

The God Who Exists has revealed Himself and His perfect design for all that exists, but humans, from the very first pair, consider themselves sufficient in ability and authority to interpret and apply His revelation **as they see fit**. Some have thought that God intended every human to reach his own "individual interpretation" of the expressions of His revelation, but such a concept is a complete contradiction not only of the Creator's design but also of His very person and nature. The Creator **never** intended any human, even the individuals who received and wrote His words, to interpret Him and His revelation **according to that individual's own understanding**. The content of His revelation, in all the forms in which He expressed it, was to be understood according to **His** perfect mind, because His revelation, regardless of the means by which He gave it, was a perfect expression of His person and nature. No finite created being, nor all of them acting in concert, regardless of their status in human perception, could ever possess the ability and the authority to superimpose any "meaning" or interpretation upon God's own expressions of Himself. His every expression, every point and aspect of His revelation, was to be understood and applied according to His perfect mind and His perfect purpose as He gave it, and not one point of it was of "private interpretation."

Certainly, the Creator's provision of so much of His revelation in a worded, written format may seem to indicate that "individual understanding" is acceptable for interacting with Him. After all, His very words, in the original languages which **He chose** for giving them, have been preserved and reproduced through the centuries, making them available to virtually any human who desires to know their original content. Then, too, His words have been translated and printed in a plethora of other languages, thus making "His words" widely available to individuals unfamiliar with the languages of His original texts. Humans, however, have done as they do so well; they have taken the words of His revelation, in whatever language **they choose** to use, and **determined for themselves** "His meanings" and "His interpretations," without regard to the meanings and interpretations which He, the God Who Exists, actually built into the words when He gave them. For many humans, even many who claim to be "believers," the words of God say and mean whatever **they**, humans, **think** His words to say and mean, but this practice is humanism in its purest expression, because it makes God's revelation subject to human minds, that is, finite humans usurp to themselves the authority and ability to determine what the transcendent Creator intended, or should have intended, to communicate. This is, indeed, pure humanism.

Despite the many claims of humans to be "led by the Spirit" into translations and interpretations of Scripture which are, in reality, inaccurate and inconsistent with all other Scripture, the Spirit of the never-changing, never-false God does not lead, nor has He ever led, any one or any thing into a mistaken understanding of any point of His revelation. In keeping with His person and nature, **He validates only that which is absolute truth, never** validating, or even appearing to validate to any degree, any violation of any aspect of His revelation. Humans deceive and mislead themselves, and they allow other "trusted" humans and powerful antiGod angelic beings to influence them into accepting perversions of "truth," but the Creator Himself never deceives or misleads. He always works to move individuals, both believers and nonbelievers, into a more accurate perception and understanding of His person and design. Thus, all erroneous teachings and "beliefs" about the person and nature of God, and how He interacts with everything in the creation, are perversions of ignorant or antiGod minds. Like Adam, the first human, individuals affected by error **think** that their concept of God is sufficiently accurate not only for relating to Him personally but also for representing Him to others. In their minds, **their** "beliefs" about God are what He intended them to "believe," and they rarely, if ever, actually evaluate those "beliefs" to determine if they conform to the actual expressions of **His** revelation.

Such individuals have chosen to reject personal intensive study of God's revelation, study which would move them beyond their superficial understanding and into a level of understanding which would make their existence in the world one of inestimable value. They prefer to submit themselves to a system wherein they are considered "justified" by conforming to externals of that system. Thus, they "know God," but only superficially, and, in that "knowledge," they reject any attempts to move them into a deeper knowledge and more accurate understanding of their Creator and His design. The Creator, however, the God Who Exists, is not mocked, and, knowing the superficiality that resides in their heart, He does not, and will not, bless the errors inherent in their "surface understanding." He rejects their erroneous "worship," regardless of their "faithfulness" in performing the "worship" actions typically proclaimed as "Biblical" by those entrusted to lead. He has seen, and He knows, that "they draw near with the mouth but their heart is far from Him."

