

SHEDDING LIGHT ON BIBLICAL CONTRASTS

#10 – Governments Are Controlled: By Satan / By God

Two Christian day school leaders take very different attitudes toward governmental demands about certified teachers & building codes. One man says, “These requirements infringe on our religious rights. They come from secular humanists – people who are under the control of Satan, the god of this age. If we give in to these regulations, we are allowing the devil, the power behind our earthly rulers, to get a foot in the door of our Christian schools.”

The other school leader obeys all the governmental regulations. All his teachers are certified & his school meets the community’s building codes. He says, “According to the Bible, God has given government the authority to rule society. Their requirements must be obeyed unless they directly contradict God’s standards & cause us to sin.”

One man’s convictions are based on the belief that governments are controlled by Satan. The other believes that governments are controlled by God. Who is right?

Governments are controlled by Satan

1. Satan indirectly brought judgement upon Israel by inciting David to number the Israelites in an act of disobedience against God (**1 Chronicles 21:1-17**).
2. Satan rules the unsaved as “*the god of this age*” (**2 Corinthians 4:4**).
3. Satan has the world lying in his lap (**1 John 5:19**).
4. Satan, through three assistants, will lead the nations to disaster at the Battle of Armageddon (**Revelation 16:13-16**).
5. Since Satan offered to give Christ “*all the kingdoms of the world*”... if He would worship him (**Matt. 4:8-9**), the kingdoms had to have been in Satan’s possession!

Governments Are Controlled by God

1. God frustrated the efforts of men to establish a one-world government (**Genesis 11:1-9**).

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2. God forced Pharaoh to release the Israelites (**Exodus Chapters 5 - 12**).
3. God holds the kings of the Earth in His hand (**Proverbs 21:1**).
4. God showed Nebuchadnezzar that He is in control of everyone & everything (**Daniel 4:28-37**).
5. God appoints the leaders of the nations & uses them to carry out His purposes (**Romans 13:1-7; 1 Timothy 2:1-7**).

Resolution

Satan & his followers are indeed a powerful army who wield tremendous influence on the minds of national leaders (**Eph. 6:12**). God, however, is in ultimate control, setting limits beyond which Satan cannot go.

Reflection

The two accounts of David numbering the Israelites in a spirit of pride show us how Satan & God are both involved in events that have to do with leaders of nations. In **1 Chronicles 21:1** we read, “*Satan stood up against Israel, and moved David to number Israel.*” However, **2 Samuel 24:1** reads: “*Again the anger of the Lord was aroused against Israel, and He moved David against them to say, ‘Go, number Israel & Judah.’*” Since both writers were inspired, we must view both as being correct.

David undoubtedly issued this order because he wanted to feel secure in his military resources rather than in God. Satan probably planted the idea in David’s mind and certainly influenced him to carry it out. But God was also involved. He permitted Satan to wield his influence over David for chastening both David & the Nation. He wanted to teach David a lesson in humility, & He wanted to correct the sinning Nation.

Similarly, civil leaders are in their place because of God’s directive or permissive will. They may be influenced or controlled by Satan, but only to the extent that God permits. Therefore, we are to obey them, even when we don’t like their rules. We are to refuse, however, when obedience to them would involve us in disobedience to God’s revealed will.

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