

# *Mirror Principle*

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Finding the Father of Jesus in the Torah



ADRIAN EBENS

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Adrian Ebens, 2023

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# FOREWORD

“Anyone who claims to know all the answers doesn’t really know very much.” 1 Corinthians 8:2

In this new book, Pastor Adrian Ebens has once again ascended to another astounding summit in the revelation of God’s character. In true Berean style, Adrian presses deep into the Bible seeking its answers for the earnest and honest questions that many would not even dare to ask.

It has been challenging, for each revelation of God’s glory also reflects back on us and shows us more clearly the sinfulness of humanity. This new book is no different. It will confront and challenge the reader to question who is the God that you love and serve. How does He speak to us individually? How can we know it is the voice of God, and not someone else?

Over the years we have walked together with Adrian’s ministry and been part of their many group discussions trying to understand how God guides and teaches His children. Each discovery has been a light that has shined further down the path, making it clearer where we are to go. Aided by the many publications written, we have experienced amazing growth and transformation of character.

Pastor Adrian has painstakingly moved forward in addressing the obstacles that face us as we climb the Rock of salvation, carefully driving mountaineering pitons with sure and proven principles laid out over the years. Having established our climbing route, he provides us all the opportunity to review and study this out for ourselves, whether if indeed these amazing revelations could possibly be true – and in our case, we heartily exclaim ‘Amen!’

For every soul that is hungering and thirsting for God’s righteousness, struggling to gain the victory over every besetting sin, and longing for

knowledge that will give transformation of character; the pages within this book will strike the chords of your heart.

By looking onto the events of the Torah through the life and teachings of Jesus on earth, truth shines forth as deliverance to dispel the darkness that shrouded our minds and shut out God from our hearts. This is not merely theoretical knowledge, for learning how God communicates with man in the past will walk you through the practical application of how God is trying to speak to you personally now.

God's light is greater than the darkness man is in. But God's ways are higher than our ways, so how His light penetrates our darkness is not intuitive to us. We must, with prayer and honest reflection, reach to understand, studying outside our comfort zone. Freedom and liberty are the true prize, a prize which Jesus waits for us to understand and decide upon before He comes back again.

Are we to stay satisfied stumbling towards God in the night? Pastor Adrian has anchored the pitons, so let us take his lead and arise like the dawn and see that the following pages are indeed pure, wonderful, and true.

Tony and Anna Pace

Vancouver Island, Canada.

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## CHAPTER 1

# IN SEARCH OF THE FATHER

Our family sat transfixed in front of the television, drinking in the storyline of *The Sound of Music*. It was a famous movie based on the real-life experience of the Von Trapp family in Austria. Captain Von Trapp had a large family, but his wife had passed away leaving him to care for them. He had been unable to find someone who could govern the mischievous, father-starved children. When Maria came into the home as governess, she won the hearts of the children, transformed the home, and brought sweet music into their lives.

I was about 5 years old at the time. We watched as Maria encouraged the reluctant captain to sing for the children, to which he eventually began to sing the song 'Edelweiss'.

It was during this song that I noticed something I had never seen before. My father was singing along with the tune and then I heard his voice catch. I turned to look into his face and I saw tears in his eyes.

This was a mystery to me, and I wondered what would cause this. In choked sentences my beloved father told us that the man playing the part of the captain reminded him of his father and of his childhood in the Netherlands.



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His tears washed over my soul and opened a window into a child's love for their father. Through my father's tears my heavenly Father was beckoning me, speaking to me of the tender love that should exist between father and son. My heavenly Father was revealing to me a glimpse of His tenderness, for every good gift comes down from the Father of lights.

Although I was ignorant of what was transpiring, a hunger was ignited in my soul by the Spirit of God drawing me to my heavenly Father. Through the deepest and tenderest earthly ties, our Father in heaven seeks to reveal Himself to us.

Like Captain Von Trapp, my father sometimes appeared stern on the outside, and I feared to dishonour him. At the same time, he could be gentle, caring, and often humorous, especially on festive occasions.

I am indebted to my father for this display of affection towards his father. It planted a seed in my heart, both in the affection I feel for my dad and how it also quickened my yearning for my heavenly Father.

Like all who walk through this life, I have been confronted with anger, conflict, hatred, and death. I have also had to reluctantly acknowledge elements in my own nature that are dark, selfish, and destructive.

At the same time, woven into this life fabric are starry heavens and gorgeous sunsets, the light of which dances over glassy seas. I have walked in majestic forests and been regaled by the joyful sounds of songbirds in the trees; I have been touched by the tender nursing care of mother animals for their furry, cuddly young; and as I have gazed upon creation I have seen, in a sin-darkened mirror, the hand of my tender Father in heaven, and heard His loving voice calling me, wooing me and drawing me into His Fatherly embrace.

My search for my Father has been convoluted and perplexing, with bursts of merciful light intermixed with long nights realizing that formerly held beliefs were wrong. When I gave my heart to Jesus in my late teens, I eagerly took up the Scriptures and was confronted with violent Old Testament images evoking unimpeachable Divine

Sovereignty. I didn't question these images for many years. I just accepted that evil people should die and be destroyed. After all, sin is a terrible thing and terrible things should be punished. But underlying this was an uncomfortability with looking any further, as my understanding of the violence of God tended to subdue any questions I might have had. I loved my Father and did not question the story of the flood or the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. To question such things was to doubt, and doubt in God could lead to apostasy and ruin, so better not to question.

These were not conversations I had with myself, but it was what was going on in my subconscious. My perceptions of justice were reinforced by my mentors and teachers from previous generations. They confirmed me in the thought that when you run a universe sometimes hard decisions have to be taken to eliminate the bad and thereby secure the good.

Living in the shadow of two world wars, I grew up with black and white perceptions of good and evil. Hitler and Mussolini were evil, while the Americans, British, and Australians were good. Hitler unleashed unspeakable evil on the world, particularly on people he considered inferior. He deserved death for what he did. That is how I was taught and that made perfect sense to me, especially since Hitler bombed my father's homeland in the Netherlands, causing the starvation of tens of thousands in the winter of 1944.

With this backdrop, watching American Hollywood movies of the Second World War only strengthened my teenage mind to think in black and white. The message was simple: the German army was evil and the American and allied armies were heroes. Many stories in the Old Testament seemed to confirm that this is how the world is. The German army enslaved my father's people and the Canadian army came and released the Dutch people from tyranny. My mind willed this to align with the story of the children of Israel in Egypt, despite the awkward fit.

On another level, the nightly news broadcasts told us horrific stories of robbers entering people's homes who were willing to kill in order to secure some treasure or, unthinkable, to rape a poor woman caught up in the drama.

This narrative led to me having endless discussions with my dad and with my friends about what we would do if a robber tried to enter our home or harm our families.

A dilemma began to emerge in my mind. Jesus loved His enemies and turned the other cheek but Joshua, the leader of ancient Israel, would protect and defend Israelite families and wipe out any threat to the people of God.

Some of my friends would urge that we should keep weapons in the home, at least baseball bats or large steel rods, to be ready to unleash upon thieves. Other of my friends trained in martial arts or boxing to ward off evildoers.

Yet the story of Jesus haunted me. He went to the Cross without retaliating against those who hurt Him. He was a man of peace and love. How could it be possible to live this way in a world so full of evil?

A salve was offered to my conscience in a television series called Kung Fu produced between 1972 and 1975. Caine, the main character, presented himself as a peaceful man; he was quiet in manners and respected the humanity in all men. At the same time, through the art of Kung Fu, he would subdue evil doers and restore peace, even teaching men how to live a better way. Each body blow from Caine upon evil doers was music to my ears. My feelings of justice were aroused, and when evil men were subdued by force by an otherwise peaceful man, I was tempted to confuse Jesus with Caine.

How could I tell the difference? Would not Jesus come from heaven on a great white horse to take vengeance on those who do evil, and destroy them?

This principle was developed further through the Star Wars movie series where Jedi knights maintained a strict moral discipline while

protecting others, through their fighting expertise, from the dark side of the force.

My exposure to television and movies created a framework for how I read the Bible. The Bible and the movies of the 1960's and 1970's often appeared to speak with one voice: a strong sense of morality that required justice for evil doers. Not that television and movies alone were responsible for this framework. My elementary knowledge of history also underpinned this method of dealing with evil.

After my conversion to Christ at the age of 17, the conflict in my mind between the peaceful Jesus and a God that takes violent vengeance on evil doers quietly grew, but more factors were needed before this conflict would be brought into the open.

## CHAPTER 2

# TO HAVE AND TO HOLD

Besides the manliness of being a hero through martial prowess, another topic that came up among my friends and I was the joy and exhilaration of romantic love. Growing up Christian and in more conservative times, we often didn't directly address the motivation of sexual pleasure, but it was there nonetheless. Courtship leading to marriage used to be the honourable way to enter into sexual excess and self-pleasure, though to admit it could be seen as immature and crude.

But in this day and era, the growing trend is to dispense with these formalities and just 'do what thou wilt' for your own pleasure. Sex as a way to enter into glory is proudly declared without reservations. As the famous Bruno Mars song *Locked Out of Heaven* states:

"I'm born again every time you spend the night  
'Cause your sex takes me to paradise"

But with this increased focus on sexual pleasure over the duties of marriage has come the increase in divorce and broken families. Marriage is seen by many as antiquated and unworkable. Yet in contrast to what the world thinks, Christianity teaches that marriage is one of

the highest institutions given to us by God for our satisfaction and fulfilment.

The joy that I had found in a saving relationship with Jesus Christ led me to study the principles of a blessed marriage. I wanted to approach intimacy and marriage the way Jesus would want me to. One of the principles that came through to me very clearly was my duty to seek a blessing from the father of the bride before entering into a marriage process.

With my heart pounding, I approached Lorelle's father to ask his permission to marry his daughter. The conversation felt awkward at the start but my love for Lorelle, aided by the Spirit of God, emboldened me with my request. I told Mr Masters that I cared for his daughter and that if I had his permission to court her, that I would take care of her for him.

After what felt like an eternity, I once again saw a grown man cry, and once again my soul was washed in that moment. I witnessed a father's love for his daughter, and the manner of my request bound my heart to his in covenant. I had entered into a relationship with Lorelle through a covenant with her father. He was entrusting his most precious treasure to me, believing in my capacity, through God, to take care of her. She was not simply mine to have and hold for *myself*, but to have and to hold within the value context of a *father's love for his child*. The difference is vast.

At the time I could never have grasped the significance of my covenant with Lorelle's father. Ever since, how I treated her was always connected to my promise to her father. It has been a shining light to guide us, grounding our relationship in the blessing of parents and strengthening us in the bond between our two greater families.

What words can be used to describe the privilege of oneness that was designed to exist between a man and his wife?

There are three things that amaze me—no, four things that I don't understand: how an eagle glides through the sky, how a snake

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slithers on a rock, how a ship navigates the ocean, how a man loves a woman. Proverbs 30:18-19

In my heart, Lorelle is a gift from my heavenly Father to me. He brought her to me that we might walk together through life, holding hands, embracing each other with thanksgiving, sharing our joys, challenges and sorrows together.

I sometimes would tear up early on in our marriage that my Father in heaven would entrust me with such a friend and companion. The growing tenderness between us spoke with increasing clarity each day of the love that was designed to exist between God and His people.

"But then I will win her back once again. I will lead her into the desert and speak tenderly to her there. I will return her vineyards to her and transform the Valley of Trouble into a gateway of hope. She will give herself to Me there, as she did long ago when she was young, when I freed her from her captivity in Egypt. When that day comes," says the LORD, "you will call Me 'my husband' instead of 'my master.'" Hosea 2:14-16

As the church submits to Christ, so you wives should submit to your husbands in everything. For husbands, this means love your wives, just as Christ loved the church. He gave up His life for her. Ephesians 5:24-25

The intimacy, tenderness, thoughtfulness, kindness, and love that should spring up in the marriage relation under the guidance of the Spirit of God calls us to look upon the face of God and consider how He loves us. We are to comprehend how tender, thoughtful, and loving His character is that He is so able to impart these qualities into human relationships. God stated in the beginning that man and wife were made in the image of God. The intimacy manifested in the marriage relationship was designed to give a picture of the love and character of God.

The marriage relationship is full of risk though, for if it is entered into without true love the relationship can grow cold and even plunge into

## TO HAVE AND TO HOLD

the darkness of abuse, suffering, and self-protection, making matters much worse than if they were single. He who hates his wife hates himself, for the Bible says:

In the same way, husbands ought to love their wives as they love their own bodies. For a man who loves his wife actually shows love for himself. No one hates his own body but feeds and cares for it, just as Christ cares for the church. Ephesians 5:28-29

I am deeply thankful to our Father, His Son and Lorelle for teaching me the joys of living for others, thus broadening my perspective of what the kingdom of God consists of.

Marriage became the second and most beautiful window into the heart of God, after the first window through my parents. For God to conceive of such a system of relations within its divine original design calls forth praise for our Father God. Bless you Father now and forever, let all the angels sing forth Your praise with trumpet and harp and with all stringed instruments. Let angelic voices blend with the voice of the redeemed, blessing the name of the Lord.



## CHAPTER 3

# THE FRUIT OF LOVE

Only divine love could conceive the creation of a child from the intimate oneness of a man and his wife. It is impossible to describe the emotion of lovingly looking into the eyes of a child created in the image of you and your spouse.

As I beheld my firstborn son and looked into his eyes, I was transfixed in an eternal moment. Deep feelings of gratitude and admiration for my wife combined with the joy of my son coming into the world. The sense of connection that was created in that moment allowed my heavenly Father to speak deep into my soul of His kingdom and character. Another heaven designed relationship came into existence and with it another potential layer to understand the Father.

Now as a dad, I could begin to identify more with our heavenly Father and what fatherhood means. We feel what God feels in the yearning desire for our children, for their protection, development and joy.

When marriage and children are received as heaven intended, the heaven born desire that relationships were never meant to end finds its exclamation mark.

To snuggle my son in my arms and feel all the paternal feelings of affection and joy are but to open the windows of heaven and touch the Fatherhood of God.

Looking back now it almost seems self-evident that in the birth of my two sons, my heart was drawn to the following passage of Scripture:

And a voice from heaven said, "This is My dearly loved Son, who brings Me great joy." Matthew 3:17

The birth of my sons drew me into a deeper relationship with God. The heavenly delight that the Father expressed for His Son gave me confidence that my heavenly Father felt the same for me. That assurance of being "dearly loved" and giving God "great joy" grew when I read:

...to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved. Ephesians 1:6 (NKJV)

Four years after the birth of my first son, a thought crystallised in my mind which was to alter my entire reality and existence. The love I experienced for my wife and sons made them very precious to me. If I could, as a husband and father, esteem them of such value, then are they not indeed that valuable – whether they feel it or not? Can it be that *as a father I determine* the value of my children, rather than my children *proving* their value to me by their achievements?

This was the birth of what I later termed *Identity Wars*;<sup>1</sup> a war between defining myself by my performance and achievement vs. allowing my Father in heaven to define my value by the love He has set upon me. It was such a simple yet profound thought. With it the Scriptures opened up to me in a new and living way, beckoning me forward into an understanding where what was important was God's fatherly words/promises to me rather than my words/promises to a God who was far away.

This is what the LORD says: "Don't let the wise boast in their wisdom, or the powerful boast in their power, or the rich boast in their riches. But those who wish to boast should boast in this alone: that they truly know Me and understand that I am the LORD who demonstrates unfailing love and who brings justice and

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<sup>1</sup> See the book *Identity Wars* available at [fatheroflove.info](http://fatheroflove.info).

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righteousness to the earth, and that I delight in these things. I, the LORD, have spoken!" Jeremiah 9:23-24

The admonition not to glory in your own wisdom, might, or riches but rather in the lovingkindness of our heavenly Father completely validated this relational thought process. In order to face Satan in the desert, the Father simply affirmed the delight He had for His Son. He did not extol His Son's power or intellect, rather He simply told Christ that He loved Him.

When Satan demanded of Christ to prove His Sonship through performing miracles, Christ reminded him that resting in the word of God was all He needed to do. The Father had already pronounced the Sonship of Jesus to the universe. Christ rested in His Father rather than seeking to defend Himself through a display of power.

At some point during this process, I was confronted with the reality of my heavenly Father's love for me. My relationship with my sons had opened my mind to grasp a little of the fatherhood of God, and one day the door swung open as my Father presented my sonship to Him without money and without price – a sonship born purely of the Father's will through the channel of my human parents. I first hesitated at the thought of it. It was majestic, sublime, and words fail me to describe it, but in the love of Christ I stepped into my sonship to God by simply believing that in Christ's Sonship was the cornerstone of my own and no one could rob my value from me again.

It would take several years for this seed planted in my soul to break through into other areas of my life. One day in 2015 I suddenly realised that if I possessed such infinite value to my Father, then it would be impossible for Him to suddenly change towards me and destroy me because my sinfulness had reached a deadline. To entertain the possibility was enough to neutralise all the value that was found in believing I am a son of God, who has predetermined and therefore predestined my value to Him.

I began to realise the truth of the verse which says:

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Such love has no fear, because perfect love expels all fear. If we are afraid, it is for fear of punishment, and this shows that we have not fully experienced His perfect love. 1 John 4:18

Perfect love can't operate where there is fear of punishment. The idea that a son or daughter could be destroyed by the hand of their Father, our Creator, creates a tension in the relationship that makes it unstable, uncertain, and cold. Living under a sword causes anxiety, shutting us out from experiencing His perfect love.

When a well-meaning Christian cries out, "Accept Jesus or burn in hell!" He is not presenting perfect love because it is given with fear of punishment. Any appeal given to a person backed by the threat of death merely entrenches the notion that human beings have zero value to God unless they do exactly as He orders them. Such notions strip God of the tender qualities of a Father and enthrone Him as a relentless condemning judge of those who cease to please Him.

The perfection of the Father's loving kindness and endless mercy are burned up in the flames of the Christian hell. It is not only the fate of sinners that are terminated in the molten flame but also the loving fatherhood of God.

My perplexity of earlier years returned. The quandary between the lovely Jesus who turned the other cheek, and the need to protect my family from evil men, exploded into a war in my mind between a tender Father that has placed infinite value on His children, and the need for justice to stop evil dead in its tracks.

Several portions of Scripture combined with my family experiences were pointing me in one direction, while several other passages of Scripture along with almost all of Christianity were pointing in another direction. How to resolve this conflict? Was my Father in heaven wonderfully merciful one day and horrifically violent the next, sending billions to their death in the most excruciating manner?

Did it really matter? Why not conclude it all a mystery beyond my comprehension? After all, God is so infinite and I am so small and my brain a little pea in comparison to His?

If I ventured to ask my Father about this, would He tell me? Was I truly made in His image, and did not all my marital and consequent paternal feelings come from Him? Was I trying to make God in my own image? Or was I trying to harmonise the Bible in light of what I was now beginning to see? Did my deep experiences of intimacy with my wife and the yearning desire for the welfare of my children tell me anything about my Creator?

One thing was for sure and that is the Bible held the answers. As a son of the living God, I felt confident that if I lacked wisdom, I could come to Him and ask Him in simple faith to explain these things to me.

Before we proceed with discussing further my search for my dear heavenly Father, we need to step back and provide further context to this search. When men come to the Bible they do not come without bias. The Bible reveals to us that the human heart is positively hostile to God and not in the least bit interested in the truth about Him. If we fail to identify this bias, we will fail in our search for the Father.

## CHAPTER 4

# THE HEART IS DECEITFUL

The saying goes that two things in life are certain – “Death and taxes.” But there is something far more certain than these: that every person on this earth must give their verdict on the character of God.

The atheist sentences God to death. His reading of the Bible leads him to the conclusion that not only is God a fictional character, but that God as an idea has a negative impact on humanity and therefore must be dismantled philosophically.

The agnostic is a little shy of taking such a bold stance, and chooses rather to consign God to the place of irrelevance, remaining uncommitted to whether God exists or not. But similarly to the atheist, the conclusion for him is that there is nothing attractive seen in the person of God that would make the issue worthy of looking into.

The adherents of all faiths deny that Jesus is the true Son of God. The Christian faith relabels Him as “God the Son”. Because of Christianity’s obsession with power, seen in history through its capture of the Roman political structure, theologians have written and written on Christ being equal with the Father with an emphasis on power. But this power equality carnal humans bestow upon God and His Son has obscured

that which is most valuable to Them and the actual basis of Their equality: Their relationship. The language of co-equal and co-eternal destroys both the true Sonship of Jesus and the true Fatherhood of God.

The Muslim and the Jew see Christ as merely a man, destroying the true paternal character of God from the opposite perspective to the orthodox Christian. God is, in their eyes, without any special Son, and thus we don't get any special insight into how God is a relational being.

Those influenced by eastern philosophy look into the mirror and see themselves as part of the divine oneness; the water droplet that surrenders its individuality into the great ocean of divinity to become one with God. They identify as God Himself, thus rendering useless the notions of a tender Father.

At the heart of all these verdicts on God is the sad reality of human nature. It is as unbiased towards God as the southern US jury in the film *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Despite the valiant attempts of Atticus Finch to acquit the black Tom Robinson of the charge of rape against a white woman, the jury found him guilty of rape nonetheless. The colour of their skin and the hatred in their hearts demanded it. It was not possible to see it any other way for them.

The Bible reveals to us the spiritual colour of our skin and the hatred in our hearts as follows:

As the Scriptures say, "No one is righteous—not even one. No one is truly wise; no one is seeking God. All have turned away; all have become useless. No one does good, not a single one." "Their talk is foul, like the stench from an open grave. Their tongues are filled with lies." "Snake venom drips from their lips." "Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness." "They rush to commit murder. Destruction and misery always follow them. They don't know where to find peace." "They have no fear of God at all."  
Romans 3:10-18

The Bible strips away the veneered claims of billions who state that they are seeking God. How is this even possible?

## THE HEART IS DECEITFUL

The human heart is the most deceitful of all things, and desperately wicked. Who really knows how bad it is? Jeremiah 17:9

There is nothing more deceitful than the human heart. Anyone who thinks they are better than others reveals they are a victim of their own deceit.

The annals of human history are replete with sad tales of pride, selfishness, lies, debauchery, and murder. Walk the corridors of the ancient senate of Rome, witness the machinations of men like Julius Caesar followed by his inglorious assassination. He came, he saw, he conquered... and died in his sins.

Visit the 18-Ton Imperia Statue in the city of Konstanz, Germany and be reminded of the prostitutes that serviced prelates and statesmen alike at the Council of Constance between 1414-1418. That council burned John Huss and his Biblical teachings at the stake and could not decide whether forced conversion through war was acceptable or not. What more fitting symbol could be employed for that council than men of power claiming holiness being upheld in the arms of a wanton woman, in quick march together to the gates of hell.

Our Father in heaven explains to us the extent of the problem in this way:

“My thoughts are nothing like your thoughts,” says the LORD.  
“And My ways are far beyond anything you could imagine. For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so My ways are higher than your ways and My thoughts higher than your thoughts.”  
Isaiah 55:8-9

If indeed God’s thoughts are far above and beyond anything we can imagine and our ways are nothing like His, then how on earth can we find Him? Paul also reminds us that by nature we are not interested in finding Him, but are well content to create God in our own image and worship that instead.



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Can an Ethiopian change the color of his skin? Can a leopard take away its spots? Neither can you start doing good, for you have always done evil. Jeremiah 13:23

What about the nation that God most tried to teach His will? Israel, though blessed with knowledge of God above all other nations, constantly rejected Him and descended into wickedness. We see a heart-broken Father pour out His grief at how they treated Him here:

“But you [Israel] thought your fame and beauty were your own. So you gave yourself as a prostitute to every man who came along. Your beauty was theirs for the asking. You used the lovely things I gave you to make shrines for idols, where you played the prostitute. Unbelievable! How could such a thing ever happen?

“You took the very jewels and gold and silver ornaments I had given you and made statues of men and worshiped them. This is adultery against Me! You used the beautifully embroidered clothes I gave you to dress your idols. Then you used My special oil and My incense to worship them. Imagine it! You set before them as a sacrifice the choice flour, olive oil, and honey I had given you, says the Sovereign LORD.

“Then you took your sons and daughters—the children you had borne to Me—and sacrificed them to your gods. Was your prostitution not enough? Must you also slaughter My children by sacrificing them to idols? In all your years of adultery and detestable sin, you have not once remembered the days long ago when you lay naked in a field, kicking about in your own blood.

“What sorrow awaits you, says the Sovereign LORD. In addition to all your other wickedness, you built a pagan shrine and put altars to idols in every town square. On every street corner you defiled your beauty, offering your body to every passerby in an endless stream of prostitution.” Ezekiel 16:15-25

Is God’s end time church better? Having been given the example of the life of Christ, can we not see some level of improvement?

“When the Son of Man returns, it will be like it was in Noah’s day. In those days before the flood, the people were enjoying banquets and parties and weddings right up to the time Noah entered his boat. People didn’t realize what was going to happen until the flood came and swept them all away. That is the way it will be when the Son of Man comes.” Matthew 24:37-39

Many come to the Bible claiming nonchalantly that they take the Bible as it reads. But how is this possible when none of us think like God nor comprehend anything about Him? **Any claim of speaking on behalf of God without an acknowledgement of our utter depravity can only lead to creating God in our image and worshipping the idol of our imagination.** We will always be biased in our assessment because at heart we hate God; we are aligned with Satan in our hatred against Him. Until we accept this verdict, we will never have any chance of knowing Him. True remedy only comes with true diagnosis.

This assessment of human nature feels extremely harsh. One of the many defensive reactions to this is the idea that once we accept Christ, somehow all of our hostility disappears. It is easy to forget His words:

“Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in Me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. **For apart from Me you can do nothing.**” John 15:5

The surrender of self is a daily battle, not a once-off event. Every day we must encounter our evil natures and give ourselves to Christ for help. We are not safe for an hour without our sense of continual dependence upon Christ for strength.

**I am crucified with Christ:** nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. Galatians 2:20 (KJV)

I affirm, by the boasting in you which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, **I die daily.** 1 Corinthians 15:31 (NKJV)

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There is not one good thought that enters our minds unless it is given us by God through Christ.

That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world. John 1:9 (NKJV)

Every time we think and do good it can only be because we have allowed the Spirit of God to come into our hearts. There never is a time in this life that we can or will do good except it be given us from above.

Whatever is good and perfect comes down to us from God our Father, who created all the lights in the heavens. He never changes or casts a shifting shadow. James 1:17

Wherever you see good in the world, it is because God is there. Do you feel far away from God; do you yearn for His presence, His love? This can only be because He yearns to bless you and draw you by His love. Neither you nor I have any inclination towards our Father in heaven. Any desire for Him comes from God through Christ. Christ is the source of every right impulse, every right desire.

Because these desires come to us silently, within us, through the agency of the Spirit of God, men are tempted to think that they can be good. Though this is a complete delusion, it comes so naturally to us because we want to take pride in ourselves. Remember our issue with lacking value? We think we are good enough to be either a source of authority ourselves, or good enough to choose another human as our source of authority, and thus everyday a new religion is born.

This is the reason why there are so many conflicting teachings claiming to come from the Bible. When men perform righteous deeds, they are in danger of thinking themselves capable of reading the Bible and understanding it. Only by the aid of the Holy Spirit can we comprehend the Scriptures.

That is what the Scriptures mean when they say, "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has imagined what God has prepared for those who love Him." **But it was to us that God revealed these things by His Spirit. For His Spirit searches out**

**everything and shows us God's deep secrets.** No one can know a person's thoughts except that person's own spirit, and no one can know God's thoughts except God's own Spirit. And we have received God's Spirit (not the world's spirit), so we can know the wonderful things God has freely given us.

When we tell you these things, we do not use words that come from human wisdom. Instead, we speak words given to us by the Spirit, using the Spirit's words to explain spiritual truths. **But people who aren't spiritual can't receive these truths from God's Spirit. It all sounds foolish to them and they can't understand it, for only those who are spiritual can understand what the Spirit means.**

1 Corinthians 2:9-14

When we come to the Bible, we must confess that we do not understand it because we do not know God's thoughts or ways. We must plead for help; we must plead for the Spirit of God to guide us and help us. We must become subject to the Scriptures as a little child; not making the Scriptures subject to us, dividing it according to our own will and making it say what we want it to say.

We must not only confess this in the beginning of our Christian walk, but all the way through it. No university or college should have the audacity to pronounce a Bible scholar worthy of a theological degree. How can they know? Can they read the hearts of men? Can they know whether a man has entered the work of scholarship for his own glory or for God's? This is impossible. The more confident a man is in his learning, the more evidence we have that he knows nothing at all.

Anyone who claims to know all the answers doesn't really know very much. 1 Corinthians 8:2

If I had the gift of prophecy, and if I understood all of God's secret plans and possessed all knowledge, and if I had such faith that I could move mountains, but didn't love others, I would be nothing. If I gave everything I have to the poor and even sacrificed my body, I could boast about it; but if I didn't love others, I would have gained nothing. 1 Corinthians 13:2-3

The repeated sexual offenses of Catholic and Protestant clergy against women and children should be evidence enough that holding degrees or wearing sacerdotal dress mean nothing towards knowing the truth.

Should we not hold it as a self-evident truth that any man who blunts his tender conscience to rape a woman or child has lost much of his sensibility for the true tenderness of our heavenly Father?

In light of our previous chapters regarding marriage and family, we raise this vital point: how can the unrepentant man or woman who destroys their marriage vow in favour of more favourable fields truly comprehend the sacredness God places upon relationships or truly appreciate His character? Could this be one of the many reasons God hates divorce?

But back to humanity's core problem. As none are good, it is only in the position of the tax collector that we can receive the truth:

"Two men went to the Temple to pray. One was a Pharisee, and the other was a despised tax collector.

"The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed this prayer: 'I thank You, God, that I am not a sinner like everyone else. For I don't cheat, I don't sin, and I don't commit adultery. I'm certainly not like that tax collector! I fast twice a week, and I give You a tenth of my income.'

"But the tax collector stood at a distance and dared not even lift his eyes to heaven as he prayed. Instead, he beat his chest in sorrow, saying, 'O God, be merciful to me, for I am a sinner.'" Luke 18:10-13

And we can learn from this dear child of God:

When the accusers heard this, they slipped away one by one, beginning with the oldest, until only Jesus was left in the middle of the crowd with the woman. Then Jesus stood up again and said to the woman, "Where are your accusers? Didn't even one of them

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condemn you?" "No, Lord," she said. And Jesus said, "Neither do I. Go and sin no more." John 8:9-11

The forgiven, grateful sinner is the only one who can receive knowledge of God. As his knowledge grows, his repentance deepens and his feelings of utter dependence upon God grow stronger. Self-confidence fades away, emptying the soul of its stinking self to make way for the Spirit of God to teach and instruct.

From this position we can humbly ask the burning question:

"When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with Me where I am. And you know the way to where I am going." **"No, we don't know, Lord," Thomas said. "We have no idea where You are going, so how can we know the way?"**  
John 14:3-5

Fascinating that for Thomas the answer was right before his face, and still he could not see it. Do we dare claim to be better than Thomas?

## CHAPTER 5

# THE WAY THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE

My teenage years blossomed against the backdrop of the digital revolution of the Eighties when “video killed the radio star.” I grew up looking at screens filled with Space Invaders, Pacman, and Asteroids, unaware I was being dragged into the vortex of popular culture. One song stood out in my mind at this time which posed a vital question: “What is love anyway, does anybody love anybody anyway?” The song begins with a portrayal of a beautiful type of love that is not troubled by doubts.

I love you whether or not you love me  
I love you even if you think that I don't  
Sometimes I find you doubt my love for you, but I don't mind  
Why should I mind, why should I mind

But in the chorus the question is raised:

What is Love anyway, does anybody love anybody anyway  
What is Love anyway, does anybody love anybody anyway

In the search for perfect love the songwriter concludes that a perfect love without fear can't be found, and therefore we should just accept that we will always doubt each other.

Can anybody love anyone so much that they will never fear  
Never worry never be sad  
The answer is they cannot love this much, nobody can  
This is why I don't mind you doubting

It ultimately tells the listener that you should be prepared for people who love you to finally decide to leave.

And maybe love is letting people be just what they want to be  
The door always must be left unlocked  
To love when circumstance may lead someone away from you  
And not to spend the time just doubting

What is love anyway? The question remained deep in my heart, even if I did not perceive it. Less than 12 months after this song was released, I experienced my first love. Less than 8 months later it ended, and I descended from the romantic peak of teen love to the pit of sorrow and emptiness, feeling very much alone and wondering again what love is. During this time another song came out which I listened to often.

I gotta take a little time, a little time to think things over  
I better read between the lines, in case I need it when I'm older  
Now this mountain I must climb, feels like the world upon my shoulders  
Through the clouds I see love shine, it keeps me warm as life grows colder  
In my life there's been heartache and pain  
I don't know if I can face it again  
Can't stop now, I've travelled so far, to change this lonely life

I want to know what love is, I want you to show me  
I want to feel what love is, I know you can show me

Even though the songwriter spoke of the love of this world, there was a deeper heart cry in his words which I caught in my soul. It was a cry to my Creator – I want to know what love is, I want you to show me.



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A few months later, feeling despondent as my life choices began to manifest their consequences, I cried out to God. The guilt of my selfishness surrounded by a world of darkness, suffering and pain, caused me to earnestly seek for a better path.

I knelt in my room with a heavy heart. I prayed to Jesus to free me from my hypocrisy, moodiness, and competitiveness at the expense of friendship and family.

As I knelt by my bed, the scene of the Cross appeared before me. I could see Jesus, suffering in agony upon the Cross, and my heart went out to Him. I felt ashamed that my sins were part of the reason He was hanging there. As I beheld Jesus, I had this sense that He did not condemn me for my sins; I was convinced that my desire to be forgiven was granted me.

