

other non-biblical writings, but it does suggest he believed that spirit beings were involved in some respect in what governments do.

In light of the cumulative evidence provided by the preceding arguments, it appears reasonable to conclude that Paul did believe spiritual beings stood behind and influenced earthly rulers.

It is true that Paul nowhere explicitly states this, but this is not a serious objection. There are a number of items in Paul's writings which, though theologically important, appear only as tacit presuppositions which are not explained:

For example, it is certain that the different expressions which Paul used to designate the various powers were not synonymous for him. Yet in none of the epistles does he describe the special function of a single one of the so-designated powers. What do we learn from Paul concerning the *stoixeia tou kosmou* ('the elemental spirits of the universe') in Gal.4:3,9, for example, where incidentally this expression is used in connection with rather concrete questions? The manner in which the 'elemental spirits' are related to these concrete situations is nowhere explained.⁷⁴

. . . the whole New Testament remains silent concerning the individual functions of the various invisible powers which [Paul] so often mentions, and yet we must assume

sequence, when Christians were confronted with obligations they could not obey, their disobedience was non-violent. The Jews, on the other hand, submit to earthly rule because foreign domination over Israel is ". . . one of God's provisional devices for chastening or protecting his people." When earthly rulers demanded disobedience to Torah, violent rebellion was allowed. Though Polish makes a good case for his interpretation of the rabbis, he offers no support for his interpretation of Paul. Also, his understanding of the Rabbis is quite similar to Archie Penner's interpretation of Paul and perhaps also John Howard Yoder's, as discussed in chapter one.

⁷⁴Cullmann, The State in the New Testament, p. 77.

that he associated a concrete thought with each different designation which he gives to these powers. Where may we expect to find further information on the subject if not in Judaism?⁷⁵

It is possible Paul did not need to elucidate the idea that angelic beings stood behind earthly rulers simply because it may have been common knowledge. (As noted in chapter two, this teaching is found quite often in the literature of his time.)

The belief that spirit beings stand behind and influence earthly rulers does have the problem of explaining why Paul would counsel submission to governments which have spiritual beings behind them when in Eph. 6:12 he states that evil rulers (*ἀρχαίς*), authorities (*ἐξουσίας*), world rulers (*κοσμοκράτορας*) and spiritual beings (*πνευματικά*) in the heavenly places are to be resisted.

There are a number of considerations which appear to adequately rectify this apparent conflict. One possible solution is that Paul may not have believed that the angels or spirit beings Christians had to wrestle with in Eph. 6:12 were the same that he understood were behind earthly rulers. The contexts where spiritual beings are to be resisted suggest a resistance on the spiritual and individual level when Christians are tempted to sin or stray from the Faith.

Secondly, if the state began to persecute Christians unjustly then it seems likely that Paul would not counsel physical resistance to the earthly authorities, but rather

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 80. Cullmann's last sentence in this quote is well put and quite reasonable.

prayer for the rulers, since Christians do not fight against flesh and blood (Eph. 6:12), but the spirits behind them. Paul's own example as he was jailed and persecuted by the various Jewish and Roman authorities of his day supports this suggestion.

Most significantly though, Paul taught that all things in Heaven and Earth, even rulers and authorities, were created through Christ and for him,⁷⁶ and it is FROM THESE rulers and authorities (both Roman and non-Christian Jews) that Paul EXPECTED persecution. When in prison, probably in Rome, Paul wrote to the Philippians about his troubles with the government:

For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake, experiencing the same⁷⁷ conflict which you saw in me, and now hear to be in me.

Paul reminded the Thessalonians of this point also:

That no man be disturbed by these afflictions; for you yourselves know that we have been destined for this. For indeed when we were with you, we kept telling you in advance that we were going to⁷⁸ suffer affliction; and so it came to pass, as you know.

It is important to realize that this same paradox, that earthly authorities can be appointed by God and yet persecute (sometimes at the "persuasion" of spirit beings) God's people, is found in the Old Testament, extra-biblical Jewish

⁷⁶Col. 1:16

⁷⁷Phil. 1:29-30. The idea that persecution is "granted" as a privilege is also found in Acts 5:41.

⁷⁸I Thess. 3:3-4.

literature and in the teachings of Jesus.

In Daniel 5:21 it is stated that all governments are appointed by God, yet in 6:7-9; 7:21-27; 10:13-21 and 11:36-39 we learn that these governments, (sometimes due to angelic beings) persecute and kill God's people. In Dan. 7:25 in particular, it is said the God will GIVE his saints into the hand of the tenth "horn" of the fourth beast to be persecuted and killed.

In Hab. 1:12-2:20 it is acknowledged that God appointed Babylon to judge his people yet this nation went too far and needed to be judged themselves.

In the Book of Dream Visions in 1 Enoch 89:51-69 Greece and Rome have received their sovereignty from God in order that they might judge God's people, but the angelic guardians, who were supposed to see to it that the killing did not exceed God's desire, fail to restrain the nations. The result was excessive violence.

The Rabbi Jose ben Kisma said:

. . . do you not know that it is heaven that has ordained this (Roman) nation to reign? For though she has laid waste His House, burnt His temple, slain His pious ones, and caused His best ones to perish, still she is firmly established!

In John 19:10-11 Jesus told Pilate the authority he had to crucify him came "from above." The idea that the present age was hostile to the disciples of Jesus and that earthly rulers would persecute and even kill them runs throughout

⁷⁹Abodah Zarah 18a., as quoted in Polish, "Pharisaism and Political Sovereignty," Judaism 19(4,1970), 421-22.

the teachings of Jesus (cf. Mt. 10:17-21).

Teachings such as these may well explain why Paul can affirm that governments are appointed by God and yet expect persecution from them. It is also worth pointing out in this regard that it appears Paul expresses a similar attitude when he quotes Ps. 44:22 in Rom. 8:36: "For thy sake we are being put to death all day long; We were considered as sheep to be slaughtered." The quote would seem most applicable to the last item quoted in Rom. 8:35, i.e., "μάχαιρα," which, of course, is the same word used in 13:4.

One interesting passage which further reveals some of Paul's attitude on this issue is found in Acts 23:1-5. Here Paul calls the High priest a "white-washed wall," but repents as soon as he learns that it is the High priest, quoting Ex. 22:28 as the basis of his submission. It is possible, of course, that Paul was being sarcastic, but this seems highly unlikely in light of the total picture we have of Paul in the New Testament. It appears that Paul submitted here to (at least in his mind) an evil ruler. It is evident in a number of ways that Paul's actions and teachings resemble those of Jesus' pacifism.⁸⁰

The passive, imperative ὑποτασσέσθω is another word whose meaning in Rom. 13:1-7 is debated. The controversy is whether the word means "obey" in the modern English sense or whether it has a "softer" nuance such as "submit," "be sub-

⁸⁰There is enough material in Paul's writings to take seriously the idea that Paul was a pacifist. See especially the argument in Yoder, The Politics of Jesus.

missive," or "have a right attitude" (as Cranfield argues). The ethical issue at stake is whether Paul meant for Christian obedience to be absolute or not.

For the purpose of this thesis it is not necessary to examine the subtle differences of nuance between ὑποτάσσω and those Greek verbs which are cognate in meaning: *τελεθροχέω*, *τελέω*, and ὑποκούω. The important issue is whether Paul believed that obedience to the state should be absolute or not since this would contribute towards understanding his view of the state's divine ordination.