Though God never delegated to humans the authority to determine for themselves the meanings of His words, they have insisted upon doing so, and many have allowed this violation of His design to lead them into misunderstandings and misrepresentations of both His person and His design. Though many examples exist, one particular text which has been greatly misunderstood is the passage in Paul's letter to the believers at Rome wherein he was instructing them regarding their relationship to earthly authorities. In this text,<sup>1</sup> as shown below, the Apostle Paul addressed this issue in one very specific expression of God's design.

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<sup>1</sup> Romans 13:1-2.

**AV Translation**

- 1 Let every soul be subject  
unto the higher powers.  
For there is no power  
but of God:  
the powers that be are  
ordained of God.
- 2 Whosoever therefore resisteth the power,  
resisteth the ordinance of God:  
and they that resist shall receive  
to themselves damnation.
- 3 For rulers are not a terror to good works,  
but to the evil.  
Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power?  
do that which is good,  
and thou shalt have praise of the same:
- 4 For he is the minister of God to thee for good.  
But if thou do that which is evil,  
be afraid;  
for he beareth not the sword in vain:  
For he is the minister of God,  
a revenger to execute wrath  
upon him that doeth evil.
- 5 Wherefore ye must needs be subject,  
not only for wrath,  
but also for conscience sake.
- 6 For for this cause pay ye tribute also:  
For they are God's ministers,  
attending continually upon this very thing.

**Descriptive Literal Translation**

- 1 Every soul must arrange himself  
under the holding-over authorities.  
For authority is not existing,  
if [authority is] not [existing] **from** God.  
and the existing authorities are existing  
having been arranged **under** the God.
- 2 As so the one arranging self against to the authority,  
to the arrangement of the God has stood against,  
and the ones having stood against will themselves receive  
to themselves a judgment.
- 3 For the ones ruling are not existing a **fear** of the ones working good,  
but (*the ones ruling are existing a fear*) of the ones working evil.  
Are you willing to *make yourself not* fear the authority?  
Do the good,  
and you will have praise out of *the same (authority)*.
- 4 For he exists an "administerer" of God to you(sg) into the good  
So, if ever the evil you might do,  
make yourself fear,  
for he is not bearing the sword in vain.  
For an "administerer" of God he exists,  
righting out into an emotion (*which causes ceasing*)  
in the one practicing the evil.
- 5 Because of which to arrange self under *exists* a necessity,  
not only because of the emotion,  
but also because of the perception together (*of His design*).
- 6 For, because of this, you are completing taxes,  
For they are existing ministers of God,  
constantly attending (toward) into this same *thing*.

