thus the meaning appears to be that the Christian can return good for evil with the assurance that God will eventually punish his or her enemy.

John N. Day



21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.



21a Stop being overcome by the evil, Wuest

- The action is assumed to already be ongoing  
**overcome** - *nikáō* - meaning to overcome, conquer, subdue
- It is present tense so you are continually being overcome
- Passive voice so you are receiving the action
- Note it is **the evil** – lit: the evil one
- 1 John 5:19 We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.

21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.



21<sup>b</sup> but be overcoming the evil by means of the good

- The remainder of the verse tells how we are to stop being overcome by the evil one
- Same word *nikao* for **overcoming** again!
- But now it is **by means of the good** – lit: the good one
- Mark 10:18 And Jesus said to him, Why do you call Me good? **No one is good except God alone.**
- So this is “a person” not a good deed
- Gal 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, **but Christ lives in me**; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

# Today's Verses from Chapter 13



<sup>1</sup> Every person is to be in subjection to the governing **authorities**. For there is no **authority** except from God, and those which exist [**authorities**] are established by God.

<sup>2</sup> Therefore whoever resists **authority** has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed [**authority**] will receive condemnation upon themselves.

1<sup>a</sup> Every person *is* to be in subjection to the governing authorities.

every person

every – *pas* - mean “all” with no exceptions

person - *psyche* - the breath of life, i.e. the soul

• The words “every soul” are a Hebraism for “every man.”\*

to be in subjection - *hypotassō* – lit: lineup under

• It’s a military word speaking of soldiers arranged in order under a general. They are subject to his orders.\*

• present tense – continuous action

• imperative – this is God’s will

• middle – subject intensely involved in the action

[to] put himself habitually in subjection\*

\*Wuest



1<sup>a</sup> Every person *is* to be in subjection to the governing authorities.



**governing** – *hyperechō* - lit. to have over

- In the NT figuratively meaning to hold one above, superior or better than another. Zodhiates

**authorities** - *exousia* - one who possesses authority, a ruler, a magistrate

- **governing authorities** is literally "authorities which have themselves over," that is, authorities who are over the citizen.\*

**1<sup>st</sup>** - Let every soul put himself habitually in subjection to **authorities** who hold position over them.\* \*Wuest

- This is the first of five statements about God's **governing authorities**

1<sup>b</sup> For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.



2<sup>nd</sup> - For there is not authority except by God Interlinear

there is not is the negative of *eimi* – the state in which something continually exists\*

- present tense continuous action, statement of fact and God is the one performing the action

by – *hypo* – lit: by means of

by God is *hypo theos*, literally, "by means of God,"

that is, constituted such by God.\*

\*Wuest

- Most leaders throughout all of human history have not understood this principle!

1<sup>b</sup> For there is no authority except from God, and  
those which exist are established by God.



3<sup>rd</sup> - and the existing ones have been appointed by God

Interlinear

the existing ones – lit: existing authorities

have been - *eimi* – the state in which something  
continually exists

appointed – *tassō* – meaning to set in a certain order,  
constitute, to ordain - perfect passive

- The word is in the perfect tense, “have been ordained  
and as a result remain ordained.”\*

by God – lit: by means of God

- That is, human government is a permanent institution  
brought into being by God for the regulation of human  
affairs.

\* Wuest

## More on governing authorities:



- Submission to governing authorities is not rooted in the character of the leader but to the sovereignty of God.  
McCalley
- Ex 9:15 For by now I [the Lord] could have put forth My hand and have struck you [Pharaoh] and your people with pestilence, and **you would have been cut off from the earth.**
- <sup>16</sup> But for this very purpose have **I let you live**, that I might show you My power, and that My name may be declared throughout all the earth.
- John 19:10-11 So Pilate said to Him, "You do not speak to me? Do You not know that **I have authority** to release You, and I have authority to crucify You?"
- <sup>11</sup> Jesus answered, "**You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above**; for this reason he who delivered Me to you has the greater sin."



2 Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.



4<sup>th</sup>- Therefore the one “opposing” the authority  
“has opposed” the ordinance of God

Interlinear

therefore – *hoste* - "so that," to express the effect or result  
of anything

the one - *ho* – a definite article

opposing - *antitassō* - to arrange in battle against, resist

- present tense continuous action, middle voice,
- lit: [the one] sets himself in array against

Wuest

the authority - *exousia* - a ruler, a magistrate

- Not *antitassō* [against authority] but *hypotassō*  
[under authority]

McCalley

4<sup>th</sup>- Therefore the one “opposing” the authority  
“has opposed” the ordinance of God

Interlinear



- Now we have the results of opposing the authority:  
[the one] **has opposed** – *anthistēmi* - to set one's self  
against, to withstand, resist, oppose
- perfect in tense, statement of fact, **the one** is  
performing the action – this is a permanent state!

**the ordinance of God**

**ordinance** - *diatagé* - a disposition, appointment

- The one who sets himself in array against the  
aforementioned authority, against the ordinance of  
God has set himself, **with the result that he is in a  
permanent position of antagonism** (against the  
ordinance).

Wuest

<sup>2</sup> Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.



**5<sup>th</sup> - and the ones “having opposed” will receive judgment to themselves**

Wuest

- Now we have an “additional” result of this opposing the authority:

[the ones] **will receive** – *lambanō* - to receive what is given or imparted, imposed – future tense

**judgment to themselves**

**judgment** - *krima* - of God's "judgment" upon men

- Refusal to submit to one's government is tantamount to refusing to submit to God.\*
- Those who resist God's ordained authority can expect to suffer condemnation by the government.\*

\*Constable

# Final Thoughts\*



- Forbidding the Christian from taking vengeance and allowing God to exercise this right [cf. 12:19-21] might lead one to think that God was letting evildoers have their way in this world.
- Not so, says Paul in 13:1-7: for God, through governing authorities, is even now inflicting wrath on evildoers (vv. 3-4).

\* Constable