



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Grace

Issue 110

He Gave Gifts unto Men

A Study of Ephesians Chapter 4

by – Duane Gallentine

God's design in the edification process is to bring into the lives of the saints, the members of the Body of Christ – the Church of this "*Dispensation of the Grace of God*" – "*doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness*" (II Timothy 3:16).

At the dawn of the Dispensation of Grace, God called His arch-enemy Saul of Tarsus by His Grace and made him to be the apostle to the Gentiles, the teacher of the Gentiles, an evangelist of the Gospel of the Grace of God, a prophet and a pastor (Galatians 1:15; Romans 11:13; I Timothy 2:7; Colossians 1:23; Acts 13:1; II Corinthians 11:28).

Starting with Paul as the apostle of the Gentiles, God in the ascension of Christ to be Head of all things, gave gifts unto men so the Body of Christ would be built up in the body of truth called "*The Mystery*" (Romans 11:13; Ephesians 4:8-12; Romans 16:25, 26; Ephesians 2:20).

According to Ephesians 4:9-11, these "*gifts*" were **men**; yes, gifted men but nevertheless men as the "*gifts*." These apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers were part of the Body of Christ. These were not the same as the Twelve apostles or the Old Testament prophets. These were Body ministers.

God set the members every one of them in the Body as it pleased Him (I Corinthians 12:18). Paul and the other God given "*gifts*" were ordained of God (I Timothy 2:7; Philippians 2:19-21, 25). They

were the "*higher powers*," "*the rulers*," and "*the ministers of God*" (Romans 13:1-4). These men were to have an effective ministry which would provide edification, exhortation, and comfort to the members of the One Body (I Corinthians 14:3; Ephesians 4:12; I Timothy 4:16). These "*gifts unto men*" were "*to thee (Body of Christ) for good*" continually looking upon this edifying (Romans 13:4).

All of these "*gifts*" [men] were temporary in nature – for they have all died. Some of them, specifically those sign-gifted ministers, possessed spiritual gifts that were to cease, vanish, and fail as the full knowledge (Greek: *epi-gnosis*) of the **mystery revelation** was given to Paul (I Corinthians 13:8-12; II Corinthians 12:1, 7).

These sign-gifted ministers had these special manifestations removed from their ministry. This removal occurred during the two year period of Acts 28:30. After the close of the Book of Acts and while the writings containing the *epi-gnosis* (full-knowledge) of "*the mystery*" were being penned, there were no more God-given tongues, miracles, healing, and prophesying, for God Himself removed the sign-gift ministry.

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Dear Saints,

It is our great privilege to share with you a set of very important articles from our dear brother Duane Gallentine of Dresser, WI.

These articles represent a major break from the traditional interpretation of two important passages of Scripture from Paul's pen. We began to see the first of these passages (Ephesians 4) differently ourselves some 15 years ago. Moreover, even though we had been exposed to a different understanding of the other passage (Romans 13) a number of years ago, it was only about 3 years ago that our hearts were opened clearly to it.

These articles expose two major errors that have created a massive power-play scheme perpetuated by the influence of the religious-political world system. I know that these concepts will probably seem quite strange to you if this is the first time that they have been presented to you.

Traditional teachings are extremely hard to break. If you do not immediately obtain fresh insight into these passages, do not quickly disregard them, as you may find yourself drawn back to these pages of the **Bible Student's Notebook (BSN)** again one day.

Ephesians 4:8-13 traditionally is used to support an ecclesiastical system of empowered ruling clergy. This is a sad abuse of the text. The apostles, prophets, evangelist, pastors and teachers are all divinely given gifts from the early days of the Body of Christ. We can tell this from the details: "*When He ascended up on high*" He **"gave"** [past tense] *gifts unto men.* "Till ..." These gifts were only temporary ... "till" the foundation of 3 things were accomplished (unity; knowledge, and full stature). These were positionally accomplished in the Pauline completion of the Word of God (Colossians 1:25). The Body of Christ now has no divinely "gifted" men; instead we have the divine sufficiency of the Word of God.

Romans 13:1-7 traditionally is used to support a political system of the "divine right of kings." This too is such a sad abuse of the text. Instead of being "*ordained of God*" as "*the minister of God to thee for good,*" world governments are under the domain of Satan – "*the god of this world* [system]." All human governments are currently under his domain. He is the usurper of world dominion, and he gives this power to whomever he wills (Matthew 4:8-9). Human political-religious authorities are not the *ministers of God*.