SCR

- 1 Πᾶσα ψυχὴ ἐξουσίαις ὑπερεχούσαις ὑποτάσσέσθω.  
 οὐ γάρ ἐστιν ἐξουσία  
 εἰ μὴ [ἐστίν] ἀπὸ Θεοῦ,  
 αἱ δὲ οὖσαι ἐξουσίαι ὑπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ τεταγμέναι εἰσίν.  
 [Primary stmt: pa ptcp fpDat, "to holding-over, holding-in behalf of, authorities"; pm impv 3s, "every soul must arrange self under"]  
 [Explan gar apodosis: "authority exists not, does not exist"]  
 [Condit ei protasis: "if authority does not exist from God"]
- 2 ὥστε ὁ ἀντιτασσόμενος τῇ ἐξουσίᾳ,  
 τῇ τοῦ Θεοῦ διαταγῇ ἀνθέστηκεν.  
 οἱ δὲ ἀνθεστηκότες ἑαυτοῖς κρίμα λήψονται.  
 [Explan de: pfp ptcp fpNom, "the existing authorities are existing having been arranged under the God"]  
 [Explan hōs compar: pm ptcp msNom, art, "the one arranging self against"]  
 [fsDat, "to the arrangemnt of the God"; pfa ind 3s, "has stood against"]  
 [Explan de: pfa ptcp mpNom, art, "the ones having stood against"; futm ind 3p, "they will make thmselves receive judgment to themselves"]
- 3 οἱ γὰρ ἄρχοντες οὐκ εἰσὶ φόβος τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἔργων,  
 ἀλλὰ [εἰσὶ φόβος] τῶν κακῶν.  
 θέλεις δὲ μὴ φοβεῖσθαι τὴν ἐξουσίαν;  
 τὸ ἀγαθὸν ποιεῖ,  
 καὶ ἔξεῖς ἔπαινον ἐξ αὐτῆς.  
 [Explan gar: pa ptcp mpNom, "the ones ruling are not existing a fear"]  
 [Contr alla: "are existing a fear": an emotion resulting from violation of the criteria imposed by an authority, whether valid or invalid]  
 [Explan de, ques: pa ind 2s, "are you willing, desiring"; pm inf, neg, "to make yourself not fear the authority"]  
 [Primary stmt, answr: pa impv 2s, "do, make, the good"]  
 [Coord kai, answr result: futa ind 2s, "you will have praise out of same"]
- 4 Θεοῦ γὰρ διάκονός ἐστὶ σοι εἰς τὸ ἀγαθόν.  
 ἐὰν δὲ τὸ κακὸν ποιῆς,  
 φοβοῦ.  
 οὐ γὰρ εἰκὴ τὴν μάχαιραν φορεῖ.  
 Θεοῦ γὰρ διάκονός ἐστιν ἔκδικος εἰς ὄργην  
 τῷ τὸ κακὸν πράσσοντι.  
 [Explan gar: msNom, "he exists an 'administerer' of God into the good"]  
 [Condit ei+an prot: "So, if ever the evil you might do"]  
 [Explan de apod: pm impv 2s, "make yourself fear"]  
 [Explan gar: pa ind 3s neg, "he is not bearing the sword in vain"]  
 [Explan gar: adj msNom, "one righting out into an emotion (causing ceasing); pa ptcp msLoc, art, "in the one practicing the evil"]
- 5 διὸ ἀνάγκη [ἐστίν] ὑποτάσσεσθαι,  
 οὐ μόνον διὰ τὴν ὄργην,  
 ἀλλὰ καὶ διὰ τὴν συνείδησιν.  
 [Strg "caus" dio: pm inf subj, undstd vb, "to arrange self under exists a necessity"]  
 [Advb neg: "not only 'because of' the emotion"]  
 [Contr alla: "but also 'because of' the perception together (of His design)"]
- 6 διὰ τοῦτο γὰρ καὶ φόρους τελεῖτε.  
 λειτουργοὶ γὰρ Θεοῦ εἰσιν,  
 εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο προσκαρτεροῦντες.  
 [Explan gar + "caus" dia + touto: pa ind 2p, "you are completing, fulfilling, taxes"]  
 [Explan gar: "for ministers of God they are existing"]  
 ["into this same thing; pa ptcp mpNom, advbl to eisin, "constantly attending to"]

STE	No variants
BYZ	1 εἰ μὴ ὑπὸ θεοῦ
GNT	1 εἰ μὴ ὑπὸ θεοῦ, αἱ δὲ οὖσαι [ ] ὑπὸ [ ] θεοῦ τεταγμέναι εἰσίν.
	2 ἑαυτοῖς κρίμα λήψονται.

After having believed the testimony of God that His Son was the only means by which a human could be reconciled to Him, the Apostle Paul began to recognize the destructive effects of human misuse of authority. In his own life as a Hebrew and a student of the Hebrew Scriptures before being "born again," he had not only seen the almost universal misuse of authority, he had also been an integral part of that misuse. Living in an age some 4,000 years after God brought into existence the first man and woman, and, as a student of Gamaliel,<sup>2</sup> he had become a Pharisee,<sup>3</sup> a true "Hebrew of the Hebrews." He knew exceedingly well all the "instructions" for human living which were recorded in their Hebrew Scriptures, but he also knew well the records of all the destructions experienced by humans at the hands of other humans who thought themselves to possess the authority to inflict those destructions. He had been an instrument of some of those destructions, and thus, he knew first hand the powerful effect, the almost "God-like" feeling, a human experiences when he acts as the authority over other persons or things. He knew first hand the emotional sensation which accompanies the "possession" of authority, and he knew all too well how that sensation could move an individual into doing acts which, from almost any other perspective, would have been recognized as totally wrong, totally evil, totally against the "righteousness" of God which he was supposed to represent.