A consideration of a number of points leads one to the conclusion that Paul would never counsel absolute obedience to the state. First of all, he could have used other Greek words which more explicitly denote "obey."⁸¹ Secondly, Paul believed the Old Testament was divinely authoritative and it does not seem likely he would have been unaware of the "divinely approved" civil disobedience of Daniel and his friends, as well as other Old Testament passages where God's people rightly disobeyed civil authorities. Third, in Acts 16:35-37 Paul himself disobeyed the authorities. Fourth, it would be questionable, to say the least, to maintain that Paul would disagree with Peter's statement to the authorities (regarding the preaching of the Gospel) in Acts 5:29: "We must obey God rather than men." (Is it possible that anyone could seriously defend the idea that Paul would worship idols or stop preach-

⁸¹See Cranfield, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary, 2:660-663.

ing the Gospel if the state so commanded him?) Fifth, the Rabbinic teaching of Paul's time counseled submission to the Roman authorities, but not to the point of disobeying God! (See chapter two of this thesis.)

The question remains though, as to whether Paul's use of *ὑποτάσσω* merely meant "have a submissive attitude," or if it included the notion of obedience.

Contextually, it seems obvious that obedience is included in the meaning of the word by noting that Paul lists at least some ethical duties to be obeyed within the section such as "doing good" and "rendering" taxes, customs, fear and honor to whomever these are due.

Also, (assuming that Tit. 3:1 is Pauline), there is an important parallel verse where Paul clearly links obedience with submission to earthly rulers: "ὑπομύμνησκε αὐτοὺς ἀρχαῖς ἐξουσίαις ὑποτάσσεσθαι, πειθαρχεῖν"

Lexically, the word can also carry the idea of obedience, although it appears that this meaning cannot be found in non-Biblical Greek.⁸²

In the Septuagint the word occurs thirty-one times and

⁸²In non-biblical Greek *ὑποτάσσω* has three general categories of meaning in the active voice and three in the passive. In the active voice the word means: 1) "Place," or arrange under" (Polyb. 3:36.7; Plut. Nic. 23). 2) "Subject," or "subdue" (Hdn. 7.2.9; OGI6 54.7). 3) "Post" something "draw up behind" (Luc. Par. 49; Ael. Tact. 15.1). In the passive voice the word means: 1) The "inferior bone" (ulna, Hippoc. Off. 16) 2) "Be obedient," "submit" (Arr. Epict. 3.24.65; Cyran. 15; Hdn. 2.28; Onos. 1.17). 3) "to underlie," "to be implied," "to be in association with" (Epic. Ep. 1.p.4U, Nat. 28.p.13V).

translates ten different Hebrew verbs. In the active voice the word usually means "subdue," "submit," or "subject" (Ps. 17:47; 3 Macc. 2:13; Ep. Je. 1) More importantly, the passive has the following meanings: 1) "submit" (with obedience implied, Ps. 36:7). 2) "to be subject" (with a "right attitude" sense, 2 Macc. 9:12). 3) "obey" (Theod. Dan. 6:13). Although Cranfield thinks that the Daniel passage is the only one "in which the specific idea of obedience is clearly prominent,"⁸³ Ps. 61:1, 5; and Wis. 8:14 would also seem to have a meaning where obedience is prominent.

In the New Testament the word occurs thirty-nine times thirty of which are in the passive. In the active the word means "make subject," "subject," "subdue," or "subordinate" (Eph. 1:21; 1 Cor. 15:27; Phil. 3:21.) In the passive the word means, generally, "subject," "make subject," "submit," or "obey." The important question here is how much or to what degree can the sense of obedience be found within these meanings.

Again, Cranfield argues that in the majority of the cases in the New Testament the specific idea of obedience is not prominent, but that the word is used to indicate a proper attitude.⁸⁴ A close examination of the contexts however, suggests otherwise. At least in eleven passages the context indicates that the sense of obedience is more than just implied;

⁸³Cranfield, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary, 2:660-61.

⁸⁴Ibid.

it is quite prominent: Luke 2:51, 10:17, 20; Rom. 8:7; 1 Cor. 14:32, 34; Eph. 5:22-24; 1 Pet. 3:1, 3:5. In eight instances obedience is implied, though it may not be as clearly prominent: Rom. 10:3; 1 Cor. 16:16; Tit. 2:5; Col. 3:18; Tit. 3:1; 1 Pet. 2:13, 18, 5:5. In only one case does the word seem to have the sense of obedience far in the background: Eph. 5:21.

It is reasonable to conclude that Paul counseled a submissive attitude which included obedience, but not absolute obedience.

Ὅτι γὰρ ἔστιν ἐξουσία εἰ μὴ ὑπὸ θεοῦ is the ground for the charge just made. A question which arises here is whether *ἐξουσία* should be understood in a concrete sense (that it refers to ruling political power), or in a general sense (that it refers to authority and power in general). It is important to decide this issue since (as discussed in chapter one) it tells us WHO or WHAT is ordained: Is something abstract ordained, such as authority, power, a principle or concept, or something concrete, i.e., governments which actually exist in history? Answering this question also decides whether a government can "lose" its ordination status or not (by reaching a certain level of sinfulness, for instance).

F. Godet⁸⁵ thinks *ἐξουσία* should be understood in a general sense (authority and power in general), and argues for this as follows: 1) The plural of *ἐξουσία* is used in both the preceding and following phrases, but the singular occurs here

⁸⁵F. Godet, Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, pp. 441-42.

only which suggests that Paul means to speak of power in itself. 2) The form of the proposition with its negative "there is not but of," corresponds to the form of an abstract principle. 3) The variant ἀπο (rather than ὑπὸ) should be retained as original in the first phrase which makes the next phrase, containing ὑπὸ, fit more logically. Paul means first that we should recognize that power/authority is itself part of God's plan for the world and then secondly (taking the "δέ" in the next phrase to mean "moreover"), that he now refers to the concrete, specific case: existing authorities/rulers are also established by God. 4) If these two phrases are not understood this way then the second would be superfluous. 5) The preposition ὑπὸ makes more sense in the second phrase since it rather naturally describes the historical facts as they are; ἀπο would not do this as well, but works quite well in the first phrase.

Although Godet makes a good case for his position, there are a number of reasons why it is probably more likely that Paul is speaking concretely in the first phrase. 1) The best textual analysis prefers ὑπὸ to ἀπο. 2) The most natural sense of δέ in this connection is "and," not "moreover." 3) Godet notes that if ἐξουσία in the first phrase is concrete then the second phrase is superfluous, since there is no need for the οὐσαί phrase because the predicate can stand by itself, but as Nigel Turner⁸⁶ points out, the redundant use of ὧν is

⁸⁶Nigel Turner, A Grammar of New Testament Greek, Vol. 3, "Syntax," (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1908-76), pp. 151-52.

characteristic of literature of this time. 4) It is more natural, even though *ἐξουσία* is singular here, to understand its meaning in light of how the word is used in the immediate context, and the immediate context shows that a concrete sense is attached to *ἐξουσία*. 5) In verses three and four *ἀρχόντες* and *διάκονός* are substituted for the abstract "authorities," and, in particular, *τὴν ἐξουσίαν* in verse three is singular, definite, and has a concrete sense.

The relationship between the two phrases is therefore best understood as coordinate. "The two clauses state the same principle, in a negative and a positive form. The repetition emphasizes the point."⁸⁷

Ἄι δὲ οὐσαὶ ὑπὸ θεοῦ τεταγμέναί εἰσίν is the most important phrase in Rom.13:1-7 and *τεταγμέναί* is its key word. *Ἄι δὲ οὐσαὶ* unambiguously means that it is the existing and contemporary authorities that are "*τεταγμέναί*." It is evident that Paul is taking pains to make this clear.

Establishing the precise meaning of *τεταγμέναί* is, of course, particularly important to determine. It is especially important to determine whether it is a "technical term," that is, one which has a particular theological content of meaning, such as the word "ordain" has in many present theological circles.

In non-biblical Greek there are five general categories of meaning that can be found for the word: 1) "form,"

⁸⁷R. St. John Parry, The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans, (Cambridge: Univ. Press, 1912), p. 169.