Joy sprang up in my heart and burst forth in a flood of tears. I was forgiven! I was free! Jesus became my Saviour and my heart became His throne from that day forward. I wanted to know what love was and He showed me. I was freely forgiven despite the hurt I had caused my Saviour. This was love – true love. Although I had doubted His love for me which hurt Him terribly, still He forgave me.

Now a new song filled my heart:

There is a redeemer  
Jesus, God's own Son  
Precious Lamb of God, Messiah  
Holy One

Thank you oh my Father  
For giving us your Son  
And leaving your Spirit  
'Til the work on earth is done.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Sung by Keith Green, *There is a Redeemer*. (1982)

Jesus lighted my whole life. My tastes and desires completely changed. The full assurance of forgiveness motivated me to forsake all for Him. I gave up things not to appease God, but because I didn't want to hurt my Saviour. The thought of hurting Him, hurt me. I found it harder and harder to do the things I used to do.

From the position of "have mercy on me a sinner" the Bible became everything to me. The spirit in the music I listened to previously clashed with the Spirit of Jesus coming to me through the Scriptures. I could feel the tension in me – the war between my flesh and God's Spirit. So many times I came on my knees to Jesus and asked Him to deliver me from carnal desires and selfishness, and He heard my prayers and delivered me over and over again.

On one occasion, I was wrestling between my desire to listen to some 'top 40' rock music and read my Bible. I couldn't shake this tune running around in my head followed by this pressure to turn on the music. I knelt down and prayed earnestly for freedom from this pressure. It went on for over an hour. The question passed through my mind: *why are you making such a big deal over such a trivial issue as a song!*

But it wasn't trivial, for music is a gateway for the inspiration behind the music to take greater control of your thought process and lead you into sin. Finally in desperation, I cried to Jesus to deliver me. I felt instant strength come to my willpower and I immediately stood, took the music record and destroyed it.

Through these challenges and victories, my love for Jesus and my confidence in Him increased. Oh, how true and precious became the words of this song to me:

I would love to tell you what I think of Jesus,  
Since I found in Him a friend so strong and true;  
I would tell you how He changed my life completely,  
He did something that no other friend could do.

No one ever cared for me like Jesus,  
There's no other friend so kind as He;

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No one else could take the sin and darkness from me,  
O how much He cared for me.

Through the tests and trials of life, the bond of love between Jesus and me strengthened. In my most humiliating defeats, my Saviour never left me; in my greatest victories, He was and is the inspiration.

Why do I take the time to share my love for Jesus and the lyrics of songs that have touched me? What relevance does this have to the search for my Father? It is Christ alone that found me in my sins; Christ alone that lifted my burdens; Christ alone that lighted my path and lit up my world. He proved truth to me, not simply in theory but in reality, that He is the light of the world. He is the light that lighted me when I came into the world. He is the one that gave to me a measure of faith that I might take up the forgiveness offered me and walk with Him.

I had attended church all my life. I was in church before I could walk. I was raised in a Christian home and went to a Christian school, and none of this ignited light into my soul until Jesus came to me. These things provided wood for the kindling of that flame that rose up in me, but none of this could light the fire.

Over a period of sixteen years, my love for Christ was developed, my hope secured. He won my confidence; He stuck closer to me than the dearest brother and friend. And for what purpose did He do this? That He might bring me to His Father, my beloved Father, that I might find my rest in Him and repose in His arms with His Son without one ounce of anxiety or trepidation.

Yet in order to take this journey, I had to accept this counsel:

And you will seek Me and find *Me*, when you search for Me with all your heart. Jeremiah 29:13 (NKJV)

Why would it take *all* of my heart? Simply because none of my thoughts were aligned with His; because, unknowingly to me, my heart was naturally at war with Him; because I had no inclination to seek after Him. All of this had to be given to me, a heart transplant that put enmity

between me and the serpent of old called the devil and Satan. Christ is the way, the truth and the life *of the Father*.

It is absolutely impossible to know God outside of the revelation of Jesus Christ. Christ Himself makes this abundantly clear:

No one has seen God at any time. **The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.** John 1:18 (NKJV)

**I have revealed You to the ones You gave Me from this world.** They were always Yours. You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. John 17:6

My Father has entrusted everything to Me. No one truly knows the Son except the Father, and **no one truly knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal Him.** Matthew 11:27

Here we discover the most fundamental principle of all in our search for the Father. Jesus, only Jesus, reveals the Father in His completeness. There is no other name under heaven where we can see the brightness of the Father's glory or character. Without this principle firmly applied, there is no hope of knowing the Father.

It took sixteen years before I could truly begin to hear the voice of my Father in a way I could not have imagined beforehand. It was not how I expected, which is perfectly understandable as my ways are not like His.

From a heartsick teenager who found new life, to the joy and intimacy of marriage, and then to the birth of my sons, Jesus has been able to draw me more and more to His Father. As I grew in my relationships with others in God, I increasingly saw and appreciated His paternal love. More facets of the character of His Fatherhood would shine through in my experience and perception of the world.

Always it was Jesus that was my guide and filter, comforter and companion. As I meditated on the words the Father spoke at His Son's baptism, I saw in Jesus my own sonship as an extension of His. My

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Saviour invited me into that place. He freely shared with me the joy, blessing, and rest of being a son of God.

From this place of repose, we return to my difficulty between my perceptions of justice and our Father's boundless mercy. How does our Father deal with evil while at the same time showing mercy and grace to the wayward sinner?

## CHAPTER 6

# WHY HAVE YOU ABANDONED ME

The question of the Father's administration of justice and mercy is fundamentally a question of what is the character of the Father? There is no greater question to be asked than this for the salvation of souls is directly linked to this question. As Jesus expressed it:

And this is the way to have eternal life—to **know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, the One You sent to earth.** John 17:3

The final victory of God's people over Satan and his forces within human history is directly connected to this question:

Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred *and* forty-four thousand, **having His Father's name written on their foreheads.** Revelation 14:1 (NKJV)

What then does the Bible define as the Father's name? It is who He is. It is what He is like. And it is what the Son of God came down from heaven to show us.

**"I have revealed You to the ones You gave Me from this world.** They were always Yours. You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word." John 17:6

Jesus tells us that He revealed His Father to His disciples. Notice another translation which makes a direct connection to Revelation 14:1.

**“I have manifested Your name** to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word.” John 17:6 (NKJV)

We dare not miss the significance of this point. The name of the Father was manifested by Jesus during His mission here to this world 2000 years ago. A few verses earlier, Jesus tells us that this was the very purpose of His work on earth.

I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. John 17:4 (NKJV)

What does Jesus mean that He glorified His Father on earth? Jesus expanded this thought in verse 6 of the same chapter. He was stating that He revealed all of the Father’s *character* to the disciples. This is why He could say to Philip:

Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.” Jesus replied, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and yet you still don’t know who I am? **Anyone who has seen Me has seen the Father!** So why are you asking Me to show Him to you?” John 14:8-9

What joy to know that we can know exactly what the Father is like! Jesus revealed Him when He came to this earth. This is the great light that came into the world and illuminated the darkness.

In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.... That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. John 1:4-5, 9-11 (NKJV)

The character which Jesus revealed was offensive to the human race. The love, mercy, and kindness He displayed exposed the narrow,

condemning nature of men. We are told the world did not know Jesus. This is because they did not want to know Him. And not knowing Jesus meant the world did not know the Father. This is the great darkness that enveloped the whole world.

For I have come to you in My Father's name, and you have rejected Me. Yet if others come in their own name, you gladly welcome them. John 5:43

Anyone who denies the Son doesn't have the Father, either. But anyone who acknowledges the Son has the Father also. 1 John 2:23

In rejecting Jesus the most favoured nation on earth, who had the greatest opportunity to know God, rejected the Father also.

Jesus said, "At My Father's direction I have done many good works. For which one are you going to stone Me?" They replied, "We're stoning you not for any good work, but for blasphemy! You, a mere man, claim to be God." John 10:32-33

The Jewish leaders' conception of God was different from how Jesus was living among them. Rather than humbly confess their sinfulness that their conception of God was wrong, they rejected Jesus as a false teacher worthy of death.

When they saw Him, the leading priests and Temple guards began shouting, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" "Take Him yourselves and crucify Him," Pilate said. "I find Him not guilty." The Jewish leaders replied, "By our law He ought to die because He called Himself the Son of God." John 19:6-7

The Jewish nation wanted Jesus dead. While Pilate testified of Jesus' innocence, he was still willing to allow Jesus to die to save his position. The life of Jesus was not allowed to penetrate his darkened mind. The Jewish church and the Roman world joined together to reject Jesus – and thus reject the Father's character in the person of His Son.

In the death of Christ upon the Cross, the face of man and the face of God are revealed. The pure light of God's character manifested in Christ



was silenced by unconverted human nature. Rather than bow in humble repentance, mankind would rather murder the light that came into the world. The statement of Jesus upon the Cross reveals the sorrow of a Father's heart.

At about three o'clock, Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" which means "My God, My God, why have You abandoned Me?" Matthew 27:46

Most people read these words as Jesus simply expressing feeling abandoned by God. But Jesus told us that He never speaks His own words but only the words His Father gives to Him.

"Don't you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me? **The words I speak are not My own, but My Father who lives in Me does His work through Me.**" John 14:10

Those who listened to Jesus did not take from His words that He was calling out to God:

Some of the bystanders misunderstood and thought He was calling for the prophet Elijah. Matthew 27:47

Added to this is the thought of what the term God can include in its meaning:

Thou shalt not revile the **gods**, nor curse the **ruler of thy people**. Exodus 22:28 (KJV)

The name gods [El or Eli] can refer to the leaders of the people. And Jesus told the people:

..."Is it not written in your law, I said, 'Ye are gods?' If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken..." John 10:34-35 (KJV)

So, was Jesus crying out to His Father in terrified despair, feeling abandoned? Or was Jesus speaking on behalf of His Father, calling to the rulers of the people, asking them why they had forsaken Him and His Father?

Knowing that God's ways are not ours, and that humanity is naturally hostile to God, does our understanding of the words of Christ reveal the Father's character or our own? Welcome to the Mirror Principle. This event reveals the core problem we all have in reading the Bible. Let's take a deeper look at this.

In speaking of the time when the Jewish leaders would hang Jesus on the Cross, Jesus said:

...“When you have lifted up the Son of Man on the cross, then you will understand that I AM He. **I do nothing on My own but say only what the Father taught Me.**” John 8:28

Did the Father teach His Son to say that He would abandon Him on the Cross? Did the Father tell His Son to cry out to Him in agony and to say that He felt abandoned by His Father? In the very next verse Jesus then says:

“And the One who sent Me is with Me—He has not deserted Me. For I always do what pleases Him.” John 8:29

Jesus only ever did what pleased His Father, therefore the Father was always with Him. The Father never deserted Him. If Jesus committed Himself to the idea that God had abandoned Him, then how could He give Himself into His Father's hands if He believed the Father was not there?

And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit:” and having said thus, he gave up the ghost. Luke 23:46 (KJV)

No doubt Satan pressed Jesus with the thought that His Father had left Him to die. In addition, what could be the meaning of the darkness around him from midday till 3pm?

At noon, darkness fell across the whole land until three o'clock. Matthew 27:45

The Bible tells us God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. (1 John 1:5). What did Jesus tell those who came to capture Him in the garden?

“Why didn’t you arrest Me in the Temple? I was there every day. But this is your moment, **the time when the power of darkness reigns.**” Luke 22:53

Jesus attributes the darkness to the leaders of Israel and their desire to destroy Jesus. Therefore the darkness around Jesus was a visible manifestation of the hatred and rejection of Jesus by the chosen people. Such was predicted 700 years earlier by the prophet Isaiah:

He was despised and rejected—a man of sorrows, acquainted with deepest grief. **We turned our backs on Him and looked the other way.** He was despised, and we did not care. Isaiah 53:3

And confirmed by Caiaphas, the High Priest:

Caiaphas, who was high priest at that time, said, “You don’t know what you’re talking about! You don’t realize that it’s better for you that one man should die for the people than for the whole nation to be destroyed.” John 11:49-50

Jesus felt rejected by the leaders of Israel; His siblings didn’t understand His mission; one of His disciples even betrayed Him; and the night before He died His disciples were arguing about who is the greatest among them, showing that they had not embraced the core principles of His message.

Then they began to argue among themselves about who would be the greatest among them. Luke 22:24

As Jesus hung upon the Cross, looking down into the faces of those who followed Him, He saw the doubts rising in their hearts. How could He be the Messiah if He dies, they wondered? (Luke 24:19-21).

Was the darkness around Jesus the wrath of an angry God, taking vengeance on a substitute? Or was it the manifestation of the wrath of the human race, forsaking the one God had sent to them?

The answer to this question is pivotal to finding the Father. As we read the history of God’s dealings with men, we ask the question, who is forsaking who?

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Finally, they cried out to the LORD for help, saying, “We have sinned against You because **we have abandoned You as our God and have served the images of Baal.**”... “**Yet you have abandoned Me and served other gods.** So I will not rescue you anymore.”  
Judges 10:10,13

“Ever since I brought them from Egypt **they have continually abandoned Me and followed other gods.** And now they are giving you [Samuel] the same treatment.” 1 Samuel 8:8

“For My people have abandoned Me and offered sacrifices to pagan gods...” 2 Kings 22:17

Oh, what a sinful nation they are—loaded down with a burden of guilt. They are evil people, corrupt children **who have rejected the LORD. They have despised the Holy One of Israel and turned their backs on Him.** Isaiah 1:4

Throughout God’s dealing with the chosen people, they continually rejected Him. When the consequences of doing so came, they accused God of abandoning them because that is what humanity does: blame God for the problems of their own making. This is what we do when we read this verse with Jesus crying out, “why have you forsaken me?” We see that God is forsaking Jesus because this is what *we think* of His character. We see God doing to Jesus what *we think* He should do to sinners. We can’t naturally see God’s sorrow in calling out to the leaders of Israel asking why they have forsaken Him. Why can’t we see this? Because our thoughts are not His and we don’t know what He is really like.

But what about the prophecy in Psalms 22? Doesn’t this predict that God would forsake Jesus on the Cross, and isn’t this the psalm Jesus is quoting?

A Psalm of David. My God, my God, why have You abandoned me? Why are You so far away when I groan for help? Every day I call to You, my God, but You do not answer. Every night You hear my voice, but I find no relief. Yet You are holy, enthroned on the

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praises of Israel. Our ancestors trusted in You, and You rescued them. Psalm 22:1-4

This Psalm speaks of David's experience in overcoming his fears that God has abandoned him. As you read through the chapter, you can read that he conquers his doubt and chooses to believe God is with him.

Praise the LORD, all you who fear Him! Honor Him, all you descendants of Jacob! Show Him reverence, all you descendants of Israel! For He has not ignored or belittled the suffering of the needy. He has not turned His back on them, but has listened to their cries for help. Psalm 22:23-24

Jesus draws on the words of the Psalm both to express His struggle with fear while at the same time expressing His Father's cry to the people of Israel. It is pure inspiration from Christ because, of course, He speaks His Father's words. These words express both the Saviour's struggle as well as the Father's anguish. As the only mediator between God and man, in this decisive moment, He reflects both God and man.

These words of Christ are a defining expression of the Mirror Principle. We can only understand them according to our understanding of both God and ourselves.

If we accept the words of Jesus that He fully revealed the Father's character while on earth, then we are forced to look again into the Scripture to determine whether we have understood them correctly in relation to Jesus. If we accept that Jesus is truly the light of the world and that we are in complete darkness in our carnal nature, then we can only discover who God is by looking to the life of Jesus while He ministered on earth. We must accept that what Jesus spoke to the Jewish leaders might apply to Christian leaders:

**“Why can't you understand what I am saying? It's because you can't even hear Me! For you are the children of your father the devil, and you love to do the evil things he does. He was a murderer from the beginning. He has always hated the truth,**

## WHY HAVE YOU ABANDONED ME

because there is no truth in him. When he lies, it is consistent with his character; for he is a liar and the father of lies." John 8:43-44

Are we sure that we understand the words Jesus speaks? Is it possible that we are misinterpreting many of the things Jesus says through the wrong filter of our evil natures? Do we unwittingly turn the words of Jesus against His Father, making Him out to be an unrelenting punisher towards those who displease Him?

Are we sure we truly understand the significance of Jesus being the light of the world as a revelation of His Father's character? As Philip asked, do we also ask: Show us the Father? Do we truly comprehend the reply of Jesus and its significance for how we read the Bible?

"...Anyone who has seen Me has seen the Father! So why are you asking Me to show Him to you?" John 14:9

## CHAPTER 7

# WITH UNVEILED FACE

By looking into the face of Jesus, we are looking at a perfect image or reflection of the Father. Paul describes this as looking into a mirror.

But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord. 2 Corinthians 3:18 (NKJV)

The glory we see in the face of the Lord Jesus is the glory of the Father.

The Son radiates God's own glory and expresses the very character of God... Hebrews 1:3

The dimensions of this mirror are defined by Christ's earthly mission.

**"I brought glory to You here on earth** by completing the work You gave Me to do." John 17:4

Nothing more can be added to this perfect revelation of God. The books of Matthew and John in the New Testament are the beginning and ending of this mirror, with Mark and Luke filling in the rest of this divine revelation of the Father's character. It is the light that illumines all of the rest of Scripture and thus the entire world. But this light tends to be rejected by humanity. Why? There is an Old Testament story that helps us understand.

After Moses has been upon the mountain for 40 days, he was imbued with the Spirit of God to such an extent that his face shone. The glory was too bright for the people. This symbolised the unwillingness of the people to accept a deeper revelation of God's character. Rather than change their perception, they asked Moses to cover up his face. Rather than open the mind to God's true gentleness and mercy, they bolted fast the door of their minds lest the contrast to themselves should be exposed.

To the Israelites at the foot of the mountain, the glory of the LORD appeared at the summit like a consuming fire. Exodus 24:17

With this veil over their face, the glory of God appeared to the Israelites like consuming fire. In their minds, God was a destroyer. This was a delusional projection of themselves onto deity, for they themselves were the destroyers who consistently mistrusted God and eventually died in the wilderness.

Paul speaks of coming to the study of God with Christ having removed this veil, in contrast to those who continue to read the Old Testament with the veil on – meaning they aren't seeing it through the revelation of the life of Christ.

But their minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament, because the *veil* is taken away in Christ. 2 Corinthians 3:14 (NKJV)

God had revealed to Moses a better picture of Himself, yet looking into the face of Moses was not the same as looking into the face of Christ.

We are not like Moses, who put a veil over his face so the people of Israel would not see the glory, even though it was destined to fade away. 2 Corinthians 3:13

The picture of God on the face of Moses faded away. This was a symbol of the refusal of Israel to allow the light to enter their darkened minds. It also was a symbol of the imperfect reflection Moses provided of the character of God. This is not to condemn Moses, for he was the meekest man who lived on the earth up till the time of Christ. (Num 12:3 KJV).



But as no man had seen God at any time, nor knew God as He really was, no man could fully reveal God's character. Only the Son of God knew the Father as He really is. Not even the angels knew the complete truth about God's character until Jesus revealed it on this earth.

...and by Him **to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven**, having made peace through the blood of His cross. Colossians 1:20 (NKJV)

A large number of the angels followed Satan in his rebellion against God because they became convinced that God was self-serving and dictatorial, and His system of governance unwise and unfair. Was that the truth of His character and of His ways? There were many unanswered questions that could not be reconciled for those remaining in heaven until Christ came to this earth, revealed the Father's character in contrast to men, and died upon the Cross, forgiving those killing Him.

Moses brought down the commandments of God from Mt Sinai. These commandments were a written description of the character of God. The glory on the face of Moses revealed a partial understanding of what was written. But in the face of Jesus was the law of His Father fully understood, written not with pen or ink, but written in His heart.

Prophesying of Christ, the Psalmist wrote:

"I delight to do Your will, O my God, and Your law *is* within my heart." Psalm 40:8 (NKJV)

Moses gave to us the written description of God's character in the law, and Jesus revealed this law written in His heart. Christ lived the spirit of the law, manifesting the full will and character of His Father.

For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ. John 1:17 (NASB)

For the law was given through Moses, *but* grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has seen God at any time. The only

begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared *Him*. John 1:17-18 (NKJV)

It is vital to realise that the work of Jesus was not a contrast to what Moses gave through the commandments, but rather a fulfilment of them in living flesh.

“Don’t misunderstand why I have come. I did not come to abolish the law of Moses or the writings of the prophets. No, I came to accomplish their purpose.” Matthew 5:17

There is obviously a difference between simply writing about the character of God and reflecting it in the life. Paul draws on these principles in talking about how the Corinthians were a living letter revealing the ministry of Paul to them.

Are we beginning to praise ourselves again? Are we like others, who need to bring you letters of recommendation, or who ask you to write such letters on their behalf? Surely not! **The only letter of recommendation we need is you yourselves. Your lives are a letter written in our hearts;** everyone can read it and recognize our good work among you. **Clearly, you are a letter from Christ** showing the result of our ministry among you. This “letter” is written not with pen and ink, but with the Spirit of the living God. **It is carved not on tablets of stone, but on human hearts.** 2 Corinthians 3:1-3

The law that Moses received from God upon Mt Sinai was not the problem, but rather the problem was how the law was ministered and understood. Although the law Moses received from God was a law of life, without a perfect knowledge of that law in the heart of Moses or the other leaders meant it was often administered by them, and always understood by the people, as a law of death.

But if the ministry of death, written *and* engraved on stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance, which *glory* was passing away, how will the ministry of the Spirit not be more glorious? 2 Corinthians 3:7-8 (NKJV)

There was nothing wrong with what was written on the stones. It was a perfect letter of God's character. The fault was with the promises of the people to perform, in their own flawed wisdom, what was written (Heb 8:6), and this consequently affected how the law was administered and reacted to. But God was not caught off guard by this. The law was used by God to reveal man's broken condition. Paul says this work was still glorious.

**For if the ministry of condemnation had glory, the ministry of righteousness exceeds much more in glory. 2 Corinthians 3:9 (NKJV)**

The law entered for the purpose that the sin of the people might become more obvious. Then God could offer them more abounding grace. This was true in the time of Moses just as much as it is today.<sup>3</sup>

The point we are making is that the contrast Paul is drawing between the letter of the law and the person of Christ is not to show the law is bad and Christ is good, but rather that Christ completed the work which Moses had started in the giving of the law. The apostle John explained it this way:

Dear friends, I am not writing a new commandment for you; rather it is an old one you have had from the very beginning [from Moses]. This old commandment—to love one another—is the same message you heard before. Yet it is also new. Jesus lived the truth of this commandment, and you also are living it. For the darkness is disappearing, and the true light is already shining. 1 John 2:7-8

The glory in the face of Moses was a partial comprehension of the letter given to him. The glory in the face of Jesus is the complete picture of the glory of God written in the heart of man.

The summary of what we are saying is that the veil that covered the hearts of not only Israel but the whole world is removed in the character

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<sup>3</sup> For more on this see the book *Removing the Veil* by Daniel Bernhardt available at [maranathamedia.com](http://maranathamedia.com).

revealed in the life of Jesus on earth. Through Him “the veil is taken away”.

When we read the stories of the Old Testament, the veil is only taken away when we read them through the lens of the life of Christ. The glory of God is no longer perceived as a consuming fire but as a tender Father. We see in Jesus’ sufferings the pain God feels because of humanity’s constant rejection of Him as He tries to reach and pierce through the veil, particularly by His beloved Israel – the ancient church and the Christian church today.

It is this simple truth that changes how you understand Christ’s statement “Eli Eli lama sabachthani?” (Matt 27:46). If we reject the revelation of Jesus on earth as the full revelation of God’s character, then we will only see that Jesus fears His Father is abandoning Him because of sin. We can’t see the anguished cry of a Father’s heart to the leaders of Israel.

Building upon the truth that “if you have seen Me [Jesus], you have seen the Father,” the task before us is to only see the truth of God’s character manifested in the Old Testament when it is in harmony with the character of Christ manifested in the New Testament. This is the only way that the veil can be taken away in our reading of the Old Testament.

When I first contemplated this principle, I was immediately troubled by many apparent references to the actions of God in the Old Testament that involved the violent death of people. As none of these things are revealed in the life of Jesus, how was I supposed to read the Old Testament in a consistent way without rejecting anything it was saying or twisting its meaning to suit a fanciful idea.

On the other hand, there was an equally troubling thought regarding the work of Jesus as a messenger of God. If I could not show that God was just like Jesus in the New Testament, then we would have to conclude that Jesus actually did not speak the truth when He spoke to Philip. How could the claim be made to Philip, “if you have seen me, you have seen the Father,” when Philip never witnessed Christ kill any

person? If God did in fact kill people, then clearly the claim of Christ is false.

Another problem to consider was the implications of the words of Paul in 2 Corinthians 3:18. Whatever we behold in the mirror of the face of Jesus will be what the Spirit of God turns us into.

**...beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image** from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord. 2 Corinthians 3:18 (NKJV)

If I behold God as violently killing those who transgress His laws, is it possible that I could be transformed into the same image? How would it be possible for me to keep the commandments? If the commandments teach that I should not kill and yet I behold a God in my thinking that does kill, then how can I stop becoming what I am beholding? It would feel like trying to lose weight eating only chocolate cake 3 times a day!

Suddenly the path before me seemed extremely narrow. Was it even possible? I immediately went to my Father in prayer and asked Him to help me. I knew that from my present understanding, the task seemed impossible. I felt much like the children of Israel at the Red Sea. Behind me and bearing down upon me was the thought of God's destructive justice that would drown, burn alive, stone or kill with the sword. Before me seemed an impassable ocean of complexity in seeking to prove that Jesus meant exactly what He said to Philip.

Lord Jesus, as I look into your precious face, can I be sure I am looking at the face of Your Father? Is there a veil over my mind just like the Israelites of old? When I venture into the Old Testament, Your Father appears to sweep away millions in a moment in the flood. I tremble at the thought of many thousands of people burnt to death in a firestorm in Sodom and Gomorrah. Were their screams of agony the result of a burst of flame from Your very being? Is it remotely possible that You can exhibit the same traits of character as a fire breathing dragon? Surely You are not like this? But the Bible says that fire came down from heaven "from the Lord!" But Jesus never did this on earth! Lord save me or else I will perish!

I am reminded of those two texts we mentioned previously:

Anyone who claims to know all the answers doesn't really know very much. 1 Corinthians 8:2

"My thoughts are nothing like your thoughts," says the LORD.  
"And My ways are far beyond anything you could imagine."  
Isaiah 55:8

Lord Jesus, please take my hand and lead me. I am like a little child trying to understand the truth of Your Father. Through many years of walking with You, I have learned to trust You – I know You will hear my prayer. Please tell me what Your Father is really like. He must be like You because You are His Son! I choose to believe that You are the complete revelation of God and that what You revealed on earth is exactly what Your Father is like. To believe otherwise is to reject Your words, and the Bible says that only when we have the Son of God can we have the Father.

From this point forward we take the position that the Divine Mirror that shows us the character of God is the person of Jesus Christ as revealed on earth. We will use this light from Christ to walk back into the Old Testament to look for the unveiled face of the character of the Father. But first we need to examine another mirror the Bible mentions.

## CHAPTER 8

# BEHOLDING YOUR NATURAL FACE

In the early 1990's two scientists in Italy conducted some experiments with monkeys focusing on how they learn through observation. This led to an entire field of study called mirror neurons. Up to 20% of the neurons in the brain work by copying or mirroring the behaviour of people around them.

A mirror neuron is a neuron that fires both when an animal acts and when the animal observes the same action performed by another. Thus, the neuron “mirrors” the behavior of the other, as though the observer were itself acting. Such neurons have been directly observed in human and primate species, and in birds.<sup>4</sup>

Mirror neurons are a core part of human civilization because through them, human beings are enabled to empathize with others and quickly integrate into society. This is why when we observe another person going through trauma, we can often feel what they are feeling because our mirror neurons cause us to feel like we are passing through the same experience.

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<sup>4</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mirror\\_neuron](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mirror_neuron)

This raises many questions about the impact of movies or interactive computer games. Through mirror neurons we can feel as though we have passed through the same experience as the actors we are most drawn to.

When a person begins to unconsciously mirror the actions of another person, it can indicate interest in that person or gives evidence of a sense of trust. Mirror neurons also help us to develop perceptions of other people's behaviour and how we should interpret their behaviour.<sup>5</sup>

Is it possible there is a far greater meaning to Paul's words in 2 Corinthians 3:18, about the mirror, than we previously considered? To be changed into the likeness of Christ by beholding Him, aided by the Spirit, suggests that mirror neurons are activated. It is only by the Spirit that we can behold Christ, but once we do this consistently, we will be changed to be like Him.

Before the fall of the human race, human nature mirrored the actions and behaviour of God, His Son (2 Cor 3:18), and secondly, the loyal heavenly angels. When Adam and Eve sinned, they transferred their allegiance to Satan and his angels. Their mirror neurons began to mirror the characteristics of Satan and they began to interpret the actions of heavenly beings in the same way as Satan and his angels did. (John 8:44).

We are familiar with this process when we observe a person who joins a cult. The person changes in personality and begins to dress, eat and live like the isolated community around them in contrast to general society.

Another place where mirror neurons reveal themselves is through peer pressure. In order to be accepted, new students need to adopt characteristics of the "tribe" to fit in and be accepted.

With these thoughts in mind, we can return to the words of our Father in heaven and grasp at a deeper level their significance.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/neuroscience/mirror-neuron>



## MIRROR PRINCIPLE

“My thoughts are nothing like your thoughts,” says the LORD.  
“And My ways are far beyond anything you could imagine.”  
Isaiah 55:8

After several generations of human history, the mirroring principles we operated under became further and further removed from the principles of heaven. Each generation built upon the perversity of the generation before it, causing increasing degradation of the human race. Once perverted into this new course, it would be extremely difficult to change mankind back to the principles of heaven – though God tried throughout history: through the line of Shem, through Enoch, through prophets, and through His church. But constant refusal to heed God’s ways and instead follow our own, hardened humanity’s hearts over the centuries, and we became locked into our own way of thinking.

This is the reason why the life and teachings of Jesus were misunderstood and misinterpreted so much by those around Him. Let me illustrate this with a Bible story:

A Gentile woman who lived there came to Him, pleading, “Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! For my daughter is possessed by a demon that torments her severely.” But Jesus gave her no reply, not even a word. **Then His disciples urged Him to send her away. “Tell her to go away,” they said. “She is bothering us with all her begging.”** Matthew 15:22-23

The disciples interpreted the actions of Jesus to this woman according to how they were used to treating such a person. The silence of Jesus triggered the mirror neurons of the disciples and caused them to interpret His actions as if He were rejecting her in the same way that they were. They anticipated His behaviour according to their own.

His silence created the perfect environment for the racial intolerance of the disciples to manifest itself. It operated like a mirror in which they might begin to see themselves in their true light.

If Jesus had confronted the disciples at this point, the contrast between His behaviour and theirs would not be easily detected. Their sinful

practices would need to be brought out more; so Jesus walks a path that allows the disciples to more openly reveal their prejudice.

But He answered and said, "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Matthew 15:24 (NKJV)

Jesus knew the thinking of the disciples and how they would interpret His words, but He makes no effort at this point to stop the development of their natural traits of character. To His disciples, when Jesus said "Israel" they understood Him to mean circumcised Jews. The lady asking for help was not a Jew, therefore they interpreted His word as confirming their thought that she should be sent away as a useless Gentile unworthy of their notice.

But the disciples had previously witnessed how Jesus had interacted with the Samaritans when He met the woman at the well and when she brought others to listen to Him. After hearing Him the Samaritans had said:

... "Now we believe, not just because of what you told us, but because we have heard Him ourselves. **Now we know that He is indeed the Savior of the world.**" John 4:42

The conclusion of the Samaritans after hearing Jesus was that He was the Saviour of the world, not just of the Jews. Jesus told Nicodemus:

God sent His Son into the world not to judge the world, **but to save the world through Him.** John 3:17

The disciples might have discerned the wider field Jesus was entertaining by his interactions with foreigners, and how He treated them. But their training from childhood took over when they saw this Gentile woman pleading for her daughter. Their mirror neurons were still in harmony with Satan's attitudes towards others. Satan loved to think himself better and more privileged than others; he looks down on those he thinks beneath him.

Yet this woman was part of Israel – spiritual Israel. Paul says in Romans 2:29 that a Jew is not in the flesh but in the Spirit, and this woman was

responding to the Spirit of God. In the kingdom of heaven, the words of Jesus meant something different to what they meant to the disciples.

To help them, Jesus must allow them, without forceful confrontation, to see themselves in yet greater contrast to Himself.

But she came and worshiped Him, pleading again, "Lord, help me!" Jesus responded, "It isn't right to take food from the children and throw it to the dogs." She replied, "That's true, Lord, but even dogs are allowed to eat the scraps that fall beneath their masters' table." Matthew 15:25-27

Jesus knows the disciples consider this woman a dog. This woman also considered herself to be a dog by her confession. Maybe she had become used to being treated that way by Jews, and maybe even by her own people also. But is there any human on this planet that God considers an animal rather than a human?

Jesus presents before them all their own thinking; He holds up a mirror to them so they might see themselves. Their private thoughts are revealed in what He speaks. But notice carefully that He didn't call her a dog. He simply states it is not right to take children's bread and give it to dogs. The woman might have answered, "I am your child and I am asking to receive bread from your hand," and Jesus would have helped her.

