

THE TRUE RULER

Romans 13:1 ... “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.”

Revelation 1:5 ... “and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood”

In Romans 13:1 we read that no one comes to power except through God's appointment. That applies to both good AND bad leaders. The part about bad leaders is what we struggle with because history has seen many rulers who committed unspeakable atrocities. History's top eleven mass murderers, include: Mao Zedong (China), Genghis Khan (China), Joseph Stalin (USSR), Adolph Hitler (Germany), King Leopold (Belgium), Hideki Tojo (Japan), Ismail Pasha (Turkey), Pol Pot (Cambodia), Kim Il Sung (No. Korea), Mengistu Mariam (Ethiopia), and Yakubu Gowon (Nigeria). Together, they ordered about 213 million of their own people killed.

Revelation 1:5 tells us that Jesus rules over kings (prime ministers, presidents, etc.), which means they do not have sole authority; they answer to Christ. Why might God allow a mass murderer to be in power? Why would God allow 213 million people to be slaughtered by just a few awful men? We cannot answer that question definitively, but there are clues.

You may think of judgment occurring in the future after you die. But God has judged people groups, cities, nations, false religions and immorality throughout history. In some instances, God sent his angels to eliminate ungodly people. At other times, he supernaturally empowered human armies to do it. As uncomfortable as it is to consider, God may have used the eleven evil men I cite today (and others) as his tools to render judgment on other ungodly persons. Mao and Genghis ordered the killing of 118 million Chinese. The Chinese people have practiced false, anti-God religions for thousands of years, but today the underground Chinese Christian church is said to be the largest in the world. Hitler wiped out 11 million people, six million of whom were God's chosen people, the Jews. The Jews had largely turned their backs on God for thousands of years. But the result of their persecution by Hitler, was the prophesized restoration of the nation of Israel.

We do not know if 213 million people were killed under God's judgment. But we do know that during and following those genocides, many people turned back to God. I suspect that some of the world leaders God has allowed to come to power today, is his attempt to force us to our knees in confession of sin, and dependence upon Him.

God instructs us to be subject to authorities, but he also instructs us to hate evil. Romans 12:9 ... “Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil.” We are obligated to respect authorities and obey them as much as we can without violating God's commands. However, that does not include supporting authorities who commit evil deeds – evil as defined in the Bible, not as defined by social media or peoples' opinions. We are required to stand for righteousness and defend the Gospel of Christ. I am shocked at the number of Christians who vote for and publicly support leaders who advocate evil and who blatantly curse and revile God, who tells us in Psalm 8:13 “The fear of the Lord is to hate evil; pride and arrogance and the evil way and the perverse mouth I hate.”

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