We encourage you to give thoughtful, studious, prayerful consideration of Brother Gallentine's excellent studies. For clarity and continuity, we did not want to have them continued into another **BSN**, so they have been edited and abridged slightly to fit a single issue.

With patience, like the noble Bereans of Paul's day (Acts 17:10-11), study (II Timothy 2:15) these things for yourselves (I Thessalonians 5:21).

"Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind" (Romans 14:5).



Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

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This biweekly publication (24 times a year) is dedicated to:

- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7)
- the affirmation of God's purpose to save all mankind through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (I Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11)
- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began" (Romans 16:25)
- true freedom and liberty apart from the law (Galatians 5:1)
- the organic nature of the church, the body of Christ (I Corinthians 12)
- the distinct ministry of Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles (Romans 11:13)
- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14:15)
- the recovery of *rich* Biblical truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding, and fear (Mark 7:7, 13).
- the completeness of the believer in Christ (Colossians 2:10), with ...
 - total forgiveness of sins (Colossians 1:14)
 - identity in His death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6)
 - adult sonship position (Galatians 4)

This publication is a joint effort of a few members of the body of Christ. It is a product of our individual lives and ministries together. We do not claim infallibility for its contents. Our readers are asked to be as the Bereans and search the Scriptures (Acts 17:10-11; I Thessalonians 5:21).

This publication is not connected with any "Movement," "Organization," "Mission," or separate body of believers, but is sent forth to and for all "saints."

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Powers, Rulers and Ministers of God

A Study of Romans Chapter 13

by – Duane Gallentine

Let us now examine Romans 13:1-7.

These commands of Paul unto the Roman saints reveal that they were to be under subjection to the “*higher powers*” that were ordained of God. Please note that Paul is addressing the saints that dwelled in Rome (Romans 1:6; 12:4-5).

Only the members of the Body have been translated into God’s jurisdiction and were instructed by God through Paul to be in subjection (I Corinthians 6:20; II Corinthians 5:15; Ephesians 5:21). Put another way, this 13th chapter of Romans contains Paul’s commandment for the One Body of Christ.

Verse one states, “***the powers that be are ordained of God.***” These are the “*higher*” or superior powers that are of God and ordained of God. They are set in orderly arrangement. God established this orderly arrangement (ordination) with a purpose in mind. That purpose being the edification process or ***the building up of the Body of Christ.*** This will be explained later.

These powers had delegated authority and were *privileged* to exercise power since the authority they operated under did **not** originate within themselves. Thus, these ministers of God were given authority to function in a proper manner so they could discharge their duty and accomplish God’s purpose. As such, they had no power within themselves to claim power or the exercising of power.

Historically, and of greater importance **doctrinally**, Paul the apostle **of** and **to** the Gentiles is the “*higher power*” due to his office of apostleship with it’s corresponding Gospel (Romans 11:13; I Timothy 2:6-7).

Paul with the “*Gospel of the Grace of God*” in the “*Dispensation of the Grace of God*” for the Gentiles was the one sent of God (Galatians 1:15-16; 1 Corinthians 9:17; Ephesians 3:1-2).

Paul revealed his understanding as he wrote concerning his delegated authority and the use of his power within the Body of Christ:

Romans 15:15 – Paul wrote to the Romans because of the grace given unto him of God that placed them within his authority/power.

I Corinthians 3:5-7 – Paul the apostle states that he is not anything.

II Corinthians 10:8 – Paul acknowledged his authority and power was given him and that it was for the edification of the Body of Christ and not their destruction.

II Corinthians 12:11 – Paul further states it this way, “*though I be nothing.*”

II Corinthians 13:3, 4 – Christ spoke through Paul and he lived with Christ by the power of God toward the Corinthians.

Ephesians 3:8 – Paul claims to be less than the least of all saints.

Colossians 1:29 – Paul’s energetic labor was according to Christ’s working in him.

It is clear that Paul grasped with humbleness of spirit and boldness of pen that his position of authority with power was ordained of God (Romans 1:5; II Corinthians 10:8; I Timothy 2:7; I Timothy 1:11).

