

# Twisted Scriptures

## Bring Out Your Guns!

TWISTED SCRIPTURES - ROMANS 13:1

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In the wake of hurricane Katrina, which struck hard on the city of New Orleans (August 29, 2005), one of the measures the government took was to confiscate as many guns as they could get their hands on. This was purportedly an attempt to curb the looting and gang violence that erupted after the hurricane. In the process, the government enlisted “clergy response teams” to assist in taking away guns from the people of their own community and congregations. The clergy (whose exalted position cannot be found anywhere in the Scriptures except to be condemned!) utilized Paul’s instruction about government to convince people it was both their civic and spiritual duty to surrender their guns to the government.

Paul wrote, “Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God and the authorities that exist are appointed by God.” (Rom. 13:1)

This, these clergy insisted, means that everyone who claims to be a Christian, should meekly surrender their guns to the government. But is this really what Paul meant? No.

Paul is writing to people in Rome (the center of the Roman Empire’s government) some of whom were overly enamored with various and strange prophecies about the destruction and overthrow of Rome. In fact, the burning of Rome in 64 A.D. may very well have been done at the hands of some misguided “Christian” sub-group – the fire was started in the Christian section of town and it was started on a day when some Egyptian prophecy said that Rome would be destroyed by fire. (The later attempts to blame Nero for the fire can be discounted as historical revision.) The point here is that Paul is writing to stop the clandestine plotting and planning to overthrow the existing rule by physical, violent or subversive means. He is not speaking, in any direct way, to the issue of gun control. Guns no more existed in Paul’s day than did fiddles (which although Nero is commonly portrayed as playing one while Rome burned, the fiddle would not be invented for some centuries.)

So what should a genuine follower of Christ who owns a gun do when the government demands his gun? Let us turn to the Scriptures and to a better reasoned response before that moment comes upon us or we will likely obey some fleshly impulse rather than the Lord.

Let us first look, though, at the government’s responsibility.

Paul goes on to say, “For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil... For he is God’s minister to you for good...he is God’s minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil.” (Rom. 13:3-4)

I’m certain the “clergy response teams” failed to read these verses! Yet this *is* the authority God has given to human governments – to curb the rampant evil that lurks in the human heart always trying to gain control over men. (Mk. 7:21-22, Gen. 4:7)

In the actions of the government in collecting people's guns after the hurricane, did the government act for the true good of the people? No. Calling on clergy to convince their parishioners to surrender their arms, for the most part, only disarmed the *honest* citizens. To which gang did the elderly lady (whom police and officials physically wrestled to the ground to relieve her of her pistol which she kept for self-defense) belong? How many gang bangers faithfully attend "church" and would peacefully surrender their weapons at the gentle request of a "pastor"? No. The government was pursuing some agenda other than the well-being of its honest citizens. All the government's actions did was to reduce the honest citizens to being ready and virtually-helpless victims – the very positions Satan's end-time government will want *all* good and godly men to be in.

But what is to be the response of godly men when evil men control the government and no longer wield their authority to accomplish good? Christians under Hitler's regime (which attempted to physically exterminate all Jews and Christians just as Satan's end-time government will do) faced this dilemma. Some chose to cooperate with the government and were allowed to both live and keep their "churches" – but the "gospel" preached and practiced at those "churches" was subject to governmental approval and bore little resemblance to the gospel of the kingdom of Christ and God. Other Christians chose to take up active, armed resistance and some Christians actually went so far as to participate in attempting to assassinate Hitler. Similar histories are found under the Communist Soviet regimes. So where is the line to be drawn?

Whenever we are faced with any situation that involves force or violence, we are always presented with four options. This is as true of us in any and every situation that we will ever face as it was true when Moses and the children of Israel were trapped by Pharaoh's army at the Red Sea. (Ex. 14:9) Their first option was to flee, to run for their lives. But they were enclosed by wilderness on one side, mountains on the other, the sea on the third side and Pharaoh's army on the fourth. Flight would result in a massive slaughter that would leave any few survivors back under slavery under the "tender mercies" of Pharaoh and the Egyptians who had all just lost their first born sons as a result of the last plague the Lord had sent upon Egypt. (Ex. 12:29-30)

Their second option was to fight. Pharaoh's army was probably well-trained, experienced and certainly equipped with armor, swords, spears, horses and chariots. The Israelites, however, were on foot and had only clubs, tools and farming implements with which they might fight – and they had no combat training or experience with these things and truly had no stomach for a fight. (Ex. 13:17) The clearly indicated result of a pitched battle would again be massive slaughter and brutal slavery for the Israelites.

Their third option was simply to surrender. But again this would place them under a government and authority that had something other than their good in mind. Life under those brutal conditions would be very difficult indeed. Death might actually be preferable.