(or "draw up, array, marshall") men and ships;⁸⁸ 2) "post, or station;"⁸⁹ 3) "appoint," or "assign" men to civil or military service;⁹⁰ 4) "set, assess, or fix" taxes or payments;⁹¹ 5) "determine" (or "set, appoint, prescribe");⁹²

In the Septuagint there are four (perhaps five) categories of meaning:

1. "Place," in several senses: "set up" (an image, Judg. 18:31); "array" (troops for battle, Judg. 20:30); "station" (the Cherib, Gen. 3:24); "adorn" (a house with fine furnishings, Esth. 1:6); "arrange" (the workings of a government, Sir. 10:1); "to set" (one's heart on something, Hag. 1:5).

2. "Determine:" a time to do something (Exod. 8:9); a signal (I Kgs. 20:35); to go somewhere (IV Kgs. 12:17).

3. "to make:" a house desolate (IV Kgs. 10:27); a dry land (Hos. 2:3, 4); a day bitter and harsh (Zeph. 1:14); one's heart disobedient (Zech. 7:12); a choice (Zech. 7:14); a decree (Dan. 6:13).

4. "Appoint" (someone to an office or task): captains

⁸⁸E.g., into lines (Xenoph. An. 1.2.15); ranks and files (Thucyd. 2.81); into an order for battle (Thucyd. 1.48).

⁸⁹E.g., men: at a place (Soph. Ant. 142); to serve in the military (Lys. 14.11, 16.15); against each other (Xenoph. Cyr. 2.1.9).

⁹⁰Xenoph. HG7 1.24 (*ἀρχοντας*), Id. Cyr. 8.6.17; Isoc. 5.151.

⁹¹Andoc. 4.11; Thucyd. 4.26; Plat. Res. 416e.

⁹²Concerning law (Plat. Leg. V. 7281; Jos. Ap. 2.203; priests (Jos. Ap. 2.187); a man in his place before God (Ench. 22); a punishment (Aristoph. Ves. 1420); Stars and times (Philo Op. Mund. 60).

(1 Kgs. 22:7); court reporter (2 Kgs. 23:23); Levites (1 Chr. 16:4); holy singers (1 Esdr. 1:15); judges (2 Kgs. 7:11); and magistrates (Esth. 8:12-13). These last two references could be translated "ordain" (in a pre-temporal, determined sense.)

It is possible that in three places in the Septuagint *τασσω* could mean "ordain" in a pre-temporal, divinely predetermined "theological" sense: 1) 2 Kgs. 7:11: ". . . from the days I [God] appointed/ordained judges over my people Israel." The context here however does not seem to offer any particular evidence that the author means that the "period" of the judges was a time predetermined by God. Rather, God (through Nathan) is reminiscing about the past and promises a better future for David and Israel. The word seems best translated "appointed" here. 2) Esth. 8:12-13:

And oftentimes evil exhortation has made partakers of the guilt of shedding innocent blood, and has involved in irremediable calamities, many of those who were appointed/ordained to offices of authority (*τῶν ἐπ' ἐξουσίας τεταχένων*), who had been entrusted with the management of their friends' affairs

It is difficult to know if God has appointed/ordained these authorities or if the appointment came from men. There is nothing in the context to decide either way. 3) Hab. 1:12: ". . . O Lord, thou hast established it [Babylon] for judgment (*εἰς κρίμα τέταχας αὐτὸ*), and he has formed me to chasten with his correction."

In this context it does appear that *τασσω* could well be translated "ordain" in the sense defined above. Note that this ordination was specifically for judgment and Habbakuk goes on to castigate Babylon for an excessive use of violence.

The preceding lexical data do not appear to provide any concrete insight into determining the precise meaning of the word in Rom. 13. It certainly does not indicate, particularly in light of the Septuagint, that it was regularly used as a technical term indicating any special meaning, particularly "divine predetermination."

In the New Testament the word occurs only eight times, and only TWO of these occurrences belong to Paul. Excluding Rom. 13:1, the word means "to designate" (a place) Matt.28:16; "be placed" (under authority) Luke 7:8; "to be appointed or ordained" (to eternal life) Acts 13:48; "determine or decide" (to send someone on a journey) Acts 15:2; "appoint or arrange" (something for someone) Acts 22:10; "set or determine" (a time to accomplish something) Acts 28:23 and "set" or "devote" (oneself to a task) 1 Cor. 16:15.

Apparently only in Acts 13:48 does the word appear to have the sense of divine predetermination. It is possible this meaning is indicated also in Acts 22:10, where Paul is told to go to Damascus where he will learn all that has been "appointed" (or, "arranged?") for him to do, but the context does not make this certain.

There is no certain evidence from the New Testament which would indicate, in contexts where God is the subject, that the verb was regularly used with a particular technical sense such as "predetermine." It is possible Paul intended this particular meaning in Rom. 13, but it cannot be substantiated by the evidence examined thus far.

Furthermore, the usual word Paul uses to indicate divine predetermination is *προορισω*. In every instance where Paul uses this word it appears to have this meaning: (Rom 8:29-30; 1 Cor. 2:7; Eph. 1:5, 11).

There are several words in the New Testament which can mean "appoint" or "determine," and some time must be spent examining those that are most significant for the present task.

1. *καθιστημι* is certainly one word Paul could have used instead of *τασσω*, since among other senses it also means "appoint." In the Septuagint, this word is often used to mean "appoint," particularly of rulers, judges, officials, etc.⁹³ In the New Testament especially (except in Paul) it is used of the appointment of rulers, judges, priests, etc., but with the particular nuance of "made," or "constituted,"⁹⁴ as in Acts 7:27b: "Who made you a ruler and judge over us?" This may well explain why in two of the only three places where Paul uses this word it means "made," or "constituted," as in Rom. 5:19:

"For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous." (Rom. 5:19)

In the remaining place where Paul uses this word (Tit. 1:5), the word does mean "appoint" (elders, in every city).

2. *ἔργασω* occurs only eight times in New Testament (six in Acts & Luke). It is used in reference to God in all

⁹³LXX= Deut. 17:15 (appoint a King), 1 Sam. 8:1 (judges over Israel), and rulers (*ἀρχοντα*) Ex. 2:14, Ac. 7:27, 1 Cl. 4:10.

⁹⁴Mt. 24:45, 25:21; Lu. 12:14, 44; Acts 6:3, 7:10, et. al.

but one place (Acts 11:29). It means determine, establish, appoint. One passage is especially important. Assuming that Luke accurately recorded Paul's Areopagus speech, Paul uses the word in Acts 17:26 (where God determined allotted periods and boundaries for men). This is reminiscent of Deut. 32:8 (where *ἵσταναι* is used) and Gen. 10:5 (refer to the discussion of these two passages in chapter two). The only other place where Paul uses *ὀρίσσω* is in Rom. 1:4. Here the word may mean "designate" or "determine beforehand."

The rare term *προστασσω* used by Paul in Acts 17:26 is particularly intriguing. It means to fix or determine beforehand. The use of this word, along with the obvious similarity it has with Deut. 32:8, is tantalizing because it appears to offer a glimpse into Paul's thought on the subject of the ordination of nations (again, see the discussion of this passage in chapter two). It definitely has a sense of divine predetermination to it. Unfortunately, little more can be said about this passage.

ὀρίσσω occurs seventeen times in the Septuagint where it generally means "separate" or "set a boundary."

It would seem that this word would have been quite appropriate for Paul to have used in Rom. 13. It is not used often enough, however, in the sense of appoint, to see any certain difference of nuance between this word and *τασσω*. If there is a difference, it may be hazarded perhaps that *ὀρίσσω* is a term which conveys a "stronger" sense of determination or appointment --something decided before the fact of its occurrence.