The Apostle knew experientially the destructions occurring in both the doer and the receiver of actions done when authority was misused. He had seen it in the relationships between husbands and wives, parents and children, leaders and those they led, even in the most menial of individuals who perceived themselves to possess some ability to impose their will upon someone or something else. **Authority itself was *not* the issue;** God had designed the entities of His creation, and especially His human creations, to possess and exercise authority within the criteria of His design. **The issue was the *sense of authority*** resident in the human mind, a mind which, since Adam's violation, had a propensity to violate the perfect design of God, a design intended to result in blessedness and success. Paul knew the origin of both the authority and the human sense of that authority; he knew that **all *valid authority is delegated from God***, and that it could only be used rightly when it was exercised in accord with the Creator's perfect design. He knew as well the natural correlary which is inseparable from this truth: any seeming authority which was not in complete conformity to His person and design was **not delegated from Him** and was not valid, regardless of the powers that seemed to validate it. The authority delegated by God was an authority to do "right" and "truth" as He defines these things, and any authority doing anything else did not originate in Him.

[transition] The Greek word translated "power," *exousia* (ἐξουσία),<sup>4</sup> is more accurately understood as "authority" in modern English, and the word "but" is **not** an adversative conjunction in Greek but a composite of "if . . . not." The "if" introduces a true **conditional clause** (protasis) which is adverbially subordinate to Paul's main clause (apodosis): "for there is no power." This main clause would be translated literally, "for authority does not exist." Thus, supplying in the conditional clause its understood subject and verb, this text literally and clearly states that **"authority does not exist, if authority does not exist from God."** This is the actual

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<sup>2</sup> Acts 22:3.

<sup>3</sup> Philippians 3:5.

<sup>4</sup> The Greek word *exousia* is a composite of the preposition *ek*, ἐκ, "out of," and a substantival participle form of *eimi*, εἶμι, the verb of "existence," thus giving a composite meaning "out of existence, out of existing." This indicates that the characteristic to which it refers is "out of, derived from" its existence, that is, because God is the absolute determiner of the existence, and nature of existence, of the entirety that exists, then each being possesses authority of a nature and to the degree that He, the Creator, delegated to that being as He designed it to exist.

statement of Paul's words, in contrast to a textual variant found in both the Byzantine (Majority) text and Nestle-UBS Critical text.

Paul's use of the preposition "**from**" (*ἀπό, ἀπο*) is very significant and is in distinction from the "**under**" (*ὑπὸ, ὑπο*) of the Byzantine and Nestle-UBS textual variants. Though not seen in the English version, Paul also used "under" in his following statement that "the existing authorities are existing having been arranged **under** the God." Thus, in this following statement, he distinctly stated that authorities are "under" God. If he had just used the very same terminology in his conditional statement, he would have been reiterating, unnecessarily, that authorities are "under" God. Paul, however, knew the OT Scriptures which revealed that **all that exists is "under" the Creator**, and he knew from Genesis 1:26-28 that God, the Creator, is **not** simply "over" all authorities; He is the origin and the one delegating all authority that exists, and He never gives authority to any one or any thing to violate any aspect of His design.

Since all that God says and does is a perfect expression of His unfalse, unchanging person,<sup>5</sup> then **He can never violate His own person by delegating authority to do evil and wrong**. Paul knew that **all valid authority** is "from" Him and conforms to the criteria of His perfect design, a design which is a perfect representation of the God Who Exists. Paul knew that **all invalid authority was not** "from" the Creator; rather, it was a usurped authority, an authority not delegated by the Creator and, thus, not bearing His authority. Invalid authority does indeed *exist* "under" Him, but it does **not** exist "from" Him, that is, by His direct agency. Many individuals, nations, and creatures have possessed both the ability and the authority "from" God to perform certain specific functions, but they exceeded the criteria of His design, claiming for themselves a level of authority **never** delegated to them, and they violated aspects of His design, and, as with any violation, the Creator held them inescapably accountable for their misuse of His "very good" authority.

The Answer Was Not in Romans 13; It Was in Genesis 1.