Even though the woman believes Jesus called her a dog, her faith in Him doesn't waiver. The disciples feel sure now that Jesus will tell her to leave, fulfilling their interpretation of His words that she is not worthy to be helped. Instead, they are shocked as He does the exact opposite:

"Dear woman," Jesus said to her, "your faith is great. Your request is granted." And her daughter was instantly healed. Matthew 15:28

This action directly, but gently, confronts the narrative the disciples imagined. Healing this woman's daughter broke their picture of Jesus. This is the process of how Christ teaches people through the Mirror Principle.

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1. He reflects their own thoughts back to them.
2. At the same time, He seeks to teach them something though their preconceived erroneous opinions.
3. If they miss His true meaning, then a greater manifestation of their evil character is revealed through their misunderstanding.
4. Christ says or does something that contradicts their world view.
5. They have a choice to make: accept a new understanding or remain in their sin.
6. He gives those who accept the truth His Spirit to draw them into changing the way they think.

Now the disciples had a choice to make. Either confess their racial intolerance or start to doubt that Jesus is the long awaited Messiah. This story reveals the process of how the gospel works.

Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more, Romans 5:20 (NKJV)

Jesus' words were a living demonstration of the law of God. But the disciples' mirror neurons interpreted His words according to their wrong understanding. When Jesus healed the woman's daughter, it caused their sin to abound or be revealed. They were convicted in their hearts and the Spirit of God offered to them grace to change. Yet the Bible does not record that this changed them at this point. It became a seed that would grow in them and manifest later. As the book of James expresses it, they saw themselves in this mirror but they immediately forgot what type of person they were to hide from the implications of what Jesus revealed to them.

As we read this story in the Bible, we enter into the same experience through *our* mirror neurons. We imagine ourselves in the story and we pass through the same process. If we possess racial intolerance, we will understand the words of Jesus like the disciples. When we get to the part where Jesus heals the woman's daughter, we are brought to a point of decision. We are faced with the same options as the disciples. Either

we feel a conviction to start to plead with God to change us, or we forget the story and repress our character flaw as a defence mechanism.

For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, **he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was.** But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues *in it*, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does. James 1:23-25 (NKJV)

When reading the stories of the Old Testament, our mirror neurons interpret the stories according to the culture we were raised in. When we read about God's anger, we typically interpret these words according to our own anger. When we see evil people destroyed, we interpret the destruction as God executing justice just like we would do in the same situation and according to the culture and history we live in.

To the faithful You show Yourself faithful; to those with integrity You show integrity. To the pure You show Yourself pure, but to the wicked You show Yourself hostile. Psalm 18:25-26

The way we view God depends very much on us. A faithful person sees God's faithfulness, a pure person sees God's purity, but a wicked person sees God as blunt, violent, and destructive.

Another reason we see God this way is because we wish to avoid accepting how evil we are in contrast to how holy He is. If we understand the Bible as presenting God as being like us, then there is less that needs to change in our lives and we go our own way feeling reasonably content.

But like the disciples watching Jesus grant the request of the foreign woman, we are offered moments in reading the Bible where our Father calls us gently to consider a different way from what we know. But once you start to read the Bible this way, you have to give up many things you once believed. Most Christians will not do this because it is too humiliating to have to relearn everything they have been taught.

This is why so many people read the Old Testament stories with the desire to prove that God condemns and kills sinners. This allows them to continue to condemn others and wish for their destruction. If they started to entertain the idea that God was not like this, it would be such a shock and cause such a change of mind about how they understood God that it would be like an earthquake.

So which mirror will you look into to understand the character of God? Will you read the Old Testament directly without the earthly life of Jesus to mediate for you, and see the reflection of your own face when you read about God? Will you continue to imagine that He is just like you?

You sit *and* speak against your brother; you slander your own mother's son. These *things* you have done, and I kept silent; **you thought that I was altogether like you;** *but* I will rebuke you, and set *them* in order before your eyes. Psalm 50:20-21 (NKJV)

Though we may have totally misunderstood God, thankfully He will rebuke us just like Jesus did to the disciples. He didn't yell at them like we would. He didn't expose them like we would. He just showed them quietly by telling the woman that He had healed her daughter. This completely rebuked their thoughts. He did this gently. This is how our Saviour works:

Moreover the law **entered**, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: Romans 5:20 (KJV)

The Greek word for *entered* in this verse means to enter privately or stealthily. Our Saviour does not seek to humiliate or embarrass us, rather He gives His Spirit to convict us in our conscience. Every violent story in the Bible gives us the opportunity to be convicted of our violent, evil natures and to look to Jesus for the only way to the Father.

We will now start to look at some stories of the Old Testament in the light of the Gospel Mirror. We will see how we are tempted to look at it through our natural mirror neuron understanding of things, but

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hopefully you will discover a new and living way to see the face of our Father.

If you don't wish to be gently humbled or rebuked in this process, then you might be inclined to stop here. I pray that you won't. I pray you have come to a time in your life where you are tired of falling into the same secret sins, the same frustration and anger of the past, and you truly want a better way to live. Will you join us?

## CHAPTER 9

# THE FLOOD

The LORD observed the extent of human wickedness on the earth, and He saw that everything they thought or imagined was consistently and totally evil. So the LORD was sorry He had ever made them and put them on the earth. It broke His heart.

And the LORD said, “I will wipe this human race I have created from the face of the earth. Yes, and I will destroy every living thing—all the people, the large animals, the small animals that scurry along the ground, and even the birds of the sky. I am sorry I ever made them.” Genesis 6:5-7

The story of Noah’s flood is among the best known stories of the Bible. It is one of the most defining stories of how people see God and understand what He is like. Take for instance American comedian, writer, producer, political commentator, actor, and television host, Bill Maher, commenting on the story of the flood:

“The thing that’s really disturbing about Noah ... is that its immoral. It’s about a psychotic mass murderer who gets away with it and His name is God. Genesis says God was so angry with Himself for screwing up when He made mankind so flawed that He sent the flood to kill everyone: men, women, children, babies. What kind of tyrant punishes everyone just to get back at the few



He is mad at? ... Hey God you know you're kind of a [expletive] when you're in a movie with Russell Crowe and you're the one with anger issues.

You know conservatives are always going on about how Americans are losing their values and their morality... Well maybe it's because you worship a guy who drowns babies! And then God's genius plan after He kills everyone is to repopulate the world with a new crop of the same [type of people] who [upset] Him the first time, with predictable results. He kills millions more.

If we were a dog and God owned us, the cops would come and take us away. Why are we getting our morals out of this book? Why do people follow any of it?<sup>6</sup>

Clearly Bill Maher's disgust with the morality of the Noah story is one of the main reasons he rejects God and Christianity. The 2014 Noah movie that Maher referred to provides a mirror into a broad section of human thought. Noah is presented as a dark, distant character, obsessed with doing God's will of exterminating the human race. The Noah character is so convinced that God wants humanity to end that he almost kills his granddaughters to prevent the human race from surviving. He refused to allow anyone except his family on the ark. His wife and children are repulsed by his rigid yet dark obsession with punishment and judgment. The two leading characters, Noah and Tubal-Cain, both comment at different times on the silence of God and apparent refusal to talk to them.

The 1999 TV miniseries called *Noah's Ark* makes a complete mockery of Noah, presenting him as a complete fool. Noah is obsessed with preventing his sons and their wives from sexual relations. God tells Noah He is not sure if He will exterminate the human race completely, and then goes silent for a long time. When God finally returns to Noah, He tells him that He decided to kill them all, to which Noah does a

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<sup>6</sup> YouTube video – Bill Mahr Trashes the Bible Noah Story.

## THE FLOOD

funny dance that amuses God causing Him to change His mind and spare the human race.

Both movies stray widely from the Bible story, adding many elements that only punctuate the human tendency to twist what God says into a framework that damns Him. It reveals the reality that there is none who seek after God nor desire Him at heart.

Although Bill Maher also twists the story, he still raises some very valid points. How do you worship a person who drowns babies? Why do so many Christians not hear the human cry for reasonableness in this question about the babies? For most of humanity, we understand punishment should fit the crime. Isn't this how we understand justice? What crime did all those babies commit to be drowned to death? Isn't this a legitimate question to ask?

How has Christianity taught the world about this story? What seeds has it sown in how it presented God to the world? Listen to the prince of Protestant preachers, Spurgeon, speak to this story:

We commonly say that "there is no rule without an exception," and certainly the rule that there is no rule without an exception has an exception to itself, for the rules of God are without exception. The rule that God will punish the ungodly is without an exception; the rule that all who are out of Christ shall perish is a rule without an exception; and the rule that all who are in Christ shall be saved is also without an exception...

"Why, he is as foolish as old Noah!" Ribald jests were all that Noah could get from them; they despised, ridiculed, and contemned him utterly, but the flood came and took them all away, and there was an end to their jests, their sarcasms, their jeers. The flood had silenced them most effectually. So will it be with any of you who have ridiculed the gospel of Christ. You will find in the great and terrible day of the Lord that your laughter shall have no power over death and win you no reprieve from the agonies of hell. **There will be no room for infidelity in that tremendous day. God will be all too real to you when he tears you in pieces, and there is none to**

**deliver; and the judgment will be all too real when the thunder claps shall wake the dead, and the books shall be opened and read by the blaze of lightning, and the sentence shall be pronounced, "Depart, ye cursed!"** – Noah's Flood, Charles Spurgeon.

For many Christians, the story of Noah offers a comforting "I told you so" and "you'll see one day" for all the mockery or ridicule endured for believing in God. Is it possible to find it easier to remind "the wicked" of their future and how God will "tear them to pieces" rather than truly forgiving your enemies?

If there is one story in the Bible that needs a mediator, it's this one. If our thoughts are not God's thoughts and we harbour natural enmity towards Him, are we safe in reading this story without the character of Jesus to mediate for us? How we interpret this story will influence how we interpret the natural disasters that we see around us today, so we should be exceedingly careful.

Look! I am about to cover the earth with a flood that will destroy every living thing that breathes. Everything on earth will die.  
Genesis 6:17

Reading this Bible verse unprotected by the person of Christ only produces the predictable results read in the book of James.

For if you listen to the word and don't obey, it is like **glancing at your face in a mirror**. You see yourself, walk away, and forget what you look like. James 1:23-24

Listening to this Bible verse outside of the character of Christ reveals what *you* think about God – you are looking at a mirror. Whether it be that you think the wicked deserve it, or God is bad to do it, or the whole story is ridiculous; all are variations of how we think.

The book of Genesis is part of the Torah written by Moses. Thus, the flood story is part of the law. Reading the law outside of the character of Christ can only reveal our own thinking. As we discovered in the

## THE FLOOD

previous chapter, this is the very work the law intends to do first with us.

Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more,... Romans 5:20 (NKJV)

Reading the story of the flood is indeed the process of the law entering into our minds. It causes our offense to abound or become more obvious. It exposes our mirror neurons, guided and trained through many generations under the leadership of Satan. It shows us our sinfulness through how we perceive God's character as a mass killer.

When we are in the flesh, in our sinful mind, God can only be like us because we don't know God's thoughts. We can't imagine Him to be anything other than we are, just with more power.

Jesus Christ is the light of the world. He is the light of God. Only in Him can we begin to appreciate God's way of thinking and therefore what He is like. Only through Christ can we approach the law and allow it to do the work it was intended to do for us.

Let us look into both mirrors side by side. We shall look directly at the law without Christ and then we will look at Christ and His expression of the Father.

<b>Our Natural Face</b>	<b>The Glory of the Lord</b>
I will wipe this human race I have created from the face of the earth. Yes, and I will destroy every living thing—all the people, the large animals, the small animals that scurry along the ground, and even the birds of the sky. I am sorry I ever made them. Genesis 6:7	But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain

## MIRROR PRINCIPLE

Look! I am about to cover the earth with a flood that will destroy every living thing that breathes. Everything on earth will die. Genesis 6:17	on the just and on the unjust. Matthew 5:44-45 (NKJV)
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Looking directly upon the expression of the law, God destroys His enemies. In Christ, He blesses them. In the unmediated law, God protects the good and violently destroys the evil. In Christ, God sends good things to the good *and* the evil.

How do we resolve this apparent contradiction? Does God love His enemies or does He kill them? Is He fickle and arbitrary, choosing sometimes to love and forgive and other times to kill and destroy? Is God nice for a while and then decides He has had enough and wipes everyone out? Or is God like Jesus – all the time?

If we are only listening to the Word of God and not obeying it, then we will mostly likely stop with the two verses in the left column above and draw the conclusion that God will violently destroy people when His patience runs out. There is no need to search further because the light of the character of Christ is not mediating the story for us. But for those who believe that Jesus is the complete revelation of the Father, they will search further to reconcile the difference in the two pictures. This is the difference between simply hearing the word and obeying it.

It will take effort; it will take time. Only when you search for the Father with all your heart will you find Him. If you conclude from reading a few texts in Genesis that our Creator, who calls Himself our Father and modeled the human family after His own loving relationship with creation, destroyed millions of people including babies, then I would appeal to you that you are not searching with all your heart. Listening? Yes. Obeying? No.

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When I accepted Jesus as the complete revelation of God's character, I had to humbly go on my knees and ask God how to reconcile the two pictures I saw. I could not see how it was possible. This is a vital part of the process. If *you* are too self-confident in your Bible study, then the Spirit of God is not in control. When you come to a point where you feel stuck and can't continue, falling to your knees and pleading "Father please show me the truth," then you place yourself in the hands of God to let Him teach you. This is what I have done many times. I go to Him and ask in faith that my Father would reveal to me that He truly is just like Jesus in every way.

The thought came into my mind of how the earth was cursed when Adam sinned. (Gen 3:17-19). The question came to me, *Why did the earth bring forth thorns and thistles?* Was it God who made the thorns or was it Adam's sin that caused them to grow? This became a pivotal question in my search to reconcile the flood story with Jesus' revelation of the Father. Let us look at the literal Hebrew reading of what God told Adam.

And to the man He said, "Because thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy wife, and dost eat of the tree concerning which I have charged thee, saying, 'Thou dost not eat of it', **cursed is the ground on thine account;** in sorrow thou dost eat of it all days of thy life." Genesis 3:17 (YLT)

God told Adam that the ground was cursed because of his sin. It is sin that brought the thorns and thistles, not God. This curse was extended through the murder of Abel by Cain.

"So now you *are* cursed from the earth, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. When you till the ground, it shall no longer yield its strength to you. A fugitive and a vagabond you shall be on the earth." Genesis 4:11-12 (NKJV)

Notice carefully how Cain understands the words of God.

Cain replied to the LORD, "My punishment is too great for me to bear! You have banished me from the land and from Your presence;

You have made me a homeless wanderer. Anyone who finds me will kill me!" Genesis 4:13-14

Cain expresses the idea that God arbitrarily punished him by banishing him from the ground. Is that what God said? As we read Genesis 4:11, can we see that God tells Cain that his actions have damaged the soil? The blood of Abel running into the earth actually damages the fertility of the ground. The earth "opening its mouth" to receive Abel's blood is the action of murder being transferred into the earth itself.

Should we interpret the words of God through the lens of Cain or through the lens of Christ? Was God telling Cain of His arbitrary actions against him, or was He simply telling him the natural consequence of what Cain did?

Does the Bible offer us further evidence of the sinfulness of men damaging the balance of nature, bringing calamity? As we follow this line of thought, we will begin to see differences in how Bible translators understand the texts of Scripture. Can you see the difference in these two translations?

"Do not defile yourselves in any of these ways, for the people I am driving out before you have defiled themselves in all these ways. Because the entire land has become defiled, **I am punishing the people who live there. I will cause the land to vomit them out.**" Leviticus 18:24-25 (NLT)

"Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things: for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you: And the land is defiled: therefore **I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants.**" Leviticus 18:24-25 (KJV)

Does God punish the people by *making* the land vomit the people out? Or is God *allowing* the effect of their continuous damaging to the earth to play out, whereby the land malfunctions with natural disasters? I would suggest the first understanding is reading the text outside of the character of Christ. It reflects what we naturally think of God, but the KJV version provides a different view that allows us to see that God

simply allows the sins of the people which damage the earth to respond back in its work of destruction. He no longer holds back the consequences of their actions.

Let us consider one more Bible passage speaking to the relationship of the sins of men and their impact on the earth. Again, let's compare two translations and see the variation expressed.

**The earth suffers for the sins of its people**, for they have twisted God's instructions, violated His laws, and broken His everlasting covenant. **Therefore, a curse consumes the earth. Its people must pay the price for their sin. They are destroyed by fire, and only a few are left alive.** Isaiah 24:5-6 (NLT)

**The earth is also defiled under its inhabitants**, because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore **the curse has devoured the earth**, and those who dwell in it are desolate. **Therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men are left.** Isaiah 24:5-6 (NKJV)

Does God make the people pay a price for their sin by destroying them with fire? Or does the earth, cursed by men's sin, finally break down and collapse beneath humanity? Are people cursed by the earth, or are they cursed by God using the earth? Looking into the face of Jesus, the answer is simple: just like God told Cain, the curse comes from the earth because of his actions. His own actions have cursed him.

Consider the following texts to further add weight to the idea that it is natural consequences falling upon men because of their sinfulness.

The LORD is known for His justice. The wicked are trapped by their own deeds. (Quiet Interlude) Psalm 9:16

Don't be misled—you cannot mock the justice of God. You will always harvest what you plant. Galatians 6:7

What is the justice of God? It is always allowing us to harvest the fruit of what we plant. If we let the truth of this thought into our hearts, many stories in the Bible will change for us. A new picture will come to light.



Now coming back to the flood story. Again, consider two translations that present two different pictures to us.

Now God saw that the earth had become corrupt and was filled with violence. God observed all this corruption in the world, for everyone on earth was corrupt. So God said to Noah, "I have decided to destroy all living creatures, for they have filled the earth with violence. Yes, **I will wipe them all out along with the earth!**" Genesis 6:11-13

The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth. And God said to Noah, "The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, **I will destroy them with the earth.**" Genesis 6:11-13 (NKJV)

The first version gives the impression that because the people of the earth have become corrupt, He has decided to wipe them out *along* with the earth.

The second version indicates that the earth itself was filled with violence because men had been violent upon the earth. The earth is like a battery absorbing the energy of men's deeds. As men fill the earth with negative energy, eventually the battery explodes because its capacity is exceeded. God says that He will destroy men with the earth; or in other words, He will allow the earth to destroy them. He does not destroy them *along* with the earth but rather lets the fruit of men's actions on the earth destroy them.

The second version aligns with the character of Jesus. In this context the following verses add more important detail to the story.

"Will you keep to the old way which wicked men have trod, who were cut down before their time, whose foundations were swept away by a flood? **They said to God, 'Depart from us!** What can the Almighty do to them?' Yet He filled their houses with good *things*; But the counsel of the wicked is far from me." Job 22:15-18 (NKJV)

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Here we see that the men of the old world told God to depart from them. They didn't want Him even though He supplied their homes with good things.

Putting the pieces together it becomes clear that the flood's infanticide was caused by the sins of men damaging the earth, with these same men evicting God from their lives, leaving their children defenceless. The only man who listened to God was Noah. Noah "found grace in the eyes of the Lord," meaning He believed God, and that God was trying to save humanity.

Through Noah, God tried to warn people that disaster was coming. God was not the author of that disaster, but He did know how much evil His system could handle before vomiting: 120 years. God did not destroy these innocent children but the rebellious seed of men planted in the earth reaped the predictably bitter harvest.

This view of the flood relieves God of the charge of killing innocent babies. It also frees Him of the charge of killing all the animals who were caught up in the deluge. But the response comes, "you just want to make God look weak on sin and so you dream up these notions to avoid God coming down on you." My response to this is, "actually, I am trying to harmonise the words and life of Jesus that if we have seen Him we have seen the Father." If God drowned babies then Jesus is a liar and is clearly not the revelation of God's character. Taking the words of Jesus seriously requires us to wrestle with these Old Testament stories in order that we will see all of Scripture in harmony on this question of God's character.

Furthermore, we see that God is not weak on sin, rather instead we see the devastating power of sin and the consequences of pushing God and His ways out of our life. The implications of this are unnerving. Could men's sins have such a dramatic effect on the earth as to create a world-wide flood? Did God give to man such vast dominion over the earth? Can the earth manifest the spiritual seeds that men sow just as much as the physical ones they plant?

One point I still needed to answer for myself was why a flood? Why not multiple calamities, such as earthquakes, hurricanes, fires as well as a flood? To answer this, I was led to this verse:

“Do not judge others, and you will not be judged. For you will be treated as you treat others. The standard you use in judging is the standard by which you will be judged.” Matthew 7:1-2

The standard we all use for judging is the standard of the God we serve. We judge others as we believe God judges them, or at least we try to follow what we understand God does. Our mirror neurons cause us to emulate the God we believe in. Even if we don't actually think God exists, we still judge according to how we think a higher power would judge, whether it exists or not (God representing our highest ideal of how power should be exercised). In light of this, how did the people in Noah's time perceive their gods?

The Sumerians believed that the universe had come into being through a series of cosmic births. First, Nammu, the primeval waters, gave birth to Ki (the earth) and An (the sky), who mated together and produced a son named Enlil. Enlil separated heaven from earth and claimed the earth as his domain. Humans were believed to have been created by Enki, the son of Nammu and An.<sup>7</sup>

The ancient religion of those before the flood believed the first goddess was Nammu, the primeval waters. Human beings were understood to come from her and An – the sky. If the goddess of water was the first god, then it follows that water would represent the highest form of calamity, displeasure, and judgment to the people. The people knew their deeds were evil. As the apostle Paul states:

And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; *they are* whisperers, backbiters,

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<sup>7</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sumerian\\_religion](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sumerian_religion)

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haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; **who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death**, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them. Romans 1:28-32 (NKJV)

The reason the earth was destroyed by water is that most of those ancient people worshipped a water goddess. Is it possible that the collective thoughts of the people impacted the world around them to such an extent that destruction appeared to come from the one they themselves worshipped?

In summary I have laid before you an alternative view for how to understand the flood story. The motivation to do this comes from looking at this story through the character of Jesus who loved His enemies and did good to them – always.

Without the character of Jesus, we only hear the Word of God in the flood story as our thoughts and not God's; all we can do is reveal what we think of God and therefore what we are. But when we look into the face of Jesus, the Word of God starts to change us, bring forth life, and accomplish what God designed for us.

“My thoughts are nothing like your thoughts,” says the LORD. “And My ways are far beyond anything you could imagine. For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so My ways are higher than your ways and My thoughts higher than your thoughts. **The rain and snow come down from the heavens and stay on the ground to water the earth. They cause the grain to grow, producing seed for the farmer and bread for the hungry. It is the same with My word. I send it out, and it always produces fruit. It will accomplish all I want it to, and it will prosper everywhere I send it.**” Isaiah 55:8-11

When we accept the life of Jesus as the character of God, we begin to shift from merely hearing the Word to obeying it. The Bible becomes a

new book, we begin to search for God with all our hearts, and the seed of the Word springs up in us and does what God intended.

The question remains though: why does the Bible in Genesis six use language to say God would destroy the world and wipe it out? Why doesn't it say the world would destroy itself?

If we delve a little further into the Hebrew, we discover something fascinating in the use of the *Hiph'il* Hebrew form in Genesis 6:13, and 6:17.

And God said to Noah, "The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, **I will destroy** [Hiph'il] them with the earth. Genesis 6:13 (NKJV)

And behold, **I Myself am bringing** [Hiph'il] floodwaters on the earth, to destroy from under heaven all flesh in which *is* the breath of life; everything that is on the earth shall die. Genesis 6:17 (NKJV)

The *Hiph'il* form allows for both active and permissive uses.

The causative nuance of the hiph'il, and of its Aramaic and Akkadian counterparts the haph'el / 'aph'el and šuprus, respectively, includes not only actions in which the subject causes the object (another person or a thing) to do something, but a range of other ways in which the subject is responsible for the object's action, such as allowing it, enabling it, tolerating it, or granting permission to do it.<sup>8</sup>

When it comes to God, the phrase "I will destroy" is used as a Hebrew idiom. There are two classes of idioms that can be used. 1. Causative. 2. Permissive. The writer's (not the translator's) use of the phrase is most often in the permissive form when it comes to quoting God—especially when the verb is negative, such as

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<sup>8</sup> "On the Tolerative/Permissive Hiph'il," in Le-Ma'an Ziony: *Studies in Honor of Ziony Zevit*, ed. Frederick E. Greenspahn and Gary A. Rendsburg. Eugene, Oregon: Cascade Books, 2017. p. 397

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destruction and sickness. This permissive verb form in Hebrew is called *Hiph'il*, to which William Lowth explains:

“...the form called *Hiph'il* in Hebrew often denotes only permission, and is rendered elsewhere to that sense by our translators.” (*A Commentary Upon the Prophet Isaiah*, p. 501)<sup>9</sup>

But it appears that only context will determine whether it is active or permissive.

The only guide to distinguishing between them is context, but determining what the context requires—or at least what is consistent with the context—can be a very subjective task.<sup>10</sup>

This means it is possible to translate Genesis 6:13 and 6:17 in this way:

And God said to Noah, “The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, **I will permit them to be destroyed** with the earth. Genesis 6:13

And behold, **I Myself am permitting the bringing of floodwaters** on the earth, to destroy from under heaven all flesh in which is the breath of life; everything that is on the earth shall die. Genesis 6:17

Reading the text in this way brings harmony to a text in Isaiah which also speaks about the flood.

Just as I swore in the time of Noah that I would **never again let a flood cover the earth**, so now I swear that I will never again be angry and punish you. Isaiah 54:9

The Hebrew form in this verse is *Niphal* which is always passive or permissive. If Genesis 6:13 and 6:17 were in the active voice, it would conflict with the permissive rendering of Isaiah 54:9. When we allow for the *Hiph'il* form to take the permissive tone, the text is resolved.

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<sup>9</sup> Kevin J. Mullins, *Jesus Christ and Him Crucified*, p. 44. Available for download from [fatheroflove.info](http://fatheroflove.info)

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*, Greenspahn and Rensburg p. 399.

Since it is context that determines how we read the *Hiph'il* Hebrew form, how should we determine the context? Jesus Christ, as revealed to us on earth, must always set the context. But why haven't translators used the permissive context first when speaking of destruction, rather than the active one in this case? Firstly, it appears that grammarians of the middle ages were not aware of this permissive variation of the *Hiph'il* form.

The tolerative nuance of the *hiph'il* is unevenly recognized in grammars of Biblical Hebrew. I have not found it mentioned by the medieval Hebrew grammarians...<sup>11</sup>

The other, and more important reason is that the character of God has not been discerned through the life of Christ on earth.

The permissive *Hiph'il* grammar not only assists us in explaining the story of the flood, but it will impact other stories, as we will see. Yet, this does not explain every situation in the Old Testament. When we read Genesis 6:7, it speaks with an active voice.

So the LORD said, "**I will destroy man** [Qal Imperfect] whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them." Genesis 6:7 (NKJV)

The Hebrew form here is *imperfect* which means it could be translated "I will commence the process to destroy man." If we align this with the texts of Gen 6:13,17 and Isaiah 54:9, we see the process which God commenced was to permit the flood to overflow the earth. Of course, it is possible to read all of these in an active voice, to present God as actively destroying people in the flood, as the reader sets the context.

But even if we simply take Gen 6:7 as God stating He will destroy the world, the Mirror Principle still addresses this. The law expresses to us our own thoughts when we read it directly without the mediation of the life of Jesus. Like Cain, we forget that God told us the curse would come

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid, Greenspahn and Rensburg p. 398.

from the earth. The true revelation of God's character in this story requires deeper, obedient study to harmonise the pieces, and in doing this it presents to us the deeper reality of human evil in how we perceive God.

It reveals that we see Him as one willing to destroy every living thing, including innocent children. Professing to believe this allows one to unwittingly hide the reality of their own depravity, projecting it onto God. Pulling God down to our level makes us feel better about ourselves.

Others want to read this in the Bible in order to condemn and damn Him as a mass murderer. It suits them to see God in this way that they might banish Him from the throne of their hearts. God does not force anyone to see things His way, but He has revealed to us His Son, so we can discern the meaning of His words.

Another reason the Bible seems to present God as saying He will destroy everything is because human nature automatically makes deity responsible for the calamity that comes into our lives. When things go wrong it is easier to ask why is God punishing me rather than to ask what have I done to bring these consequences on myself. This is what Cain did when God revealed to him the natural consequences of his actions. He reframed God's word as an arbitrary punishment from God.

The greatest reason why I believe the Bible presents God as "claiming responsibility" for the destruction of humanity is because of the natural human self-defence mechanism that shifts the blame to anyone but self. The psychology world calls this Projection. This is a fundamental human principle that the Bible, if it has true diagnostic capability for the human condition, must be able to discern.

For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires. Hebrews 4:12



CHAPTER 10

# TAKING RESPONSIBILITY

If you do a search on the internet for “taking responsibility for your actions,” you will be presented with an abundance of links for presentations and materials on how to do this. The fact that so much has been written about it shows that humans find it massively difficult to take responsibility. Why?

This goes back to the garden of Eden, when Adam was asked why he took fruit from the tree that he was commanded not to.

“Who told you that you were naked?” the LORD God asked. “Have you eaten from the tree whose fruit I commanded you not to eat?”

The man replied, “It was the woman **You gave me** who gave me the fruit, and I ate it.” Genesis 3:11-12

Rather than accepting his error and asking forgiveness, Adam shifts the blame for the action to his wife as well as to God. It reminds me of the story of a young man who struck another person with a snow ball while at a sports match. When asked to give account he said, “if the snow had not been there, this never would have happened!”

The default option for humanity is to project their problem onto others and make them responsible for it, especially when there is fear involved. Projection has been defined as follows:

Psychological projection is a defence mechanism of alterity concerning “inside” content mistaken to be coming from the “outside” other. It forms the basis of empathy by the projection of personal experiences to understand someone else’s subjective world. In its malignant forms, it is a defense mechanism in which **the ego defends itself against disowned and highly negative parts of the self by denying their existence in themselves and attributing them to others**, breeding misunderstanding and causing untold interpersonal damage.<sup>12</sup>

We see this principle pass from Adam to Cain, for when Cain is asked to explain the death of his brother, he at first pretends to know nothing about it. He seeks to make the issue simply go away.

In the previous chapter we looked at how Cain twisted what God said and made it look like God was the aggressor and punisher. God told Cain that his actions would bring their own consequences and damage the earth. Cain projected these consequences onto God and blamed Him for the affliction he now endured. But his blame game didn’t end there.

“You have banished me from the land and from Your presence; You have made me a homeless wanderer. **Anyone who finds me will kill me!**” Genesis 4:14

Why does he speak this absurd idea that any person that comes across him will kill him? Cain externalized the murder of his brother onto everyone else and makes himself the victim of the very thing which he committed. It is Cain that is the killer, and having killed now he thinks everyone else is a potential killer like him. He doesn’t realise that he thinks people will kill him because of his own mindset that sees murder

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<sup>12</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychological\\_projection](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychological_projection)

as a solution to problems; instead, he blames God for creating an environment that would cause his death.

How do you help someone who projects every wrong thing they are doing onto someone else and feigns themselves the victim? The Bible reveals this characteristic of man by appearing to present God as doing the very thing that man is actually doing.

We note carefully that the pattern for the story of Cain is the seed for the events played out in the story of the flood.

Cain	The Flood
Cain murders Abel.	Humanity becomes violent and wicked before God.
The ground is damaged by Cain's actions.	The earth is corrupted by the actions of the people on the earth.
Cain blames God for driving him off the land.	Humanity blames God for wiping out the whole world.
Cain refuses to take responsibility for the death of Abel and for the ground's loss of fertility, and projects the calamity onto God.	The human race refused to take responsibility for the destruction of the flood, but rather blames God for it and projects onto Him its destruction.

Because the Bible is a discerner of the thoughts of men (Heb 4:12), this evil process of Projection is captured in Scripture.

And the LORD said, **“I will wipe this human race I have created from the face of the earth. Yes, and I will destroy every living thing**—all the people, the large animals, the small animals that

scurry along the ground, and even the birds of the sky. I am sorry I ever made them." Genesis 6:7

The language God employs accounts for how men think about the story of the flood. We choose to believe that God wiped out the earth in a flood to avoid taking the responsibility that God has granted us the power to destroy the earth ourselves.

"The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, and those who fear Your name, small and great, **and should destroy those who destroy the earth.**" Revelation 11:18 (NKJV)

How does God destroy those who destroy the earth? By not preventing them from doing it through their rebellion against Him.

We have no need to recount the history of the human race and how men have completely wiped out other civilizations from the face of the earth. This is what resides in the heart of man and it will manifest itself every time it is given the opportunity. This human trait is written into Genesis 6:7. The language accounts for the Projection Principles of humanity. Once you grasp this, your whole world will change when you read the Bible and many apparent contradictions will resolve themselves.

Let's take a very obvious example of this in the book of Ezekiel.

Then this message came to me from the LORD: "Son of man, turn and face Jerusalem and prophesy against Israel and her sanctuaries. Tell her, 'This is what the LORD says: **I am your enemy, O Israel, and I am about to unsheath My sword to destroy your people—the righteous and the wicked alike.**" Ezekiel 21:1-3

Does God destroy the righteous and wicked alike? Is this truly His character?

When God speaks to Israel, He is speaking to them what they themselves are thinking. He is a discerner of their thoughts and He confronts them with what they fear. God also is revealing to us what

human beings are actually like. In this verse we have the externalization of the human heart's desire. Has there occurred in human history events where men were willing to destroy the righteous with the wicked?