In the *King James Version* of the Bible, the English word *power* and *powers* in Romans 13:1

and II Corinthians 13:10, and the English word *authority* in II Corinthians 10:8 are translated from the *same* Greek word. Thus, in II Corinthians 10:8 Paul writes that his “*authority*” was given to him by the Lord.

In II Corinthians 13:10, Paul also states that he would use sharpness amongst the Corinthians according to the “*power*” which the Lord had given to him. In Paul’s mind both the authority and power came from God.

There is a three-fold cord in Scriptures that can not be broken concerning God investing His chosen mouthpiece with authority/power. The Record shows God vesting authority in Moses in the Dispensation of Law during “*time past*,” and He had also committed unto Peter, the primary prophetic Kingdom apostle, the “*keys*” to the “*Kingdom of Heaven upon earth*,” with Peter using those keys during the Pentecostal era as recorded in the early chapters of Acts; and God had also committed unto Paul the “*Dispensation of the Grace of God*,” with it’s corresponding authority/power to accomplish the establishment of the “*sound doctrine*” of grace truth (I Corinthians 9:17; Ephesians 3:2; Colossians 1:25; compare Acts 13:4-12).

To review what we have studied so far:

1. The 13th chapter of Romans is addressed to every soul within the One Body of Christ, which is the Church in this “*Dispensation of the Grace of God*.”

2. God had placed in orderly arrangement a “*higher power*” (authority) to which all saints were to be in subjection. The “*higher power*” was not any man *within* his own power; for man is nothing. Because of God’s design for edification of the One Body of Christ, the “*higher powers*” were men who had been granted stewardship of the *mystery* revelation *with Paul being the first one in this “Dispensation of the Grace of God”* (I Corinthians 4:1-2; I Timothy 1:12-16).

Paul was the “*higher power*” because of the form of “*sound doctrine*” that God was *depositing* with

him (II Corinthians 12:1, 7; I Timothy 1:11; Titus 1:3, 9). Thus, the higher authority *delegated* unto Paul, ***is in reality for us***, that form of “*sound words*” contained in “*sound doctrine*” which produces *sound faith* when sinners believe his Gospel (*i.e.*, the Scriptures rightly divided).

3. God had set (ordained) some apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers within the Body of Christ to facilitate the edification process as the Word of Truth was being given to Paul (Ephesians 4:11-14). These men labored in *harmony* with Paul. They were co-laborers with him as he exercised his apostolic authority in directing their ministry (I Thessalonians 3:1-2; Philippians 2:19-25; I Timothy 1:3; Titus 1:5).

Within themselves, these men were not the authority, but because of the *deposit* of Truth placed into their trust by God through Paul’s ministry, they could speak and rebuke with all authority (I Timothy 5:17; II Timothy 2:2; 4:2-5; Titus 2:15).

Submission, Obedience, and Life

In Romans 13:2-5, there are two basic issues presented concerning how the *saints could respond* to the “*higher powers*” of verse one. Of course, this is consistent with the other admonitions given by Paul throughout this Roman epistle.

For example, in Romans chapters 6-8, Paul lays before each saint the newness of life in which we have been raised to walk. A saint can either choose to walk “*after*” the flesh or walk “*after*” the Spirit of God. One walk is a daily life in subjection to God and His revealed Word under Grace. The other is resistance to God and His authority found under Paul’s ministry and written in his epistles (I Corinthians 14:37; II Corinthians 13:3).

Likewise, in Romans 13 the charge is to find obedience unto God through willingly subjecting oneself unto God’s “*higher power*” (rulers or ministers). The opposite of this is to resist that which God had ordained to be the power.

The two basic issues are either saints walking after

the *flesh*, or saints walking after the *Spirit*.

Saints Walking After the **FLESH**

These believers **resist** the power (authority) of God – Romans 13:2.

These believers **resist** the ordinance (or arrangement) of God – Romans 13:2.

The ordinance of God reveals the will and purpose of God so the saint can align his manner of living so that he may function as a full-grown son of God manifesting *grace* and *truth* (Romans 8:29; 15:8; II Corinthians 3:18).

These believers that **resist** receive unto themselves damnation or judgment.

During the Acts period as Romans was being written, Paul exercised his authority to bring physical signs of destruction unto those who opposed the preaching of His gospel. There was also a great spiritual loss in the blessedness of grace reigning when they rejected and spoke against Paul (Acts 13:11; I Corinthians 4:21; 5:3-5; 11:27-30; II Corinthians 12:12-13:3, 10; Galatians 4:15).