Certainly, one of the primary aspects of accurate interpretation of any text of Scripture is the fact that the modern perspective of the meaning and significance of "being" verb forms must be discarded and replaced with the true ancient Hebrew perspective, a perspective better captured in modern language by the verb "exist." Modern English, especially, has made the verb "to be" little more than a "linking verb," a "copulative," which is merely linking or connecting two (or more) things, and, though this "linking perspective" does indeed occur in the Hebrew texts, it is not an accurate concept of the Hebrew "being" verb and often leads to excessively simplified translations and interpretations with a commensurate loss of understanding. **The ancient Hebrew verb, *hāyāh*, "to exist" and "to be," that is, to actively possess the characteristic or quality of "existence,"** came into ancient Greek as the verb *eimi*, carrying the same significance. Thus, this verb in its various person forms of its present tense would be:

*eimi* "I exist, am existing," *ei* "you exist, are existing," *esti(n)* "he/she/it exists, is existing," etc.

Many times, however, this verb, whether *hayah* in Hebrew or *eimi* in Greek or in many other languages around the world, is elided, left out, but perfectly understood. Such sentences, where the verb of existence is not shown, are often called "noun sentences," because they have no visible verb, but, in actuality, the verb of existence is no less present in a noun sentence than it is in a sentence where it is written or spoken. This is the

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<sup>5</sup> Titus 1:2; Malachi 3:6; and many references . . . to be added.

nature of "understood being verbs," except that they are verbs of existence, and not simple "being verbs." Whether written, spoken, or elided, this verb indicates that the subject of that verb possesses the characteristic or quality of "existence" in regard to whatever the context refers. Indeed, in God's chosen name for Himself, *Ehyeh*, "I exist," or *Yihyeh*, "He exists," both from the Hebrew verb *hayah*, the characteristic or quality in view is simply, but crucially, that of "existence."

Using the verb *eimi* properly, and its understood forms where elided, an examination of a descriptive literal translation of the original preposition *apo*, "from," instead of the textual variant *upo*, "under," in verse 1 yields:

original *apo*: Every soul must arrange himself under the holding-over authorities.  
For authority is not existing,  
if [authority is] not [existing] **from** God.  
and the existing authorities are existing  
having been arranged **under** the God.

variant *upo*: Every soul must arrange himself under the holding-over authorities.  
For authority is not existing,  
if [authority is] not [existing] **under** God.  
and the existing authorities are existing  
having been arranged **under** the God.

Footnote Text from "Leadership": Romans 13:1. Here, too, the original preposition "from" (*apo*) is significant and is in distinction from the variant "under" (*upo*) of BYZ and GNT texts, in that, it signifies that *all* authority is "from" God as the originator and is therefore in complete agreement with His design, not simply "under" Him or "existing" by His "direct agency," though the latter *can be* essentially the same. Many throughout history have possessed special authority from God to perform specific functions, but they exceeded His design and claimed *additional* authority, never delegated to them, to violate the design of God, but, as with any violation, the Creator held, and continues to hold, them inescapably accountable for misuse of this "very good" aspect of His creation.

### The Apostle Knew, from the Genesis Record of Creation, the Nature of All Valid Authority

One of the first things to remember is that the writer, Paul, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, a student of Gamaliel, and a Pharisee, was extremely knowledgeable regarding the Hebrew Scriptures. Thus, he knew well, and would have believed, the words of God recorded in Genesis 1:28-30 and which described the origin of the first man and woman. Paul knew that the Creator had built these first two humans in His "likeness" and "image," in order that they would represent Him in their authority. He knew that the authority which humans possessed was delegated and imparted to them by God, but the Apostle also knew that God never would or could violate His own person, and thus, God would never delegate to any created being the authority to violate His design. Accordingly, Paul knew from the very first words of God's written revelation that all human authority, and their sense of that authority, originated from the Creator. He did not need a later revelation, some 4,000 years after it had been revealed, to perceive that all valid authority had been delegated by God. Humans had misused and misapplied that authority and had taken to themselves a level of authority never delegated to them. Thus, Paul would **not** have stated or implied to the least degree that any exercise of authority which was not in full accord with the person and nature of God had been delegated by Him. All authority which was actually delegated by the Creator was an exact representation of His never-changing, never-false person, and He never delegated to any being the authority to violate His design. Paul, then, especially under the inspiration of the Spirit of God,

would never have expressed even in the most remote manner anything which would be accurately interpreted as saying that all human authorities, regardless of their conformity to God's design, had originated from Him.

