

THE BEGINNING OF HUMAN GOVERNMENT

Golden Text

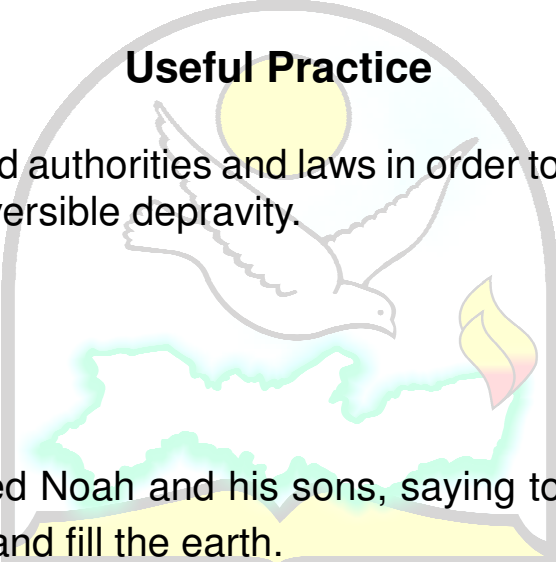
“Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God” (Romans 13:1).

Useful Practice

God has established authorities and laws in order to keep human society from a total and irreversible depravity.

Scripture Reading

Genesis 9:1-13

- 
- 1** - Then God blessed Noah and his sons, saying to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth.
- 2** -The fear and dread of you will fall on all the beasts of the earth, and on all the birds in the sky, on every creature that moves along the ground, and on all the fish in the sea; they are given into your hands.
- 3** - Everything that lives and moves about will be food for you. Just as I gave you the green plants, I now give you everything.
- 4** - “But you must not eat meat that has its lifeblood still in it.
- 5** - And for your lifeblood I will surely demand an accounting. I will demand an accounting from every animal. And from each human being, too, I will demand an accounting for the life of another human being.
- 6** - “Whoever sheds human blood, by humans shall their blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made mankind.
- 7** As for you, be fruitful and increase in number; multiply on the earth

and increase upon it.”

8 - Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him:

9 - “I now establish my covenant with you and with your descendants after you

10 - and with every living creature that was with you—the birds, the livestock and all the wild animals, all those that came out of the ark with you—every living creature on earth.

11- I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be destroyed by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth.”

12 - And God said, “This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come:

13 - I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth.

General objective

To understand that God has established authorities and laws to preserve mankind.

Specific objectives

- I. To show** that God has established a new beginning from Noah’s family on;
- II. To analyze** the rainbow of God as a symbol of his new covenant with mankind;
- III. To explain** the principle of human government.

Introduction

God sent rain down upon the earth for forty days and forty nights. The waters fell and flowed so heavily that they got to last for nearly a year. So the whole first human civilization came to perish. Meanwhile, Noah and his family, inside the big ark, wandered about on the waters that were subsiding day after day until the dry ground appeared. Once out of the big boat, the survivors embark on a new civilizing work. And so, the patriarch receives specific instructions from the Lord, in order for him and his sons to faithfully fulfill his will: to build a society based on love for God and for

others. A society that, by distancing itself from that region, could reach the ends of the earth. That was the beginning of human government, which would last until today, despite so many dramas and tragedies.

I A NEW BEGINNING

1. A new relationship with nature. If until then mankind had lived in harmony with creation, from now on, this relationship will be quite traumatic. The Lord warns that the beasts, for example, would fear and dread human beings (Gen 9:2). To fight against them, great hunters like Nimrod would emerge (Genesis 10:9). Nature should be tamed with difficulty, so that the dwelling place of Noah's sons could become sustainable. The apostle Paul speaks about the issue: "We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time" (Romans 8:22 - NIV). In the millennium, however, this situation will be reversed (Isaiah 11:6). For now, we are all under a heavy captivity.

2. A new diet. If before the Flood all had a rich and abundant vegetable diet, now they would have to complement it with animal nutrients. However, they should abstain from blood (Gen. 9:4). A similar recommendation would be made by the apostles in Jerusalem (Acts 15:19,20).

3. God's blessing. Rebuilding human society was no easy task. Noah and his family would have to restart a civilizing process that, because of the great flood, had lost almost two thousand years of inventions, discoveries and technological advances. In this work, the patriarch and his sons would need the fullness of God's blessing. By blessing them, the Lord urges them: "Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth" (Gen 9:7). It would not take long, as we shall see in the next lessons, for mankind to be successful again and to occupy the remotest continents.

II GOD'S RAINBOW

1. A new covenant with mankind. Aiming to calm their minds, the Lord promises them: the world will never be destroyed by another flood. Without this promise, Noah's descendants would have wasted their efforts in building arks, towers and dams. In his mercy, the Lord promises: "I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be destroyed by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth" (Genesis 9:11).

2. The sign of the covenant with Noah. In order for mankind to remember God's mercy, whenever it rains, the Lord makes his covenant quite visible: "I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the

covenant between me and the earth. Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds" (Genesis 9:13,14). The rainbow of God would be a phenomenon as new as regular rain. In seeing it whenever heavy rain came down, Noah's descendants could rest in God's care.

III THE BEGINNING OF HUMAN GOVERNMENT

1. Human government. Theologically, human government is the institution established by God soon after the Flood, through which the Lord entrusts to man not only the governance of the planet, but also the rule of justice (Romans 13:1). This institution, without which human civilization would be inviable, can be summarized in this one divine sentence: "Whoever sheds human blood, by humans shall their blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made mankind" (Genesis 9:6). On ratifying this principle, the Lord Jesus was emphatic to highlight the benevolent and loving side that should guide human government: "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets" (Mt 7:12).

2. The improvement of human government. Israel had, in various periods of its history, some governments that got to be perfect. Consider the reign of Hezekiah (2 Chron 29:1,2). By the way, those men sought to fulfill the Law of Moses, because they knew that no kingdom can be built anarchically. Thus, Noah and his descendants, under the new rules given by the Lord, were able to continue human history, despite the gaps left by the flood.

COMADALPE **CONCLUSION**

Human government is a divine institution. It has been given by the Lord, aiming to bring civilization to achieve its goals until his Kingdom is established among us through Jesus Christ his Son. Meanwhile, we are all urged to obey the authorized representatives and those in power, provided that they do not establish laws contrary to the Word of God which is above all human laws. So here is our golden text: "We must obey God rather than human beings!" (Acts 5:29).