The post-Acts period marked the departure of physical signs being manifested, but the magnitude of the spiritual loss has increased as the saints, since Paul's day, have consistently rejected the authority of God found in the Pauline epistles. As a whole *the Church which is His Body* has preferred the demonstration of God's power as recorded in Acts chapters 1-8. The Body of Christ has neglected, yes even changed, the truth concerning "**the powers that be are ordained of God**." Yet, there remains a day when all the Body will appear before the Bema Seat of Christ to give account (I Corinthians 3:10-4:2; II Corinthians 5:10).

Understand that when **resistance** is given, it is to resist (1) the power of God, (2) the ordinance of God, (3) the rulers of God (I Timothy 5:17), (4) the ministers of God (I Thessalonians 3:2).

Saints Walking After the **SPIRIT**

These believers were **subject** unto the "higher power" (authority) of God – Romans 13:3.

These believers were to be affected for good by the power as the will and purpose of God was manifested and understood by the saints. The powers of God were to exercise their authority in such an exacting manner that the saints would experience spiritual soundness, goodness, and profit (Philippians 2:19-21; I Timothy 4:15-16).

These believers would receive praise of the powers that be.

During the **apostolic journeys** of Paul as he had just left the brethren in the midst of persecution, he often sent his co-laborers or ministers of God to run checks upon those saints he left behind. As these ministers of God brought back good reports of the saints submitting to Paul's authority, this news refreshed Paul and brought his praise unto the same (I Thessalonians 3:1-10; Philippians 2:19-23; II Corinthians 7:6-16).

It was the design of God to use men invested with delegated power/authority contained in "*sound doctrine*" to bring *maturity* and *edification* to the members of the Body of Christ by the "*power of God*" (I Corinthians 2:5). Romans 13:4 records that this is good. The spirit-filled ministers of God would be faithful stewards of the truth committed to Paul and would not change the doctrine (II Timothy 2:2).

When **subjection** is given, it is to submit to (1) the revealed Word of Truth, (2) the authority of Paul, the apostle, (3) the speaking of Christ in Paul, (4) the power of Christ in one's life.

*The warning is clear and the results very evident, that apart from the leaders in the Body of Christ recognizing God's design for **building up** the Church (not building the Church) through the **mystery** committed to Paul, the impact of their ministries would be to the evil/bad no matter how Biblical their teaching.*

Properly, the teaching/laboring should accommodate God's leadership in teaching the Word of Truth rightly divided. Years later when Paul wrote his second epistle to Timothy this very issue was expressed in II Timothy 2:15:

“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

Leaders within the Body of Christ **must** teach the Word of Truth rightly divided making clear the differences between **mystery truth** and *prophetic truth*, the **Body of Christ** and *national Israel*, the **heavenly program** and the *earthly program*, and **grace** and *law*.

To sum up what we have covered so far is to say that God ordained Paul the apostle with delegated authority to be God's mouthpiece during this present Dispensation of Grace. Paul had the signs of an apostle wrought in him. He used this power upon the lost and the saved to bring the understanding that Christ was speaking through him. Paul could and did use that power in a destructive way as well as for edification (II Corinthians 10:8; 13:2, 10; Acts 13:11).

Concerning the “*higher powers*” (rulers or ministers) of God as recorded in Romans 13:3-6, Paul also sent others such as Titus, Timothy, and Epaphroditus as those ordained ministers of God to confirm the saints with the issues of *His Gospel*. These men were the “*gifts*” God gave to the Body of Christ as recorded in I Corinthians 12:28 and Ephesians 4:11.

The identifying mark of the true ministers of God would be that they would *not change* the “*sound doctrine*” Paul had committed unto them. They would teach and do the same thing Paul taught (II Timothy 2:1-2; Philippians 4:9). The saints were expected to submit themselves unto these true powers/rulers/ministers of God thus proving the sincerity of their love (II Corinthians 7:5-16). They were/are expected to stand against Satan's false apostles and deceitful workers. These men were/are sent by Satan into the Body of Christ to draw the members into a Law/Works/Flesh

system. God even labels these “*false workers*” as “*the ministers of righteousness*” (II Corinthians 11:13-15; Ephesians 4:14).

