

PREVIOUSLY IN CHAPTER 13

- The Christian and Government | Romans 13:1-7

THE CHRISTIAN'S OBLIGATIONS | ROMANS 13:8-10

- Verse 8 –
 - This is not a prohibition against debt but rather an instruction concerning the one obligation we should have, and that is **to love one another**.
 - In what way has **he that loveth another...fulfilled the law**? Furthermore, why does it matter, if we are **dead to the law** (Rom. 7:1) and **delivered from the law** (Rom. 7:6)?
 - No law is fulfilled in love alone. However, love for God and for others will keep a person from breaking any law (see vv. 9-10).
- Verses 9-10 - Paul gives a quick summary of the Ten Commandments and says they are **briefly comprehended** in the command to **love thy neighbor**. It would be a mistake (that many have made) to assume that love toward others is a *full comprehension* of the Law.

A CHRISTIAN'S WARNING | ROMANS 13:11-14

- Verse 11 –
 - The **time** is the *kairon* not the *chronon*, that is, the *season* not the *hour of day*. Because of the *kairon*, **now it is high time to awake**. Literally, *the hour is already*.
 - The New Testament epistles are filled with warnings about the approaching end (1 Cor. 7:29, 1 Peter 4:7, 1 John 2:17, James 4:13-16, 5:3).
 - This is not proof that the writers were wrong, but proof that the timing of God's work was not revealed.
 - Remember that they were living under a recently revealed mystery, one that shook the very foundations of their Jewish faith and of the previously revealed prophetic time-line. Furthermore, every indication was that "life as we know it" would not continue long (the Jewish revolt was simmering, Rome would put down the revolt, Jerusalem would be no more). So far as they could see, the Messiah would surely come quickly.
 - Note that all the references to short time have a very Jewish audience in mind, so it very well could be that these were warnings about the end of Jewish national life.
 - By stating that **now is our salvation nearer**, Paul verifies that what believers have today is not the full measure of salvation. It is true to say, *I was saved, I am being saved, I will be saved*.
 - Note that while this is not a clear teaching of the rapture, Paul speaks of **our salvation** and not of the time of testing. This is not sufficient to provide proof of a pretribulational rapture, but it does align with pre-trib chronology.
- Verse 12 –
 - When Paul says that **the day is at hand** it is clear that **the day** has not yet arrived.
 - This is the same Greek word (ἐγγίζω - engizo) as is used in reference to the Kingdom of God. If **the day** has still not arrived in Paul's day, how then do so many argue that the Kingdom of God had arrived?

- Verses 13 – 14 –
 - Paul speaks figuratively of day/light and night/darkness, with the darkness being the current period and the light being the coming salvation.
 - In light of the soon-coming Salvation, living a holy life in Christ is in order, with **no provision for the flesh**, or, literally, *do not take forethought unto desire*.

DEALING WITH WEAKER BELIEVERS | ROMANS 14:1

- The instruction to receive a weaker brother is repeated (in essence) in Rom. 15:1 and 15:7.
- The instruction is to **receive** the one **weak in the flesh** but **not to doubtful disputations**.
 - The word **disputations** is διάκρισις [diakrisis], which is to *thoroughly judge/evaluate* (see the same root used in vv. 3 & r (**judge / judgest**) and v. 5 (**esteemeth**)).
 - The word **doubtful** is διαλογισμός [dialogismos], which is *thoroughly discussed (and thoroughly logical)*.
 - The KJV has taken the negative which is in the Greek to interpret as **doubtful disputations**. There is no directly literal equivalent in English. A very literal translation would be *receive Him that is weak, but do not receive from him that which has already been thoroughly discussed and evaluated*. Darby translates as "not to *the* determining of questions of reasoning."

WEAK PRACTICE | ROMANS 14:2-4

- Verses 2-3 –
 - Note that this is not a matter of what a teacher is teaching, but a matter of what a weak brother is believing.
 - It would be a totally different matter if a local congregation was to allow one **who is weak** to teach their weakness to the congregation (to do so would violate Paul's doctrine of food in 1 Timothy 4:4).
 - It is sometimes challenging to discern what is weakness which can be excused and what is weakness which must be addressed. In general, the *person in the pew* doesn't need corrected for every weak belief, they need verse-by-verse Bible teaching that will, in time, correct those beliefs.
- Verse 4 –
 - It is wise (but difficult) to realize that weaker brothers are not our **servant**, but **he standeth or falleth** before **his own master** who is God Himself.
 - Note that this argues against the Roman Catholic papal system as well as all authoritarian systems of church government.