Here is one example. In 1209 in southern France, the Papal legal and leader of the Albigensian Crusade, abbot Arnaud Amalric, uttered these words as his army surrounded a town that was a mixture of Albigenses and Catholics: "Caedite eos. Novit enim Dominus qui sunt eius" – "Kill them. The Lord knows those that are his own." Arnaud, in a letter to the Pope that year said: "Our men spared no one, irrespective of rank, sex or age, and put to the sword almost 20,000 people. After this great slaughter the whole city was despoiled and burnt..."

So the words of Ezekiel 21:1-3 identify the wickedness of men that has manifested in people like Arnaud Amalric. But we say again that this human trait is externalized from man and projected onto God to save humanity from the shame of taking responsibility for this nature which will do unspeakable atrocities. We are reminded how the disciples took the words of Jesus and made them appear that He was racially intolerant towards the Canaanite women who asked Jesus to help her daughter.

A number of Bible scholars have discerned that some of the language of the Bible cannot possibly be His true character. Here is one example:

"When God is said to harden men's hearts [Exodus 7-8], to deliver them up to a reprobate mind [Rom 1:27-29], to send them strong delusions, that they should believe that God is acting unrighteously [2 Thes 2:11] – meaning He is acting against His character – it is infinitely far from being meant of an efficacious impulse in God Almighty. That all those verbs, – to harden, to blind, to deliver up, to send delusions, to deceive, and the like, are by an ordinary Hebraism **only permissive in signification, though active in sound**, is placed without all controversy." (Thomas Pierce, I, page 23-24 edition of 1658 as quoted in Jackson, *The Providence of God*, page 401)

What he is saying is that it is a linguistic fact that in ancient Hebrew God can be described as actively doing something when He merely permits it. When the Bible says God deceived, it means He allowed the man to be deceived due to his own actions.

Part of the reason for this relates to what we discovered earlier regarding the *Hiph'il* form. Context determines whether it is active or passive. So, in some cases, it is not the Hebrew, but rather the lack of understanding of the translators in relation to Hebrew.

This brings us back to what God told Cain.

“So now you *are* cursed from the earth, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your hand. When you till the ground, it shall no longer yield its strength to you. A fugitive and a vagabond you shall be on the earth.” Genesis 4:11-12 (NKJV)

God did not actively make the ground lose its fertility but He permitted the consequences of Cain’s actions to affect the earth so fertility was lost. He might have stopped these consequences but He permitted them according to the laws of nature which He established.

The two main stumbling blocks people have in reading the Old Testament is: 1) a refusal or lack of understanding to read it through the character of Christ, and 2) a self-defence mechanism projecting our evil natures onto God. Now our Father calls upon us to take responsibility for our natures. He doesn’t condemn us so we can stop trying to project our evil onto God and others.

## CHAPTER 11

# MAN HAS BECOME AS ONE OF US

The story of Cain gave us an important pattern for how God interacts with sinful men and reveals how men project their wrongs onto Him. We now want to walk back a few steps in the Genesis story and observe how God dealt with Adam in putting him out of the garden. It contains important information for how the mirror operates.

Adam has eaten the forbidden fruit and God is now deciding what should be done with him:

Then the LORD God said, "**Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil.** And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever" — therefore the LORD God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken. So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.  
Genesis 3:22-24 (NKJV)

How was it possible for Adam to become like God by eating the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil? How could Adam become like God through a process of disobedience to Him? Adam's knowledge of

evil was experiential, how did this make him like God? The worst part about this is that the actions of God appear to confirm exactly what Satan told Eve:

Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and **you will be like God, knowing good and evil.**" Genesis 3:4-5 (NKJV)

Satan told Eve that God was trying to prevent them from having something that would make them become like Him. Later God states that the man has become like "us," meaning like God, and then tells them to leave the garden. This could be seen to confirm Satan's suggestion that they would become like God and that God can't handle that.

So, what is going on here?

There is nothing in Genesis 3 that indicates that Adam repented of his sin. We did read that Adam blamed God and his wife for his actions. At that moment, Adam is outside of Christ – meaning He does not have the Spirit of Christ in Him. The Mirror Principle teaches us that when we are outside of Christ, the words God speaks can only mirror what we think. This is because our thoughts are not God's thoughts and as we discovered earlier, "the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God for they are foolishness to him." (1 Cor 2:14).

Jesus explains:

"For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you." Matthew 7:2 (NKJV)

When Adam ate the fruit, he allowed Satan to influence him in a much greater way. The words of Satan made perfect sense to him. They had to because either Adam repents or his only perceived way of escape is to believe the words Satan spoke through the serpent.



In believing the words of the serpent, Adam believed he had become like God, and he also believed that God wanted to hide this from him, leading him to the conclusion that God would try to prevent Adam from staying in the garden either by killing him or driving him out.

The words of God to Adam are in fact the thoughts of Adam revealed, for we discovered in chapter 8 that when the law of God comes to a man, it first causes the sins of men to increase – so that men are able to recognize their sin – and therefore grace can be applied. (Rom 5:20).

In speaking the words “the man has become like one of us” God is speaking the thoughts of Adam who was taught this by Satan. In telling Adam that he must be driven out of the garden, God is but giving the sentence that Adam believes God will give. God judges Adam as Adam judged God will act.

We see this principle in the story of the talents:

‘For I feared you, because you are an austere man. You collect what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.’ And he said to him, ‘**Out of your own mouth I will judge you, *you*** wicked servant. You knew that I was an austere man, collecting what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow.’ Luke 19:21-22 (NKJV)

The man with one talent chose to believe that the master was harsh and acts unjustly. The master judges the man from his own thoughts and words. What happened to this man is exactly what happened to Adam in the garden. When Adam had fallen, he was influenced to believe God was austere in keeping him from the Tree of Knowledge. He was therefore judged according to his own thoughts and put out of the garden and prevented by force from approaching the tree of life.

Does this mean that if Adam had repented, he would have been able to stay in the garden? Yes, it does, but God knew that once Adam ate the fruit, Satan would influence his thoughts to such an extent that Adam would not be able to repent. Adam did not know the true depravity of his heart. It would take time for God to help him see how far he had fallen.

The human heart is the most deceitful of all things, and desperately wicked. Who really knows how bad it is? Jeremiah 17:9

The way that God helps us to see ourselves is to allow what we think to manifest itself and then direct us to compare it to Christ's character to begin to see our true problem. God had to give to Adam the judgment that Adam thought God would give.

The reader may think that surely there was another way for God to deal with this situation. But to think so underestimates the enmity Adam had at that moment towards God; how much like a cornered and threatened animal Adam must have felt. There was nothing else God could give other than what Adam expected, because the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God. (1 Cor 2:14). To try to explain further at that moment would only harden Adam's heart.

"Agree with your adversary quickly, while you are on the way with him, lest your adversary deliver you to the judge, the judge hand you over to the officer, and you be thrown into prison."  
Matthew 5:25 (NKJV)

At that moment God could only agree with his adversary quickly while He was with Adam in the way. Adam had delivered his judgment of the case of God's character and thus God could do nothing but deliver him to the officer to be cast out of the garden. (Matt 5:25).

Although God spoke to Adam's thoughts in the words – "the man has become like us, knowing good and evil," God had a message for Adam in these words which would actually prove true in a vastly different way to what Adam understood when he heard it. God had been dealing with Satan even prior to the creation of man, using truth and longsuffering to answer Satan's misrepresentations of God to the angels. Having sinned, now Adam would have to struggle with Satan, aided by Christ, in a much deeper and more complicated way, much more similar to God's experience with Satan than the original test of obedience. Adam would have to preach the gospel for a thousand years and constantly be rejected, mocked, and attacked. It is only in this way that he has become like "us" – God and His Son – who have been

constantly rejected, mocked, and attacked for six thousand years. But as Adam heard those words and left the garden, he didn't know that this would be his fate.

Using the Mirror Principle to explain this passage feels very destabilising at first because it exposes our natural human tendency to project onto God the responsibility of our own thoughts and actions. It is also hard to accept that our hearts are so stubborn in sin that God has to use this method. It pushes us to consider our assumptions about God while doing painful self-examination and soul-searching.

It naturally feels more comforting to see God booting Adam out of the garden and placing guards to prevent him from getting access to the Tree of Life. This is because of how we think. But God's thoughts are not our thoughts. Once you accept that it was impossible for Adam to become like God through an action of disobedience, then you are ready to consider a different framework.

If God punished Adam by forcing him out of the garden, then it is evident that God Himself enforced the penalty upon him. But the Bible states that:

Such love has no fear, because perfect love expels all fear. If we are afraid, it is for fear of punishment, and this shows that we have not fully experienced His perfect love. 1 John 4:18

Punishing Adam in this way simply causes fear of further punishment in the future, which extinguishes love in the soul. Punishment leads to fear, not love. Love allows us to receive the punishment we think we deserve in the hope that we might then look to Christ and live. Love allows us to see the truth of ourselves, our actions, and their consequences.

It is to be expected that many readers will simply not accept this and cling to the lie that God forced Adam out of the garden as punishment and acted like man in placing guards to keep Adam out. Is it not time to see that God simply gave to Adam the judgment he thought God

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should give? Only this would satisfy Adam's notion of justice and therefore serve as a foundation for him to repent later on.

## CHAPTER 12

# MINISTRY OF DEATH

Can you picture the sad face of Adam with his arm wrapped around his dear wife, holding onto her for some comfort as he leaves his beloved garden. As it would be later revealed in his son Cain, Adam was partly tempted to feel the punishment was greater than he could bear and partly tempted to feel his iniquity was greater than could be forgiven. These two perceptions are revealed in the two possible meanings of Genesis 4:13.

Cain replied to the LORD, “My punishment is too great for me to bear!” Genesis 4:13 (NLT)

“Mine iniquity is greater than that it may be forgiven.”  
Genesis 4:13 (KJV Marginal reading)

Cain’s feelings are a manifestation of the seeds that resided in his unconverted father before he fully repented.

When we are outside of Christ, we, like the children of Israel, cannot look at the face of Moses because of the glory. We cannot see the character of God. With this veil over our eyes, we must walk through the ministry of death.

But if **the ministry of death**, written *and* engraved on stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel **could not look steadily at the**

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**face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance**, which *glory* was passing away, how will the ministry of the Spirit not be more glorious? 2 Corinthians 3:7-8 (NKJV)

The ministry of death exposes the carnal mind in man. In this state, the true character of God is hidden by the veil of our sinful natures. We see in 2 Cor 3:7 that the ministry of death operates when we can't look steadily into the glory of God's character. The glory on the face of Moses was a reflection of the character of God. The ministry of the Spirit operates when the veil covering God's true glory is removed.

But their minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament, **because the veil is taken away in Christ**. 2 Corinthians 3:14 (NKJV)

The ministry of death occurs when men look upon the face of God without Christ and thus only see themselves in His face because we think God is like us. When we believe on the name or character of Jesus and steadfastly behold His face, then the ministry of the Spirit can begin to transform us.

...who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. 2 Corinthians 3:6 (NKJV)

The ministry of the Spirit is the New Covenant. The ministry of death therefore is the Old Covenant. The New Covenant is the true revelation of God's character which is much more glorious than the Old Covenant which reveals the character of man. To truly have our evil natures revealed to us so that we might repent is a glorious work but it is much more glorious to then see the contrast in the character of God.

Within this framework the Bible reads completely differently when we are under the ministry of death than when we are in the ministry of the Spirit.

For if you listen to the word and don't obey, **it is like glancing at your face in a mirror**. You see yourself, walk away, and forget what you look like. But if you look carefully into the perfect law that sets

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you free, and if you do what it says and don't forget what you heard, then God will bless you for doing it. James 1:23-25

Reading the Bible under the ministry of death is simply listening to the Bible but not obeying it. All the Bible can do under the ministry of death is present God to you as a tyrannical, killing machine that has some capacity for mercy when it suits Him. This is because we are all like this by nature.

**"No one is truly wise; no one is seeking God.** All have turned away; all have become useless. No one does good, not a single one." "Their talk is foul, like the stench from an open grave. Their tongues are filled with lies." "Snake venom drips from their lips." "Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness." **"They rush to commit murder. Destruction and misery always follow them."**  
Romans 3:11-16

As we discussed earlier, our natural human nature projects onto God undesirable attributes that exist in ourselves. When we read the Old Testament without the mediation of the character of God, the Bible will only present God to us like we truly are. This is the reason why men like Richard Dawkins and Bill Maher consider God to be a ruthless, genocidal maniac. This is proof positive of the carnal heart projecting its own nature onto God.

The Bible is wonderfully written to reveal to us under the ministry of death what we are truly like. Of course, if we believe God judges, condemns and destroys people then by beholding this image, our natural natures will manifest themselves more quickly and then when we are in the place where our sin is abounding, our Father in heaven then seeks to present the meek and lowly Jesus to us as a contrast and pleads with us to consider His Son, His character and offers to us the invitation to learn of Him that we might change to be like Him through His Spirit.

The best way to learn the Mirror Principle is to now apply the principle to several Bible stories. We must look at them through the ministry of death and see our nature and then we must look at the story through

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the ministry of the Spirit which means looking at it through the character of Christ and see these stories resolve the confusion where God appears harsh and merciless.



## CHAPTER 13

# THE CRY OF SODOM

The story of the flood is relatively easy to piece together once we remove the darkened veil of human misunderstanding of God's character. The effect on the earth of Cain killing Abel opens to us the ability to see how the continual evil of men could cause a worldwide flood.

The story of Sodom and Gomorrah is more complex to unravel. Our confidence in our quest to see God as nonviolent like His Son can easily be shattered by taking on the story of the fire from heaven that turned the five cities on the plain to ash.

We begin this story with Abraham concerned that God might destroy the righteous with the wicked.

So the LORD told Abraham, "I have heard a great outcry from Sodom and Gomorrah, because their sin is so flagrant. I am going down to see if their actions are as wicked as I have heard. If not, I want to know." The other men turned and headed toward Sodom, but the LORD remained with Abraham.

Abraham approached Him and said, "Will You sweep away both the righteous and the wicked? Suppose You find fifty righteous people living there in the city—will You still sweep it away and not spare it for their sakes? Surely You wouldn't do such a thing, destroying the righteous along with the wicked. Why, You would

be treating the righteous and the wicked exactly the same! Surely You wouldn't do that! Should not the Judge of all the earth do what is right?" Genesis 18:20-25

God says He won't destroy the city if there are fifty righteous in it. Abraham, not wanting to see the city destroyed, tries to bring this number lower. Abraham is having an internal struggle between his perception of justice and the lives of the righteous in the city. What is curious in this story is that Abraham stops pleading for the righteous at ten people.

Finally, Abraham said, "Lord, please don't be angry with me if I speak one more time. **Suppose only ten are found there?**" **And the LORD replied, "Then I will not destroy it for the sake of the ten."** When the LORD had finished His conversation with Abraham, He went on His way, and Abraham returned to his tent. Genesis 18:32-33

If Abraham believed that it was not just to slay the righteous with the wicked, then why did he not go right to the point of asking for one person? Did Abraham believe that there were more than ten righteous people in Sodom on account of the fact that Lot was there with his family? Maybe he thought for sure there would be ten of Lot's family who could prevent the catastrophe.

But the reality of stopping at ten people is that Abraham reveals that he would be willing to sacrifice nine righteous people for the satisfaction of divine justice. It is as if he thought, *if there are less than 10 righteous people, that is so little that it makes sense the city must be destroyed.*

If we look into the face of Jesus, we see something different.

"If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them gets lost, what will he do? Won't he leave the ninety-nine others in the wilderness and go to **search for the one that is lost** until he finds it? And when he has found it, he will joyfully carry it home on his shoulders." Luke 15:4-5

And Peter says:

The Lord isn't really being slow about His promise, as some people think. No, He is being patient for your sake. **He does not want anyone to be destroyed**, but wants everyone to repent. 2 Peter 3:9

Is Abraham projecting onto God the human trait of being willing to kill the righteous with the wicked in capping God's mercy at ten righteous people?

This brings us to the question of what was happening in Sodom and the other cities on the plain. God spoke to Abraham of a "cry" in Sodom. Once again notice two different translations on this.

So the LORD told Abraham, "I have heard a great outcry **from** Sodom and Gomorrah, because their sin is so flagrant." Genesis 18:20 (NLT)

Then the LORD said, "The outcry **against** Sodom and Gomorrah is so great and their sin so grievous." Genesis 18:20 (NIV)

From where did this cry come? Was there a cry coming *from* Sodom or was there a cry being made *against* Sodom? If the cry is made against Sodom, it would be by those outside demanding justice against the cities on the plain. If the cry is coming from Sodom, then it is those inside who are bewailing the natural consequences of the sins committed in the city.

One version views the text through a lens of imposed justice *upon* sin while the other views the text through a lens of the natural effect *of* sin. How do you read? If we read it through the person of the character of Jesus on earth, would it make a difference? Would it suggest natural consequences rather than imposed destruction?

It is interesting to note that the word for *cry* in Hebrew carries the meaning *to shriek*. While it is possible that people might shriek for others to be punished, it is more likely the shriek of those suffering from the crimes committed in Sodom. It is also interesting to note that although

the Bible uses a different Hebrew word to describe the sound of Abel's blood crying from the ground, it also carries the meaning *to shriek*.

What sins were being committed in Sodom that beckoned destruction for it? The prophets gives us the following:

So Abram settled in the land of Canaan, and Lot moved his tents to a place near Sodom and settled among the cities of the plain. But the people of this area **were extremely wicked and constantly sinned against the LORD**. Genesis 13:12-13

Sodom's sins were pride, gluttony, and laziness, while the poor and needy suffered outside her door. Ezekiel 16:49

"But now I see that the prophets of Jerusalem are even worse! **They commit adultery and love dishonesty**. They encourage those who are doing evil so that no one turns away from their sins. **These prophets are as wicked as the people of Sodom and Gomorrah** once were." Jeremiah 23:14

Pride, gluttony, and laziness are a sure path to adultery and dishonesty. These selfish sins harden the heart, resulting in the poor being forgotten. Excess eating clouds the mind and prepares the heart for sexual excess. Sexual excess in the form of adultery nearly always bring her sister deception with her to cover her evil deeds.

Jesus tracks this path from eating and drinking to sexual excess in the stories of the Flood and Sodom in this way:

"In those days, the people enjoyed banquets and parties and weddings right up to the time Noah entered his boat and the flood came and destroyed them all. And the world will be as it was in the days of Lot. People went about their daily business—eating and drinking, buying and selling, farming and building—until the morning Lot left Sodom. Then fire and burning sulfur rained down from heaven and destroyed them all." Luke 17:27-29

Jesus makes the statement that they married wives. What is wrong with marrying a wife? Nothing, unless one man is marrying multiple wives, having them all together or discarding the previous ones along the way.

It is interesting to note that the first man recorded to have taken two wives at one time was the second recorded murderer in the Bible.

One day Lamech said to his wives, "Adah and Zillah, hear my voice; listen to me, you wives of Lamech. I have killed a man who attacked me, a young man who wounded me. If someone who kills Cain is punished seven times, then the one who kills me will be punished seventy-seven times!" Genesis 4:23-24

I indicated in chapter two that the intimacy I found in marriage to my wife was a key factor which led me to seek for the truth of my Father's character. It should be evident that restful intimacy can never be found where a woman is contending with another woman for the affections of her husband. We see the jealousies that developed amongst the wives of Jacob and what sorrow this brought to his home. Our Father in heaven only has one begotten Son and He alone dwells in the bosom of the Father. (John 1:18). This intimacy is reflected in the husband and wife relationship, not sexually, but in terms of closeness and intimacy. When a third party enters the marriage, loyalty is divided and rest is replaced with a race of who will be the most favoured. This hardens the heart, as it did in the case of Lamech, making it easier for him to kill another man.

The fertility of the plain of Sodom attracted Lot and was the reason he settled there. Such fertility made food easy to grow and thus facilitated more time for pleasure. The abundance of food combined with more time for leisure led the heart to sexual excess. The marriage union was degraded and the pursuit for worldly ecstasy became the god of many in Sodom. When true love for a spouse is replaced with the pursuit of self-pleasure, novelty in sexual activity will force itself upon those abandoning the wife of their youth.

Normal sexual activity delivers the pleasure hormone, dopamine. Sexual activity outside of the commandments of God brings adrenaline

on top of dopamine due to the consciousness of evil in the heart. The heart beats faster in the face of the cry of God into the hearts of those fleeing His commandments. Strangely, the result is a heightened sexual experience in the flesh for a short time until the heart hardens to the voice of God, luring the sinner deeper into sin to bring more adrenaline with dopamine to achieve the same experience as before. It also explains the growing market for adrenochrome amongst the wicked of these last days. In this context it makes perfect sense that the men of Sodom wanted to sleep with the two visitors to Sodom that fateful night.

That evening the two angels came to the entrance of the city of Sodom. Lot was sitting there, and when he saw them, he stood up to meet them. Then he welcomed them and bowed with his face to the ground. "My lords," he said, "come to my home to wash your feet, and be my guests for the night. You may then get up early in the morning and be on your way again."

"Oh no," they replied. "We'll just spend the night out here in the city square." But Lot insisted, so at last they went home with him. Lot prepared a feast for them, complete with fresh bread made without yeast, and they ate.

But before they retired for the night, all the men of Sodom, young and old, came from all over the city and surrounded the house. They shouted to Lot, "Where are the men who came to spend the night with you? Bring them out to us so we can have sex with them!" Genesis 19:1-5

What an astonishing scene! Not a few, not some, but *all* the men of Sodom came to rape the two visitors to their city. The urgent need for some novel dopamine/adrenaline fix drove all the men of the city to these two distinctly unfamiliar visitors. They sought some form of high to replace that which they had lost: a relationship with God and the blissful intimacy that comes from staying married to one person in a spirit of selfless love.

The apostle Paul attributes to the sin of sexual excess every other form of wickedness:

And the **men, instead of having normal sexual relations with women, burned with lust for each other.** Men did shameful things with other men, and as a result of this sin, they suffered within themselves the penalty they deserved. Since they thought it foolish to acknowledge God, **He abandoned them to their foolish thinking and let them do things that should never be done.** Their lives became full of every kind of wickedness, sin, greed, hate, envy, murder, quarreling, deception, malicious behavior, and gossip. They are backstabbers, haters of God, insolent, proud, and boastful. They invent new ways of sinning, and they disobey their parents. They refuse to understand, break their promises, are heartless, and have no mercy. Romans 1:27-31

When men burn in their lust for one another, we have evidence of the seeking for novelty and adrenaline that must come when breaking God's commandments. Unbelievable sorrow is created when men, in trying to ease their restlessness, desire sex with young children, stamping into the children the idea that such things are normal sexual behaviour, confusing their senses while stealing from them the sweetness and innocence of virgin love between a man and a woman that lasts for life. Worse is when parents do it to their own children; such corruption of pure familial love haunts households forever.

The men of Sodom had become so perverse, so hardened in their pursuit of pleasure, that they lost all respect for the commandments of God as well as the sacredness of marriage and life itself. Like the people before the flood, their "thoughts were only evil continually".

It is clear what God meant when he could hear a cry in Sodom. The broken lives of children, having their innocence ripped from them by degraded men seeking a little adrenaline in their excited fear of breaking God's commandments, rose into the heavens like a shriek of despair both from the perpetrators and the victims. They had tried to fill their lives with forbidden pleasures and found themselves wretched and empty.

## THE CRY OF SODOM

This sad reality proves the truth that rest can only be found in God. He is the God of all comfort (2 Cor 1:3) and His commandments are the only place to find lasting peace. (Ps 119:165). All those who hate God, love death. (Prov 8:36).



## CHAPTER 14

# THE DESTRUCTION OF SODOM

Having provided some of the background to this story, let us now look directly upon the face of God through the texts that speak of how He deals with Sodom's depravity. It is easy for all the principles we have considered to this point to be swallowed up in an instant by what we read in the Old Testament. We must take the step of contrasting the ministration of death with the ministration of the Spirit. Take the time to observe your initial reaction to what the Old Testament says:

Then the LORD rained down fire and burning sulfur from the sky on Sodom and Gomorrah. He utterly destroyed them, along with the other cities and villages of the plain, wiping out all the people and every bit of vegetation. Genesis 19:24-25

It almost seems pointless to say anything. It appears so complete. God rained down fire on these cities and burned them up with everyone in it. He did not leave one green leaf behind but destroyed it all.

Are these two verses enough to settle the whole story for you? Having now flown into the clouds which veil this story, shall we fly by what we feel or shall we fly by our instruments given to direct us in the person of Christ?

There is a kind of inertia that presses the soul to just conclude the search for the Father's character in this story. Do I surrender the beautiful things I have discovered about Him on the edge of this cliff face? Has all the gentleness I have seen in the face of Jesus been burned up in these two verses? Is there nothing that encourages me to search further to see whether I have understood this correctly? Is it possible that I could be unwittingly projecting my own thoughts onto God? Am I sufficiently taking responsibility for humanity's part in this event? In reading this story, has my innocence of God's character been lost? Have I become like God, knowing good and evil, and must I now be thrust out of His peaceful garden and barred from all possible tranquillity through fear and torment of death?

Surely it is worth the search to see whether or not *all* of Scripture confirms what we imagine these two verses are saying. If you are willing to continue this journey with me, then I would first stop at this verse just to jolt the mind into a possibility that there is more to the story than simply reading Genesis 19:24 and 25.

And their dead bodies [two witnesses] *will lie* in the street of the great city which **spiritually is called Sodom** and Egypt, **where also our Lord was crucified**. Revelation 11:8 (NKJV)

This chapter of Revelation speaks about the two witnesses and their power against evil. Finally, these two witnesses are overcome and killed and are said to lay in the streets of Sodom and Egypt. The Apostle John indicates that these references are spiritual, meaning these cities carry some symbol of a deeper meaning. It then states that Jesus was crucified in Sodom (and we would add spiritually, because Jesus was literally crucified in Jerusalem, not Sodom or Egypt). How can God rain fire from heaven and burn up Sodom while Jesus Christ was crucified in the same place? Could it be possible John is referring to the same event where fire came down on Sodom?

Taking the theme of the crucifixion, let us consider the crucifixion passage of Isaiah:

## MIRROR PRINCIPLE

He is despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, *our* faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. Isaiah 53:3-4 (NKJV)

The principle of the Cross involves humanity considering that God is the one who strikes and afflicts. All of the Christian world believe that God struck Sodom and therefore the event of fire coming from heaven matches this criterion for a Cross event.

Previously we had considered the words of Jesus on the Cross: "My God My God, why have you forsaken me." We discovered that this phrase can be understood two ways. It can be read as God afflicting His Son with His anger against sin and leaving Him to die, or we can read this as Jesus calling to the leaders of Israel on behalf of His Father asking why they had forsaken Him.

Revelation 11:8 speaks of a spiritual crucifixion, which suggests that death is involved. So how was Christ crucified in Sodom?

**In all their affliction He was afflicted,** and the Angel of His presence saved them; in His love and in His pity He redeemed them; and **He bore them and carried them all the days of old.** Isaiah 63:9 (NKJV)

This One who is life itself was revealed to us, and we have seen Him. And now we testify and proclaim to you that **He is the One who is eternal life.** He was with the Father, and then He was revealed to us. 1 John 1:2

The Son radiates God's own glory and expresses the very character of God, and **He sustains everything by the mighty power of His command.** Hebrews 1:3

Every man, woman, and child that lives on this earth is sustained by the life in Christ. Every breath we breathe is given to us through Christ. This means that the Son of God is infinitely closer to us than a brother. (Prov 18:24). Since we all live by His life, He feels all our afflictions with us.

This means that He carries us through all the challenges of life. God's life sent to us through Christ is expressed by Paul in this way:

**"For in Him we live and move and exist.** As some of your own poets have said, 'We are His offspring.'" Acts 17:28

Every man, woman, and child in Sodom was living by the life that exists in Christ Jesus. Christ was touched by the feelings of their weaknesses; He felt their sorrows, suffering and pain. He felt in detail the agony of children raped by older men; He was pierced by their cruelty towards each other. All the while His still small voice spoke to them to turn from their wicked ways and find peace in good works, self-control, and righteousness. But His entreaties to their consciences were scorned.

Christ carried His Cross through the streets of Sodom. He was despised and rejected by them. Is there not a cry for justice from the weak, poor, and abused? The anguished cry of the victims in Sodom is matched by the Bible readers' demand for this traffic to stop. Don't we hear it often said nowadays that God should step in and do something about the injustice around us? It is at this point we need to understand God's wrath.

**'The whole land is brimstone, salt, and burning; it is not sown, nor does it bear, nor does any grass grow there, like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, which the LORD overthrew in His anger and His wrath.'** Deuteronomy 29:23 (NKJV)

We understand human wrath easily for we all have engaged in it. We feel the incorrect actions of another push us to the point where we angrily tell them they are wrong and, if need be, we lash out at them and inflict punishment upon them. But as God's thoughts are not our thoughts, let us check what the Bible says about God's wrath.

**"Then My anger shall be aroused against them in that day, and I will forsake them, and I will hide My face from them, and they shall be devoured. And many evils and troubles shall befall them, so that they will say in that day, 'Have not these evils come upon**

us because our God *is* not among us?’ And **I will surely hide My face in that day because of all the evil which they have done**, in that they have turned to other gods.” Deuteronomy 31:17-18 (NKJV)

“And when the LORD saw *it*, He spurned *them*, because of the provocation of His sons and His daughters. And He said: **‘I will hide My face from them, I will see what their end *will be***, for they *are* a perverse generation, children in whom *is* no faith. They have provoked Me to jealousy by *what* is not God; **they have moved Me to anger** by their foolish idols. But I will provoke them to jealousy by *those who are* not a nation; I will move them to anger by a foolish nation. **For a fire is kindled in My anger, and shall burn to the lowest hell**; it shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains.” Deuteronomy 32:19-22 (NKJV)

“They come to fight with the Chaldeans, but *only* to fill their places with the dead bodies of men whom I will slay in My anger and My fury, all for whose wickedness **I have hidden My face from this city**.” Jeremiah 33:5 (NKJV)

God’s anger is manifested by hiding His face and ceasing to uphold and protect people from the consequences of the evil they are doing. Jesus demonstrated the anger of His Father perfectly when He spoke to the leaders of Israel:

**“What sorrow awaits you teachers of religious law and you Pharisees. Hypocrites!** For you are like whitewashed tombs—beautiful on the outside but filled on the inside with dead people’s bones and all sorts of impurity. Outwardly you look like righteous people, but inwardly your hearts are filled with hypocrisy and lawlessness. What sorrow awaits you teachers of religious law and you Pharisees. Hypocrites! For you build tombs for the prophets your ancestors killed, and you decorate the monuments of the godly people your ancestors destroyed....

## THE DESTRUCTION OF SODOM

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones God’s messengers! How often I have wanted to gather your children together as a hen protects her chicks beneath her wings, but you wouldn’t let Me. **And now, look, your house is abandoned and desolate.**” Matthew 23:27-29,37-38

Jesus was angry at the leaders of Israel for living hypocritical lives and preventing the truth from reaching the people. His anger caused Him to pronounce that He was abandoning them to their own ways. He would no longer try to influence them to do right because they had completely rejected Him. Jesus did not kill any of the Jewish leaders who wanted to kill Him and who were causing most of the problems, instead He walked away and left them. He hid His face from them; He abandoned them to their own ways.

This is how God overthrew Sodom. When all the men of the city wanted to rape the two visitors, Lot tried to discourage them from doing such evil, leading them to want to kill him. This evil was the final action causing the Spirit of God to be withdrawn.

This is parallel to Jesus hanging upon the Cross, as both were the final actions that meant the total rejection of God. Darkness covered the whole land, showing that God’s Spirit had been withdrawn due to the leaders of the nation wanting to murder Jesus. Through this terrible moment Christ remains with the rejectors of God’s love and mercy and feels the agonies of their final moments. This is how Christ is spiritually crucified in the lives of those turning from God.

The blindness which the angels brought to the men of Sodom physically was only a manifestation of what their condition was spiritually.

So He overthrew [H2015] those cities, all the plain, all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground.  
Genesis 19:25 (NKJV)

The word overthrew in this text has a root meaning *to turn*. It can also carry the meaning *to turn aside, retire, turn back*. This same word is used as follows in various passages:

## MIRROR PRINCIPLE

And the LORD multiplied the people of Israel until they became too mighty for their enemies. Then He **turned** the Egyptians against the Israelites, and they plotted against the LORD's servants.  
Psalm 105:24-25

For they had not provided the Israelites with food and water in the wilderness. Instead, they hired Balaam to curse them, though our God **turned** the curse into a blessing. Nehemiah 13:2

How did God turn aside the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah? He turned His face away from them and hid it, no longer protecting her with His hand.

And greater is the iniquity of the daughter of my people, than the sin of **Sodom, that was overturned as in a moment, and no hands were stayed on her.** Lamentations 4:6 (YLT)

If God had burned Sodom to ashes, it could easily be said that He laid the hand of justice upon her and burned her to death – but the Bible says that “no hands was stayed” upon Sodom. God had turned aside and the consequences of her actions would now fall upon her.

The Bible tells us what happens to those who engage in sexual excess:

Do not practice homosexuality, having sex with another man as with a woman. It is a detestable sin. A man must not defile himself by having sex with an animal. And a woman must not offer herself to a male animal to have intercourse with it. This is a perverse act. Do not defile yourselves in any of these ways, for the people I am driving out before you have defiled themselves in all these ways. Because the entire land has become defiled, I am punishing the people who live there. **I will cause** [Hiph'il imperfect] **the land to vomit them out.** Leviticus 18:22-25

Notice another translation with regard to God causing the land to vomit out the people.

## THE DESTRUCTION OF SODOM

And the land is defiled: therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, **and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants.** Leviticus 18:25 (KJV)

In this case, the KJV provides a permissive context for the earth vomiting, as compared with the NLT which provides an active context, stating that God would cause the earth to vomit.