Loving obedience to God was made known when the saints submitted to Paul and his co-laborers and rejected the false authorities or powers. This was evidence of their obedience to the Spirit of Christ that was in them as they lived under the Grace/Faith/Spirit system.

To serve Christ and to be involved with the work of Christ was to obey Paul and to respond in a God honoring manner to his co-laborers giving honor to whom honor was due (Philippians 2:25-30; I Thessalonians 5:12-13).

The Nitty Gritty Application

For the saint to resist the powers of God is to walk “*after the flesh*.” Today, most of the members of the Church, which is His Body, are in this position due to their ignorance and disregard of the distinctive nature of Paul's authority, power, and epistles in the “*Dispensation of the Grace of God*.” Though the consequences of that resistance *may* not be viewed in this life, all things will be manifested at the Judgment Seat of Christ (I Corinthians 4:5; 5:10). Nevertheless, the believer that *now* ministers another gospel due to his neglect of rightly dividing the Word of Truth between *prophecy* and *mystery* is accursed (Galatians 1:8-9), reprobate concerning the faith and good works (II Timothy 3:8; Titus 1:16).

We must keep in mind that as Paul wrote Romans during the diminishing of Israel (Romans 11:11-13), and as God raised up this *apostle of grace*, that to speak against Paul *at this time*, resulted in a judgment/damnation that affected the physical body.

A good example of this is in I Corinthians 5 wherein a member of the Body of Christ was having sexual relations with his father's wife. This man, as well as the whole Corinthian assembly, was outside of godly conduct that was acceptable to Paul in his God given authority.

Though the Corinthians were speaking against Paul, they were in essence speaking against or resisting the “*higher power*” of God over them and as a result, God through Paul brought a damnation to the flesh of this man who was guilty of fornication.

In addition to this, in I Corinthians 11, the whole assembly was feeling the effects of rebellion towards Paul’s deposit of truth. He had labored to build up the saints, but many were sick, even dying, because they resisted the “*higher power*,” – *the Word of Truth in Paul*.

In these cases, Paul played the part of the revenger (Romans 13:4; I Corinthians 4:21; II Corinthians 13:2, 10; I Thessalonians 4:6).

With the diminishing of Israel being brought to a close in Acts 28, we find this era of the apostolic signs failing, ceasing, and vanishing (I Corinthians 13:8-12). This was done by God in conjunction with the completed deposit of the full-knowledge (Greek = *epi-gnosis*) concerning the revelation of the mystery of God’s will as *revealed to Paul* (Ephesians 1:9-10; Colossians 1:25).

Therefore, we find that since that time, and unto our day, God’s method for establishing “*sound doctrine*,” for bringing reproof, correction, and instruction to the saints, is via II Timothy 3:16; **A COMPLETED BOOK CALLED THE HOLY SCRIPTURES STUDIED AND APPLIED ACCORDING TO II TIMOTHY 2:15.**

Every believer can find himself in subjection unto God during this present Dispensation of Grace, living life under His power as we grow in understanding Grace; *for today grace reigns* (Romans 5:21).

Let’s consider Romans 13:6-8 wherein we find *one* major point within these three verses. It is that the members of the One Body were to discharge their duty unto the ministers of God as he faithfully discharged his responsibility given him of God.

Those that received the “*spiritual things*” from the minister of God were bound by love’s duty

to provide the “*physical things*” unto that *faithful power/ruler/minister* so he could continue in those God given ministries (Galatians 6:6; I Corinthians 9:10-14).

Romans 13:6 states that these powers/rulers/ministers of God were to attend continually upon this very thing. What is “*this very thing*?” In *context* it is that the minister of God exercises his God delegated power for the *benefit* of the saints which produces edification and maturity. Verse 5 reveals that the saint was to obey the minister of God for conscience sake (*i.e.*, for the saint to possess a pure and good conscience toward God’s commandments through Paul, contrasted to a weak and defiled or seared conscience). This is the forming of Christ within the saints (Galatians 4:19; Ephesians 4:11-12; Colossians 1:28).

These men of God were to use effectively Paul’s “*sound doctrine*.” That “*sound doctrine*” would then provide the increase or profit of God within the new life of the saints (I Timothy 1:10-11; 4:15).

Actually, it is the Holy Spirit taking the Word of God through an *effective ministry* and energizing the Word within the believing heart of the saints by the power of God, thus strengthening the inner man (Romans 15:13; Ephesians 3:16-17; Romans 8:29; II Corinthians 3:18).