3. *Προχειρίζω* is another word which appears would have fit quite well in Rom. 13. The word is often found in military and political settings in classical literature and generally means determine, nominate and elect.⁹⁵ In the Septuagint the word means to be chosen or commissioned (by God and men) to perform tasks, especially those involving the military or political spheres.⁹⁶ In the New Testament the word unfortunately occurs only three times, all in Acts: (3:20, 22:14 and 26:16). It means appoint, make, choose. If there is a particular nuance associated with the use of this term which would be relevant for this thesis, it does not seem to be evident.

4. *τίθημι* in both the Septuagint and in Classical literature means to place, put, set, etc. In the Septuagint it is often used with God as the subject.⁹⁷ In the New Testament the word occurs over one hundred times and has several meanings. The word is not used in contexts dealing with the appointment of political authorities. However, when God is the subject, the word often signifies the sense of "destine."⁹⁸

Lexically, it is difficult to fix a particular nuance to *τίθημι* as opposed to other words which Paul might have used. In light of the lexical evidence alone, the nearest e-

⁹⁵P. Schmidt, S.v. "*προχειρίζω*." New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology, 1:475.

⁹⁶Ibid., 1:476.

⁹⁷See Christian Maurer, S.v. "*τίθημι*." Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, 8:154-55.

⁹⁸Heb. 1:2; Mk. 12:36; Rom. 4:17; Acts 13:47, et. al.

quivalent English words would seem to be appoint, place or establish.

There is some lexical support to suggest that the word could have conveyed the sense of predetermination, but again, Paul could have picked a word which would have indicated this with much less (if any) ambiguity! The issue of the sovereignty of God will be discussed further, in chapter four.

The fact must be faced that lexical evidence alone does not explain the theological content of meaning that Paul had in his mind when he used the word *ταύτην* : it was not a technical term. Obviously, a decision on this issue must take into consideration Paul's theology. This topic is also reserved for chapter four of this thesis.

Political Optimism in Verses Three and Four

One of the often mentioned "problems" in verses three and four is its apparent optimism: Paul does not appear to consider the fact that governments are often corrupt, unjust and sometimes reward evil and persecute good or that Rome (as outlined in chapter two) was corrupt and brutal. This issue is important for this thesis for two reasons: One, it helps to clarify the purpose of the state as Paul saw it, and two, it affects the issue of whether Paul is making a universal, theological statement about government, or whether he is merely describing Rome at that time and would speak differently if, for example, Nero were persecuting Christians.

A number of solutions to this apparent problem have been offered by different authors: 1) Paul's attitude is con-

ditioned by the Pax Romana, the Quinquennium Neronis and his own positive experiences with the authorities. Therefore what he says in Rom. 13:1-7 is a generally accurate description of the state of his time as he saw it.

This solution should be rejected for several reasons. First, Paul was certainly aware of Roman corruption and abuse of power, especially in relation to the Jews in Palestine (see chapter two). As Käsemann notes ". . . it simply should not be overlooked that the apostle is in fact writing under a dictatorship with largely corrupt and capricious representatives, not to speak of the petty despotism of departments and officials."⁹⁹ Second, Paul's experience with Rome was not uniformly pleasant, as he mentions in 2 Cor. 11:25 (cf. Acts 16:22-23, 37). Also, as noted earlier, Paul EXPECTED persecution from the ruling authorities, both Roman and Jewish (cf. Phil. 1:29-30; I Thess. 3:3-4). Third, Paul certainly could not forget that it was Rome who crucified Jesus. Fourth, verses one and two appear to be universal theological statements. Therefore any existing government at any time would be included, which is in agreement, as discussed in chapter two, with the teaching of the Old Testament (which taught that all governments, even those that are "evil," are appointed by God) and with what can be found in much of the rest of Jewish literature. It should also be mentioned there is evidence that later on, during times of persecution, Christians still held to the idea that

⁹⁹Käsemann, Commentary on Romans, p. 356.

the state should be respected and honored.¹⁰⁰

2) Another solution to Paul's optimism is that civil authorities will "consciously or unconsciously, willingly or unwillingly, in one way or another . . . praise the good work and punish the evil."¹⁰¹ They will do this because they are, whether they are aware of it or not, God's servants, and end up accomplishing just exactly what God wants them to do (whether this is willingly or unwillingly) as can be seen in Isa. 10:5-15. A state may unjustly punish an individual, but the punishment will end up being praise; a state may unjustly take the life of a Christian, but in so doing the Christian will receive a crown of glory.¹⁰²

This interpretation has a measure of legitimacy, since there is somewhat of a precedent for it in Isa. 10:5-15, and there may an undertone of this in the Romans passage, but it is has no concrete exegetical support beyond this. It is an attractive proposition, but it is based mostly on theological guesswork using a logic that Paul may not have shared.¹⁰³

3) Paul is speaking of what government OUGHT to do,

¹⁰⁰ 1 Pet. 2:17. The author of the Epistle to Diognetus described the response of Christians under persecution as still honoring (*τιμωρε*) the authorities, even though their conduct was "outrageous" (as quoted in Godet, Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, p. 445).

¹⁰¹ Cranfield, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, 2:665.

¹⁰² Cranfield, "Some Observations on Romans XIII.1-7," New Testament Studies 6(April, 1960):245.

¹⁰³ Hutchinson, "The Political Implications of Romans 13:1-7," p. 53.

although they often do not adhere to the ideal.¹⁰⁴ This solution is more reasonable than the others. Cranfield, however, objects that its one-sidedness does not fit well with a serious pastoral purpose and that it stands in too stark a contrast with the realism in 8:35-39.¹⁰⁵ These objections appear quite legitimate, particularly the first: It would be strange of Paul to insist on submission based on what government SHOULD do ideally. This solution still has an attraction though, perhaps because its logic appears quite natural (at least to the minds of many modern readers).

4) That the "good" (verse four) which government brings is the good that is inherent in any state which is not in a state of anarchy.¹⁰⁶ Since Paul names only one function for government¹⁰⁷ (administration of wrath on those who do evil) the benefit, the "good" that comes to the individual is not necessarily direct, but the "common morality" which results from the absence of anarchy. This "common morality" can be found in any state, even a sinful police state (as was Rome). "Anarchy 'the bellum omnium contra omnes,' is much worse than the worst

¹⁰⁴Cranfield, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary, 2:664.

¹⁰⁵Ibid., 2:664-65.

¹⁰⁶Archie Penner, The Christian, The State and the New Testament (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1968), pp. 85-86.

¹⁰⁷The debate as to whether Paul thought governments had more than one purpose is discussed below.

state."¹⁰⁸ The following comments by Emil Brunner¹⁰⁹ help to clarify this position:

Even if that [evil] power is exercised by a despot devoid of any intention of justice, the mere fact that this central will exists, and effectively claims for itself the monopoly of coercive power, that above all, by claiming for itself the power over life and death, it removes that most dangerous element from the hands of the individual, has a beneficent influence. The state of anarchy ceases . . . a certain order of peace, however brutal, is established The monopolization of power . . . though unintentionally, [has] this peaceable effect . . . [and] justice is . . . possible since the mutual use of force by individuals is eliminated Even without wishing to, the unified coercive power safeguards the life of the individuals against each other by reserving to itself the right to kill

This solution looks strange viewed through modern, Western eyes, accustomed to the justice and good found in most constitutional democracies, but it is most likely the best solution for several reasons. First, "the good work" ($\tau\hat{\omega} \acute{\alpha}\gamma\alpha\theta\hat{\omega} \acute{\epsilon}\rho\gamma\omega$) is probably best interpreted in light of verses one and five, where $\text{\textit{\u0399}\u03bd\u03c9\u03c4\u03b1\u03c3\u03c3\u03c9}$ "brackets" the section in which $\acute{\alpha}\gamma\alpha\theta\omicron\varsigma$ recurs. Therefore, the "good" work is "being submissive," in whatever forms that takes, but especially by paying taxes.