The land itself vomits out the people because no hand was upon Sodom to protect her or to harm her. God had hidden His face in His anger and Sodom was left to be vomited out by the laws of nature which Sodom had violated.

The earth suffers for the sins of its people, for they have twisted God's instructions, violated His laws, and broken His everlasting covenant. Therefore, a curse consumes the earth. Its people must pay the price for their sin. They are destroyed by fire, and only a few are left alive. Isaiah 24:5-6

This is similar to the story of Cain. God told him that the curse would come to him *from* the earth. In the time of the flood the people had corrupted the earth, and God destroyed them by hiding His face and letting the earth vomit them out. The same happened in the story of Sodom and Gomorrah. The area where Sodom was located was surrounded by tar or asphalt pits:

As it happened, the valley of the Dead Sea was filled with tar pits. And as the army of the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, some fell into the tar pits, while the rest escaped into the mountains. Genesis 14:10

The historian Josephus tells us exactly what happened to Sodom and Gomorrah. The following archaeological information might give us more of a clue on how those cities were destroyed by their own iniquities and not directly from the Lord.

4. The nature of the lake Asphaltitis is also worth describing. It is, as I have said already, bitter and unfruitful. It is so light [or thick] that it bears up the heaviest things that are thrown into it; nor is it



easy for any one to make things sink therein to the bottom, if he had a mind so to do. Accordingly, when Vespasian went to see it, he commanded that some who could not swim should have their hands tied behind them, and be thrown into the deep, when it so happened that they all swam as if a wind had forced them upwards.

Moreover, the change of the color of this lake is wonderful, for it changes its appearance thrice every day; and as the rays of the sun fall differently upon it, the light is variously reflected. However, **it casts up black clods of bitumen in many parts of it;** these swim at the top of the water, and resemble both in shape and bigness headless bulls; and when the laborers that belong to the lake come to it, and catch hold of it as it hangs together, they draw it into their ships; but when the ship is full, it is not easy to cut off the rest, for it is so tenacious as to make the ship hang upon its clods till they set it loose with the menstrual blood of women, and with urine, to which alone it yields. This bitumen is not only useful for the caulking of ships, but for the cure of men's bodies; accordingly, it is mixed in a great many medicines.

The length of this lake is five hundred and eighty furlongs, [116.5kms] where it is extended as far as Zoar in Arabia; and its breadth is a hundred and fifty. [30kms] The country of Sodom borders upon it. It was of old a most happy land, both for the fruits it bore and the riches of its cities, although it be now all burnt up. **It is related how, for the impiety of its inhabitants, it was burnt by lightning; in consequence of which there are still the remainders of that Divine fire,** and the traces [or shadows] of the five cities are still to be seen, as well as the ashes growing in their fruits; which fruits have a color as if they were fit to be eaten, but if you pluck them with your hands, they dissolve into smoke and ashes. And thus what is related of this land of Sodom hath these marks of credibility which our very sight affords us. Josephus, *War of the Jews*, Book 4, Chapter 8, Paragraph 4.

When men break the commandments of God, it charges the earth with frequencies that ultimately must be discharged. God had been holding

back the terrible storm that burst upon Sodom, but finally He hid His face and the earth vomited out its inhabitants. The tar pits were struck by lightning and the whole valley was catastrophically burnt as a result.

This would explain why the angels were in such a hurry to move Lot out of the city.

At dawn the next morning the angels became insistent. "Hurry," they said to Lot. "Take your wife and your two daughters who are here. **Get out right now, or you will be swept away in the destruction of the city!**" Genesis 19:15

If God was the one who would destroy the city with His hand, the angels could have taken as long as they liked. There would be no rush, as God would wait for them to get out before acting. But since it was the wickedness of the people of Sodom that corrupted the earth, the whole thing was about to blow up and the angels had to get Lot out of the city.

But how would the angels destroy this place? Most believe that God sent fire directly from heaven to destroy Sodom according to their reading of Genesis 19:24. Notice what the angels said to Lot. Again I want to provide two translations to show you how different translators present it:

"For we are about to destroy this city completely. The outcry against this place is so great it has reached the LORD, and He has sent us to destroy it." Genesis 19:13

"For we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the LORD; and the LORD hath sent us to destroy it." Genesis 19:13 (KJV)

See how the first version speaks of the outcry *against* the city, while the KJV speaks of the cry *of* the city? The difference is important, as we shall see.

The angels state they are about to destroy the city. The question is how will they do it? Let us dig deeper into what they said the Lord had told them. They stated that God had sent *them* to destroy it. Doesn't this

conflict with the claim that God *Himself* sent fire from heaven in Genesis 19:24? What part do the angels play in this? Let us consider the word *sent* in the phrase “The Lord has sent us to destroy it.” This particular Hebrew word is in the particular Hebrew form called *Piel*. Looking at the Brown, Driver, and Briggs Hebrew dictionary we see what this means:

1. to send off or away or out or forth, dismiss, give over, cast out
2. to let go, set free
3. to shoot forth (of branches)
4. to let down
5. to shoot

This word *send* can be expressed as *send away, dismiss or let go or set free*.

So this is how we could translate the verse:

For we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the LORD; and the LORD hath sent us to *let it go and set it free*. Genesis 19:13 (KJV)

We will go into more details about the work of angels later. But briefly let us note that the primary work of angels is to guard and protect the human family.

For the angel of the LORD is a guard; he surrounds and defends all who fear Him. Psalm 34:7

Therefore, angels are only servants—spirits sent to care for people who will inherit salvation. Hebrews 1:14

God sends His angels to protect everyone who has not fully given themselves over to Satan. When a group of people fully decide to turn against God, He commands His angels to step down from protecting them because they don't want His presence any more. On the night when all the men of the city came to rape the two angels who appeared as men, they closed the probation of the city. The wickedness of the

people had damaged the earth to such an extent that the electrical charge of the atmosphere was about to explode.

Up to this point the angels were holding back the full effect of human sinfulness on the earth. This type of work is expressed in this verse:

Then I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds so they did not blow on the earth or the sea, or even on any tree. Revelation 7:1

The angels that appeared to Lot had been helping to protect the city from the winds of strife created by the wickedness of the people. The presence of the angels brought an atmosphere of peace to calm down the effects of sin on the earth, or “hold back” the winds of strife. Once those angels were sent away, there was nothing to prevent the corruptions of the people of Sodom from destroying the place. This is the meaning of the angels that they were about to destroy the city. They were about to leave and once they left, everything would explode.

If there was a cry against Sodom from heaven, then the angels could be seen as coming to Sodom to arbitrarily destroy it. If the cry comes from Sodom itself as an expression of the sorrow, trauma and perversion taking place in the city, then when the angels are sent away there is nothing to stop the impact of that cry on the earth.

For the inhabitants of that plain who watched great bolts of lightning falling from the heavens, it could easily be seen as God Himself sending fire from heaven. This is what the servant of Job thought when Satan sent fire to burn up Job’s flocks.

While he was still speaking, another messenger arrived with this news: “**The fire of God has fallen from heaven** and burned up your sheep and all the shepherds. I am the only one who escaped to tell you.” Job 1:16

In the story of the flood we mentioned the use of the *Hiph’il* Hebrew form which can provide an active or a permissive meaning depending on the context. The language of Genesis 19:24-25 is the same as the language of Genesis 6:13. They both use the *Hiph’il* form:

And God said to Noah, “The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, **I will destroy** [Hiph’il] them with the earth. Genesis 6:13 (NKJV)

Then **the LORD rained** [Hiph’il] down fire and burning sulfur from the sky on Sodom and Gomorrah. Genesis 19:24

This means, depending on the context, Gen 19:24 can be read like this:

Then **the LORD permitted it to rain** [Hiph’il] down fire and burning sulfur from the sky on Sodom and Gomorrah. Genesis 19:24—My version.

Reading the text permissively aligns the story with the history of Josephus, as well as the obvious testimony of the life of Jesus.

Reading these texts in the active form, which the grammar permits us to do, captures for us the human trait of Projection which avoids personal responsibility for our actions. Seeing such great bolts of lightning strike the earth causing tremendous explosions that wiped out the entire valley, killing tens of thousands of people, can easily be pinned on God as the one who killed everyone in His anger. But that is only an assumption based on how *we* would act if we were God. It is an inference we make based on how *we think* God relates to His creation.

The actions of the angel visitors who came into the city caused the sin of the men of Sodom to abound to the point that it triggered the storm that would be unleashed the following morning. Their fury at having their lusts denied beckoned “Zeus’s thunderbolts” from the heavens. This is how the angels destroyed the city. They acted in a way to manifest in the men of Sodom their evil natures. At the same time they ceased to hold back the winds of the storm that was about to blow on the earth. But they didn’t want this to happen. They hoped that they would repent; they hoped for a last-minute conviction that would wake them up so they (and their children) could be saved – but it wasn’t so. Instead, this last attempt at mercy fully hardened the hearts of the people of Sodom.

One more vital piece of evidence we need to consider here. Were the people that God saved out of Sodom actually righteous? In his exuberance to show hospitality to his guests, Lot was willing to sacrifice the virginity of his daughters to the men of Sodom. This act is a violation of the Ten Commandments. Lot's mind was clouded by dwelling in Sodom. After escaping the city, Lot's daughters, believing they were the only ones left on the earth, schemed to get their father drunk so they could both sleep with him to have children. The Bible forbids children having sex with their parents.

None of you shall approach anyone who is near of kin to him, to uncover his nakedness: I *am* the LORD. The nakedness of your father or the nakedness of your mother you shall not uncover. She *is* your mother; you shall not uncover her nakedness. Leviticus 18:6-7

Neither Lot nor his daughters were more worthy than the inhabitants of Sodom with regard to keeping God's commandments. It was the prayers of Abraham, along with the desire of Lot to be hospitable to strangers, that saved him and his daughters.

We make this vital point that if God Himself destroyed the people of Sodom because they were wicked, to be consistent, He should have destroyed Lot and all his family. God was able to save them because of prayer and because Lot retained some of the principles of the kingdom of God. The Bible does refer to Lot as righteous (2 Peter 2:7), but Lot was not righteous because of his deeds; he was righteous by faith. His deeds made him deserving of a similar fate to the others at Sodom. What father would give his virgin daughters to a violent mob to be repeatedly raped? This is not righteous at all. The actions of Lot's wife reveal her rebellion against God. She explicitly disobeyed the command of the angels. This left her unprotected from the desolation of the huge explosion behind them. Lot's wife wasn't *more* wicked than the others, but she refused to obey in a time of great crisis and paid with her life.

There is plenty more evidence that can be provided on this story but sufficient has been given to show that, with regard to the story of Sodom

and Gomorrah, God did not personally burn thousands of babies and small children with His own hand. The people of Sodom, like Cain and like the antediluvians, had damaged the earth and corrupted it. Finally God had to hide His face in sorrow and allow the wicked to receive the consequences of their own actions.

As the people of Sodom were burning alive in great horror, Christ was “afflicted in all their affliction” (Isa 63:9); therefore Christ was spiritually crucified in Sodom as the book of Revelation tells us.

Shall we continue to blaspheme God’s character by stating that Sodom “was smitten of God and afflicted”, or will we look into the face of Jesus and realise that the story of Sodom and Gomorrah revealed the true horror of our own natures in a mirror; a wickedness which we project onto God to avoid the sad truth of our true depravity.

Why do we invoke the Mirror Principle in this story? Because the life of Christ on earth is inconsistent with burning sinners alive as punishment. The life of Christ on earth stands opposed to the idea of God burning little children to death. Christ tells us that He and His ministers come to save from sin, not to save from Himself striking men down.

This is how the mirror works. Any view of God that suggests something different to what Christ revealed on earth can only be a reflection of our evil natures projected back onto Him. It comes from our sinful mind and its faulty interpretation of the law, rather than the mind of Christ and His perfect living out of the law. Once this inconsistency is discerned, we are invited to dig deeper into Scripture to find the pieces which allow all the verses to harmonise.

The story of the Cross is the key that will unlock many of the stories of the Old Testament. The next obvious story connected to the theme of crucifixion is the command of God to Abraham to sacrifice his son.

But before we examine that story, we need to explore more deeply why God reflects or mirrors our thoughts back to us and why does He allow us to misunderstand His character in the process.

## CHAPTER 15

# DO YOU AGAPE ME?

One of the greatest challenges people have when encountering the Mirror Principle is that they struggle to understand why God would speak back to people their own thoughts. Why doesn't He simply say what He is thinking?

This important question finds sharp focus in situations where men have planned to kill others. How does God deal with them, especially when they are men that know God? An example of this that is discussed at length in the Bible is the story of Saul, the first king of Israel. He had embarrassed himself by making a rash vow, losing the confidence of his own soldiers. He felt that the way to regain his prestige was to destroy some of the surrounding nations and thereby cover himself in glory. Let's see how God would address this when He is called upon.

Saul's rash vow was that none of his soldiers should eat until he, Saul, had been avenged of his enemies – meaning no one could eat until Saul was satisfied with the victory gained. His son, Jonathan, had not heard the command and took some honey to sustain himself in battle. After Israel's victory, the men were so hungry that they raced upon the spoils of war and ate meat containing blood which was against the commandments of God. Saul wanted to immediately continue the war and completely wipe out his enemies, but the priest suggested to Saul they should ask God what to do.



## MIRROR PRINCIPLE

Then Saul said, "Let's chase the Philistines all night and plunder them until sunrise. Let's destroy every last one of them."

His men replied, "We'll do whatever you think is best."

But the priest said, "Let's ask God first."

So Saul asked God, "Should we go after the Philistines? Will You help us defeat them?" But God made no reply that day.

Then Saul said to the leaders, "Something's wrong! I want all my army commanders to come here. We must find out what sin was committed today." 1 Samuel 14:36-38

Like the story of the Canaanite woman who came to Jesus asking for help for her daughter, the response given by God is silence. This brings out more clearly the thoughts of Saul. The king is now looking for an atonement for whatever seems to be displeasing God.

Saul was irritated by the fact that his son had taken centre stage in the war against Israel's enemies. Saul was anxious about his crown after he had foolishly decided to take on the role of the priests and offer a sacrifice to the Lord in the process of seeking God's guidance. Samuel was really unhappy when he saw what Saul did, and he told Saul that the kingdom would be taken from him. From that day forward, Saul was troubled, moody, and watchful of any person who might appear to be a threat to his throne. The actions of his son could trigger a movement amongst the people to dethrone Saul and install his son. The true wickedness of Saul is manifested in the words he speaks when looking for the reason for why God was not speaking to him.

"I vow by the name of the LORD who rescued Israel that the sinner will surely die, even if it is my own son Jonathan!" But no one would tell him what the trouble was. 1 Samuel 14:39

In these words, we discern an echo of the Cross. Jonathan was completely innocent of any wrong doing. In order for the king to solve his problems, he is willing to offer up his own son as a sacrificial atonement.

In like manner, the Christian world thinks this is how God solves His problems; He offers up His first-born Son as an atonement for the ills of His kingdom. The implications of this are vast, but we won't delay now to consider them.

The Lord allows the thoughts of Saul to manifest themselves completely by letting the casting of lots discern who was the guilty party for why God wasn't talking to Saul.

Then Saul said, "Jonathan and I will stand over here, and all of you stand over there."

And the people responded to Saul, "Whatever you think is best."

Then Saul prayed, "O LORD, God of Israel, please show us who is guilty and who is innocent." Then they cast sacred lots, and Jonathan and Saul were chosen as the guilty ones, and the people were declared innocent.

Then Saul said, "Now cast lots again and choose between me and Jonathan." And Jonathan was shown to be the guilty one.

"Tell me what you have done," Saul demanded of Jonathan.

"I tasted a little honey," Jonathan admitted. "It was only a little bit on the end of my stick. Does that deserve death?"

"Yes, Jonathan," Saul said, "you must die! May God strike me and even kill me if you do not die for this." 1 Samuel 14:40-44

Israel's love for Jonathan urges them to gather together to block the insanity of the king.

But the people broke in and said to Saul, "Jonathan has won this great victory for Israel. Should he die? Far from it! As surely as the LORD lives, not one hair on his head will be touched, for God helped him do a great deed today." So the people rescued Jonathan, and he was not put to death. 1 Samuel 14:45

Rather than securing his throne by killing his son, Saul had now put the entire populace against him by his foolish tough-guy act. Through

Jonathan, Saul had reclaimed his dominions in relation to the Philistines, but now he was in danger of losing the hearts of the men of Israel. He had to win back their loyalty.

Now when Saul had secured his grasp on Israel's throne, he fought against his enemies in every direction—against Moab, Ammon, Edom, the kings of Zobah, and the Philistines. And wherever he turned, he was victorious. He performed great deeds and conquered the Amalekites, saving Israel from all those who had plundered them. 1 Samuel 14:47-48

Saul had a clear motivation for destroying the surrounding nations. He wanted to regain the respect of his nation and secure his throne with them. If such a man was willing to kill his own son to protect his throne, then how hard would it be for him to slaughter the sons and daughters of an enemy nation?

In this context God now speaks an extremely confronting statement:

“This is what the LORD of Heaven's Armies has declared: I have decided to settle accounts with the nation of Amalek for opposing Israel when they came from Egypt. Now go and completely destroy the entire Amalekite nation—men, women, children, babies, cattle, sheep, goats, camels, and donkeys.” 1 Samuel 15:2-3

Reading this text outside of the character of Jesus, leaves you with the terrifying thought that God will order the slaughter of small children if required.

As this completely opposes the character of Jesus, it is evident the mirror is operating. This leads the faithful Bible student to seek for further evidence of why God said this. In the Young's Literal Translation, we find something interesting:

“Thus said Jehovah of Hosts, I have looked after that which Amalek did to Israel, that which he laid for him in the way in his going up out of Egypt. **Now, go, and thou hast smitten Amalek, and devoted all that it hath, and thou hast no pity on it, and hast put**

**to death from man unto woman, from infant unto suckling, from ox unto sheep, from camel unto ass.”** 1 Samuel 15:2-3 (YLT)

God knew the thoughts of Saul and presents them to him, telling him what is in his heart. Saul finds in these words the assurance he is seeking to advance with his original plans. God warns Saul about Saul’s own plans; Saul twists the words of God to make them suit his own agenda. Saul heard the word of God the way he wanted to hear it. He was a hearer of the word but not a doer. (James 1:23).

Do we honestly think that a man who was willing to murder his own innocent son to protect his throne would qualify to be the man whom God would use to fight against His enemies? How does this even make sense?

The challenge in the words spoken to Saul is that there is enough ambiguity in the Hebrew to allow the words to be understood differently. The question that must be asked is why did God let Himself be misunderstood? With so many young children’s lives at stake, couldn’t He have made things clearer to Saul?

The Psalmist declares part of the problem when describing what Israel repeatedly did to God.

Yes, again and again they tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel. Psalm 78:41 (NKJV)

Men hold God at a distance causing them to misread what He is saying, attributing to Him their own thoughts. Thus, God is limited in what He can say and do.

A very good example of this is when Jesus, just resurrected, asked Peter whether he loved Him. This was a tough question for Peter after his terrible failure during the trial of Christ before His crucifixion.

After breakfast Jesus asked Simon Peter, “Simon son of John, do you love Me more than these?” “Yes, Lord,” Peter replied, “You know I love You.” “Then feed My lambs,” Jesus told him.

Jesus repeated the question: "Simon son of John, do you love Me?" "Yes Lord," Peter said, "You know I love You." "Then take care of My sheep," Jesus said.

A third time He asked him, "Simon son of John, do you love Me?" Peter was hurt that Jesus asked the question a third time. He said, "Lord, You know everything. You know that I love You." Jesus said, "Then feed My sheep." John 21:15-17

Within the Old Covenant framework, it seems that Jesus is pressing Peter because of his terrible failure. Justice demands that Peter be confronted until it hurts; he needs to experience a little humiliation in response to his failure. Considering how terribly Peter failed his master, the actions of Jesus are perceived as very merciful and Christ is faithfully wounding his friend in order to restore him to favour.

With a little more consideration, it must be recognized that no human being has the capacity to love Jesus. As we discovered in chapter four, the human heart is at war with God and His Son. We do not seek for God let alone love Him. We are also reminded by John:

We love him, because he first loved us. 1 John 4:19 (KJV)

Only when we believe that God and His Son love us, can we begin to respond to them with love. Therefore, in the New Covenant, the request of Jesus "do you love me" is impossible because we can't do anything good. Why then, did Jesus ask this question?

After Peter had denied his Lord, he became deeply distressed about his failure. He thought He loved Jesus, but his actions showed otherwise. Peter himself questioned whether he really loved Jesus as he claimed. Therefore, the question of Jesus to Peter is a reflection of what Peter was already thinking. Jesus was meeting Peter where he was and Peter was being judged by his own judgment.

Peter's self-doubt actually made him unable to give the answer Jesus was looking for. The English translation masks the deeper issue taking place between Peter and Jesus. We will insert the Greek word into the texts we quoted previously and discover something very interesting.

## DO YOU AGAPE ME?

After breakfast Jesus asked Simon Peter, “Simon son of John, do you love [agape] Me more than these?” “Yes, Lord,” Peter replied, “You know I love [phileo] You.” “Then feed My lambs,” Jesus told him.

Jesus repeated the question: “Simon son of John, do you [agape] love Me?” “Yes, Lord,” Peter said, “You know I love [phileo] You.” “Then take care of My sheep,” Jesus said.

A third time He asked him, “Simon son of John, do you love [phileo] Me?” Peter was hurt that Jesus asked the question a third time. He said, “Lord, You know everything. You know that I love [phileo] You.” Jesus said, “Then feed My sheep.” John 21:15-17

What essentially is the difference between *agape* and *phileo*? We get the word *brotherly love* from *phileo*. *Agape* means *to love* while *phileo* means *to be a friend*. A friend can display affection and feel a sense of attachment because of a common cause or shared history but *agape* loves under all circumstances. The Strong’s Concordance contrasts the two words this way:

phileō

From G5384; to be a friend to (fond of [an individual or an object]), that is, have affection for (**denoting personal attachment, as a matter of sentiment or feeling**; while G25 [agape] is wider, embracing especially the judgment **and the deliberate assent of the will as a matter of principle, duty and propriety**: the two thus stand related very much as G2309 and G1014, or as G2372 and G3563 respectively; **the former being chiefly of the heart and the latter of the head**); specifically to kiss (as a mark of tenderness): - kiss, love.

*Phileo* springs from the emotions, while *agape* anchors in the will. We might even say that *agape* is the source from which *phileo* can be consistently maintained. Our feelings are variable and sometimes unstable. *Agape* ensures that our love for others doesn’t change, even if they hurt us or turn against us.

## MIRROR PRINCIPLE

Why did Peter answer the question of Jesus with a different word to what Jesus asked? If Peter did not have the abiding assurance that Jesus had unwavering agape love for him, then Peter could not reflect this back to Jesus. The consistency of our love for Christ is anchored in the assurance of Christ's steadfast love for us.

Peter's actions caused him to doubt whether Jesus could love him; he could not answer Jesus with the type of love that Jesus asked him about. Of course, Jesus knew this for He knew the heart of Peter intimately, as He does all of us.

Peter felt a sense of condemnation for what he had done. This condemnation which he placed upon himself did not allow Peter to receive the full agape of Christ, thus leaving Peter unable to return to Christ the agape which was shown to him.

When Jesus asked Peter the third time "*Do you phileo me,*" He was not simply asking Peter a third time "*Do you love me,*" He was asking Peter, "*Are you limiting my love for you to phileo?*" "*Do you simply have love for me as a brother? Do you not see in me one who is giving all for you? Do you not see that I don't condemn you for the mistake you made? If you could see this Peter, then you would know that I agape you and this would allow you to agape me.*"

This story is vitally important. Peter's self-condemnation limited the love of God to brotherly love; a love that could be changed by circumstances. When we limit God's love like this, then we lose sight of His agape. Notice what happens when we lose agape.

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, [agape] I have become **sounding brass** or a clanging cymbal. 1 Corinthians 13:1 (NKJV)

Just to make this clear, when we condemn ourselves or others, the *agape* of God is hidden from us. Therefore, if we can't grasp God's *agape* for us, we can't agape God or others. We then become brass minded.

What is fascinating about brass is that this is the metal that was used in the courtyard of the sanctuary for the altar of sacrifice and the laver of

water. The laver was made from the brass mirrors of the women of Israel.

Bezalel made the bronze washbasin and its bronze [brass] stand from **bronze mirrors** [H4759] donated by the women who served at the entrance of the Tabernacle. Exodus 38:8

Brass was used by Israel to make mirrors into which they could see themselves. What is interesting about the word *mirror* in the above verse is that the same word can also mean *vision*.

H4759 mar'ah

Feminine of H4758; **a vision**; also (causatively) a mirror: - looking glass, vision

We note the word used for *vision* in the book of Daniel chapter eight:

And I heard a human voice calling out from the Ulai River, "Gabriel, tell this man the meaning of his vision." [H4758] Daniel 8:16

Is there a message here in this word *vision*? Could the visions recounted by the prophets be affected by the level of brass (lack of agape) in their thinking? When the prophets Daniel and John looked upon Christ, Daniel saw His hands and feet as brass but saw gold around His waist. John only saw the feet of Christ as brass.

I looked up and saw a man dressed in linen clothing, **with a belt of pure gold around his waist**. His body looked like a precious gem. His face flashed like lightning, and his eyes flamed like torches. **His arms and feet shone like polished bronze**, and his voice roared like a vast multitude of people. Daniel 10:5-6

And standing in the middle of the lampstands was someone like the Son of Man. **He was wearing a long robe with a gold sash across His chest**. His head and His hair were white like wool, as white as snow. And His eyes were like flames of fire. **His feet were like polished bronze** refined in a furnace, and His voice thundered like mighty ocean waves. Revelation 1:13-15



## MIRROR PRINCIPLE

Within the Sanctuary, we see a courtyard containing an altar and laver of brass, but the objects in the Holy Place and Most Holy Place are either gold entirely or Acacia wood covered with gold. The footings of the temple were silver.

The progression from the court to the Most Holy Place is a journey from brass to gold and silver. In this process we are invited to have our brass thinking purified out of us.

“Son of man, the house of Israel is to me become dross: all they *are* brass, and tin, and iron, and lead, in the midst of the furnace; they *are even* the dross of silver.” Ezekiel 22:18 (KJV)

The prophets were subject to this brass thinking also, but God spoke through their brass (lack of agape) understanding to give us truth. The words the prophets spoke through brass diagnose our sinful condition, while the words they speak through gold give us the remedy. The ability to discern the difference between brass and gold in their writings is revealed in the character of Jesus.

In the very word *vision* is contained the principle of the mirror! The integrity of the prophets is not diminished in the slightest because the Word of God is given to reveal both our sinfulness and God’s glory.

Notice the response of Isaiah to seeing the glory of God.

It was in the year King Uzziah died that **I saw the Lord. He was sitting on a lofty throne, and the train of His robe filled the Temple.** Attending Him were mighty seraphim, each having six wings. With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. They were calling out to each other, “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of Heaven’s Armies! The whole earth is filled with His glory!” Their voices shook the Temple to its foundations, and the entire building was filled with smoke. **Then I said, “It’s all over! I am doomed, for I am a sinful man. I have filthy lips, and I live among a people with filthy lips. Yet I have seen the King, the LORD of Heaven’s Armies.”** Isaiah 6:1-5

## DO YOU AGAPE ME?

Isaiah condemned himself in the light of God's glory. But when we see God's glory and feel our utter depravity, we should trust that God's grace will abound over and above our sinfulness; we can trust the words of Jesus "neither do I condemn you, go and sin no more." (John 8:11).

The symbolism here is astounding. When we condemn ourselves or others and put this judgment in place of God's *agape* for us, we unwittingly make God in our image and we begin to imagine that He is like us. One act of condemnation towards ourselves or others obliterates *agape* and then we imagine God to possess a character which condemns and destroys like we do.

Owe nothing to anyone—except for your obligation to love [agape] one another. If you love your neighbor, you will fulfill the requirements of God's law. Romans 13:8

When we have the assurance of God's *agape*, then it will be revealed in the keeping of the law of God. Breaking the law of God reveals we don't believe God has *agape* for us but that we are deserving of punishment and possibly death.

"But if you refuse to listen to the LORD your God and do not obey all the commands and decrees I am giving you today, all these curses will come and overwhelm you: Your towns and your fields will be cursed. Your fruit baskets and breadboards will be cursed. Your children and your crops will be cursed. The offspring of your herds and flocks will be cursed. Wherever you go and whatever you do, you will be cursed. The LORD Himself will send on you curses, confusion, and frustration in everything you do, until at last you are completely destroyed for doing evil and abandoning Me. The LORD will afflict you with diseases until none of you are left in the land you are about to enter and occupy. The LORD will strike you with wasting diseases, fever, and inflammation, with scorching heat and drought, and with blight and mildew. These disasters will pursue you until you die. **The skies above will be as unyielding**

**as bronze, and the earth beneath will be as hard as iron.”**

Deuteronomy 28:15-23

God tells us in Deuteronomy that when we break His commandments, the heavens will become bronze or brass over our heads. This means that our perception of God is that He is a reflection of ourselves. It is we in our carnal nature who do not forgive ourselves or others, and we think God is just like us.

These *things* you have done, and I kept silent; You thought that I was altogether like you; *but* I will rebuke you, and set *them* in order before your eyes. Psalm 50:21 (NKJV)

God tells us that we think He is like us. The thing that causes this is we do not believe that God can *agape* us because we judge ourselves deserving of punishment.

In the very same chapter where Jesus asks Peter if he has *agape* for him, John, the author of the book of John reveals himself as the disciple which Jesus loved.

Peter turned around and saw behind them the disciple Jesus loved [agaped]—the one who had leaned over to Jesus during supper and asked, “Lord, who will betray You?” John 21:20

John reveals the answer to Peter’s dilemma. John believed that Jesus loved him. John had also forsaken Jesus (Matt 26:56), but he embraced the forgiving love of Jesus and didn’t believe Jesus condemned him. Therefore, John could reflect agape-love back to Jesus. As John says in his epistle, “we love Him because He first loved us.” (1 John 4:19).

Here we find the greatest reason why men and women can’t see the truth of God’s character. The condemnation by which they judge themselves or others, prevents them from accepting the *agape* of God, just like Peter. His own judgment of his situation limited the love of Jesus for him and hid from Peter the true love Jesus had for him.

This story helps us to understand why men like Saul misunderstood the words of God. Saul’s condemnation of his son as a result of his own self-

condemnation for his previous failures caused him not to hear the Word of God correctly. As Jesus was speaking to Peter his own thoughts to bring this issue to the surface, so God did the same to Saul, bringing his murderous thoughts to the surface. As Saul heard them without knowing of God's agape, he could only discern in those words a confirmation of his own traits of character. As James tells us, those who hear the word of God but don't follow it read in the words of God a mirror of themselves.

Although Saul never came to know God's true character, thankfully before Peter died, he moved from simply *phileo* to *agape*. As he writes in his epistle:

But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness [phileo], and to brotherly kindness love [agape].  
2 Peter 1:5-7 (NKJV)

Peter overcame his self-condemnation by accepting the complete *agape* of God through Christ. This allowed him to add to his *phileo*, *agape*.

Will we do the same? Without it, we shall be as sounding brass; God will appear to be like us and we will read the Bible thinking God is like us. The key to believing the truth of God's character is to accept that all your sins are freely forgiven and that God does not condemn you but He has complete *agape* for you. Are you the disciple that Jesus loves or are you questioning whether God can love you because you are condemning yourself for your sins? What you choose alters radically how you read the Bible and how you view God.

## CHAPTER 16

# VEIL REMOVAL TOOLBOX

In the first chapter of this book I presented the spark that ignited my search for our Father in heaven. The tears of my father as he spoke endearingly of his father awakened in me the principle of tenderness that should exist between a father and his child. Through the parental relationship, God spoke to me of His love for me as His son.

In chapters two and three this principle of tenderness was extended into the intimacy of marriage and the joys of fatherhood. The sweetness and joyful longing that ideally exist between husband and wife beckon the soul to consider who created the framework for such a state of things to exist. As we stated in chapter two, God calls to us through the institution of marriage and says:

*“When that day comes,” says the LORD, “you will call Me ‘my husband’ instead of ‘my master.’” Hosea 2:16*

When marriage is contracted in the love of Christ, the heart is opened to see the Father as a tender, caring and devoted husband who is always thinking, planning and providing for His bride. Within the love that exists in a marriage there is never a thought of the husband killing his wife. Love can't exist where the threat of death exists. When a couple

pledge to love one another forever, this pledge does not include any principle of destruction. In our human context, the vow that states “till death do us part” does not in any way suggest that the death comes about through the husband killing his wife. Such thoughts are absurd.

It is true that in this world husbands do kill their wives and wives their husbands, but this occurs outside of the realm of love, commitment and intimacy, and it most certainly occurs outside the realm of God’s *agape* love and His commandments.

Chapter three provides the counterpart to the love that I saw my father had for his father. Now as a father myself, I could begin to comprehend the truth of these words:

And a voice from heaven said, “This is My dearly loved Son, who brings Me great joy.” Matthew 3:17

The joy of holding my sons in my arms renders impossible the thought that one day I would kill them for incorrect behaviour. Once again the notion is completely absurd.

Just before Jesus left this earth He spoke these beautiful words:

“Don’t cling to Me,” Jesus said, “for I haven’t yet ascended to the Father. But go find My brothers and tell them, ‘I am ascending to My Father and your Father, to My God and your God.’” John 20:17

Jesus tells us that His Father is our Father and that His God is our God. This means every single human being is a child of God and is deeply loved by Him. By invoking the name Father for us, Jesus shows us how we should look upon Him. No child can thrive and prosper with the notion that at any moment his father could kill him for his errors. Again, such an idea is wildly absurd.