1 PHA כל נפֿש לשולטנא דרבּוּתא תשתעבדֿ  
לית גיר שולטנא

דלא הוא מן אלהא הן

ואילין שולטנא דאיתיהון מן אלהא הן פקידין:

2 מן דקאם הכיל לוקבל שולטנא לוקבל פוקדנא דאלהא קאם והלין דקימין לוקבלהון דינא נסבון: 3 דינא גיר לא הון דחלתא לעבדא טבא אלא לבישא צבא אנת הכיל דלא תדחל מן שולטנא עבד טבתא ותשבוחתא תהוא לד מנה: 4 משמשנא הו גיר דאלהא אלא לד לטבתא וואן בישתא עבד אנת דחל לא הוא גיר סריקאית אסיר לספסרא משמשנא הו גיר דאלהא ותבועא דרונא לאילין דעבדין בישתא: 5 ומטל הנא אלצא לן דגשתעבדֿ לא מטל רונא בלחודֿ אלא אף מטל תארותן: 6 מטל הנא אף כסף רשא יהבין אנתון משמשנא אנון גיר דאלהא דעליהו דהלין קימין:

Text Critical Notes:

Pickering, in his Greek MSS Family 35, agrees with the Byzantine (Majority) Text and the Nestle-UBS (Critical) Text. His Family 35 is comprised of 20 MSS: 35, 204, 510, 586, 824, 928, 1072, 1145, 1339, 1435, 1503, 1551, 1667, 2253, 2352, 2382, 2466, 2503, 2554, 2765.

His introduction to his *Family 35* text states: "The first reading is that of the family and represents the vote of all the collated MSS (listed above) that are not identified as having a variant. 2554 has no variants."

**CNTTS (BW10)**

**Rom 13:1 variation unit #7.0** [Rom 13:1-7.0]

Πασα ψυχη εξουσαις υπερεχουσαις υποτασσεσθω  
 ου γαρ εστιν εξουσια  
 ει μη **ΥΠΟ** θεου  
 αι δε ουσαι υπο θεου τεταγμεναι εισιν

**ΥΠΟ(1) SO-N** A B D06c Ψ 049 1 33 35 69\* 76 131 209 218 424 489 927 999 1243 1244 1245 1315 1319 1448 1505 1628 1646 1720  
 1735 1739 1768 1874 1876 1877 1881 1900 1962 2400 2495 MT SBL >>

	I	II	III	IV	V	No Category
<b>4 c.</b>	N B					
<b>5 c.</b>	A					
<b>7 c.</b>		D06c				
<b>9 c.</b>	33	Ψ		049	1900	
<b>10 c.</b>	1739	1874			1720	
<b>11 c.</b>		1243 1735 1962			1244 131 35 424	
<b>12 c.</b>		1319 1505		1 1448 927	1245 1315 1646	
<b>13 c.</b>		218 2400			999	
<b>14 c.</b>		1881 1877		209	489 76	
<b>15 c.</b>		2495 69			1628 1876	
<b>16 c.</b>					1768	

MT SBL

**αΠΟ R 2** D06\* F010 G012 69cc<sup>c</sup> 945 1573 TR >>

	I	II	III	IV	V	No Category
<b>6 c.</b>	D06					
<b>9 c.</b>		F010 G012				
<b>11 c.</b>				945		
<b>12 c.</b>		1573				
<b>15 c.</b>		69cc [??]		69cc [??]		
<b>19 c.</b>						TR

**lacunae - 99** Ϝ10 Ϝ26 Ϝ27 Ϝ31 Ϝ40 Ϝ46 Ϝ61 Ϝ94 Ϝ99 Ϝ113 Ϝ118 C 0172 >>