Conversely, it is probably best to define the "evil" work in light of verse two (resisting or opposing authorities), which could include, of course, many different forms of action and not just "rebellion" in a general sense.

Two, Paul IS writing under a largely corrupt and brutal

¹⁰⁸ Archie Penner, The Christian, The State and the New Testament, p. 86.

¹⁰⁹ Emil Brunner, Justice and the Social Order, trans. by Mary Hottinger, 1st ed. (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1945), pp. 119-24.

dictatorship whose many injustices (especially with the Jews) he was certainly aware of, and, as mentioned before, Paul EXPECTED further persecution from the authorities.

Three, it fits in well with Old Testament/Jewish theology which teaches that God sometimes "appoints" evil rulers and asks that God's people submit to them.

Four, it conforms well with the context of Rom. 12:17-13:7. In Rom. 12:17-21 Paul insists that Christians as individuals should never take their own revenge against evil, but rather leave room for God's wrath: he will see to it that evil is repaid (verse nineteen). In Rom. 13:1-7 Paul allows government to do WHAT HE HAS JUST FORBIDDEN the Christian. The vengeance promised in Rom. 12:19 is fulfilled in the actions of the ruling authorities when (as servants of God) they bring wrath on those who do evil.

An objection to this solution is that Paul seems to attribute some real trust and justice to the authorities. Ernst Käsemann has a reasonable answer to this objection:

Insofar as Paul really takes up an aspect of justice and accords a measure of trust to the authorities, this may be explained quite naturally by the fear of anarchy, in the light of which it is easy to understand the heaping up of derivatives of the stem tag-.¹¹⁰

The Purpose of the Authorities

Some exegetes argue there is a dual purpose for the state in verse four, one being vengeance and the other "doing good." Since this issue is important for fully defining the

¹¹⁰Käsemann, Commentary on Romans, p. 356.

ordination of the state, it is important to discuss verse four in some depth. The problem centers on the phrase "θεοῦ γὰρ διακονός ἐστιν σοὶ εἰς τὸ ἀγαθόν," especially "εἰς τὸ ἀγαθόν." Cranfield argues for a dual interpretation for the following reasons:¹¹¹ 1) The paired sentences θεοῦ γὰρ διακονός ἐστιν σοὶ εἰς τὸ ἀγαθόν and θεοῦ γὰρ διακονός ἐστιν, ἕκδικος εἰς ὀργὴν τῷ τὸ κακὸν πράσσοντι indicate two purposes, with σοὶ εἰς τὸ ἀγαθόν being primary and preeminent because of 1 Tim. 2:1-4. 2) Σοὶ refers to the Christian who is doing "that which is good," and it is to the CHRISTIAN that the assurance that the state will do good (εἰς τὸ ἀγαθόν) is directed. 3) Ἀγαθόν should not be understood generally ("advantage," "benefit," "well-being"), but as referring specifically to Christian salvation. He bases this on the sense ἀγαθόν has in Rom. 8:28 and because, if the ruler is just, he helps the Christian toward salvation by "providing him with encouragement to do good and discouragement from doing evil . . . and by curbing the worst excesses of other men's sinfulness" ¹¹² If the ruler is unjust, he still provides help by contriving trials and tribulations, which are needed by all Christians so that they might reach maturity and salvation in Christ.

This rather strange interpretation should be rejected for the following reasons: 1) As discussed already, the

¹¹¹Cranfield, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary, 2:665-666.

¹¹²Ibid., 2:666.

"good" that government provides is best understood as the "common morality" which results from the absence of anarchy (see above). 2) The second similar sentence, *θεοῦ γὰρ δικάκονός ἐστιν ἕκδικος . . .*, is best taken as that which elucidates the first: it explains in what sense the state is God's "*δικάκονός εἰς τὸ ἀγαθόν.*" 3) The Jews and Christians of Paul's time simply had nothing "good" to expect from the state other than an environment of order and peace. Rome was more often viewed as immoral, a usurper of rights, and as one which TOOK rather than gave:

In corroboration and extension of what is implied and asserted in Josephus it is stated in the Talmud that one of the principal activities for which the Romans were remembered was their building of marketplaces for the express purpose of setting prostitutes within them."¹¹³

R. Judah (b. Ila'i), R. Jose and R. Simeon [b. Yohai] were sitting, and Judah, a son of proselytes, was sitting near them. R. Judah commenced [the discussion] by observing, 'How beautiful are the works of this people [the Romans]! They have made streets, they have built bridges, they have erected baths.' R. Jose was silent. R. Simeon answered and said, 'All that they made they made for themselves. They built market-places to set harlots in them, baths to rejuvenate themselves, bridges to levy tolls for them.'¹¹⁴

It is also evident from the New Testament that most of those who lived in Palestine would have preferred to be rid of the Roman yoke!

It therefore took a perceptive (and optimistic) Jew to see any "good" in Rome's government. Rabbi Hanina (about A.D. 66) probably best puts into words what "good" a Jew (or Chris-

¹¹³J. Gibson, "Hoi Telonai Kai Hai Pornai," The Journal of Theological Studies 32(October, 1981):431.

¹¹⁴TB. Shab. 33b., as quoted in Gibson, "Hoi Telonai Kai Hai Pornai," p. 432.

tian) might see in having Rome rule the Mediterranean world: "Were it not for the fear of the government, a man would swallow up his neighbor alive."¹¹⁵ 2) There is no demonstrable reason why the meaning of ἀγαθόν in 8:28 should be imported into 13:4. Also, the meaning of ἀγαθόν in 8:28 may include salvation, but may well refer to the final end of certain events (such as suffering) in a Christian's life. The meaning of ἀγαθόν in 13:4 is best decided by context and this suggests, as discussed, a general sense. 3) 1 Tim. 2:1-4 does not appear to support Cranfield's position; rather it appears to be in congruity with the interpretation presented here. The passage may even be expressing a desire that government not begin a policy of persecution.

The phrase "εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο προσκαρτεροῦντες" in verse six is also related to the issue of the purpose of government. There are two problems with the phrase 1) What does αὐτὸ τοῦτο refer to, and 2) Should προσκαρτεροῦντες be taken with αὐτό τοῦτο or by itself, in an "absolute" sense?

Concerning the first problem, it is possible to see αὐτό τοῦτο as referring to three things: 1) That it refers to λειτουργοὶ γὰρ θεοῦ εἶσιν (all that is involved in that service, including paying taxes),¹¹⁶ 2) That it refers to the duties described in verses three and four (giving approval to

¹¹⁵As quoted in Paul Furnish, The Moral Teaching of Paul (Nashville: Abingdon, 1979), p. 129.

¹¹⁶Walter Grundmann, S.v. "προσκαρτερεω," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, 3:618.

those who do good and wrath to those who do evil), and 3) That it refers to the collecting of taxes.¹¹⁷

Although it is difficult to choose from among these three interpretations it would appear that the best choice is the first, that it refers to *λεειτουργοὶ γὰρ θεοῦ εἶσιν*. The expression *εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο προσκατεροῦντες* seems too emphatic and weighty to refer to taxes, especially with the particular verb Paul chose (*προσκατερω*), which carries with it the moral notion of perseverance.¹¹⁸ Having it refer to verses three and four has the problem of a lack of proximity: grammatically speaking, they are "too far away." It seems best, then, that *αὐτὸ τοῦτο* refers to *λεειτουργοὶ γὰρ θεοῦ εἶσιν* since this phrase is both the nearest and most logically deserving of the rather emphatic wording of *εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο προσκατεροῦντες*.¹¹⁹

Concerning the second problem it can be said that there is reasonable evidence to suggest that *προσκατεροῦντες* could be taken absolutely: "persevering faithfully in their office," with *εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο* providing the purpose of the office, since *προσκατερω* usually governs the dative as in Rom. 12:13.¹²⁰ Also, there are examples where *προσκατερω* stands absolutely

¹¹⁷Cranfield, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary, 2:669.