But the fourth option was not evident to the people because they were afraid. (Ex. 14:10) "They said to Moses, 'Because there were no graves in Egypt, have you taken us away to die in the wilderness? Why have you so dealt with us, to bring us up out of Egypt? Is this not the word that we told you in Egypt, saying, "Let us alone that we may serve the Egyptians"? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than that we should die in the wilderness.'" (Ex. 14:11-12)

In spite of Charlton Heston's rousing speech about the government having to take his rifle from his cold, dead hands, many people – the Second Amendment and NRA membership notwithstanding – will, in fear of the government, choose to surrender their guns without a fight.

This fear is the natural reaction of the human heart – and it is this very fear that will keep us from experiencing the fourth option, an option that is only discernible through the Holy Spirit of God.

The fourth option is the way of divine deliverance and here there are no rules that we can lay down in advance. The way of divine deliverance is completely unpredictable to the natural man. (see 1 Cor. 2:14) It may mean raising a staff and parting the waters of the Red Sea. (Ex. 14:21) It may mean sending 99% of the people away and taking up torches and clay pots to rout an army too numerous to count. (Jdgs. 7:3, 7-8, 12, 22) It may mean spending a safe, restful night with hungry lions (Dan. 6:22) or a peaceful, relaxing walk with the Son of God inside a lethal, fiery furnace. (Dan. 3:25) It might mean quietly walking out of the middle of a crowd of people maniacally determined to kill you. (Jn. 8:59, 10:31, 39) It may mean that one gets beheaded for his faith while his companion is miraculously released from prison by an angel. (Acts 12:2, 9) It might mean getting up after being viciously stoned and left for dead. (Acts 14:19-20) Or it may be that the fourth option entails torture, trials of mocking, scourgings, chains and imprisonments, stonings, being cut in two, killed with the sword, wandering about as nomads and refugees, being destitute, afflicted and tormented – refusing to accept human deliverance so as to obtain a better resurrection. (Heb. 11:35-37) God’s ways are always beyond our own human understanding and our physical lives are not the treasure we ought to be seeking to preserve. The Revelation clearly tells us that the end-time saints will overcome Satan “by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and that they did not love their lives to the death.” (Rev. 12:11)

“My sheep hear My voice,” Jesus said. (Jn. 10:27) And with that we will be forced to leave it. There are precious few instructions regarding weapons in the New Testament and this very silence should tell us their place of importance (or lack thereof) in the kingdom of Christ and God.

- Peter used his sword rashly and was rebuked and stopped by Jesus with the warning: “All who take the sword will perish by the sword.” (Mt. 26:51-52) Jesus was far more intent upon attaining to the will of God for His life – the cross whereby He would liberate millions from sin, death and Satan – than He was desirous of leading a petty, small-scale rebellion to gain the Judean or even Roman throne.
- When Satan’s end-time government is granted authority to “make war with the saints and to overcome them” (Rev. 13:7), we are told that a portion of the testing we will undergo is whether to take up weapons and we are warned that “he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword.” (Rev. 13:10) The serious-minded student of these things will note that there are worse ways to die and that killing some evil thug (whether government official or gang member) may be a better choice than idly watching him commit some atrocity on some helpless woman or child. The clergy or official who tells you a man has no right to defend the helpless has lost all grip on the realities of life, godliness and simple, plain decency and goodness.
- Prior to His crucifixion, Christ clearly instructed His followers, “he who has no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one.” (Lk. 22:36) Any gun-toting zealots who would see this as a license to stockpile heavy weaponry should note well that although Jesus was talking to at least twelve men, He also clearly said that *two* swords would be enough for

them all. (Lk. 22:14, 38)

This *is* the sum total of the New Testament's instruction regarding weapons. Their usage must therefore be governed directly under His headship and must be used in connection with the fruit of His Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23) and not according to the rash impulses of fear or self-preservation. (2 Tim. 1:7)

The issue of gun control has, in America, become a more complex issue than what Paul was addressing (when he instructed the Roman Christians to "be subject to the governing authorities." - Rom. 13:1) because America was founded, in part, on the underlying philosophy that godly men could and would govern themselves. The governments of kings, in particular, afforded evil men an opportunity to use the government as a tool to oppress other men – particularly but not limited to those with differing religious opinions. Therefore, both the people and the government needed to be severely restrained. One of the restraints the American Constitution placed on its government was that of a well-armed populace. No mere handful of evil (or even well-intentioned but misguided) men could seize power over the nation if the populace were as well-armed as they were. The Second Amendment achieved a balance of power that has been a major hindrance to the schemes and machinations of men who, in the name of doing good for society, have been manipulating world events so as to produce a society ready to embrace and follow Satan in his last-ditch effort to wield power like God does.

There simply is no clear-cut basis in the New Testament for anyone (*other than Christ Himself!*) to demand that you surrender your guns to some government official. Anyone who tells you otherwise is serving some human or demonic agenda. Do not be deceived.

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