

WHEN IS IT RIGHT TO DISOBEY YOUR GOVERNMENT?

Since all submission to government is rendered due to our submission first to the Lord as our sovereign God & Head of the Church, there are times when a believer may/will need to “obey God _____ than man” (Acts 5:29) when the two spheres are in conflict. This occurs when human government _____ its limits of delegated authority by _____ disobedience or _____ obedience in doing the _____ will of God as set forth in Scripture. However, the believer’s civil disobedience must be done upon _____ grounds, not first constitutional grounds, which may factor into the discussion later. The believer who chooses to disobey human government in obedience to Jesus Christ on biblical grounds actually _____ God (Ex. 1:20; Heb. 11:31) but also must be willing to suffer the _____ of that disobedience from man in suffering for “righteousness sake” (1 Pet. 3:13-17; 4:12-16). The scriptural accounts of acceptable civil disobedience revolved around the _____ of human life, the believer’s _____ to & _____ of God privately or publicly, and the furtherance of the _____ and sound doctrine through faithful believers and local churches.

A. The OLD TESTAMENT Examples of Acceptable Civil Disobedience.

1. **The Hebrew midwives disobeyed Pharaoh. (Exodus 1)** The *principle*: Acceptable civil disobedience is when out of a genuine _____, believers trust / obey God instead of man, resulting in righteous actions, including the _____ of human life.
2. **Rahab hid the Israelite spies in disobedience to the King of Jericho. (Joshua 2)** The *conclusion*: While the Bible does not comment on Rahab’s lies, God _____ her _____ & the righteous actions of _____ human lives. (Heb. 11:31; Jam. 2:25)
3. **Daniel addressed the king’s diet requirements which were contrary to the Law. (Daniel 1)**
 - a. **The context. (1:1-7)** Starting around 605 BC, there was a deportation to Babylon of certain teenage boys from Jewish royalty to be taught and trained in the ways of the Chaldeans in order to _____ before the _____. (1:1- 7)
 - b. **The conflict. (1:8)** Though only a teenager, Daniel _____ in his heart to do God’s will according to the Word of God which created a conflict with the King’s prescribed dietary menu.
 - c. **The creative alternative. (1:9-16)** In his desire to obey God, Daniel still recognized and respected the human authorities over him and submissively offered a _____ for their diet w/o compromising his scriptural convictions. Providentially, his steward agreed to a ten-day test.
 - d. **The conclusion. (1:17-21)** The 4 Hebrew young men proved to be more qualified than any others when examined by the King and were given official positions of service in the Babylonian gov’t. Thus, obedience to God first was maintained, and civil disobedience avoided, by the grace of _____ and creative alternatives employed.
4. **Meshach, Shadrach and Abed-nego refused to bow down and worship an idol. (Daniel 3)**
 - a. **The ceremony for the image. (3:1-3)** There was constructed a mammoth _____ (probably of the King) & government officials from around the empire were summoned for its dedication.

- b. **The command of the king. (3:4-7)** Those gathered at the ceremony were commanded to fall down and _____ the golden image with the _____ of the fiery furnace for non-compliance.
- c. **The conspiracy against 3 faithful Jews. (3:8-12)** Certain jealous Chaldeans accused the Jews of civil disobedience by way of _____ King Nebuchadnezzar, not _____ his gods, or _____ the golden image. Was this true? Why was there civil disobedience by these Jews?
- d. **The convictions of these 3 faithful Jews. (3:13-18)** In spite of the King's rage, these men were unwilling to repent & compromise their _____ convictions, even in the face of threatened death.
- e. **The consequences. (3:19-39)** In keeping with the king's word, these Hebrew men were cast into the furnace of fire. But instead of dying (like those who threw them in), they were divinely _____ and joined with one like the _____. As a result, even the King acknowledges these 3 men as _____ of God "who _____ in Him, and ... had yielded their bodies, that they should _____ serve nor worship any god except their own _____." While not initially designed to be an attack upon Jewish believers, nevertheless, civil disobedience was justified before God because the government _____ its authority by _____ obedience in contrast to God's will. Yet, it still resulted in a clear _____ to the world of the power of God.

5. **Daniel disobeys the king's written decree to not pray for thirty days. (Daniel 6)**

- a. **The context. (6:1-3)** Daniel is promoted (in the providence of God) as one of three _____ in the Babylonian empire, along with being considered as _____ due to his distinguished service.
- b. **The conspiracy. (6:4-9)** Motivated by apparent jealousy, various government officials conspired to find some _____ against Daniel. Since they were unable to do so against him personally, they conspired against him "concerning his _____". In doing so, they devised a written decree that "whoever _____ a god or man for _____ days" except the king, "shall be cast into the den of lions".
- c. **The conviction of Daniel. (6:10)** Knowing fully the signed decree, Daniel went home and with open windows "knelt down on his knees _____ times that day, and _____ and gave _____ before his God, as was his custom since early days." This was clearly a case of needed civil disobedience.
- d. **The charge against Daniel and the concern of King Darius. (6:11-17)** The charge against Daniel is a failure to show due _____ to the King and _____ to the signed decree. Realizing he had been duped, the king sought _____ for Daniel but eventually had to fulfill the stated punishment.
- e. **The conclusion. (6:18-28)** On this occasion (though this doesn't always happen), God divinely _____ his faithful servant, Daniel. He obeyed _____ rather than _____ based upon _____ principles, when gov't _____ their authority by _____ prayer to God, even on a _____ basis. Yet, it still resulted in a clear _____ of God to the world for His glory.