¹¹⁸H. A. W. Meyer, Critical and Exegetical Hand-Book to the Epistle to the Romans, ed., by William P. Dickson, trans. by J. C. Moore and E. Johnson (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1884), p. 493.

¹¹⁹Ibid.

¹²⁰William Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, 5th ed., International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1902), p. 368.

(cf. Num. 13:20; Xen. Hell. 7:5, 14).¹²¹ But it seems more natural and logical, within the context, to take the verb with *αὐτο τοῦτο* : "attending to this very thing."¹²²

The verb *προσκαρτερεω* may also indirectly support the suggestion that Paul may have been intending a sense of "priestliness" to *λεειτουργος* since *προσκαρτερεω* can be found to have "special associations with liturgy" in the New Testament (cf. Rom. 12:12; Acts 1:14, & 2:46).¹²³

Concluding Remarks

In this chapter an examination of exegetical issues which are relevant for the topic of this paper has revealed a number of conclusions and insights into Paul's understanding of the ordination of governments, but it has not provided a satisfactory answer to the research question of this thesis, nor has it dealt with a number of issues about ordination raised at various points in this paper, especially chapter one.

It is the purpose of chapter four to bring together valid exegetical data and conclusions from chapters two and three in order to answer the research question: In what sense

¹²¹Meyer, Critical and Exegetical Hand-Book to the Epistle to the Romans, p. 493.

¹²²As do Cranfield, Bauer, Zerwick, et.al.

¹²³Black, Romans, p. 161. There is some good reason for thinking that Paul may be "hinting" at the thought of priestly service with *λεειτουργος*. In most passages where it can be determined that the word has a "priestly" sense, the context makes the decision. In Rom. 13:1-7 the context is service to God, and this, along with the switch from *δουλος* to *λεειτουργος* at least suggests that it is not unreasonable to think that Paul intended some such sense.

did Paul understand that the "Powers that be" are "appointed," as well as deal with some of the particular issues raised throughout this paper about "ordination."

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

Introduction

In this chapter three main topics will be covered:

1) A listing of those conclusions from chapters two and three which provide solid exegetical insight into Paul's understanding of the nature of the ordination of the state. This section also includes critiques of some of the issues raised by various interpreters about ordination as found in the preceding chapters. 2) Two "reconstructions" of Paul's concept of ordination which offer a more comprehensive and integrated understanding of the issue. These reconstructions are propositions (educated guesses) based on the material presented in chapters two and three. 3) A brief discussion of some ethical problems and implications raised by the exegetical conclusions reached in this paper.

Summary of Conclusions Concerning Ordination

Based on the studies presented in chapters two and three, few solid exegetical conclusions about Paul's understanding of ordination can be reached. Those reached in this paper are as follow:

1. In Rom. 13 Paul is speaking about concrete, existing authorities and not an abstract concept of authority, power, or of government in general. This conclusion excludes

those interpretations of ordination which maintain that what is ordained is power or authority in general, as described in chapter one (pages 6-8).

2. In accordance with the preceding conclusion, Paul is not thinking of higher grades of authority as opposed to lower (e.g., the emperor and his higher officials). Paul is referring to ALL existing authorities who wield power. As Ernst Kasemann has ably stated:

For [Paul] the man who has asserted himself politically has a God-bestowed function and authority simply as the possessor of power de facto I want to include tyranny and despotism, which in any event reigned supreme over wide stretches of the Roman Empire.¹

This conclusion, though difficult for those brought up in modern democracies to accept, is the best interpretation not only because of the wording Paul used in verse one, but for those reasons discussed in chapters two and three, where corrupt, idolatrous and evil governments can still be placed or appointed by God (in agreement with the teaching of the Old Testament, extra-biblical Jewish literature and Jesus).

It is also worth reminding the reader that Paul is in fact writing about about a corrupt, idolatrous and imperialistic government whose relationship to Palestine at the time that Paul wrote is generally analogous to Russian rule of Poland at the present (see page 33). Moreover, as mentioned in chapter three, the purpose of government is but one: to prevent anarchy, and evil governments are capable of this.

¹Ernst Käsemann, New Testament Questions of Today (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1969), p. 202.

This conclusion rules out that understanding of ordination which maintains that only those governments which live up to a minimum standard of moral requirements are "ordained."

3. Spirit beings can and do influence earthly authorities. This is hinted at in Paul's writings, stated explicitly in the Gospels and taught both in the Old Testament and in extra-biblical Jewish writings.

While it is possible that Paul believed each earthly government had an angelic being assigned to it as taught by certain Rabbis, found in Sir. 17:17, 1 Enoch 89:57-69, 3 Enoch 30, (and hinted at in the Septuagint translation of Deut. 32:8, as well as the Book of Daniel), Paul nowhere states or hints that he accepted this precise interpretation or any other.

Cullmann's interpretation that the state was ordained when Christ subjected the angels as his servants through his death and resurrection has been shown to be untenable.

4. Paul expected obedience (submission) to government in some areas, but did not counsel absolute submission to every governmental decree or law.

5. As mentioned earlier, lexical studies alone do not explain the theological content of meaning that Paul had in his mind when he used the word *τατοω* in verse one: it was not a technical term.

Lexically it can be said that the word's nearest English equivalents (with the closest nuance) are "place" or "establish." Although it is quite possible that for Paul *ταταμένα* in Rom. 13 meant "ordain" in the sense of a divine pretemporal "decree," there is no certain lexical evidence to

support this and, as discussed in chapter three, there is some evidence to suggest that he did not intend this meaning. Lexically, little more can be said about this most important word.

In this writer's opinion, a good translation of Rom. 13:1 would be: "Let everyone be submissive in their relation to the civil authorities since there is no authority apart from God and those authorities in existence are established by God."

The preceding conclusions appear to be all that can be said exegetically about Rom. 13:1-7 in answering the research question of this thesis. Paul simply nowhere explains his theology of God's relation to foreign nations. Rom. 13:1-7 by itself falls into the category of those passages written by Paul which, although important, appear only as tacit presuppositions (e.g., Gal. 4:3, 9; 1 Cor. 11:10; and 2 Cor. 12:2-4, et. al.).

Two Reconstructions of Paul's Concept of Ordination

Since lexical studies do not explain the theological content of meaning that Paul had in his mind when he wrote Rom. 13:1-7, and because Paul nowhere explains his theology of God's relation to foreign powers, a logical interpretive step to make is to assume that Paul's theological understanding on ordination comes from his Jewish background, especially from the teachings of the Old Testament.

This is the most reasonable assumption to make since Paul bases so much of his theology either directly or indirectly on the Old Testament, was trained by a Pharisaic rabbi,

and, as Cullmann has said in a similar situation, "Where may we expect to find further information on the subject if not in Judaism?"²

It is therefore appropriate to attempt to reconstruct, perhaps as a paleontologist reconstructs a skeleton based on a few key bones, Paul's concept of ordination, based on the exegetical conclusions from chapter three and information from chapter two.

Reconstruction One

As mentioned above, the most reasonable assumption one can make regarding Paul's concept of the ordination of the state is to presume that it was based on the Old Testament. Apart from the fact that Paul considered the Old Testament divinely authoritative, this proposition is all the more reasonable when one considers the many striking similarities that can be found between Rom. 13:1-7 and the teaching of the Old Testament, particularly Jeremiah. At this point it is appropriate to list some of these similarities.