The point of the first three chapters is to provide the **first tool** for our toolbox; the first principle for finding the truth of our Father. The love, intimacy, tenderness, joy and tranquillity that we all long for and should exist in a family is a window into the character of God. It is the foundational principle of finding Him. It is the spark that ignites the

flame of love in the soul and draws it into the bosom of the Father of lights.

For many children, tenderness, love and kindness have not been shown them. Their experience has only been one of condemnation, violence, self-preservation and hatred. How can a child who has passed through this experience comprehend the love that should exist between family members?

Even if it has not been experienced, has not every child yearned to be loved, hugged and held tight to the breast of their parents? Is there not a divine spark in the soul that lights every person coming into the world? Although Satan seeks to crush the hopes of children through wicked parents, the Spirit of Christ still reaches to every child, calling them to seek for a love that will never let them go. Speaking of Christ, the apostle John stated:

The One who is the true light, who gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. John 1:9

Throughout each and every day of our lives, the Spirit of God is calling to us, inviting us into His family kingdom of love and tenderness. If we do not resist the Spirit of God, we will be led to consider the earthly life of Jesus as the supreme manifestation of what God is like.

“For no one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws them to Me, ...” John 6:44

Our Father in heaven draws us to consider His Son who provides for us the only bridge to the Father.

Jesus told him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through Me.” John 14:6

Jesus Christ as revealed in the Gospels is the **second and most important element in our toolbox** for removing the veil hiding the Father’s face from us. This element we discussed in chapter five.

“I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. ...I have manifested Your name

[character] to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word." John 17:4,6 (NKJV)

For every child who was rejected, hurt or crushed by their parents or caregivers, these words offer precious hope:

And a voice from heaven said, "This is My dearly loved Son, who brings Me great joy." Matthew 3:17

...to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which **He made us accepted in the Beloved.** Ephesians 1:6 (NKJV)

The beams of light that settled upon Jesus in the form of a dove speak of the Father's blessing and delight in His Son. This is the supreme manifestation of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The words spoken by the Father are as surely spoken to us as they were to Him, for Jesus said that His Father is also our Father and thus we also receive the outpouring of the Father's Spirit when we believe these words. In these words we see the fulfilment of the Psalm which says:

Even if my father and mother abandon me, the LORD will hold me close. Psalm 27:10

In the person of Jesus, we see directly into the Father's face. In Christ's healing of the sick, caring for the poor, and preaching hope and love to all, we see the Father. Jesus lovingly confronted wrongdoing and meekly received condemnation, persecution, and death at the hands of His enemies. In all this He revealed the character of His Father.

"You have heard the law that says, 'Love your neighbor' and hate your enemy. But I say, love your enemies! Bless those who curse you. Do good to those who hate you. Pray for those who persecute you! In that way, **you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven.** For He gives His sunlight to both the evil and the good, and He sends rain on the just and the unjust alike." Matthew 5:43-45



Jesus never killed anyone, therefore revealing the truth of His Father's character as written in the Ten Commandments: "you shall not kill."

In the light of the character of Christ we have the greatest tool to penetrate the dark sayings of the Old Testament and see the face of our Father. (2 Cor 3:14).

In chapter four we discovered the **third tool** in our toolbox, which relates to the obvious subject of *why* the veil is there in the first place. The darkness that surrounds the character of our heavenly Father stems directly from the lies which the human race received from Satan. When Adam took the fruit of the tree, he unwittingly embraced the darkness flowing out of the heart of Satan, and this darkness became Adam's prison barring him from finding his way to the Father.

No one is truly wise; **no one is seeking God**. All have turned away; all have become useless. **No one does good, not a single one**.  
Romans 3:11-12

The mind governed by the flesh is **hostile** to God; it does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Roman 8:7 (NIV)

This hostility towards God was hidden in the heart of Adam. The fear of death to which Adam was afflicted after the fall was a projection of his unwitting desire to kill God's Son.<sup>13</sup>

And they, **as Adam**, transgressed a covenant, there they dealt treacherously against me. Hosea 6:7 (YLT)

Our Father tries to reveal to us in different ways how deep this enmity within us goes, as we shall discover in later chapters.

Because our minds are naturally hostile to God, our default method of engaging Him is to twist everything He says against Him. This is why we can't read the Old Testament truthfully; we will always twist it to our destruction unless we have the Spirit of Christ in us to lighten the

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<sup>13</sup> See chapter 4 of the book *At-one-ment*. Available at [fatheroflove.info](http://fatheroflove.info) for more details on this.

Old Testament so we can read it without the veil of darkness. The apostle Peter touches on this subject here:

...speaking of these things in all of his [Paul's] letters. Some of his comments are hard to understand, and those who are ignorant and unstable have twisted his letters to mean something quite different, just as they do with other parts of Scripture. And this will result in their destruction. 2 Peter 3:16

It is critical for us to understand that it is impossible for us to read the Bible unaided by Christ. Every time we read it we will default to a wrong understanding because our ways are not God's ways. Embracing this principle will lead us to humbly plead with God to teach us the truth.

In chapter six we tested this principle of how easily people misunderstand the Bible by studying the words of Jesus "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me." Once we accept the words of Christ that He never spoke anything of Himself but only what His Father gave Him to say (John 12:49), we then revealed that Jesus was actually calling out to the Jewish leaders asking them why they had forsaken His Father. These words spoken by Christ are the supreme example of how easily humans twist Scripture according to their understanding.

It is natural for us to think that God will abandon the sinner to die. Christianity teaches that Christ took our place and suffered the punishment that we deserved. Therefore, Christ represents our understanding of what God does to sinners whom He abandons.

The ability to read the words of Christ in two completely different ways introduced to us the subject matter found in chapters seven and eight. In the face of Christ we look into the mirror that perfectly reflects the face of God. When we do not look into the face of Christ, our reading of the Bible will only reflect our natural face. The Two Mirrors are described in these two passages:

But we all, **with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord**, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord. 2 Corinthians 3:18 (NKJV)

For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, **he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror**; James 1:23 (NKJV)

These Two Mirrors give to us the **fourth tool** in our toolbox for removing the veil of darkness. We then tested this principle in chapter nine regarding the story of the flood. We applied the principle of looking directly at texts like Genesis 6:7 where God said He would destroy the whole earth. To accept God would destroy the whole earth with every living thing contradicts what Jesus revealed when He was here on earth. Looking into the mirror of the face of Christ urges us to question our initial reading of Genesis 6:7. Whenever God does not act like Jesus as revealed in the Gospels, we can be certain we are looking into a mirror of ourselves.

As we continued to study, we discovered the truth that God spoke to Cain: that sin curses the earth and that this curse would fall back upon the sinner. Due to the fact that men's thoughts were only evil continually, it corrupted the earth to such an extent that the earth finally collapsed under the weight of human sinfulness. Therefore, we find that human sinfulness damages the earth resulting in floods, fire, earthquakes and storms. Here we find our **fifth tool**. This is why God stated "I will destroy them with the earth," which correctly understood means that God would not prevent the earth from destroying the entire human race except those entering the ark.

The fact that almost all people who read the Bible believe that God personally destroyed the world with a flood, including all people less Noah and his family, shows that almost no one is looking into the face of Jesus to remove the veil hanging over this story. Unwittingly, men forget the words of Jesus that no one can come to the Father except through the revelation given in the earthly life of Jesus. They fail to allow this revelation to mediate for them the stories which appear to indicate a violent God who personally administers punishment.

Connected to this fifth tool is a **sixth tool** that we discussed concerning the destruction of Sodom. The angels who are sent to hold back the winds of strife created by human sinfulness are finally commanded to leave the place they once protected because of human determination to resist God. The presence of angels holds back the wicked effects of men on the earth, but when angels finally move away the effects of sin will allow the earth to vomit out its inhabitants.

This brings us to the **seventh tool** in our toolbox, which is an extension of the third tool concerning the depravity and darkness in men. The seventh tool exposes the inability of men to take responsibility for their actions. In chapter ten we examined the human trait of Projection, which in its negative form is a means of the human agent projecting negative elements in itself onto God.

The Word of God has the ability to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart, (Heb 4:12), therefore it has the ability to diagnose the human trait of Projection. It does so by exposing Projection through the way the Two Mirrors work to save the soul. We provided the story of how God dealt with Adam after his fall where God stated, “the man is become like one of us to know good and evil,” as an example of how God uses the mirror to cause the sinfulness of man to be magnified to the point where it is clearly seen. Then as men look into the mirror of the life of Christ, the contrast is immediately seen and the moment of reckoning arrives. The Spirit of God convicts the soul of righteousness in the person of Christ and the soul surrenders to the grace of God, without works, and thus becomes righteous by faith.

We need to address how this process worked in the Old Testament, as people in this era did not have the earthly life of Jesus manifested to them. They had to depend upon the Spirit of Christ which was in them, (1 Pet 1:11), (also symbolised in the principle of the seed of the woman, Gen 3:15) to lead them to grace. But we will come back to this later.

The principle of Projection can also be understood as a principle of accommodation. This has been understood by many Bible scholars. This principle states that God takes responsibility for that which He allows.

In other words, that which states God is taking action actually is God allowing men the consequences of their own choices. One Bible scholar expressed it this way:

“In the language of scripture, natural consequences are sometimes spoken of as though they were pre-ordained and irrevocable decrees. What happens solely through the permission of the Almighty, in the ordinary course of his Providence, is described as though it had taken place through some special and irresistible intervention of his hand. This is a mode of writing peculiar to the Hebrew idiom; an idiom which prevails everywhere throughout the New Testament, as well as the Old. Thus, when the sacred writers represent God as “blinding the eyes of men that they should not see, and hardening their hearts that they should not understand;” their meaning generally is that he does not powerfully interfere to prevent those evils which are the natural fruits of our own folly, perverseness, and impenitence.” (John Goodge Foyster, *Sermons*, 1826)

The limitation of expressing things in this way is that it does not address the underlying reality that men project these things onto God and make Him responsible for their actions. By God stating that He “blinds eyes” and “hardens hearts,” He is spelling out clearly the human trait of projecting blame onto God for the self-delusion sinners bring on themselves.

The **eighth tool** is how the Two Mirrors are expressed in the ideas of the Old and New Covenant, which are two different ways man and God relate to each other. The Old Covenant is the ministration of death to fully reveal to us in our natural mirror the true extent of our depravity. Paul describes this work as glorious (2 Cor 3:9), but how much more glorious is the ministration of the Spirit that abounds toward us as we look into the mirror of Christ who is the image of the invisible God.

This brings us to the apex of this book, which is what I have termed the Mirror Principle. It is the use of these Two Mirrors described in the Bible to bring a person back into the bosom of the Father and out of the realms

of human darkness and misunderstanding of His precious character. These Two Mirrors as revealed in the Two Covenants are what provided me the doorway to lift the veil covering my mind when I read the Old Testament.

As we read all the stories of the Old Testament, the ministration of death reveals the inner thoughts we all possess in what we attribute to God. We are all destined, by our twisted nature, to understand that God obliterated the world, wiping out countless millions of souls in the flood. But God knows what we are like and how we think, and He has a way of gently letting us see our wickedness to the point of despairing of ourselves, all while encouraging us to come to His Son as the precious answer to the problem we have. It is through Him that we might see the face of God.

It is a delicate process, for the majority of the world do not consent to accept the diagnosis, choosing rather to continue to project their depravity onto others and God – this is the terrible hardening of man’s heart. It is here we pause in wonder at the reality of the words of Christ that narrow is the way that leads to eternal life and there are few who will find it. (Matt 7:14). The gap between the Two Mirrors is one small step for the individual, yet it proves to be too great of a leap for the majority of mankind.

So I present to you a summary of eight things in our toolbox before moving onto the ninth, which is the most sublime and breathtaking principle of all and upon which we owe everything.

Tools	Bible Evidence
1. The tenderness of God as revealed in family relationships.	Prov 17:6; 30:19; Matt 3:17; Eph 5:22-24; Jer 9:23-24; Eph 1:6

MIRROR PRINCIPLE

2. The complete revelation of the Father's character in the life of Jesus Christ as revealed on earth and written in the four Gospels of the New Testament.	John 5:19,30,43; 14:6,9; 17:4,6; Heb 1:3-4; Col 1:15; 2 Cor 3:14
3. The hostility of the human heart against God which causes wilful misrepresentation of His character.	Rom 3:10-18; Rom 8:7; Isa 55:8-9
4. The Two Mirrors. Christ as the mirror of the Father's character vs the mirror of ourselves when we seek to look directly upon God outside of Christ.	2 Cor 3:18 James 1:23
5. Human sinfulness curses the earth resulting in the earth vomiting out its inhabitants.	Gen 4:13; Lev 18:25; Isa 24:4-6
6. Angel Hedge.	Ps 34:7; Heb 1:14; Job 1:10
7. The human trait of projecting evil within oneself onto others and especially onto God.	Ps 50:21
8. The use of the Two Mirrors within the Two Covenants called the ministration of death and the ministration of righteousness.	2 Cor 3:7-18

The ninth tool we explained in chapter 14 in the story of Sodom. The book of revelation spoke of Christ being crucified spiritually in Sodom. We discovered that as Christ gives life to every person coming into the world; He personally feels all the sorrow and pain that a person feels. We learned in Isaiah 63:9 that Christ is afflicted in all our afflictions and

surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. (Isa 53:4). The literal Hebrew translation makes this link with us even more concrete:

Surely our sicknesses He hath borne, and our pains—he hath carried them... Isaiah 53:4 (YLT)

In order to give each one of us the chance to realise how sinful we are, Christ is forced to carry His Cross and endure every sin that we commit against God and others. Christ is made to witness every act of depravity and this causes Christ immense suffering because He is meek and gentle at heart.

If we pause for a moment to think of the billions of souls who inhabit this world and how much suffering is going on, then we can begin to dimly comprehend how much Christ suffers. Christ is crucified afresh every day (Heb 6:6) in the sins that people commit. To think of how much self-denial Jesus must endure for us should cause us to weep in wonder at such selfless love manifested towards us.

Yet no matter what, Jesus will never cast us off. He will never leave us nor forsake us; He is with us even unto the end of the world. But to do this He must suffer every day the sinfulness of the entire human race.

In order to escape the reality of this Cross, a Cross that reveals that Christ was slain from the foundation of the world, the human race projects the calamities that fall upon them onto God. As we saw in the story of Sodom, we naturally think that God destroyed the inhabitants of this city with His own hand. We do this in order to avoid seeing how much God and His Son suffer in the loss of one human soul.

It is considered vital for sinful men to believe that God scorched the men of Sodom to ashes to hide the brilliance of the sufferings of Christ, who was spiritually crucified in Sodom. This is why men demand the veil in reading the violent stories of the Old Testament, because when this history is told in its true settings we only see Christ and Him crucified. (1 Cor 2:2).

Dear reader, I appeal to you to let the Spirit of Jesus bring this light into your mind. Let the true Cross of Christ come to you and see the



unutterable beauty of the character of God as revealed in Christ. By beholding this truth we shall be transformed into the same image, even by the Spirit of the Lord. (2 Cor 3:18).

So let us summarise the nine tools we have considered into a few words.

1. Family
2. Gospel Character
3. Enmity
4. Two Mirrors
5. Earth Curse
6. Angel Hedge
7. Projection
8. Two Covenant Framework
9. True Cross

These are tools or principles we will reach for when we consider an Old Testament story that appears to present God as being violent and destructive.

It takes time to learn to use these tools and see which ones apply to what stories. Each one of these tools is a principle that is consistently presented in Scripture. To use another analogy, these tools are like instruments in a plane. When God appears to be different than Jesus, it is like flying into clouds and experiencing spacial disorientation: it's natural to trust our feelings to get us through, but the trained pilot knows that going by his own perception is much more dangerous than trusting his instruments to get him through.

We want to look at several stories while applying these tools/principles until it becomes easier to see how they work.

Now let us turn to the story of the command of God for Abraham to sacrifice his son.

## CHAPTER 17

# ABRAHAM AND ISAAC

Mount Moriah is the second highest peak in pursuit of Golgotha's summit. Ascending to this height unaided by the tools in our toolbox will lead to asphyxiation. It is difficult to escape the truth that we, as readers of the story, are having our faith tested as we behold Abraham's faith tested by God in the book of Genesis.

In this context then, we can hear the panting breath of Abraham in the stillness of the early morning ascending the mount with his unsuspecting son who is dutifully carrying the wood for his own sacrifice. We stare in wonder at Abraham's face and we perceive the conflict raging in his mind. He has gone through so much to have Isaac, the heir of promise, yet now it had come to this most terrible test. The Family Principle of tender affection for Isaac is protesting against the command of God to sacrifice his beloved son.

The clash between duty and mercy erupted 3500 years later when the great reformer Martin Luther discussed the story with his wife. It was their turn to climb this peak with Abraham and his son. Listening to her intrepid husband recount the story, Katie Luther, with all the compassion of a mother, blurted out: "I do not believe it! God would not have treated His Son like that!" Shaken but not deterred by the cry of his wife, Luther replied, "But Katie, He *did*."

Some time later, God tested Abraham's faith. "Abraham!" God called. "Yes," he replied. "Here I am." "Take your son, your only son—yes, Isaac, whom you love so much—and go to the land of Moriah. Go and sacrifice him as a burnt offering on one of the mountains, which I will show you." Genesis 22:1-2

The fact that Abraham kept the entire plan from his wife suggests the fear that Sarah would respond exactly as Katie Luther did. Katie Luther seems more in tune with the principle of family tenderness and compassion, yet we must not attempt to bypass the word of God.

If we take the Gospel tool of looking into the face of Jesus, we see no evidence that Jesus sacrificed anyone at all. Taking this lead, we comb the Scriptures looking for statements which reveal more about God's thoughts on sacrifice.

**You take no delight in sacrifices or offerings.** Now that You have made me listen, I finally understand—**You don't require burnt offerings or sin offerings.** Psalm 40:6

If our Father in heaven does not require sacrifices, then why did He apparently require Abraham to sacrifice his son? Also, what does this mean for all the sacrificial requirements given to Moses for Israel? Didn't God require Israel to do all these things?

**"For I did not speak to your fathers, or command them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices.** But this is what I commanded them, saying, 'Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be My people. And walk in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well with you.'" Jeremiah 7:22-23 (NKJV)

How do we reconcile this apparent conflict between God telling Moses what sacrifices and offerings were required, with Him saying He didn't ask for all this? We have to make sense of it all. God also said this in the Torah:

“Do not permit any of your children to be offered as a sacrifice to Molech, for you must not bring shame on the name of your God. I am the LORD.” Leviticus 18:21

God explicitly tells Israel not to offer their children as sacrifices to Molech because it brings shame on the name of God. The Hebrew word for *name* includes the meaning of *character*. How can it be a shame on God’s character to offer children as a sacrifice to Molech, but it not be a shame for God to ask Abraham to offer his son as a sacrifice to Himself?

The prohibition God placed on offering children as sacrifices to Molech indicates that child sacrifice was part of the religious practices of the surrounding pagan religions that had influence on the Israelites. These religions reflect the carnal desire to appease deity through a costly gift – and none is more costly than one’s own child, thus nothing could have more power to appease.

After Adam sinned, he was willing to blame his wife for his actions and transfer accountability to her. Child sacrifice is an extension of this principle of transferring responsibility to someone else as an atonement for sin. This brings us to the Enmity tool. The natural human heart, in its hatred of God, is willing to stoop to the level of offering its own children and claiming God desires it. This brings shame on the name of the character of God.

Should we offer Him thousands of rams and ten thousand rivers of olive oil? **Should we sacrifice our firstborn children to pay for our sins? No, O people,** the LORD has told you what is good, and this is what He requires of you: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God. Micah 6:7-8

God clearly indicates that offering children as a sacrifice can never pay for your sins. In fact, our beloved Father tells us that such an idea never entered His mind:

“They have built pagan shrines to Baal, and there they **burn their sons as sacrifices to Baal. I have never commanded such a horrible**

**deed; it never even crossed My mind to command such a thing!"**

Jeremiah 19:5

If God never commanded child sacrifice, then can we say that there is a mirror operating in the command of God to Abraham. Is it possible that Abraham is hearing what he *thinks* God wants according to his own understanding and upbringing? As Jesus never offered child sacrifice, then how could it be possible that God would ever do this? As He Himself stated, such an idea never came into His mind. Is it possible that our fifth tool of Projection is operating when we read the command of God to Abraham?

Abraham came from Ur of the Chaldeans. This was the land of Babylon and child sacrifice was an integral part of its religion. In order for our Father in heaven to remove this deep-seated principle from Abraham, He had to bring it to the surface through our eighth tool, using the ministration of death.

In light of the tools we have applied so far, it becomes evident that the principle of child sacrifice comes from the depraved heart of man – and our precious Father wants to deliver Abraham from it.

The language God speaks is exactly the same as what occurred when Christ spoke from the Cross: "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?"

So, in this case, God told Abraham to take his only son and do what exactly?

Consider the phrase "offer him for a burnt offering," in Genesis 22:2. The word *offer* contains the following meanings in *Brown, Driver and Briggs Dictionary*:

To bring up, **cause to ascend or climb**, cause to go up, to bring up, bring against, take away, to bring up, draw up, train, to cause to ascend, to rouse, stir up (mentally), to offer, bring up (of gifts), to exalt, to cause to ascend, offer – Hiph'il form of H5927.

Within this context we see how the Young's Literal Translation renders this word:

And He saith, "Take, I pray thee, thy son, thine only one, whom thou hast loved, even Isaac, and go for thyself unto the land of Moriah, and **cause him to ascend there** for a burnt-offering on one of the mountains of which I speak unto thee." Genesis 22:2 (YLT)

As they were going to climb Mt Moriah, the word ascend is a natural choice for such a journey. The word for burnt offering, H5930, carries two meanings. The first is a *burnt offering* and the second is *ascent, stairway* or *go up*. The Strong's Concordance renders it this way:

H5930: Feminine active participle of H5927; a step or (collectively stairs, as ascending); usually a holocaust (as going up in smoke): – ascent, burnt offering (sacrifice), go up to. See also H5766.

See how the word for 'burnt offering' is translated in this verse:

And *there were* seven steps to **go up** to it, and the arches thereof *were* before them: and it had palm trees, one on this side, and another on that side, upon the posts thereof. Ezekiel 40:26 (KJV)

The ability to translate this word in different ways have led translators to different understandings of what the Queen of Sheba saw in the house of Solomon.

And the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel, and his cupbearers, and his **ascent** by which he went up unto the house of the LORD; there was no more spirit in her. 1 Kings 10:5 (KJV)

...the food on his table, the seating of his officials, the attending servants in their robes, his cupbearers, and the **burnt offerings** he made at the temple of the LORD, she was overwhelmed. 1 Kings 10:5 (NIV)

Therefore, what God spoke to Abraham could be translated this way:

Then He said, "Take now your son, your only *son* Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and **ascend** there and **go up** on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you." Genesis 22:2 (NKJV)

God knew the language could be understood two ways. He knew that Abraham would understand the text according to his own understanding of the character of God. Naturally, the translators understand it the way Abraham understood it, as *burnt offering*, because of what Abraham did.

Abraham had nurtured the desire for a long time for Ishmael to be the son to inherit the promises God had made to Abraham. God loved Ishmael, but Abraham showed a lack of faith in going into Hagar to produce a child outside of the marriage relationship with Sarah.

When Abraham had to send Hagar and his dear son Ishmael away, it pierced him. He realised his own actions had caused all this pain and that his beloved son Ishmael had to be separated from him as a result.

The depth of his sorrow tested his belief that God would still bless him with a great nation through Isaac. That, along with his various missteps over the years, such as lying that Sarah was not his wife, made him not one hundred percent sure if he was right with God – and therefore deep within him was the idea that maybe God would require some sort of appeasement. In this context, the words of God surfaced in Abraham the remnant seed of paganism still buried deep in his soul, unaware to him.

Abraham knew the commandment of God to not kill. This would have created a conflict within him between what he understood from the law and the inherited traditions of men that said God needs to be appeased with sacrifice.

Amazingly, though he was operating under an incorrect understanding, Abraham believed that God could raise his son from the dead again. (Heb 11:19). This victory of faith helped Abraham to trust God implicitly, even unto death.

And Abraham picked up the knife to kill his son as a sacrifice. At that moment the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven, "Abraham! Abraham!"

"Yes," Abraham replied. "Here I am!"

"Don't lay a hand on the boy!" the angel said. "Do not hurt him in any way, for now I know that you truly fear God. You have not withheld from Me even your son, your only son." Genesis 22:10-12

The evidence that God did not want Abraham to kill his son is plainly revealed in the command not to slay him. If God wanted Abraham to slay his son, He easily could have raised Isaac from the dead. It would be a cruel hoax if God was testing Abraham by leading him to believe that He wanted Isaac to be sacrificed when in reality He didn't. God is not a man that He should lie. God doesn't test His children by leading them to believe something false and then say, "You passed the test. Well done!"

Applying the tool of Family tenderness, God actually wanted Abraham to come onto the mountain with his precious son and just worship and fellowship with Him. This is in harmony with the character of God as revealed in Christ.

This understanding of the Abraham and Isaac story is vital to grasp the meaning of the Cross. Abraham offered his son under the misunderstanding of the enmity that was hidden deep within himself. The offering up of the Son of God on the Cross only came about because of the unawareness of the enmity which resides in the souls of men and women. The Cross is the ultimate ministration of death when we look into the mirror of the natural man. When we look into the New Covenant mirror we see the unfathomable love of the Father being willing to give up His Son to our perceptions of sacrifice and atonement.

The sacrifice of Isaac is what Abraham thought God wanted. The Cross upon which Jesus died is what those who believe in the Bible think God wanted. Both are incorrect assumptions coming from human thinking.



In being willing to offer up his son, Abraham was strengthened in faith and was enabled to walk closer with God. Similarly, accepting the death of Jesus according to the belief that God required this for justice to be served strengthens the faith of the believer and brings them into a closer relationship with God. But in both cases, the thoughts and desire of God are not represented. This is simply because God's thoughts are not our thoughts.

In applying the tools in our toolbox, the veil over this story is removed and we see such a beautiful revelation of the Father's character. We also see more clearly the depth of human depravity in thinking that our dear Father desires blood and death for sin. This is a cruel accusation against Him and causes the darkness around human hearts to stubbornly remain.

As we descend from Mt Moriah, I pray it is with deep gratitude and joy in our hearts. Our Father did not want Abraham to slay his son, but rather He wanted to emancipate Abraham from believing such things to bring Abraham closer to His bosom.

I find it very significant that after this story, there is no more mention of Abraham offering sacrifices. This does not mean that he stopped doing it, but under inspiration Scripture is written in such a way that it sends us a message that through the process of offering his son, God was able to cause sacrifice and offering to cease. (Dan 9:27, KJV).

When we understand this process of how God brings out more clearly things hidden in our hearts by a ministration of death that we might come to a deeper knowledge of our Father, then we can easily apply this to the principle of circumcision, which is our next chapter.

To finish this chapter, let's summarise what tools we used and how they apply to this story.

ABRAHAM AND ISAAC

Tools	Application
1. Family	Abraham did not tell his wife what he felt impressed to do. The killing of a family member operates outside the principles of tenderness, kindness and care. But most of all it calls into question the term Father as applied to God Himself.
2. Gospel Character	Jesus never offered anyone as a sacrifice while on earth.
3. Enmity	Abraham's interpretation of God's command revealed the hidden enmity in Abraham that believed God desires sacrifice for sin.
4. Two Mirrors	The command of God can be understood two ways. When we see God commanding Abraham to sacrifice, we are looking into the mirror that reveals what we think about God but is actually a reflection of who we are. When we know God is like Jesus we are led to see that God commanded Abraham to take his precious son and come worship God in the mountains. This is the mirror of the New Covenant and reveals the character of God.
5. Angel Hedge	Not Applicable to this story.
6. Earth Curse	Not Applicable to this story.

MIRROR PRINCIPLE

7. Projection	Abraham's interpretation of God's command revealed the hidden enmity in Abraham that he projected onto God through misunderstanding His words.
8. Two Covenants	God worked through Abraham's misunderstanding and brought Abraham's enmity to the surface, but through this process Abraham's faith was strengthened. When God stopped Abraham from sacrificing his son, Abraham had time to reflect that God does not desire sacrifice and offering.
9. True Cross	The story of Abraham and Isaac is a template for how we understand the Cross. Also, regardless of the fact that Abraham did not know he had this enmity in him that demanded sacrifice, Christ carried Abraham and his misunderstandings all his life and bore with it even when it was totally against the principles of heaven.

## CHAPTER 18

# BRIDEGROOM OF BLOOD

The first chapters of the book of Exodus tell the story of the grinding oppression of God's people in the land of Egypt under the heavy hand of Pharaoh. We are gripped by the captivating story of Moses who escaped the death decree of Pharaoh in a floating basket, only to become a member of Pharaoh's extended household as a prince of Egypt.

What destiny awaited Moses after cheating certain death and finding entrance into the corridors of power? For forty years he is groomed to be the next pharaoh, and he is perceived by the Egyptians as having the skill and capability to become a great leader for their nation. But Moses never forgets his heritage and, aware of the persecution of his people and cognizant of his special destiny, steps into a position to save God's people by killing an Egyptian slave master.

This violent move on the part of Moses required him to flee into the desert and into apparent oblivion. For forty years he cared for sheep and learned the tender skills of a shepherd. It took a long time for the violent principles in which he had been schooled to be subdued.

Then God calls him back to Egypt to deliver His people. But Moses has lost all confidence in his own abilities. God eventually persuades him,

telling him that his brother Aaron can help him, and at eighty years old Moses is finally prepared to do what God has called him to do.

As Moses makes his way to Egypt, we come across a very strange event.

**On the way to Egypt, at a place where Moses and his family had stopped for the night, the LORD confronted him and was about to kill him.** But Moses' wife, Zipporah, took a flint knife and circumcised her son. She touched his feet with the foreskin and said, "Now you are a bridegroom of blood to me." (When she said "a bridegroom of blood," she was referring to the circumcision.) After that, the LORD left him alone. Exodus 4:24-26

What? Just as Moses is about to begin the work God told him to do, God confronts him with the intent to kill him? This fact alone appears to be contradictory. A few verses earlier God tells Moses about the miracles he will do in Egypt and how Pharaoh is going to respond. Did God suddenly change His mind and turn his back on eighty years of preparation and just kill him there in the desert?

Does this fail the Family test? Was God going to kill Zipporah's husband and leave her children fatherless? The puzzlement only deepens as the story continues. Zipporah, the wife of Moses, suddenly springs to action, circumcises their son and throws the foreskin at the feet of Moses and calls him a bridegroom of blood. Then when the circumcision is complete, God drops His intent to kill Moses. What on earth is this all about?

Apparently, Zipporah didn't want to have her son circumcised according to the law of Israel. Is Moses to die for having delayed in performing this rite? To the candid reader, God appears to be very petty about this issue. It doesn't make Him look stable. Apparently, God would break up a family, leave a woman husbandless and her children fatherless, just to ensure Moses circumcises his son?

At another level, it sounds like "Do what I tell you or I will kill you!" Did Jesus ever say that to anyone? There is no record of Him ever saying this. So, this story easily fails the Gospel Character test. When we see

this test violated, it means that the Mirror Principle is operating: our natural way of reading this passage shows something in humanity that is being projected onto God.

We need to step back in history to look at the context for where circumcision began for Israel.

And God said to Abraham: “As for you, you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations. This *is* My covenant which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: Every male child among you shall be circumcised; and you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, **and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you.**

“He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised, every male child in your generations, he who is born in your house or bought with money from any foreigner who is not your descendant. He who is born in your house and he who is bought with your money must be circumcised, and My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. And the uncircumcised male child, who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person shall be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant.” Genesis 17:9-14 (NKJV)

Circumcision was given as a sign of the covenant God was making with Abraham. The covenant God made with Abraham was that He would make Abraham a great nation and that his children would be as numerous as the stars of heaven. When God first spoke to Abraham about this, Abraham simply believed what God said and Abraham was accounted righteous as a result. Circumcision came later as a visual symbol of that promise.

Then He brought him outside and said, “Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them.” And He said to him, “So shall your descendants be.” And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness. Genesis 15:5-6 (NKJV)

## MIRROR PRINCIPLE

Now, is this blessing only for the Jews, or is it also for uncircumcised Gentiles? Well, we have been saying that Abraham was counted as righteous by God because of his faith. But how did this happen? Was he counted as righteous only after he was circumcised, or was it before he was circumcised? Clearly, God accepted Abraham before he was circumcised!

Circumcision was a sign that Abraham already had faith and that God had already accepted him and declared him to be righteous—even before he was circumcised. So Abraham is the spiritual father of those who have faith but have not been circumcised. They are counted as righteous because of their faith. Romans 4:9-11

If Abraham was considered righteous by God for his faith, then why did God need to give Abraham a sign?

But Abram replied, “O Sovereign LORD, **how can I be sure** that I will actually possess it?” Genesis 15:8

When God promised Abraham a great nation, he simply believed. When God promised to give him all the land to go with it, Abraham asked for some indication that this would happen. Why did he ask for this? Because he didn’t have the faith to believe God would do it without some sign first. We notice what Jesus says about asking for signs regarding things God has already promised.

