

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION
Psalms: Living By Faith In God
CXIX. The Vast Value Of God’s Word
G. Handling Harmful Insubordination
(Psalm 119:49-56 [Zayin])

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

A settled society is marked by law-abiding citizens, but a lot of harmful insubordination toward the laws of the land and lawfully established authorities abounds in today’s world, what fosters discontent and leads to unrest:

(1) Harmful insubordination toward the law and lawful authorities thrives at the national level: A letter to the editor of the October 23, 2024, Republican-American, p. 7A, by Randa Dobos of Naugatuck stated, “I am a registered Democrat from President Kennedy’s time. I do not like the fact that when Biden was made to get out of the (presidential) race, a primary was not held so that the people could have chosen a candidate. There was time to do that . . . President Biden did not just come down with what appears to be dementia. He’s been like this for a long time. If he was not capable of running for president again, why are they letting him stay until January?”

Randa Dobos added, “I am hoping for an honest election, but I do not think that will happen.” (Ibid.)

(2) Harmful insubordination toward the law and lawful authorities thrives at the state level: “Mayor Joe Gannim sought to get a list of residents of city-subsidized housing for use in obtaining absentee ballot applications – a list of people who could be told that voting for the mayor would help them keep their apartments. Sure enough, though Gannim served seven years in federal prison for corruption committed during his first stint as mayor, his second stint has been achieved repeatedly by the big pluralities in absentee ballots.” (Chris Powell, “Voter fraud may be rare, so Democrats want more,” Ibid., p. 7A)

(3) Harmful insubordination toward the law and lawful authorities abounds in the general public, but a lot of it is a reaction to irresponsible leaders in major institutions: A letter to the editor of the October 25, 2024, Republican American, p. 6A, by Lawrence J. Chiucarello, Jr. of Terryville cited a January 7, 2021, editorial of the paper that stated of the political “left-wing” and “conservatives in general” that “(n)either . . . believes American government agencies and courts – local, state and federal – are inclined to deliver justice or even capable of doing so. Nor does either side trust the news media to deliver honest, and objective reporting!”

(4) The Preamble of the U. S. Constitution begins with the phrase, “We the People of the United States . . .” so that the Constitution treats the voting public as the supreme human authority in the nation. However, harmful insubordination toward the Constitution itself and toward the lawful authority of the American voting public is rampant even among lawmakers: “(I)n Connecticut politics, Republicans introduce legislation to improve election security, and Democrats accuse them of engaging in voter suppression . . . (and) Democrats are able to stave off GOP reforms because they dominate the legislature.” (“Why reject election vigilance?”, Ibid., October 26, 2024, p. 6A)

(5) Harmful insubordination occurs at the grassroots level: A letter by “Tired of Chaos” to Annie Lane of the “Dear Annie” column (Ibid., October 25, 2024, p. 13B) complained, “We have friends who are in their 40s, with two kids (6 and 4). We have gone out to lunches with the four of them, and it’s always been a bad experience. The kids tear through the restaurant and scream. It’s becoming very embarrassing . . .”

Need: *So, we ask, “How does God direct that we respond constructively to harmful insubordination?”*

I. The psalmist faced affliction from a party that was harmfully insubordinate to Scripture’s God:

- A. A party was causing the psalmist *‘ani*, “affliction” in the sense of “distress, pain,” Psalm 119:50a (B. D. B., A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 777; H. A. W., Theol. Wrdbk. of the O. T., 1980, v. II, p. 682-683).
- B. The trial involved spiritual persecution by people who were harmfully insubordinate to Scripture’s God:
 1. Wicked people around the psalmist had forsaken the Word of God, Psalm 119:53b.
 2. In place of the authority of Scripture’s God, the wicked had assumed for themselves an authority that was presumptuously proud far above what rightly belonged to them, Psalm 119:51a. The wicked are described here by the adjective *zed*, “insolent, presumptuous” (Ibid., B. D. B., p. 267), insufferable insubordination.
 3. The wicked had exercised their insolently insufferable attitude of insubordination to scorn the psalmist’s righteous stance on an issue that aligned with Scripture’s truth, Psalm 119:51:b,c.
 4. Consequently, the psalmist internally reacted with great fury at the wrong he thus suffered, v. 53a ESV.