If those ministers of God failed to deliver the Word rightly divided, the saints would not be established by God in spiritual wisdom of the *mystery*, but rather they would possess a human and worldly wisdom (I Corinthians 2:5; Romans 8:5-7).

In verses 6-8 there are four words that most people, saved or lost, view as *only applying* to some form of human/national/civil government. The words are: **tribute, custom, fear, and honor.**

Verse 7 reads, “**Render therefore to all their dues.**” This is the collective heading that ties all the four words under *one issue*. That issue being the saints faithfully discharging their responsibility unto God’s ministers who are the “*higher powers*.” Rendering their dues unto the *faithful power/ruler/*

minister of God, was the same as being done unto God for He had ordained this procedure.

TRIBUTE – a “tax” which was self imposed which was paid to the minister of God (I Corinthians 9:9-14; II Corinthians 8:8-14; 9:5-8; Galatians 6:6). By “taxing” oneself it denoted an attitude of subjection unto God as the saint recognized God’s ordinance or arrangement.

CUSTOM – a “tax” paid to accomplish a specific purpose. Paul collected money to be used to help out the poor saints. Paul was entreated to take on “*the fellowship of the ministering to the saints*” (II Corinthians 8:1-18; II Corinthians 1:13).

FEAR – a wholesome dread of displeasing the minister of God. This godly fear was beneficial as it influenced the disposition and attitude concerning subjection unto God (II Corinthians 7:1; Ephesians 5:21).

HONOR – an internal system of valuing or esteeming the Man of God in his ministry as the saints yielded to God’s will as expressed by these faithful stewards (I Thessalonians 5:12, 13; I Timothy 5:17).

Finally, Romans 13 is very plain that the “higher power” (ruler/minister) of God was *continually* to look upon that which edified and was for good. This brought maturity to the saints so they could do the work of the ministry. Ephesians 4:11-13 is a wonderful passage of Scripture that confirms this truth. If the servant of God did this, he was worthy of support.

In the present “*Dispensation of the Grace of God*,” Jesus Christ is the Head of the One Body. To make this *mystery* position known, God committed unto Paul’s trust a divine office of authority. There were no other humans who had **this** office (Romans 11:13) though there were other Body apostles. Just like Moses, who was the *first and only one* that possessed “*the pattern of the tabernacle*” and delivered the Law unto the Circumcised, Paul was the *first and only one* God entrusted with “*the form of sound words*” and delivered the issues of

the “*Dispensation of the Grace of God*” unto the Uncircumcised (Titus 1:3; I Timothy 1:11).

Paul received “*the form of sound words*” through visions and revelations of the Lord (Acts 9:16; 18:9; 26:16; Galatians 1:11-12; Ephesians 3:3; Colossians 1:25). All the other “*gifts*” God *gave* unto men (apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, etc.) received this “*form of sound words*” through illumination as they were taught by the Holy Spirit through Paul’s ministry. Subsequently, they ministered the *same* things with the Spirit of God confirming the issues of this *mystery revelation* (Ephesians 3:4-5; I Corinthians 1:10; 2:13; 14:26-37; I Timothy 1:3; II Timothy 2:2).

As God’s authority and power was personified in Moses at the beginning of **the Dispensation of Law**, likewise God’s authority and power was personified in Paul at the beginning of **the Dispensation of the Grace of God**.

As the sign gift ministry failed, ceased, and vanished with the close of the Acts period; and with Paul and the other “*gifts*” that God gave to men having died; and God **not giving** others or **continuing** to give¹ other “*gifts*,” was/is God left without an authoritative voice? Is there a power/authority that speaks for God today? **Yes, there still is an authority that speaks.**

Yet just like it was in Paul’s day when the lost, and sadly the saved, spoke against God’s design in the edification process in using Paul and the other “*gifts*,” the same ill-will is demonstrated towards that which replaced them.

As we look at Paul’s ministry as well as the ministry of the other ordained men of God, we find that their ministries were to provide a four-fold effect. These men were to provide “**doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in**

1. In Ephesians 4:9-13 it is recorded that the Lord Jesus Christ **gave** men as gifts in His ascension far above all heavens; this is Paul’s preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the Mystery for the Church, which is Christ’s Body. The past tense verb in this passage shows that Jesus Christ is **NOT STILL** giving gifts unto men. The gifts are now no longer needed as we have THE FAITH or completed Scripture (II Timothy 3:16-17).

righteousness.” With the passing away of these “*gifts unto men*” God replaced them with His completed Word of Truth.