“A wicked and adulterous generation seeks after a sign,...”  
Matthew 16:4 (NKJV)

We need to step through this carefully. In giving the sign to Abraham, God is helping Abraham transition from unbelief to belief. So, although it was a sign of the faith of Abraham, the need for that sign revealed the original unbelief that Abraham had. Unbelief is enmity towards God. It suggests that God can’t or won’t keep His word, which is an attack on His character. And this is the reason why Paul makes the following statements:

For it makes no difference whether or not a man has been circumcised. The important thing is to keep God's commandments. 1 Corinthians 7:19

In fact, uncircumcised Gentiles who keep God's law will condemn you Jews who are circumcised and possess God's law but don't obey it. For you are not a true Jew just because you were born of Jewish parents or because you have gone through the ceremony of circumcision. Romans 2:27-28

In this context, if we apply the Two Covenant rule, God gave circumcision to Abraham as a ministration of death. His unbelief made this sign necessary. But God would use the sign to bring him into the New Covenant and make it a sign of faith (and righteousness and acceptance) rather than a sign of unbelief.

The question we need to ask is why did God choose circumcision as a sign? Abraham's unbelief required it, therefore what God brings to Abraham is a deeper revelation of what is in Abraham's heart. When we study the origins of circumcision, we discover something very interesting.

Sixth Dynasty (2345–2181 BCE) tomb **artwork in Egypt has been thought to be the oldest documentary evidence of circumcision**, the most ancient depiction being a bas-relief from the necropolis at Saqqara (c. 2400 BCE). In the oldest written account, by an Egyptian named Uha, in the 23rd century BCE, he describes a mass circumcision and boasts of his ability to stoically endure the pain:

"When I was circumcised, together with one hundred and twenty men ... there was none thereof who hit out, there was none thereof who was hit, and there was none thereof who scratched and there was none thereof who was scratched."<sup>14</sup>

Circumcision is first documented in Egypt and came into practice just before the time of Abraham. Circumcision was practiced in Egypt at the

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<sup>14</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\\_of\\_circumcision](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_circumcision)



time of puberty. What is fascinating is that Ishmael's mother, Hagar, was Egyptian, and when God asked Abraham to take the sign of circumcision into his family, his son Ishmael was 13 years old, being around the age of puberty. As an Egyptian, Hagar would have been very familiar with circumcision and may have requested Abraham for her son to be circumcised at puberty like it was done in Egypt.

Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised, and Ishmael, his son, was thirteen. Both Abraham and his son, Ishmael, were circumcised on that same day, Genesis 17:24-26

Immediately after God gave to Abraham the sign of circumcision, He once again promises to give Abraham a son through Sarah. Abraham is now almost 100 years old and Sarah is well beyond the normal age to bear children. When God gives the promise, the unbelief in Abraham is revealed.

Then God said to Abraham, "Regarding Sarai, your wife—her name will no longer be Sarai. From now on her name will be Sarah. And I will bless her and give you a son from her! Yes, I will bless her richly, and she will become the mother of many nations. Kings of nations will be among her descendants."

Then Abraham bowed down to the ground, **but he laughed to himself in disbelief.** "How could I become a father at the age of 100?" he thought. "And how can Sarah have a baby when she is ninety years old?" So Abraham said to God, "May Ishmael live under Your special blessing!" Genesis 17:15-18

So, we see that Abraham did not believe God's word. Instead, he wanted God to accept his own works in producing Ishmael. God's commandment for circumcision appears to confirm Abraham's desire for Ishmael to be the promised seed. Ishmael had reached the age of puberty and according to Egyptian custom, he was to be prepared for manhood through this rite of passage. God speaks to Abraham the thoughts that he is thinking just like God did with Adam in saying, "the man has become as one of us to know good and evil". Circumcision comes from Abraham, possibly through Hagar. God magnifies

Abraham's unbelief through a ministration of death and transforms the process into a sign of faith. What could be more aptly labelled a ministration of death than a grown man having to take a knife to his penis and cut part of it off!

Circumcision for the Egyptians was a sign of manhood, strength and the ability to endure great pain without complaining. It was a sacrifice of blood that served to unite the Egyptians as brethren.

In the heart of man, we see the need for pain, blood and death in order to believe God. Here we see a symbol of the Cross once again. Here again is man's enmity towards God in his belief that God needs man afflicted first before He will accept us. But God works with our warped ideas and transforms this symbol into a life-saving gift to the world.

In this context we see that just as it is impossible for men to come into the forgiveness of God without accepting the death of the Cross, so in the time of Abraham leading up to the Cross, it would be impossible for men to accept God's forgiveness without being circumcised. Therefore, whoever was not circumcised would be cut off from the chosen people. Circumcision became the path to life.

Once again none of this reflects God's thoughts. They are men's thoughts and God meets men where they are to save them. This is the reason why Moses had to circumcise his son. Within his heritage, to not do this would bring disaster and the frown of God would be hanging over any Israelite who did not circumcise their sons.

Due to the fact Zipporah pled with Moses not to circumcise their son, Moses delayed what his forefathers had done for generations. In his mind was a growing fear and condemnation of himself that because he had not done what God required that he might be killed.

In order to help Moses overcome this fear, the Lord confronts him with the very thoughts Moses has that he is not fully aware of. God appears in the very way that Moses imagines. God causes the sin of Moses to abound in order that grace might much more abound.

## MIRROR PRINCIPLE

Once Zipporah had circumcised their son, Moses was released from his fear that God might kill him and so he was safe to go to Egypt and do the Lord's work.

How patient is our Father in heaven with us. He stoops to meet us in our strange pagan ideas, reconciling our dilemmas that we might further believe in His love and protection!

Let us summarise our tools used in this story.

<b>Tools</b>	<b>Application</b>
1. Family	The family of Moses was to be deprived of a husband and father to satisfy the requirement of circumcision. This suggests a major issue. As a Father, if God wanted His children circumcised why couldn't He have created them that way? Why take a knife to one of the most sensitive parts of the body and inflict pain?
2. Gospel Character	Jesus never threatened to kill anyone for not being circumcised. The ministry of Jesus resulted in circumcision becoming redundant.
3. Enmity	Moses feared God would harm him for failure to do what he knew to be right.
4. Two Mirrors	God surfaced the thinking of Moses by appearing to him in the manner in which Moses imagined. This pressed Zipporah to do the required deed. But her words indicate she did not do it willingly but under duress.
5. Angel Hedge	Not Applicable to this story.
6. Earth Curse	Not Applicable to this story.

BRIDEGROOM OF BLOOD

7. Projection.	By Moses imagining that God would kill him or let him be killed in Egypt, he was projecting human thinking onto God, of believing in a death penalty for disobedience.
8. Two Covenants	God or more likely an angel appearing to Moses was a ministration of death for Moses. It confronted him with his own thoughts to resolve the fear in Moses.
9. True Cross	Christ is pierced by the thought that Moses believed God would kill him for this.

## CHAPTER 19

# CALVARY AND THE SERPENT ROD

The story of the plagues in Egypt has been the default story to offer oppressed and persecuted Christians a sense of power over their persecutors. The humiliation of a worldly king before the God of the Bible gives hope to the Christian that their suffering will be rewarded and the enemies of God will be humbled and destroyed if they refuse to submit. For preachers like Spurgeon, it offered a forceful appeal to those undecided about giving their hearts to Christ:

If I could speak it as Jehovah would speak it by His servant Moses, I think it would run like this— “Thus says Jehovah, God of the Hebrews, How long will you refuse to humble yourself before Me? Let My people go that they may serve Me.” God as God says to Pharaoh, “It is no use for you to stand out against Me. As well might a moth contend with the furnace. It is of no use for you to lift your puny hand against Me. You know not how great My power is. I have given you a taste of it, but I have yet more terrible plagues in the rear which I will bring forward—and you will have to bow before Me.” And you know, Brothers and Sisters, how Pharaoh did at last have to bow before Jehovah! The firstborn of his strength was

cut off in the dead of night and there was wailing in the palace and in all the land.

And then, when Pharaoh said, "I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil. My lust shall be satisfied upon them. I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them" – he dashed forward to pursue the hosts of the Lord and you know what followed. "For the horse of Pharaoh went in with his chariots and with his horsemen into the sea, and the Lord brought again the waters of the sea upon them." Then was heard the song of Miriam, "Sing you to Jehovah, for He has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider has He thrown into the sea." As the rushing waters bore him away, proud Pharaoh learned when, too late, how great a fool he had been to contend against the Infinite Majesty of Almighty God!

And I say to you, Brothers and Sisters, who are fighting against God, you must either bend or break! As God lives, you must bow before Him in repentance, or you shall be crushed beneath Him in the day of His anger! Think not, when we talk to you of God's mercy, that we come to you as your equal might come, and reason with you as though God were afraid of you! Do you talk of your great strength? He is almighty! As for you, your breath is in your nostrils and the Lord could cause you, in a moment, to fall dead in a fit, as many have done before you! If you will not yield to Him, He is infinitely glorious without you! And if you rebel against Him, in what way can you affect the supremacy of His empire? As well might a drop of spray hope to shake the cliffs of Albion as for you to contend against the Majesty of God! – Charles Spurgeon – *The Question Between the Plagues*.

As the narrative is usually understood, each time Moses raised his rod into the air, another plague would smash into Egypt, causing desolation and ruin. The plagues became increasingly severe, as if God were slowly squeezing Pharaoh's neck until he yielded to God's demand to let Israel go.

The final plague is unforgettable once you've heard it: the death of the firstborn. Can you imagine the wail of Egyptian mothers bent over the lifeless forms of their deceased children who just happened to be cursed with being born first into the family?

Finally, Pharaoh relents under the crushing pressure of God's deadly plagues and lets Israel go. But he has a change of heart, chases the Israelites, and he and his wicked army are drowned in the sea, ensuring the freedom of the Israelites. The children of Israel praise their God as a warrior God.

**"The LORD is a warrior; Yahweh is His name!** Pharaoh's chariots and army He has hurled into the sea. The finest of Pharaoh's officers are drowned in the Red Sea. The deep waters gushed over them; they sank to the bottom like a stone. Your right hand, O LORD, is glorious in power. **Your right hand, O LORD, smashes the enemy.**" Exodus 15:3-6

We pause for a moment and turn to look into the face of Jesus to begin to assess if we are reading things correctly. Looking directly upon this story in the Old Testament, God certainly appears warlike, relentless, and one who instills terror into those who oppose Him.

Israel sings that the Lord smashes His enemies, but Jesus tells us that God loves His enemies, and if we want to be the children of God, we should love them also.

"You have heard the law that says, 'Love your neighbor' and hate your enemy. **But I say, love your enemies!** Bless those who curse you. Do good to those who hate you. Pray for those who persecute you! In that way, **you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven.** For He gives His sunlight to both the evil and the good, and He sends rain on the just and the unjust alike." Matthew 5:43-45

Looking into the face of Jesus we have an instant disconnect from the story we just read in Exodus. How do you smash your enemies and love them at the same time? Do you love them up to a point and then smash

them after that? How do we reconcile this conflict? Again we ask, did Jesus bring plagues down on people? Did He kill the firstborn children of the Romans that oppressed Israel? We know the answer to these questions. Clearly, NO!

How precious the life of Jesus is to be our guide through these stories in the Old Testament. The conflict of this story with the character of Jesus requires us to search to bring the face of God in the plagues into harmony with the face of Jesus in the Gospels.

Although this is a complex task, the things we have learned from the stories of Adam, Cain and Abel, the flood, and Sodom and Gomorrah will provide us many of the principles needed to address the disaster in Egypt, but we will need to look more deeply into how the Angel Hedge works to harmonise this story with the character of the lovely Jesus. This story takes more effort, but this will help us become more skilful in removing the veil from our faces.

Due to the fact that nine of the ten plagues are the result of natural disasters, we immediately think of the curse of the thorns and the thistles that resulted from Adam's sin. Cain was told that the curse would come upon him from the earth and therefore we ask the simple question: Was there anything the Egyptians were doing that could cause natural disasters?

A few hundred years before the time of Moses, a great famine fell upon Egypt, Canaan and the surrounding nations of that region. This was when Joseph became a ruler in Egypt under Pharaoh. The people of Canaan and Egypt did not worship the true God of heaven, nor did they keep His Sabbaths or commandments. This gift of rain is connected to the keeping of God's commandments, as we see here:

**“Ye shall make you no idols nor graven image, neither rear you up a standing image, neither shall ye set up *any* image of stone in your land, to bow down unto it: for I *am* the LORD your God. Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I *am* the LORD. If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them; then I will give you rain in due season, and the land**



shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit." Leviticus 26:1-4 (KJV)

The pagan nations still received rain because the mercy of God gives rain to the just and the unjust, but for pagan nations it does not come in its season. When God's people dwell in pagan regions, they become affected by the same weather patterns. This is one of the many reasons why choosing to live in large cities of unbelievers brings unwanted challenges.

The seven year famine in Egypt and Canaan was a warning of greater calamities that would come because these nations refused to honour the true God of heaven, receive His protection or keep God's commandments and statutes. The breaking of His law would eventually have consequences on the environment. God was holding these consequences back, but He would not force His mercy upon them in the face of their constant rejection.

So, what were the Egyptians doing that was affecting the land? They were copying the things that their gods did. The gods of Egypt were many, but the first god of the Egyptians was Atum.

In the beginning there was nothing (Nun). A mound of earth rose from Nun and upon it Atum created himself. He spat Shu (air) and Tefnut (moisture) from his mouth. Atum's two offspring became separated from him and lost in the dark nothingness, so Atum sent his "Eye" to look for them (a precursor to the "Eye of Ra", an epithet given to many deities at different times). When they were found, he named Shu as "life" and Tefnut as "order" and entwined them together.

Atum became tired and wanted a place to rest, so he kissed his daughter Tefnut, and created the first mound (Iunu) to rise from the waters of Nun. Shu and Tefnut gave birth to the earth (Geb) and the sky (Nut) who in turn give birth to Osiris, Isis, Set, Nephthys and Horus the elder. In later versions of the myth, Atum produces Shu and Tefnut by masturbation and splits up Geb and Nut because he is jealous of their constant copulation.

His creative nature has two sides. In the Book of the Dead, Atum tells Osiris that he will eventually destroy the world, submerging everything back into the primal waters (Nun), which were all that existed at the beginning of time. In this nonexistence, Atum and Osiris would survive in the form of serpents.<sup>15</sup>

On the principle of becoming what you behold, it is not hard to discern the effect of believing the primary god masturbated to create things. The idea that Isis and Osiris were brother and sister who married added the example of incest. While the majority of common people did not marry within the family, many royal family members did. Add to this the thought of the creator god being jealous of two of his children constantly copulating and it is not hard to perceive the sexual degeneracy of Egypt. While adultery was greatly opposed in Egyptian culture, premarital sex was commonplace and virginity was not something of any significance to them.

There is also evidence of abortion being practiced and that the Egyptians had an ancient form of porn displayed in their art and drawings.

We don't need to be in any doubt as to the sexual activities of the Egyptians because God tells the Israelites not to imitate the sexual activities of the Egyptians once they left Egypt.

“Give the following instructions to the people of Israel. I am the LORD your God. So do not act like the people in Egypt, where you used to live, or like the people of Canaan, where I am taking you. You must not imitate their way of life.” Leviticus 18:2-3

The list of activities listed in the rest of the chapter tells you what both the Egyptians and Canaanites were doing:

1. Incest with any relative – Lev 18:6-17
2. Polygamy – Lev 18:18

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<sup>15</sup> <https://ancientegyptonline.co.uk/atum/>

3. Sex during period – Lev 18:19
4. Adultery – Lev 18:20
5. Child sacrifice – Lev 18:21
6. Homosexuality – Lev 18:22
7. Bestiality – Lev 18:23

As we have quoted before, these activities alone will result in the earth bringing natural disasters.

“Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things: for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you: And the land is defiled: therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants.” Leviticus 18:24-25 (KJV)

I quote this verse from the KJV because it shows plainly that the *land itself vomits* out its inhabitants.

Add to these abominations the slavery of the Israelite nation which involved murder, beatings and cruelty over a period of more than two hundred years, and the earth was ready to vomit its inhabitants. Just like the time of the flood, God could see the end of Egypt coming up before Him through all their abominations.

So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth. And God said to Noah, “The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth.” Genesis 6:12-13 (NKJV)

Just as God had destroyed the earth during the flood by allowing the earth to vomit them out, once again God would do the same thing in Egypt. This time the ark of safety was found in obedience to the instructions given to Moses and Aaron. Like Noah, Moses told the people what was coming, but this time it appears that Moses is actually the one bringing the destruction on behalf of God.

The Family Principle in our toolbox reminds us that God loved His children in Egypt. He didn't want them to die; He wanted to save them. But how could God speak to Pharaoh when Pharaoh knew nothing of God's ways? God could only speak to Pharaoh in a way that he understood. The Egyptians walked outside God's commandments. They might have known the true God through Joseph, who was sent to them. But they rebelled and brought calamity upon themselves.

Our Father in heaven might have just released the winds of destruction bound up in the earth, but even in this process He wanted to help at least some of them see their error, repent, and turn to the light.

The miracle of the rod turning into the serpent sent a message directly to Pharaoh. He knew his country's legend about their creator god, Atum, becoming a serpent after destroying the world and returning it to water only. Was there not a message here for Pharaoh?

It was impossible for God to tell Pharaoh – "My dear son, your nation's lifestyle is about to wipe you out, please repent and turn back to me and I will forgive you and heal your land." God could only speak the language that Pharaoh understood; He could only mirror the thoughts of Pharaoh in the hope that he be led, like Abraham, through his misunderstanding, into a better relationship with God, and Egypt's calamity be reduced as much as possible.

There is a much deeper meaning in the rod being turned into a serpent. We return once again to the book of Revelation to consider the verse that spoke of Christ being spiritually crucified in Sodom.

And their dead bodies *will lie* in the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and **Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.** Revelation 11:8 (NKJV)

Christ was crucified in Egypt. Christ was pierced in all that Israel suffered under the grinding tyranny of Egypt as well as in the sexual perversion and child sacrifice that was done, like it was in Sodom. But the greatest sorrow for Christ was when Egypt was destroyed and many

people and animals died. This was torture for Christ who tenderly cares for everyone of His children.

“And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up...” John 3:14 (NKJV)

The primary meaning of this verse is when Moses made a bronze serpent and lifted it up on a pole. When the people looked to the serpent, they would live. Christ compared Himself to that serpent raised upon the pole. But at another level, Moses caught a serpent by the tail in the wilderness and he lifted it up and it turned back into a rod. (Ex 4:4). Could there be a connection here?

Every miracle and plague that Moses wrought was through the rod that was turned into a serpent:

“Go to Pharaoh in the morning, when he goes out to the water, and you shall stand by the river’s bank to meet him; **and the rod which was turned to a serpent you shall take in your hand.**” Exodus 7:15 (NKJV)

Pharaoh knew the symbolism of the rod in the hand of Moses and Aaron, for he saw the rod turn into a serpent and then back into a rod.

So Moses and Aaron went in to Pharaoh, and they did so, just as the LORD commanded. And Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh and before his servants, and it became a serpent. Exodus 7:10 (NKJV)

We see in the first plague that the rod which was lifted up, was the same one that had become a serpent.

And Moses and Aaron did so, just as the LORD commanded. **So he lifted up the rod** and struck the waters that *were* in the river, in the sight of Pharaoh and in the sight of his servants. And all the waters that were in the river were turned to blood. Exodus 7:20 (NKJV)

The rod is used as a symbol in the Bible for Christ.

**There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots. The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD. His delight is in the fear of the LORD, and He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes, nor decide by the hearing of His ears; but with righteousness He shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked.**  
Isaiah 11:1-4 (NKJV)

The story of the plagues connects us to the words of Jesus that as Moses lifted up the serpent, so Christ must be lifted up, signifying His crucifixion.

So how do we connect this symbolism of the Cross to Moses lifting up the rod and bringing devastating plagues on Egypt? Firstly, when Jesus died on the Cross, it is understood by most that God demanded this sacrifice for His justice to be satisfied. The truth is that Jesus was not sacrificed by men inspired by God, but that Jesus was murdered by sinful men to simply get rid of him. In a similar way, while God appears to be the one destroying the Egyptians, it is actually the work of sinful people who had damaged the earth, aided by fallen angels.

Secondly, as we have stated previously, all life comes through Christ from the Father.

But to those called by God to salvation, both Jews and Gentiles,  
**Christ is the power of God** and the wisdom of God.  
1 Corinthians 1:24

God has spoken plainly, and I have heard it many times: **Power, O God, belongs to You;** Psalms 62:11

All power to create and to destroy comes from God, but destructive power only manifests when God hides His face and allows His Son to be crucified. When God hides His face, Satan takes control of the power in Christ and uses it to destroy. The rod becomes a serpent when Christ

falls to the ground out of the hand of God. He is rejected and thus He falls and “strikes the earth.”

This is what happened in the garden of Gethsemane.

He went a little farther and **fell on His face**, and prayed...  
Matthew 26:39 (NKJV)

Christ falling as a result of Him being made sin for us – meaning to lose connection with, and the protection of His Father – is when He is allowing Satan to do what he wishes to Him. What is happening when Jesus is falling to the ground is revealed by the words he spoke to the mob who came to kill Him:

“When I was with you daily in the temple, you did not try to seize Me. **But this is your hour, and the power of darkness.**” Luke 22:53  
(NKJV)

The Jewish leaders and Roman soldiers who crucified Jesus all had the breath of life from Christ Himself. It was the power of Christ in the Roman soldiers that drove the spikes through His hands and feet. Here we see clearly the rod turned into a serpent. The power of Christ in the soldiers under the control of Satan, that old serpent, doing the work of destruction.

We must bring all this imagery to the story of the plagues because the book of Revelation tells us that Christ was spiritually crucified in Egypt. But the Bible offers us more than this:

“For I *am* the LORD your God, The Holy One of Israel, your Savior; **I gave Egypt for your ransom**, Ethiopia and Seba in your place.”  
Isaiah 43:3 (NKJV)

“For even the **Son of Man** did not come to be served, but to serve, and to **give His life a ransom for many.**” Mark 10:45 (NKJV)

In order to rescue Israel from slavery, God had to allow His Egyptian children to be ruined, and in many cases, killed. The death of the firstborn of the Egyptians is a symbol of the firstborn Son of God, crucified as a ransom so that we might go free. Just as Christianity

believes that God required the death of His Son to allow us to go free, so we see in the killing of the first-born of Egypt that it is perceived that God killed the first-born in order for Israel to finally be set free.

We see then that the story of the plagues is a prototype of the story of the Cross of Christ. Jesus was lifted up in the rod, meaning He was crucified as the power of the serpent was unleashed bringing devastation. This piercing of the heart of Christ that sin causes must be recognized; it must be “lifted up” – then all men will come to Christ in contrition and remorse for healing.

In all this devastation God was meeting Pharaoh on his own ground, for Pharaoh could not help but wonder that Atum, the creator god of the Egyptians, was desolating Egypt while turning into a serpent. The problem for Pharaoh was the rod was in the hands of Moses, which means Pharaoh would eventually be forced to acknowledge a higher God than he was willing to accept.

Applying the principles of the Character of the Gospel, the Earth Curse, the Mirror Principle, and the True Cross, we hope that your mind is opening to see the plagues without the dark veil of human understanding.

Another layer to the Cross we must consider is that most of Israel did not accept Jesus as the Messiah. They manifested an unbelief in Him that would have serious consequences. The same happened in Egypt.



## CHAPTER 20

# A REFUSAL TO LISTEN

In chapter 18, we looked at the unbelief Abraham manifested when he was promised the land for his descendants who would be as the stars of heaven. The sign of circumcision was actually given to accommodate Abraham's lack of faith. God meets Abraham where his mind is and gives him circumcision as a sign of faith – a sign that God would do what He said. Therefore, to God it is a sign of unbelief but to men it was a sign of belief.

Unbelief pierces the heart of God. It is a manifest distrust in Him and His love. Abraham's unbelief is evidence of the carnal mind at enmity with God. We don't think we are at enmity with Him when we really are.

Coming to the time of Moses we find the same unbelief manifested:

*"Now go, for I am sending you to Pharaoh. You must lead My people Israel out of Egypt." But Moses protested to God, "Who am I to appear before Pharaoh? Who am I to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt?" Exodus 3:10-11*

Moses says "Who am I to appear before Pharaoh," but in these words contains the underlying sentiment of "You must be making a mistake because you have chosen incorrectly." This was not the intention of

Moses, but it is the effect. The Lord offers a number of assurances to Moses, indicating that God would help him. But still Moses is plagued with doubt.

But Moses protested again, "What if they won't believe me or listen to me? What if they say, 'The LORD never appeared to you'?"

Exodus 4:1

After this third protest from Moses, the Lord proceeds to give Moses a sign. The need to give Moses a sign is evidence of unbelief. As we considered previously, the Lord gives to Moses the sign of the rod turning into a serpent followed by the hand of Moses turning to leprosy. Then the Lord spoke the following:

The LORD said to Moses, "If they do not believe you and are not convinced by the first miraculous sign, they will be convinced by the second sign." Exodus 4:8

Moses and Aaron came to Egypt and showed the signs to the Israelites, and they believed, just as the Lord had said.

Aaron told them everything the LORD had told Moses, and Moses performed the miraculous signs as they watched. Then the people of Israel were convinced that the LORD had sent Moses and Aaron. When they heard that the LORD was concerned about them and had seen their misery, they bowed down and worshiped. Exodus 4:30-31

Although things had started well, it wasn't long before unbelief surfaced in the Israelites. After Pharaoh refused to let the people go, he punished the people due to the Sabbath reforms that Moses tried to bring to the people. Pharaoh demanded the people make bricks without straw at the same rate as previously. When the Hebrew foremen could not maintain the same rate, they were beaten. The people naturally turned against Moses:

The Israelite foremen could see that they were in serious trouble when they were told, "You must not reduce the number of bricks you make each day." As they left Pharaoh's court, they confronted

Moses and Aaron, who were waiting outside for them. The foremen said to them, "May the LORD judge and punish you for making us stink before Pharaoh and his officials. You have put a sword into their hands, an excuse to kill us!" Exodus 5:19-21

The confidence of the Israelites evaporated and now Moses became distressed with events unfolding. We note that Moses humbly writes down his private exchange with God and reveals to us the battle in his heart.

Then Moses went back to the LORD and protested, "Why have You brought all this trouble on Your own people, Lord? Why did You send me? Ever since I came to Pharaoh as Your spokesman, he has been even more brutal to Your people. And You have done nothing to rescue them!" Exodus 5:22-23

We dare not pass judgment on Moses, for we are all tempted to discouragement when things do not go as we desire. But we see the mistrust of God expressed in these words, and this mistrust has implications.

Our Father in heaven works tenderly with Moses and reminds him of the covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and then makes seven promises to Moses reaffirming the covenant, giving blessing, and stating again that He will deliver the people from the Egyptians and bring them into the promised land, and be their God.

When Moses faithfully delivers this message to the Israelites, they respond negatively:

So Moses told the people of Israel what the LORD had said, but they refused to listen anymore. They had become too discouraged by the brutality of their slavery. Exodus 6:9

If you are being freed from tyranny, why would you turn it down in unbelief? One reason could be that they blamed their slavery on God. The truth of the matter is that many in Israel had assimilated the customs and lifestyle of the Egyptians. Many had given up the Sabbath and other statutes of God.

Having forsaken these precepts, they exposed themselves to Satan's scheming to stir up the fears of the Egyptians and force them into slavery. The difficulty of their situation was because of their own actions. But being human, they did not take responsibility but projected the problem onto God.

If Moses was having trouble believing God and the Israelites refused to believe in the promises of God, what effect would this have on the Egyptians? If the Israelites were hardening their heart against what God was offering them, could this potentially effect the hardening of Pharaoh's heart?

And it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to Him must believe that God exists and that He rewards those who sincerely seek Him. Hebrews 11:6

There was almost no one in Israel who believed God would deliver them. Moses wrestled to believe at first, but his faith grew stronger over time and thus he basically stood alone in believing God would deliver them. Moses appears to make the connection between Israel's lack of faith and the potential for Pharaoh to doubt.

"Go back to Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, and tell him to let the people of Israel leave his country." "But LORD!" Moses objected. "My own people won't listen to me anymore. How can I expect Pharaoh to listen? I'm such a clumsy speaker!" Exodus 6:11-12

The Israelites' complete lack of faith, along with the fact that they blamed Moses for their troubles, would have impacted the appeal that Moses made to Pharaoh. Rather than being full of confidence and courage, he would have to wrestle against doubt and disappointment in his appeal.

God told Moses from the beginning (Ex 3:19) that Pharaoh would not listen, but how much of Pharaoh's resistance was connected to Israel's resistance to believe?

As the Spirit of Christ reached out to all the Israelites in Egypt, He must face their opposition and lack of faith. Great was His sorrow that

virtually no one believed Him. The sacrifice of the Passover lamb was commanded for the Israelites. It was a fitting symbol of what they were doing to Him.

Just like in the case of circumcision, God took that which revealed unbelief and turned it into a sign of belief. In the same way, the sacrifice of the Passover, which symbolised the unbelief of the Israelites piercing Christ, became a symbol of protection and deliverance for them. How patient, loving, and forgiving is our Father in heaven.

The vital point here is that the sacrifice of the lamb was not a meritorious action by the Israelites to save them, even if they thought this to be the case. Done in faith, the sacrifice of the lamb was a means of bringing the people into the channel of obedience which allowed God to protect them.

The people did not perceive that the slaying of the lamb symbolised what their unbelief was doing to Christ. But even though they did not understand, God still saved them from the destroyer of the firstborn. We will address the destroyer more later. The point here is that men move towards God in a framework of misunderstanding what is actually happening, but God uses where they are at to bring them into a deeper relationship with Him.

The lack of faith of the Israelites would result in all of them dying in the wilderness who were 20 years old and above, except for Caleb and Joshua. This is the sad reality of unbelief. None of the adults who left Egypt made it to the promised land because none of them believed, except for Moses, Aaron followed by Caleb and Joshua.

What if the Israelites had believed God? Could this have impacted Pharaoh? If all of Israel had prayed for Pharaoh in faith, would it have made a difference and might the plagues have stopped earlier? We can't know for sure. Either way, the destruction of Egypt was not due solely to the wickedness of the Egyptians while the Israelites were innocent. Like in the story of Lot and his family being taken out of Sodom, it wasn't because they were righteous that they were saved, highlighting the point that God did not love the Israelites more than the Egyptians.

But like Lot, the Israelites finally decided to do what Moses asked and God was able to work with that. But none of them did anything to merit being saved.

These things happened to them as examples for us. They were written down to warn us who live at the end of the age. If you think you are standing strong, be careful not to fall.  
1 Corinthians 10:11-12

As we approach the final scenes of earth's history, we are faced with a similar situation. The kings of the earth wish to rule the populations of the world and keep them subservient to their goals. In order for the Lord to rescue His people, the world will pass through seven last plagues in order for this deliverance to be accomplished.

How shall we respond to these events? As we read of their unbelief, do we realise our own potential to do the same things? Will we seek God for help in holding fast our faith to Him, or will we forget we are just like Israel and doubt like them?

Our attitude will have an effect on the leaders of the world and those around us. May we believe that our Father will deliver us. May a better understanding of how God worked in the past give us wisdom to face what is to come.

We will face hardship and difficulty, but He will never leave us nor forsake us if we place our trust in Him and walk in His commandments.

## CHAPTER 21

# HEDGE MECHANICS

Before we can navigate the details of each plague which fell upon Egypt, we need to establish the principles of God's hedge of protection. In chapter 19 we showed plainly that the Egyptian lifestyle was clearly outside of God's commandments. Only when we listen to God's word can we be fully protected by Him.

For the LORD God is our sun and our shield. He gives us grace and glory. The LORD will withhold no good thing from those who do what is right. Psalm 84:11

You are my refuge and my shield; Your word is my source of hope.  
Psalm 119:114

For You bless the godly, O LORD; You surround them with Your shield of love. Psalm 5:12

Job loved and revered God. He kept His commandments for the Bible says he was blameless.

There once was a man named Job who lived in the land of Uz. He was blameless—a man of complete integrity. He feared God and stayed away from evil. Job 1:1

When Satan boasted of his control of the earth, God reminded him about Job, to which Satan complained about the hedge of protection around him.

Then the LORD asked Satan, “Have you noticed My servant Job? He is the finest man in all the earth. He is blameless—a man of complete integrity. He fears God and stays away from evil.” Satan replied to the LORD, “Yes, but Job has good reason to fear God. **You have always put a wall of protection around him and his home and his property.** You have made him prosper in everything he does. Look how rich he is!” Job 1:8-10

Every person who walks in the commandments of God has a wall of protection around them. Those who break the commandments create gaps in the wall of protection which require angels to stand in those gaps. These angels are sent in answer to the prayers of God’s trusting children. We read often of how Moses pleaded with the Lord to save Israel during their desert wanderings.

Therefore He said that He would destroy them, **had not Moses His chosen one stood before Him in the breach, to turn away His wrath, lest He destroy** [Hiph’il] *them*. Psalm 106:23 (NKJV)

The Bible describes God as being angry and thinking to destroy them. This is projected language to express that God was thinking to allow the gaps created by Israel to remain open, allowing Satan to come in and destroy the people. This is proved by the use of the *Hiph’il* verb form which allows for a permissive context. As we have seen, God’s anger is to hide His face and allow things to unfold without His gracious intervention. In the case of Israel, Moses stood in the gap and prayed, bringing angels to shield the people from Satan’s destructive power.