II. God’s solution for the psalmist’s predicament involved his relying on Scripture and the emotional release of his frustrations through edifying musical expressions and musing on Scripture, v. 49-51, 53-56:

- A. The psalmist recalled God’s past record of fulfilling His promises of help in similar former trials for encouragement with his current trial, Psalm 119:49-50.
- B. Accordingly, the psalmist resisted the temptation to “bend, turn away” (*natah*, Ibid., p. 639-641) from God’s Scripture truth under the pressure of the scorn he faced from the wicked, Psalm 119:51.
- C. However, the psalmist’s great internal fury at the wrong he had suffered by the insufferably insubordinate needed a release, and one way he wisely released this anger was by praising God in song, Psalm 119:54.
- D. Also, even at night when the psalmist reflected on the trial he faced, he found that recalling the “Name” of the Lord, a reference to God’s character (cf. “Name,” *Z. P. E. B.*, v. 4, p. 361-365) of being righteous and the sovereign to deal with the insufferably insubordinate, led him to keep obeying Scripture, Psalm 119:55.
- E. The psalmist testified that this blessed way of handling this particular trial had been his experience because he had learned to obey God’s Word in the Scriptures, Psalm 119:56.

Lesson: *To handle the trial of being scorned for standing for the truth by those who are unbearably insubordinate to God and His Word, (a) the psalmist recalled God’s faithful record in fulfilling His promises of help in past similar trials for current encouragement to keep his godly stand, (b) he released his pent up fury through musical expressions of praise to the Lord and (c) recalled God’s righteous and sovereign attributes to assure him that God would effectively deal with his evil persecutors.*

Application: *(1) May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God’s gift of eternal life, John 3:16; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11. (2) May we apply Psalm 119:49-56 [Zayin] to handle what harmful insubordination we face.*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message and/or provide additional guidance . . .)

We apply Scripture as Psalm 119:49-51, 56 teaches to handle the insubordination issues in our introduction:

(1) On various actions of insubordination to sovereign American voters, such as the replacement of President Joe Biden who won in the primaries with Vice President Kamala Harris who never won a primary all by strong-arm politics, the likely unlawful manipulation of voters in Bridgeport, Connecticut by Mayor Joe Gannim’s supporters and efforts by Democratic legislators to block voting security reforms here in Connecticut, (a) Romans 13:1 promises that there is no ruler in any human government on the earth who comes to power and keeps it without God’s permissive will. (b) Thus, if an incompetent or evil person *does* get into office, the **reason** God is *letting* it occur is to fulfill His will that is revealed in Scripture that we have often noted – to allow for a “mini-Great Tribulation” as foretold in Revelation 3:21 with 7:17! God is letting such trouble occur to get believers in the Church to **separate** from the godless world around them as directed in 1 John 2:15-16 that they might **prepare** for **Christ’s coming kingdom** in how they live today, 1 John 2:17 with Revelation 19:1-20:6. We also know from Revelation 7:17 in its context that God seeks to get more people to believe in Christ before the pretribulation rapture of the Church since the Lord knows of the intense world suffering that will occur in the Tribulation Period to follow (Revelation 4:1-19:21)! (c) Thus, instead of emotionally and mentally “falling apart” if the election results are not what we might have hoped them to be, we believers in Christ should focus on fulfilling God’s calling for us and inform concerned people who come our way of God’s plan for our current needy era, and disciple them for Christ! (d) As for the coming election on Tuesday, some people believe that there will be social unrest **regardless who wins**, but even if that is so, we will simply need to apply **all** the Scripture verses in this “(1)” section!

(2) On insubordination by the public toward lawful authorities and the establishment media due to actions by people in authority in these institutions that do not to provide justice or truth, (a) Romans 13:2 directs us to obey those in power as God has allowed them to come to power. (b) The sole exception for us is if those in power call us to disobey God’s Word, and at that point, we must obey God over those humans who are in power, Acts 5:29.

(3) On insubordination by those at the grassroots level, (a) passages like 1 Timothy 4:1-3 and 2 Timothy 2:16, 3:1, 3:9, 3:13 and 4:3-4 teach that mankind’s sinfulness will increase before the 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 rapture of the Church, when God takes Christians to heaven! (b) Thus, God calls us to increasing levels of separation from sin in our lives and dedication to serving His interests (1 Timothy 4:4-16; 2 Timothy 2:19b; 3:10-12; 3:14-4:2 and 4:5-8)!

(4) On insubordination to the American voting public by practices or arrangements of people in power that cause many voters to doubt the credibility of the electoral process, (a) 2 Timothy 3:13 predicted that deception in the world would greatly increase, (b) all the more reason to trust God’s sovereignty for election results, Romans 13:1!

May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God’s gift of eternal life. May we apply Psalm 119:49-56 [Zayin] to handle what harmful insubordination we face.