One similarity is that earthly authorities are appointed (in some sense) by God, as Paul mentions in Rom. 13:1. Though there are many passages in the Old Testament which state or suggest this, Dan. 5:21-22 is perhaps the best representative of these.

²Cullmann, The State in the New Testament, 2nd ed., p. 80.

But when his [Belshazzar] heart was lifted up and his spirit was hardened . . . he was driven from among men . . . until he knew that the Most High God rules the kingdom of men, and sets over it whom he will.

Another similarity concerns Paul's idea that earthly rulers are servants or ministers of God who execute his wrath and vengeance on evil doers (Rom. 13:4). Again, there are many passages in the Old Testament which echo this. A good example is Jer. 25:8-9:

Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts: Because you have not obeyed my words, behold, I will send for all the tribes of the north, says the LORD, and for Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and I will bring them against this land and its inhabitants, and against all these nations round about

It is important to note, as this verse (and others) suggest, that wrath is executed by God's nation-servants not just on Israel, but on ALL who do evil, a thought Paul includes in Rom. 13:1-7.

A third similarity is that of nations "bearing the sword" (Rom. 13:4). This sword imagery is found throughout the Old Testament, but especially in Jeremiah. It is a standard way of describing how God's wrath is effected:

The clamor will resound to the ends of the earth, for the LORD has an indictment against the nations; he is entering into judgment with all flesh,³ and the wicked he will put to the sword, says the LORD. That day is the day of the Lord GOD of hosts, a day of vengeance, to avenge himself on his foes. The sword shall devour⁴ and be sated, and drink its fill of their blood

³Jer. 25:31. Similar phrases can be found over sixty times in Jeremiah. This may have been a crucial book for Paul in the development of his understanding of the way God relates to pagan nations.

⁴Jer. 46:10.

A fourth similarity concerns the understanding that nations deserve pay (or taxes, as in Rom. 13:6) for their work of bringing God's vengeance on evildoers. Ezek. 29:17-20 (see chapter two, pages 35-36) includes this idea: Babylon was to receive Egypt as pay for her work against Tyre!

A fifth similarity concerns the idea that men should submit to and even pray for a ruling authority for the sake of their own welfare and because God commands it. Paul mentions this idea in Rom. 13:1-7 and 1 Tim. 2:1,2. It is found in the Old Testament in Jeremiah:

But if any nation or kingdom will not serve this Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and put its neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, I will punish that nation with the sword . . . But any nation which will bring its neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon and serve him, I will leave on its own⁵land, to till it and dwell there, says the LORD

Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat their produce. Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons . . . multiply there, and do not decrease. But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare. For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Do not let your prophets and your diviners who are among you deceive you . . . for it is a lie which they are prophesying⁶to you in my name; I did not send them, says the LORD.

These statements from Jeremiah are striking in that

⁵Jer. 27:8-11 (cf. 38:17 and 21:9).

⁶Jer. 29:4-9. One cannot be certain that Paul viewed the Roman occupation of Israel as he did the Babylonian, but the similarities are striking and it is not an unreasonable conclusion since it is evident that most Jewish writers that Paul could have been acquainted with viewed Roman occupation in the the same way they had the Babylonian (see chapter two).

they counsel submission to a nation described by Ezekiel as being the most ruthless of nations. The similarity between the attitude of this passage with its particular historical circumstances and the attitude of Rom. 13:1-7 and the historical circumstances at the time it was written (concerning the people of God and their relation to a foreign nation) seems more than coincidental.

Perhaps one of the most important of those similarities which can be found in the Old Testament is Hab. 1:12, where Habakkuk begins his inquiry into why God would use an evil nation such as Babylon to punish those who are less evil. The particular wording " *εἰς κρίμα τέταχας αὐτὸ* " is practically a summary of Rom. 13:1-7!

The similarity of Rom. 13:1-7 to Jewish teaching does not end with the Old Testament of course. The discussion in chapter two has shown that the main points in Rom. 13:1-7 are essentially identical with what can be found in the Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha and the Rabbinic writings.

The theological background from which Paul writes certainly affirms the sovereignty of God in the setting up of nations yet is quite clear that not "every governmental decree is God's ordinance."⁷ This is best seen perhaps in the Book of Daniel, where in 6:21 it is stated that ". . . the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind, and that He sets over it whomever He wishes," and in the very next chapter Dari-

⁷James Moulder, "Romans 13 and Conscientious Disobedience," Journal of Theology for Southern Africa, 21(1977):19.

us signs an injunction whereby all who pray to anyone other than Darius should be cast into a lions' den (6:7-9). But it is also seen in the numerous passages in the Old Testament (e.g., Hab. 1:12, 2:1-20) as well as extra-biblical Jewish literature (see chapter two), where it is acknowledged that God has appointed a nation to judge Israel but that the nation went beyond God's intent and therefore needed judgment.

The issue of Paul's precise understanding of divine predestination is, of course, beyond the scope of this thesis. It is a relevant topic however, and two points can be made here: One, it seems apparent that both predestinarian and "free will" elements can be found in Paul's writings. Two, the Old Testament, as discussed already, affirms the sovereignty of God yet also states that at times governments act on their own initiative.

As a proposition it seems reasonable, therefore, to suggest that in the Old Testament, in the majority of Jewish teaching of Paul's day and in Paul's thought, governments are "God-appointed," or "God-established," but not necessarily "God-approved" in all their actions.⁸

In light of these considerations it would appear best to translate *τεταγμέναι* with a word that denotes a reasoned, authoritative action on God's part, but not with a connotation which automatically implies divine approval or acquiescence in all of the activities of any particular government. A single

⁸Robert W. Cook, "Biblical Light on the Christian's Civil Responsibility," Bibliotheca Sacra, 127(March 1970):56.

English word which conveys this understanding is difficult to find, but perhaps "placed" or "established" would be the best choices since they are also in agreement with the lexical conclusions.

In addition to the preceding understanding, it seems certain, as discussed in chapter three, that Paul believed spirit beings were involved (sometimes or all the time?) in government policies and actions, as taught in Daniel, and many non-biblical Jewish writings and in the teachings of Jesus.

Whether or not Paul believed, as did many Rabbis, that the initial ordination of the nations was based on the number of the sons of God (the doctrine that every nation but Israel had a guardian angel) or the sons of Israel, is something that apparently cannot be determined. There is not enough data to substantiate the validity of either understanding (within a reasonable degree of probability). There is also no way to prove that Paul held to the Gospel tradition that Satan was in control of the nations. It is appropriate to note though, that Paul apparently did share at least some extra-biblical Jewish theology as can be seen in 2 Cor. 12:2-4 (where paradise is located in the third heaven [cf. Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, 2 Enoch and Talmud, Chagigah 12b; et. al.]); 1 Cor. 11:6-10 (where women need head coverings "because of the angels") and 1 Cor. 15:29 (baptism for the dead).

In light of the preceding information, a reconstruction of Paul's concept of ordination can be made as follows: God is in ultimate control of all the peoples and nations of

the Earth. Governments are allowed to exercise authority only because God's authority allows it. It is He who has, in some way, initially set their number and boundaries, according to either the number of the sons of Israel or the number of the sons of God (i.e., angels). He maintains, changes and uses them as he sees fit, for the benefit of Himself, Israel, and the nations themselves. Changes usually take place as a result of sin (as discussed in chapter two), and, as Daniel, Deut. 32:8 (according to one reading), and the New Testament indicate, angels and/or spirit beings are somehow involved in what the nations do.

God is always, in some ultimate sense, in control of the nations, dealing with, intervening, and directing them as he sees fit. But, even though he is sovereign over all, he still allows the nations to function autonomously to a certain extent. When this autonomy manifests itself in persistent sinful actions, especially the violence of oppression associated with pride, God appoints a time for judgment (see chapter two). If the nation repents during this period judgment will be withheld; if not, the nation is punished or destroyed.