Part of God’s design in the edification process was to have Paul complete the Word of Truth through the hidden wisdom of God which he received of Jesus Christ (I Corinthians 2:7). It is called “***the mystery.***” It was/is, “... ***the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the MYSTERY, which was kept secret since the world began ...***” that “fulfilled” [i.e., filled full] the Word of God (Ephesians 3:1-3; Colossians 1:25-26).

This completed Word of God was known as Scriptures (II Timothy 3:16). *II Timothy 3:16-17 reveals that the four-fold ministry of the gifted men had been replaced with Scriptures that do the very same thing.* God replacing Paul’s ministry as well as the ministry of the other ordained men of God with Scriptures that provide “*doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness.*”

TODAY

Today, there are no longer any Romans 13 “higher powers” or rulers or ministers of God, but God’s fully, completed, perfect Word in the Bible.

With the epistle of Second Timothy being the last book in the Bible to be written while Paul was near his execution, God *had* used the Romans 13 “higher powers” to give, copy, collect, and collate all that is Scripture. God’s design was to have all Scripture resident within the Body of Christ *before* Paul died, with his Second Epistle to Timothy concluding the deposit of Truth. The Body of Christ was/is to be the place where God’s Word of Truth could be found. The Body of Christ, the church of the living God, was/is the pillar and the ground of the truth (I Timothy 3:15). The Body of Christ was/is the depository of the completed Word of Truth. It has sixty-six books of Scripture found in a *one volume* book. These are the Writings that God breathed. Scripture now gives the “*doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness*” (II Timothy 3:16-17; Romans

16:25-26; II Corinthians 14:37; Colossians 4:16).

Since the death of Paul the apostle, God’s edifying process has been through Scriptures; **NOT a man as a gift or even especially gifted men for ministry, for *this false tradition is not stated in II Timothy 3:16 as the means of edification.*** Through the Word of Truth found in a BOOK studied “rightly divided,” we grow up **in Christ** and become workmen of God (Ephesians 4:15; II Timothy 2:15).

ROMANS 13 AND HUMAN GOVERNMENT

A good Bible student will recognize from Luke 4:5-7; Ephesians 2:2, Daniel 10, Ezekiel 28:1-19, and Isaiah 14:9-18 that *all human governments* that are presently on this planet, including the one in the *United States*, are under the dominion and control of Satan.

God’s *one and only* ordained righteous earthly government is the one of His righteous Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will sit upon the Throne of His Glory (Matthew 25:31).

All seats of governmental authority, both heavenly and earthly, which were created by and for Jesus Christ (Colossians 1:16) have been delivered unto Satan, with him giving this power and glory to whomsoever he wills.

The power of God’s Christ *has **not** yet come* to bear its fullness upon these created ranks of governmental power (Revelation 12:10; Hebrews 2:8; I Corinthians 15:24-27). All power in heaven and earth *has **not** yet been given* to Jesus Christ; for the strongman of the house *has **not** yet been bound* (Matthew 12:25-29; 28:18; Revelation 20:1-3).

Thus, the rulers of the nations are Satan’s men, *not God’s ministers; neither do they occupy the seats of the “higher power.”* Therefore, to appeal to any human government to protect “the Word of God” in a book is like placing the fox over the chicken coop.

“For there are many unruly and vain

talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake" (Titus 1:10-11).

Surely, to the observant student of the Word he can see that it has not changed since Paul's day unto ours, only their attack is so sophisticated that the hearts of the simple are still being deceived (Romans 16:17-18). Let the trusting soul acknowledge that God exalted Paul's office of apostleship with *power* and *authority* for the purpose of making known the riches of His grace among the Nations.

To say that Romans 13:1-7 is feeble, weak, and corrupt forms of human government and/or governmental leaders is to defile God's glory and eternal purpose. It is also to neglect and hide the truth of God's initial design in the *edification process* of the Body of Christ through these higher powers/rulers/ministers of God, of which Paul was the *first* apostle in the "*Dispensation of the Grace of God*" (I Timothy 1:15-16).

ADDENDUM:

Some view this passage as Paul's proclamation that God ordained, in a broader sense, human government with the particular form of government determined by the men of the nation.

