

INCITEMENT TO REVOLUTION.

Religious Outslight on the Government and Supreme Court of the United States.

Rev. Dr. Cheever's Fourth and Last Sermon on the Dred Scott Decision.

RESISTANCE TO TYRANTS IS OBEDIENCE TO GOD.

Maledictions Against Unjust Judges in General, and Chief Justice Taney and Associates in Particular.

SHALL WE HAVE CIVIL WAR?

The Rev. Dr. Cheever preached last Sabbath evening in his church in Union square his fourth and last sermon against what he denominated the "infamous" decision of the Supreme Court of the United States in the Dred Scott case.

The text from which Dr. Cheever preached last Sunday evening was one which he had been challenged to take up and handle. It was that famous text from Paul's Epistle to the Romans, which has been in all ages, within the Christian era, resorted to to enforce obedience to authority.

DEFINITION OF GOVERNMENT. The great truth here taught is that human government is of divine origin and sanction. From the context we also learn the object for which it is ordained—the ground and duty of obedience—the rule of discipline, and when, and on what conditions, and by what authority, and for what purposes—the responsibility of the government to the people and to God, as well as of the people to the government and to God—and the restrictions and obligations upon its different branches.

The great first truth is, that human government is of Divine origin and sanction. The very obligation to form such a government is from God; the constitution of the human mind is such that it is necessary to have a government, and the necessity of taking it on, and it does inevitably take it on, and grows with it, and is developed under it, and is developed in that, the powers which are the faculties of the human mind are ordained of God, and unjust powers are no more ordained of God than unjust passions. The powers of and for justice and oppression are no more ordained of God than the passion of drunkenness or avarice or murder is ordained, or the faculty of standing on one's head instead of walking.

RESISTANCE TO TYRANTS IS OBEDIENCE TO GOD. The usurpation of power, for selfish and unrighteous objects, for oppression, injustice and cruelty, is not the ordinance of God, but of sin and Satan. In such a case, it ceases to be the duty of the people to obey, and the government is dissolved. Consequently, an unjust government, a government of oppressive laws, laws that command and enforce injustice and cruelty, carries in its very measure the necessity of its own destruction.

DUTY OF DISOBEDIENCE. But here again the duty of disobedience, if the powers that be are tyrants, is equally the duty of the grounds of disobedience are the same; namely, the will of God, and conscience towards him. In the great rule of submission to the higher powers there is always this reserve, which is the foundation and reason of the obedience towards God. Whenever the conscience is violated towards God, the obedience to the king is at once suspended. Peter, on the same subject, says: "Submit yourselves to every ordinance, for the Lord's sake; whether it be to the king as supreme, or to governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men. As free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. The object of human government is to prevent and punish wickedness, and to encourage and reward goodness; to restrain and reform the evil and protect the good—thus co-operating with his own word, to prepare men for the service of God. Hence, in commanding obedience to the powers that be, it is a righteous obedience that is insisted on—an obedience in things that are good, refusing at the same time the evil, and keeping a conscience void of offence towards God. In the parallel passage in Ecclesiastes, "I counsel thee to keep the king's commandment, and that in regard to the oath of God;" and then it is added, "Stand not in any evil thing." The authority of the king is from God, for a terror to evil-doers, and a praise to those who do well; and if the king command an evil action, the king himself is against God, and it is to be disobeyed on conscience towards God. But some say, no, he is to be obeyed, at least for a season, until the power resisteth the ordinance of God, and the moment a thing is law it must be executed, no matter what law of God or conscience goes against it, or else there is an end to all government. No, my friends, the law of God is the foundation of the establishment of good. The nullification of unrighteous law by force and absolute refusal to obey it, is one mode of true religious obedience to the powers that be, for good and for evil, and for the ordinance of God, that they might be obeyed out of conscience towards him; for, as Baxter once said, he gives no power against himself, none against his own conscience, and he will not be bound to obey his law as the people, and he will not be bound to obey his law as the people, that whenever they disobey his law.

THE SLAUGHTER OF THE INNOCENT—O, IF I BLEND.

But if you still insist upon unqualified obedience, take the case of Herod, in Matthew 11, 16, and test your principles by his command to slay all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under. In obedience to the command of the king, founded on reasons of state, and Peter tells you to submit to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether of the king as supreme, or governors as sent by him. And Paul tells you that whosoever resisteth the ordinance of God, and that every soul must be subject to the higher powers. According to your interpretation it is right, in obedience to the king, to murder those children; it was an act of obedience to God; and according to your theory, if the child Jesus himself had been murdered under that command, it would have been right and just, and whoever was commanded to put the Babe in Bethlehem to the sword, in obedience to do it, and if he had succeeded, would have done a thing acceptable to God. My friends, there is a rule in regard to obedience to state policy in such cases—a rule that every man should know, and that every man should be ready to defend. It is the voice of Satan, and his friends, "Prepare my way before me," a rule pithy, terse and comprehensive—"Go it blind." If you will obey government in executing unrighteous deeds, under pretence of obedience to God, you must "go it blind"—but remember our declaration of our blessed Lord in such a case—that "if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch."

THE RIGHTS OF HIGHER LAW. The rule of goodness and law, which the government, by its very essence, as ordained of God, is bound to pursue, extends to all classes equally, and to the equal rights of all. There are certain rights, powers and duties lavished in, imposed upon, and growing out of the construction of society, and the nature of man, as God has framed it, and appointed governments for it, which, if government violate and oppose them, much more it prevent and deny them, set society itself rights against the government, and forbid men, under the authority of God, from obeying the government. Such are the rights, powers and duties of the family relation, as constituted and ordained of God, before all government, higher and more sacred than all, and forming the great object and interest indeed of governmental protection and care. Now, any government that breaks down that relation, or destroys its sacredness, or renders its freedom points as sacred and essential to the family relation, and the attainment of its objects equally impossible, sets itself in open and essential defiance of God and emulsi against his law. Now, any government that breaks down that relation, or destroys its sacredness, or renders its freedom points as sacred and essential to the family relation, and the attainment of its objects equally impossible, sets itself in open and essential defiance of God and emulsi against his law.

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CONTINUES THE REASONING, but to love one another, for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

But to love one another, for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. He that doeth all that man or divine government requires of him. The whole law is briefly comprehended in this saying, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." It is an act of obedience to God, and therefore love is the fulfilling of the law, the whole law, human and divine.

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ORDERED AS A PACT OF EQUITY AND TRUTH, and not of subtlety and oppression.

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AS THROUGH THEIR OWN INDIVIDUAL OBEDIENCE TO GOD.

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