Sirach seems to have perceived the teaching of the Old Testament on this issue very clearly and his eloquent statement is perhaps the most accurate and succinct summary that can be made:

The rule over the world is in the hands of God, and at the right time He setteth over it one that is worthy. In the hand of God is the rule of every man, and He investeth the commander with his dignity. Pride is hateful to the Lord and to men, and before both oppression is an offence. Sovereignty is transferred from nation to nation

on account of the violence of pride.⁹

In other words, if a nation exists, it does so because God has placed it there or allowed it to be. The very existence of a nation proves that it is established, or appointed, by God. This is true even if the nation becomes sinful and oppressive. Until God's judgment actually falls on such a nation, and it has been toppled, it is still "τεταγμέναι" by Him and no one has a right to destroy that nation until its sin, as God told Abraham, is complete.¹⁰

Those who were oppressed in the Old Testament were counseled to wait for the vengeance of the Lord. God had an appointed time for judgment and it would certainly come.

The most striking thing about Paul's statements in Rom. 13:1-7 is that they are in conformity, on the whole, with the teaching of the Old Testament and the teaching found within most extra-biblical Jewish literature. There is nothing distinctly Christian in the passage. In this instance it appears that Paul has kept his Jewish understanding and integrated it into the New Covenant.

In this writer's opinion, the preceding reconstruction is most likely the way Paul understood the nature of the divine appointment of nations. It would also seem that this proposition is one which an interpreter who believes in Biblical inerrancy would be compelled to accept since the New Tes-

⁹Sir. 10:4-8.

¹⁰Gen. 15:13-16. This teaching is found in the Apocrypha as well (see chapter two of this thesis).

tament nowhere appears to alter the teaching of the Old Testament on how God deals with pagan governments.

Reconstruction Two

Another way Paul could have understood the appointment of governments is that the Roman government alone is appointed. This is similar to Marcus Borg's position (see chapter one, page thirteen). In other words, Paul is not making a universal theological statement about governments in general, but is speaking only of Rome. The present reconstruction differs from Borg's in that it does not agree with his statement that ". . . Rome is God's minister of justice against that particularity which separates Jew and Gentile."¹¹

This second reconstruction has one major flaw that should be mentioned from the start: Paul's statements in Rom. 13:1-7 do not read as if he is speaking of Rome only. They read more like a universal statement about civil government. Nevertheless, there are a number of points which, if all taken together, do give this reconstruction a measure of validity worth serious consideration:

1. Paul thought (as did many Christians of his time) that he was living in the last days, just prior to the return of Jesus.¹²

2. In the Book of Daniel, history is apparently di-

¹¹Marcus Borg, "A New Context for Romans xiii." New Testament Studies 19(2, 1973):216.

¹²There are numerous passages where Paul indicates this belief: 1 Cor. 10:11, Rom. 13:11-12, 1 Cor. 7:29-31, et. al.

vided into four main world kingdoms, the last of which God allows to persecute and kill, for the PURPOSE OF PURIFICATION or producing holiness, his saints (see Dan. 7:23-27 and 11:31-35). While the fourth beast is not named in the book, it is evident that Jews (and Christians) came to believe it referred to Rome.¹³

3. Paul had a distinct and interesting "theology of suffering" that is similar to Daniel's. As noted earlier, Paul believed that Christians were DESTINED for persecution by the authorities; it was an expected part of Christian life. Paul could have come to this conclusion because of Jesus' teachings, Daniel's, or from other passages in the Old Testament, or even all of these. Paul taught that persecution and hardship were DESIGNED to bring about purification and holiness in Christians:

And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations; knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance,¹⁴ proven character; and proven character, hope;¹⁴ and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him.¹⁵

¹³1. In the Book of Dream Visions in 1 Enoch Rome received sovereignty from God IN ORDER that they might slay, at appointed times, predetermined numbers of God's people (1 Enoch 89:51-68). 2. In the fourth book of the Sibylline Oracles the history of man (after the flood) is also divided into four world kingdoms (Assyria, Mede, Persia and Rome) all of which have their times of rule predetermined by God (Sib. Or. 4:49-114). 3. In 4 Ezra history is also divided into four kingdoms with Rome being the last.

¹⁴Rom. 5:3-4.

¹⁵Rom. 8:17. See also 2 Cor. 4:11, 17. Peter and James also taught this. See 1 Pe. 4:1 and especially James 1:2-4. This idea is also found in the Old Testament outside

A summary of this second reconstruction is that Paul thought Rome was the fourth and final kingdom, predestined to rise in the last days not only for the purpose of executing wrath on those who do evil, but to persecute and kill the saints for their purification and growth in holiness.

This reconstruction could help explain why the early Church was pacifistic: to suffer unjustly and without retaliation brought about purification of character. Of course, it is more likely that the early Church was pacifistic due to the teachings of Jesus, but it is possible that Daniel, Paul and Jesus' teachings were all contributing factors.

Although both of the preceding reconstructions are reasonable propositions, particularly the first, it must be said that Paul could have understood ordination in other ways. It is unfortunate that he nowhere elucidates all that was in his mind when he wrote Rom. 13:1-7.

Ethical Implications

Even though Paul does not elucidate Rom. 13:1-7, we have enough solid exegetical information about his understanding to provide an adequate basis for formulating ethical duties for Christians in their relation to the state. While it is not the purpose of this paper to do this per se, it is appropriate to briefly mention at least two ethical implications based on what we do know.

of the Book of Daniel (cf. Ps. 119:67) as well as the teachings of the prophets that suffering brings one back to God and promotes holiness.

One implication is that Christian obedience should not be absolute. Therefore blind faith in a government's goodness along with a willingness to obey any law or meet any governmental "need" has no place in a Christian's life. It is also presumptuous, since Paul was probably referring to the payment of two specific taxes, to think that Rom. 13:1-7 sanctions the payment of all and any taxes that any particular government might decide to levy.

Another implication is raised by the conclusion that if a government exists, it does so because God has established it, even if it has become unjust and evil. Assuming that it is the duty of the Church to speak out against institutional and national evil as well as individual evil, how will the Church know what to say to the nations? If the Church cannot assume that a nation is not "established" or "appointed" by God since, in its "opinion" (or that of others), it does not measure up to some minimum standard of righteousness and justice, what should its counsel be toward unjust governments and toward governments which are taking measures to "straighten out" governments it has decided are unjust?

This "problem" was handled in the Old Testament by the prophetic office. Men of God received information from God on what to say to particular governments regarding particular situations.

Although it would not be a welcome answer to many Christians today, it seems reasonable to think that Paul would counsel, in addition to being thoroughly aware of political situations, the resumption of the prophetic office.

Today we are pathetically confused, believing that social action is to replace the feeble prophetic voice of the church. Placations rather than prophecy mark the voice of the church. We seek to be peacemakers by appeasement rather than the voice of God for righteousness and justice, the true pillars of peace. The world needs a bold prophetic church speaking out in a ringing tone the great principles of ethical monotheism.¹⁶

Conclusion

Rom. 13:1-7 has always been a particularly important passage since governments have for so long played such an important part in the lives of individuals and the life of the Church for both good and bad.

In light of today's tense political relationships and the proliferation of weapons which not only can destroy most (or all) of the Earth, but cost billions upon billions of dollars, a proper understanding and application of Rom. 13:1-7 by the Church is more important than ever. It is hoped that this thesis will contribute significantly toward a better understanding of Paul on this issue and a more responsible response from the the Church.

¹⁶George W. Peters, A Biblical Theology of Missions (Chicago: Moody Press, 1972), pp. 169-70.