These views come from those who have readily accepted Scofield's dispensational scheme of Genesis 9 and its "Dispensation of Human Government." That particular passage says nothing of human government. It has been *privately interpreted* to mean human government.

The very words of that passage are codified in the law to Israel regarding what is called the cities of refuge. The requiring of the life of man who sheds man's blood is done by every man's brother, not delegated to human government. Judgment in the cities of refuge is determined by the congregation of Israel (Numbers 35:24), not elected governmental officials.

In the greater sense, "the brethren" is the whole of the seed of Abraham, every Israelite being a brother to each other. So who would have a better sense of avenging needing to be served in quick justice than the very kin of the one killed.

Also in Joshua 20:6 the avenger of blood comes from the very city of the killing. Based upon Genesis 9 that avenger is a brother of the deceased.

Additionally, some advance that government's sole function is to bring order to man's society; even if this order (peace and safety) is secured by destruction, fear, and lies.

The author will gladly acknowledge I Timothy 2:1-2 wherein Paul admonishes the Body of Christ to make supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks for Kings and all that are in authority. While on this earth we, like Paul, find ourselves under human authority; but to make Romans 13 the traditional viewpoint, or variations of it, is to deny the very words of that passage.

If the believer is going to be consistent in his interpretation that Romans 13 refers to human government being given by God to the saints to continually minister good in their lives, then he must conclude that God contradicted Himself when Paul wrote I Corinthians 6:1-8 wherein he rebuked the saints for going to law (human government).

In other words, you can't be honest with the passage and say that human government is ordained of God, but then make the exception that all the people in the offices of government aren't ordained. By the way, have you ever been down to your local county government office lately? Does the traditional view of Romans 13 being humans in government "fit" what you saw and experienced there?

As this writer has confined himself to building understanding by staying in the passage and turning to other Pauline Scriptures, he and other believers have found great comfort and consolation in the understanding God has granted by His Spirit regarding Romans 13:1-7. Let us praise Him for the light of His Word rightly divided! ■

(continued from page 1177)

During those two years as Paul was in jail at Rome, he penned the epistles which contain the full knowledge of the **mystery revelation**: Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians. During this time there still existed those who were apostles, prophets, evangelists, teachers and pastors, though their particular ministries could no longer exhibit the supernatural manifestation of the Spirit. Factually, Paul was still an apostle and wrote as such (Ephesians 1:1; Colossians 1:1), but after the close of the Book of Acts his ministry was without the “*signs of an apostle*” (Philippians 2:27; II Timothy 4:20).

After the full deposit of **grace truth** was given to Paul that concluded this particular “*revelation of Jesus Christ according to the mystery*,” God finalizes the edification process through Scripture. Those men who were once the “*gifts unto men*” were diminishing by the time Paul had written his last epistle which brought to fullness the canon of Scripture.

II Timothy 3:16-17 reveals that the four-fold ministry of the gifted men had been replaced with Scriptures that do the very same thing. God replaced their four-fold ministry of “*doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness*” with His Word of Truth found in a Book rightly divided. No longer were men provided as “*gifts*” unto the Body of Christ, but God’s full complete Word of Truth.

With the Epistle of Second Timothy being the last book in the Bible to be written, God had used His internal *gift-system* to copy, collect, and collate all which is Scripture. The Body of Christ, the church of the living God, was the pillar and the ground of the truth (I Timothy 3:15).

God’s design was to have all Scripture resident within the Body of Christ before Paul died, with his Second Epistle to Timothy concluding the **deposit of truth**. We have sixty-six books of Scripture found in a one volume book. These are the Writings that God breathed, called Scripture (II Timothy 3:16-17; Romans 16:25-26; I Corinthians 14:37; Colossians 4:16).

Though religion will not recognize it and moves to oppose it, it is very clear that since the death of Paul God’s edifying process for giving “*doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness*” to the Church has been through the Bible, **not** a man in a ministry, for that is not the means as stated in II Timothy 3:16. Through the Word of Truth found in a BOOK studied “*rightly divided*” we grow up **in Christ** and become workmen of God (Ephesians 4:15; II Timothy 2:15).

To neglect God’s revelation concerning present day edification of the saints is to cavort with a shipwrecked faith having the “*form of godliness*” but “*denying the power thereof*.” ■

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