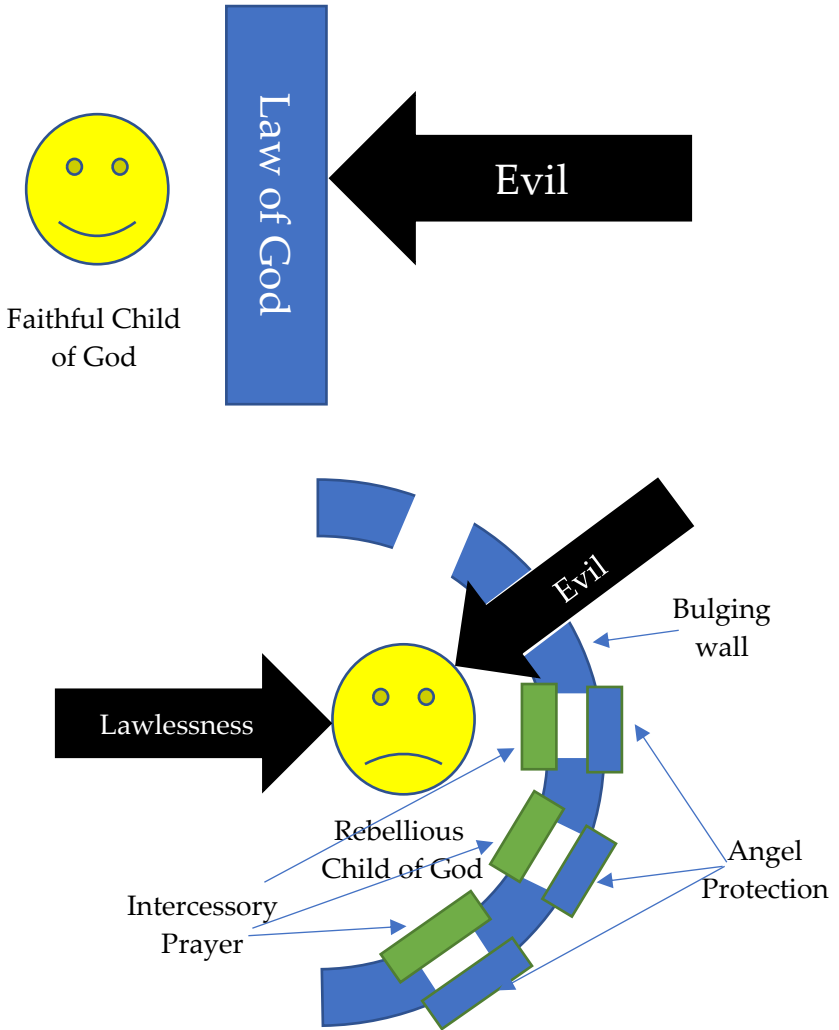
The Bible tells us plainly what happens when God’s word is rejected.

This is the reply of the Holy One of Israel: **“Because you despise what I tell you** and trust instead in oppression and lies, calamity will come upon you suddenly—**like a bulging wall that bursts and**



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**falls.** In an instant it will collapse and come crashing down.”  
Isaiah 30:12-13



Lawlessness causes the wall of protection to bulge, creating gaps that need filling in through prayer and angelic protection.

An early example of lawlessness causing gaps in the wall is the story of Er, the son of Judah.

Then Judah took a wife for Er his firstborn, and her name *was* Tamar. But Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the sight of the LORD, and the LORD killed him. Genesis 38:6-7 (NKJV)

The Bible states that Er was wicked. Wickedness is lawlessness. The Bible does not tell us what wickedness Er engaged in. We are simply told that God killed Er because he was wicked.

We are not told how Er was killed, but when we look into the face of Jesus we immediately see a conflict with the idea of God literally and directly killing this wicked man. If we compare this story with the story of the death of Saul, we get a clearer picture of what "the Lord killed him" actually means.

So Saul died because he was unfaithful to the LORD. He failed to obey the LORD's command, and he even consulted a medium instead of asking the LORD for guidance. **So the LORD killed him** and turned the kingdom over to David son of Jesse. 1 Chronicles 10:13-14

In this story, we are told how Saul died:

The fighting grew very fierce around Saul, and the Philistine archers caught up with him and wounded him. Saul groaned to his armor bearer, "Take your sword and kill me before these pagan Philistines come to taunt and torture me." But his armor bearer was afraid and would not do it. **So Saul took his own sword and fell on it.** 1 Chronicles 10:3-4

By consulting a medium, Saul caused a break in the hedge of protection. God was not able to protect Saul as He did previously. When Saul was wounded and the battle appeared lost, Saul asked his armourbearer to kill him, but he refused. Saul then committed suicide by falling on his

sword. How did God kill Saul? By allowing him to reap the consequences of his own decisions. The statement that God killed Saul is a projection onto God making Him responsible for Saul's death. It is only true in the sense that God allowed Saul to kill himself, but that is because God respected Saul's decisions, not that He maneuvered Saul into a corner because He wanted Saul dead.

Should we consider God responsible for the rebellious actions Saul took against Him? The answer *should* be obvious, but it isn't an answer we like. The human heart is stamped with Adam's nature of blaming God for his own eating of the forbidden fruit, and this story captures the same essence of attributing the responsibility to God.

This same pattern must apply to the story of Er. The Bible says Er was wicked, and the Psalmist tells us what slays the wicked.

Evil shall slay the wicked, and those who hate the righteous shall be condemned. Psalm 34:21 (NKJV)

The Bible recounts the stories of many men who did evil in the sight of the Lord, but we are not told that the Lord killed them. Their own evil deeds destroyed them. God does not show partiality, but treats all men the same. (James 2:9). The same principle that applies to Er also applies to his younger brother Onan who violated the biblical law (Deut 25:5-6) that a younger brother is to raise up seed to the honour of his older brother, if he should die.

Then Judah said to Er's brother Onan, "Go and marry Tamar, as our law requires of the brother of a man who has died. You must produce an heir for your brother." But Onan was not willing to have a child who would not be his own heir. So whenever he had intercourse with his brother's wife, he spilled the semen on the ground. This prevented her from having a child who would belong to his brother. But the LORD considered it evil for Onan to deny a child to his dead brother. So the LORD took Onan's life, too. Genesis 38:8-10

In refusing to honour his dead brother, Onan stepped outside the hedge of protection. His selfishness led him into Satan's realm, who was then able to cause his destruction. At the higher level, we consider the decision of Judah to marry a Canaanite woman. His family history, the lengths Abraham went to in order to secure a wife for Isaac, the efforts of Jacob to marry a wife within the same family structure – all seemed lost to Judah. His sons therefore were influenced by the lifestyle of his Canaanite wife who had been an idolator all her life. Er did not become wicked in a vacuum; there were influences that led him in this direction. All of these things facilitate breaches which lead to death.

God is made responsible for the death of Er, Onan and Saul, but as we know that Jesus never killed people and God's commandments forbid such things, we are led to see that these deaths were a breach in the hedge allowing evil to slay the wicked.

This is proven once again by the fact that in each of these cases the *Hiph'il* verb form is used to describe the Lord's actions towards each of these men, Er, Onan, and Saul. In the light of the character of Christ we should determine the context of these stories as God permitted these men to die as a result of their own actions.

We now turn to the book of Ezekiel, speaking of corruption in Israel's leadership. Let us observe closely the process which led to their destruction by Babylon.

“The conspiracy of her prophets in her midst is like a roaring lion tearing the prey; [1] **they have devoured people; they have taken treasure and precious things; they have made many widows in her midst.** Her priests have [2] **violated My law** and profaned My holy things; [3] **they have not distinguished between the holy and unholy, nor have they made known the difference between the unclean and the clean;** and they have [4] **hidden their eyes from My Sabbaths,** so that I am profaned among them.

[5] **Her princes in her midst are like wolves tearing the prey, to shed blood, to destroy people, and to get dishonest gain.** Her prophets plastered them with untempered *mortar*, seeing false

visions, and [6] **divining lies** for them, saying, 'Thus says the Lord GOD,' when the LORD had not spoken. The people of the land [7] **have used oppressions, committed robbery, and mistreated the poor and needy; and they wrongfully oppress the stranger.**

So **I sought for a man among them who would make a wall, and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land,** that I should not destroy it; but I found no one. Therefore I have poured out My indignation on them; I have consumed them with the fire of My wrath; **and I have recompensed their deeds on their own heads,**" says the Lord GOD. Ezekiel 22:25-31 (NKJV)

The Bible lists seven points leading towards disaster:

1. Religious leaders take advantage of people by stealing and murdering
2. Breaking the law
3. Mixing sacred and profane things
4. Ignored the Sabbath
5. Civil leaders stealing and murdering, which is unrebuked by religious leaders
6. Divining lies
7. Oppressing and mistreating the poor and foreigners

This is what the leaders of Egypt were doing to Israel as well as their own people. God looked for someone to stand in the gap for Egypt, restoring the law and strengthening the link between God and the people. If this had been done, Egypt would have more time. God *did* offer a way to do this, through the instruction to keep the Sabbath and the request to keep a feast.

We mentioned in chapter 19 the wickedness of Egypt both in the worship of their gods and their sexual wickedness. Like the Antediluvians, and the people of Sodom, Egypt has corrupted the earth around them.

In order to build up the hedge, God told Moses to request Pharaoh that they might keep a feast. Moses was also instructed to tell the Israelites to start keeping the Sabbath again.

And Pharaoh said, "Look, the people of the land *are* many now, and you make them rest [Sabbath] from their labor!" Exodus 5:5 (NKJV)

The word *rest* actually is Shabat or Sabbath. Jesus states that He is "Lord of the Sabbath" and therefore the rest that we find in Christ comes to us in a special way on the Sabbath as well as the feasts.<sup>16</sup> When people keep the Sabbath, their souls are given rest. As men and women are rested, the earth itself is affected, for just as the sins of men damage the earth, the righteous actions of God's people heal the earth.

Here we discover one of the reasons for the separation of the Israelites and the Egyptians. Through the reforms of Moses and Aaron, the Israelites had started to keep the Sabbath. The peace that this brought to them ensured that the earth around them did not experience the seven last plagues to fall upon Egypt. Sadly, the unbelief of the Israelites exposed them to the first three plagues.

It is interesting to note that part of God's requirements includes a rest for the land every seventh year.

"Give the following instructions to the people of Israel. When you have entered the land I am giving you, the land itself must observe a Sabbath rest before the LORD every seventh year. For six years you may plant your fields and prune your vineyards and harvest your crops, but during the seventh year the land must have a Sabbath year of complete rest. It is the LORD's Sabbath. Do not plant your fields or prune your vineyards during that year."  
Leviticus 25:2-4

This command reveals that the earth itself is included in the Sabbath principle and needs rest. When people rest every seventh day, this also

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<sup>16</sup> For more details on this, see the book *Fountain of Blessing* available at [fatheroflove.info](http://fatheroflove.info).

affects the earth. The peace given to men on the Sabbath vibrates into the earth in exactly the opposite way to how Cain murdering Abel placed a damaging vibration into it.

The feasts are also part of this process, and Pharaoh was given the opportunity to be part of the filling of the breach against calamity – without even participating in it himself, merely by allowing religious freedom!

And they say, “The God of the Hebrews hath met with us, let us go, we pray thee, a journey of three days into the wilderness, and we sacrifice to Jehovah our God, lest He meet **us** with pestilence or with sword.” Exodus 5:3 (YLT)

We see the connection between keeping the feast and the avoidance of pestilence. This is an important principle for us today in seeking to fill gaps in the wall made through lawlessness. The feasts of the Lord will prevent pestilence and sword from meeting us if we walk in these blessed occasions.

Sadly, Pharaoh refused to acknowledge God, nor would he give them time for the Sabbath or the feast Moses requested. So, then God poured out His indignation and wrath on Egypt. What does this mean? It means He hid His face as we discovered earlier.

“Then My anger will blaze forth against them. I will abandon them, hiding My face from them, and they will be devoured. Terrible trouble will come down on them, and on that day they will say, ‘These disasters have come down on us because God is no longer among us!’” Deuteronomy 31:17

There was no possible way to hedge up the gaps made by Egypt. God might have released everything at once, but in His wisdom, God “recompensed their deeds on their own heads” step by step so that some of the people might awake, repent, and turn to the Lord.

As we turn to examine each of the plagues, we must especially remember the Two Mirrors, the Earth Curse, the Angel Hedge and the True Cross.

1. Within the Two Mirror Principle, God is speaking to Pharaoh in language that he understands. God tells Moses in Exodus 7:1 that He would make Moses seem like a God to Pharaoh. To seem like a God to Pharaoh, Moses must speak in the same way Pharaoh speaks because Pharaoh believes himself to be a god.
2. God can and must speak to Pharaoh in harsh terms because the Egyptians have corrupted the earth through their lawlessness and the situation is getting desperate. God has been holding back the natural consequences for a long time, but now He will release them in such a way to cause Pharaoh to lose confidence in his own gods, as well as in himself, in order to turn and repent.
3. The angels are gatekeepers to the destruction falling on the earth. Just like the plagues in Revelation 16, we see angels releasing plagues by ceasing to stand in the gap of the walls made by the Egyptians. This is how the angels “have the plagues in their hands”: it is because they are filling gaps in the walls made by the Egyptians themselves.
4. The language of the plagues also reveals the story of the Cross. The blood in the first plague, thunder and lightning in the seventh, darkness in the ninth and the death of the firstborn in the tenth, all cry out to us to see the sufferings of Christ in the sufferings of the Egyptians.

All of these things are happening at the same time in the story. At first it feels disorienting, but it is wiser to navigate this story with our instruments rather than our natural feelings. We must let every word of God have its place in the story; we must prove all things; we must be patient and faithful to put all the pieces together for the face of Jesus and the plagues to come into harmony.

One more thing before we address the plagues. We need to address the hardening of Pharaoh’s heart. God said He would harden it.



## MIRROR PRINCIPLE

And the LORD told Moses, "When you arrive back in Egypt, go to Pharaoh and perform all the miracles I have empowered you to do. But **I will harden his heart** so he will refuse to let the people go."  
Exodus 4:21

How does this actually happen? Do we imagine that God asks Pharaoh to let the people go and then intentionally prevents Pharaoh from doing so? Such a notion is impossible and does not reflect God's character in the slightest.

"You stubborn people! You are heathen at heart and deaf to the truth. Must you forever resist the Holy Spirit? That's what your ancestors did, and so do you!" Acts 7:51

Pharaoh was a heathen and was deaf to truth. He became harder and harder by resisting the Holy Spirit which pleaded with his conscience to submit himself to God. The more the Spirit pleaded, the harder Pharaoh had to make himself in order to resist. So indeed, God hardened Pharaoh's heart by trying to soften it. And that's why it can also be true that Pharaoh hardened his own heart.

But Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time also; neither would he let the people go. Exodus 8:32 (NKJV)

## CHAPTER 22

# THE EGYPTIAN PLAGUES

Then the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, “When Pharaoh speaks to you, saying, ‘Show a miracle for yourselves,’ then you shall say to Aaron, ‘Take your rod and cast it before Pharaoh, *and* let it become a serpent.’”

So Moses and Aaron went in to Pharaoh, and they did so, just as the LORD commanded. And Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh and before his servants, and it became a serpent.

But Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers; so the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments. For every man threw down his rod, and they became serpents. But Aaron’s rod swallowed up their rods. And Pharaoh’s heart grew hard, and he did not heed them, as the LORD had said. Exodus 7:8-13 (NKJV)

Jesus tells us that a wicked generation seek after a miracle, but God meets the wicked where they are at and He gives to Pharaoh the miracle of a rod turning into a serpent. Only God has the power to turn a rod into a serpent. It was a miracle that had deep significance to Pharaoh,

for it echoes the story of the father of the Egyptian gods, Atum, who would destroy all and turn into a serpent.

Satan counterfeits the miracles to give Pharaoh an excuse to discount the sign given by Moses and Aaron. Pharaoh had no faith so he was always going to find some way to ignore the miracle given, even as the Pharisees found a way to discount the miracles of Jesus and kill Him.

Then the LORD said to Moses: "Tell Aaron, 'Take your staff and raise your hand over the waters of Egypt—all its rivers, canals, ponds, and all the reservoirs. Turn all the water to blood. Everywhere in Egypt the water will turn to blood, even the water stored in wooden bowls and stone pots.'"

So Moses and Aaron did just as the LORD commanded them. As Pharaoh and all of his officials watched, Aaron raised his staff and struck the water of the Nile. Suddenly, the whole river turned to blood! The fish in the river died, and the water became so foul that the Egyptians couldn't drink it. There was blood everywhere throughout the land of Egypt. Exodus 7:19-21

Our Father in heaven sustains all creation. He purifies air and water and preserves it for us. When His Spirit is withdrawn then death immediately follows.

But if You turn away from them, they panic. When You take away their breath, they die and turn again to dust. When You give them Your breath, life is created, and You renew the face of the earth.  
Psalm 104:29-30

Harpi was the androgynous god of the Nile to the Egyptians. Some of the titles of Harpi were "Lord of the Fish and Birds of the Marshes" and "Lord of the River Bringing Vegetation". In Jehovah withdrawing His regenerating power, Harpi became a destroyer of the fish and vegetation. Coming from the rod in Aaron's hand, this represented the power of the God of Israel over one of the most important gods to Egypt.

The Hebrew word for *blood* is used symbolically for grape juice. Jesus turned water to wine as a sweet symbol of the gospel. Like the Jewish leaders who rejected Christ, symbolised by the cursed fig tree which had its life sucked out of it, so the Nile River became the equivalent of the fig tree: its life sucked out of it by the withdrawal of the Spirit of God. The Nile was left desolate. Just as light is generated and darkness is the natural result of the absence of light, so the river becoming blood was a natural result of the absence of the sustaining life of Christ.

But why did the waters turn to blood? Why didn't they just stagnate or dry up? The book of Revelation tells us why.

Then the second angel poured out his bowl on the sea, and it became blood as of a dead *man*; and every living creature in the sea died. Then the third angel poured out his bowl on the rivers and springs of water, and they became blood.

And I heard the angel of the waters saying: "You are righteous, O Lord, the One who is and who was and who is to be, because You have judged these things. **For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and You have given them blood to drink.** For it is their just due." Revelation 16:3-6 (NKJV)

The Egyptians had brutalised the Israelites, killed their infant sons, and thrown them into the river. A later Pharaoh is characterized as a serpent/dragon in the river (Eze 29:3), a fitting symbol for a man who headed this work. Now the blood of these infants slain in the rivers came back upon them. God didn't need to arbitrarily turn the water to blood, He simply had to remove His Spirit from it and the deeds of the past were exposed.

God also allowed the waters to manifest in this way because blood is a symbol of the ransom Christ has to pay for the Israelites. Just as Jesus sweated drops of blood on the night before He hung on the Cross, so Christ shed drops of blood into the Nile as an indication of His coming passion in the death of the firstborn of Egypt.

Satan worked a miracle to replicate the unravelling of nature in the Nile. In doing this, Satan convinced Pharaoh that the God of Moses had acted directly to cause the destruction while assuring Pharaoh that his own gods still could match the God of Moses.

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Tell Aaron, 'Raise the staff in your hand over all the rivers, canals, and ponds of Egypt, and bring up frogs over all the land.'" So Aaron raised his hand over the waters of Egypt, and frogs came up and covered the whole land! But the magicians were able to do the same thing with their magic. They, too, caused frogs to come up on the land of Egypt. Exodus 8:5-7

Heqet was the goddess of fertility connected to the flooding of the Nile. She is represented in the form of a frog. In the language of Pharaoh, the serpent rod turns Heqet into a destroyer. Her fertility goes into overdrive and frogs are everywhere. The balance of nature kept in check by the Spirit of God is released.

He sent vast swarms of flies to consume them and hordes of frogs to ruin them. Psalm 78:45

The word for *sent* in this Psalm is in the *Piel* form which means *to let loose, set free, dismiss or give over*. This is important in the context of the Earth Curse. God did not *send* the frogs but rather He let them loose. Secondly, the word for *ruin* is in the *Hiph'il* form which we know can be translated "permitted to ruin." This fits perfectly with God releasing or setting free these plagues to permit them to ruin the Egyptians.

This is important with regard to the hedge of protection. God allows part of the wall of protection which He had been covering with angelic protection to open. He only opened part of the wall in order to send Pharaoh a warning.

Why is it so important to make a distinction between sending frogs and releasing them? Because when we look into the face of Jesus, we see peace, calm, and order. We see waves restrained within their boundaries. The frogs represent chaos and disorder which comes from

a different spirit. The earth itself begins to vomit because of the sins of the people.

The frogs are also important because of how they are portrayed in the plagues of Revelation:

**And I saw three evil spirits that looked like frogs** leap from the mouths of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet. **They are demonic spirits who work miracles and go out to all the rulers of the world to gather them for battle against the Lord** on that great judgment day of God the Almighty. Revelation 16:13-14

In God releasing a spirit of disorder into frog reproduction, was He sending a warning that demonic spirits working miracles were about to be unleashed on Egypt? We remember that each time the plagues come, it comes from the rod who was turned into a serpent.

Satan, through his agents, counterfeits the frogs, hardening Pharaoh's heart still further. But Satan is clever, because in having his priests produce frogs, Pharaoh is led to believe that God is actively sending frogs to punish him rather than removing His Spirit and allowing disorder to reign. It is vital to underscore that the frogs would not have been disordered if the Egyptians had kept God's commandments.

The third and fourth plague are of the same process as the plague of the frogs. The Psalmist combined them together as being released, or set free, by God. We remember that Moses had told Pharaoh that if the feast was not kept God would allow pestilence to manifest, but this pestilence is only a result of the wickedness of the Egyptians.

In allowing these plagues in succession, God was actually restricting and limiting that which should have all happened at once. This is how God works with all of us, limiting the number of problems we have that we might learn; if He were to release them all upon us, we would be overwhelmed, and if He did not release any we would never understand cause and effect, nor choose to be reconciled to Him.

The interesting point about the plague of lice is that it appeared that the agents of Pharaoh could not replicate it. If Satan could use sorcery to

cause snakes and frogs to appear, it would have been easy for him to cause lice to appear if he wanted to. But Satan wanted it to appear that God was a bigger destroyer than himself. It was shown that the work of God was superior to that of Satan. But Satan was leading the people deeper into deception.

At the same time, God allows Himself to appear as a destroyer so that posterity would finally realise that these attributes reflect human behaviour, not divine behaviour.

The frogs had been annoying and their stench when they died was uncomfortable. The lice were even more annoying, but the stinging flies were the first to bring pain to the bodies of the Egyptians. Once again the *Hiph'il* form is used which provides for a context of permission.

The Israelites had endured the first three plagues with the Egyptians due to their unbelief, but now that the plagues began to afflict the bodies of men, the angels of God protect the Israelites.

“But this time I will spare the region of Goshen, where My people live. No flies will be found there. Then you will know that I am the LORD and that I am present even in the heart of your land. I will make a clear distinction between My people and your people. This miraculous sign will happen tomorrow.” Exodus 8:22-23

It is interesting to note that flies were associated with the Canaanite god Beelzebub, seemingly another name for the god Baal.<sup>17</sup> These were large venomous flies that inflicted a painful sting, which is entirely characteristic for the Lord of the Flies, Satan.

During this plague Pharaoh begins to show a willingness to listen, proving true of most men what Satan said to God concerning Job:

Satan replied to the LORD, “Skin for skin! A man will give up everything he has to save his life.” Job 2:4

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<sup>17</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beelzebub>

## THE EGYPTIAN PLAGUES

Pharaoh places restrictions on Moses, commanding that Israel sacrifice in Egypt rather than leaving.

Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron. "All right! Go ahead and offer sacrifices to your God," he said. "But do it here in this land."  
Exodus 8:25

But as soon as Moses prayed for the flies to be removed, Pharaoh hardened his heart and changed his mind.

The next plague was a plague on all their livestock. We remind ourselves that Egypt had already placed itself where pestilence was certain to come. When God spoke to Israel about the importance of walking in His commandments, He stated the following:

"And I will bring a sword against you that will execute the vengeance of the covenant; when you are gathered together within your cities **I will send pestilence among you; and you shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy.**" Leviticus 26:25 (NKJV)

So the next plague prepared to be released in Egypt was God delivering Egypt "into the hand of the enemy":

"Go back to Pharaoh," the LORD commanded Moses. "Tell him, 'This is what the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, says: Let My people go, so they can worship Me. If you continue to hold them and refuse to let them go, the hand of the LORD will strike all your livestock—your horses, donkeys, camels, cattle, sheep, and goats—with a deadly plague.'" Exodus 9:1-3

A glance into the face of Jesus and we don't see Him killing horses, donkeys, camels, sheep and goats with plagues. This is what the Psalms says about how God deals with plagues:

Those who live in the shelter of the Most High will find rest in the shadow of the Almighty. This I declare about the LORD: He alone is my refuge, my place of safety; He is my God, and I trust Him. For **He will rescue you from every trap and protect you from deadly disease.** He will cover you with His feathers. He will shelter you



with His wings. His faithful promises are your armor and protection. Psalm 91:1-4

Did God protect the animals of the Israelites with one hand and kill the animals of Egypt with the other? The idea is foolish. Looking to Christ, we see that He restored everything that He touched. Christ is life; He is not the author of disease and death.

Once Satan had convinced the Egyptians that God is the one actively bringing these plagues, he now can do his work of destruction with the satisfaction that God will be blamed for it – he just needs to wait for when the breach opens up. As God said to Israel, pestilence is evidence of being handed over to the enemy (Lev 26:25), and Satan is our enemy. God protected the Israelites livestock from the work of Satan in killing all the animals. If Pharaoh had listened to Moses, God could have stopped up the gap in the wall and protected the Egyptians' animals. But when he refused to listen, God hid his face and almost all the animals died.

The sixth plague brought extremely painful boils. The signature of these boils is found in the story of Job:

So Satan left the LORD's presence, and he [Satan] struck Job with terrible boils from head to foot. Job scraped his skin with a piece of broken pottery as he sat among the ashes. Job 2:7-8

This is the only other example we have in the Bible of someone being struck with boils. Job's wife thought God was the one who did this to him:

His wife said to him, "Are you still trying to maintain your integrity? Curse God and die." Job 2:9

As we have stated previously, in the case of the Egyptians, these boils came because of breaking God's commandments to such an extent that Satan could attack them. Like the case of Job, God limits the level of affliction the enemy can do.

## THE EGYPTIAN PLAGUES

The boils produced a ministration of death, especially for the Egyptian magicians. This plague broke the confidence of the people in their leadership and revealed that they could not protect the people because they also were covered in them.

In terms of Christ being crucified in Egypt, in all the affliction of the Egyptians, Christ was afflicted. He felt their intense agony, a type of Christ's agony in Pilate's hall and on the Cross. And just like the Cross event, Bible readers today consider the Egyptians "smitten of God and afflicted," when in reality, Satan had been released to do this work, just as he was the one behind the sufferings of Christ on the Cross.

Fiery hail is the next plague, and we have clear evidence in this plague of satanic activity.

He **gave up** [Hiph'il] **their cattle also to the hail**, and their flocks to hot thunderbolts. He cast upon them the fierceness of his anger, wrath, and indignation, and trouble, **by sending evil angels among them**. Psalm 78:48-49 (KJV)

The KJV correctly translates the *Hiph'il* as permissive, "gave up". The same verb form occurs in Exodus, and can be translated the same way, proving that Psalm 78:48 and Exodus 9:18 will harmonise together when using the permissive context.

So tomorrow at this time **I will send** [permit, Hiph'il] a hailstorm more devastating than any in all the history of Egypt. Exodus 9:18

Psalms 78:49 states that it is evil angels that are released upon Egypt. But several translations obscure the fact that evil angels were bringing the hail.

He cast on them the fierceness of His anger, wrath, indignation, and trouble, **by sending angels of destruction among them**. Psalm 78:49 (NKJV)

He unleashed against them his hot anger, his wrath, indignation and hostility – **a band of destroying angels**. Psalm 78:49 (NIV)

But the word in Hebrew is *evil* and is used in the phrase 'the tree of knowledge of good and evil'. The book of Psalms tells us plainly that God's anger has been activated, meaning His sorrowful withdrawal, allowing evil angels to do their work.

It also tells us that God *gave up* the cattle to the hail rather than He directly sending the hail. This detail is important. This is why our dear Father in heaven was concerned for the herdsman and the cattle.

"So tomorrow at this time I will send a hailstorm more devastating than any in all the history of Egypt. Quick! Order your livestock and servants to come in from the fields to find shelter. Any person or animal left outside will die when the hail falls." Some of Pharaoh's officials were afraid because of what the LORD had said. They quickly brought their servants and livestock in from the fields.  
Exodus 9:18-20

If God wanted to punish Egypt, then why is He trying to save the herdsman and cattle? This makes perfect sense when we see that evil angels are assembling to bring destruction. God continues to try to save while Satan does his work of destruction.

When we read the Bible carefully and look at all that it says, the picture starts to change and we see Satan revealed for the murderer that he is.

Let's just run through our tools again as we read about the hail. Reading this passage outside the character Christ, we only see a vengeful angry God destroying those who disobey Him. Looking into the face of Christ, we begin to discover more texts that reveal evil angels are involved in the process. The wording of Bible texts become clearer. We see the hiding of the face of God and Satan is revealed as the one engaged in destruction. We realise the reason they are released is because the Angel Hedge has been broken down through the Egyptians breaking God's commandments.

This process becomes easier with each application of the principles. Knowing that Christ was crucified in Egypt according to Revelation 11:8, we search for more connections.

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All the flax and barley were ruined by the hail, because the barley had formed heads and the flax was budding. Exodus 9:31

Barley is the crop waved as the first fruit offering during Passover. The following verse tells us who the first-fruits represent:

But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those *who are* Christ's at His coming. 1 Corinthians 15:23 (NKJV)

The smashing of the barley crop represents the crushing of Christ as He is afflicted in the affliction of the Egyptians. Our hearts are moved at the thought of Christ's suffering. We begin to see the Cross in a much deeper light. We see how His pain is extended across time. He wants us to know this but He also doesn't want to force us to know this. The Spirit of God pleads with us to give up our natural desire for sacrifice and offering to appease human perceptions of justice. Our desire for vengeance hurts Him, but Jesus will not demand that we let it go against our will but hopes to awaken to us the value of love and forgiveness.

If we search for more connections regarding hail, we discover gems like this in the Psalms. One of the reasons we look to the Psalms is that Jesus specifically mentions that the Psalms speak of Him.

Then He said, "When I was with you before, **I told you that everything written about Me** in the law of Moses and the prophets and **in the Psalms** must be fulfilled." Luke 24:44

In Psalm 18, we find a reference to fiery hail. The opening part of the Psalm speaks of Christ's wrestle leading up to the Cross.

I called on the LORD, who is worthy of praise, and He saved me from my enemies. The ropes of death entangled me; floods of destruction swept over me. The grave wrapped its ropes around me; death laid a trap in my path. But in my distress I cried out to the LORD; yes, I prayed to my God for help. He heard me from His sanctuary; my cry to Him reached His ears. Psalm 18:3-6

What follows next is a description of God's reaction:

**Then the earth quaked and trembled. The foundations of the mountains shook; they quaked because of His anger.** Smoke poured from His nostrils; fierce flames leaped from His mouth. Glowing coals blazed forth from Him. **He opened the heavens and came down; dark storm clouds were beneath His feet. Mounted on a mighty angelic being, He flew, soaring on the wings of the wind. He shrouded Himself in darkness, veiling His approach with dark rain clouds. Thick clouds shielded the brightness around Him and rained down hail and burning coals.** The LORD thundered from heaven; the voice of the Most High resounded **amid the hail and burning coals.** Psalm 18:7-13

The shaking of the earth reminds us of the earthquake during the crucifixion of Jesus. The darkness indicated suggests the terrible darkness around the Cross that lasted from noon to 3pm (Luke 23:44), revealing the Father's presence at the Cross shrouded in darkness.

There is much more that we could explore here, but we make the point that the true understanding of the Cross connects many portions of Scripture that had remained obscure previously. The plague of hail is connected to the Cross event, causing us to realise more and more that the Cross of Christ is the key to unlocking all the mysteries of the Bible where God previously appeared to be fearfully violent. It is the key to understanding His relationship with the world and how everything goes through His Son Jesus.

Locusts decimated Egypt in the eighth plague. After the fiery hail had smashed everything, the locusts removed everything green from Egypt. In the book of Revelation, the fifth trumpet speaks of a horde of locusts. The leader of the locusts is identified as Apollyon, the destroyer.

**The locusts looked like horses prepared for battle.** They had what looked like gold crowns on their heads, and their faces looked like human faces. They had hair like women's hair and teeth like the teeth of a lion. They wore armor made of iron, and their wings roared like an army of chariots rushing into battle. They had tails that stung like scorpions, and for five months they had the power

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to torment people. Their king is the angel from the bottomless pit; **his name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in Greek, Apollyon—the Destroyer.** Revelation 9:7-11

An east wind brought the locusts into Egypt.

**So Moses raised his staff** over Egypt, and the LORD caused an east wind to blow over the land all that day and through the night. When morning arrived, the east wind had brought the locusts. Exodus 10:13

The Angel Hedge which held back the winds of strife was released and Satan, the destroyer, stripped away all hope from Egypt.

Then I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, **holding back the four winds so they did not blow on the earth or the sea, or even on any tree.** Revelation 7:1

The “hearers of the word who are not doers” (James 1:23) will read this as God personally sending the locusts, but the Bible indicates that Egypt was *given over* to the locusts.

He gave [delivered up, gave over] their crops to caterpillars; their harvest was consumed by locusts. Psalm 78:46

This is confirmed again by a permissive use of the *Hiph'il* Hebrew form.

Or else, if you refuse to let My people go, behold, tomorrow I will bring [permit—*Hiph'il*] locusts into your territory. Exodus 10:4 (NKJV)

Pharaoh’s officials begged him to let the Israelites go as they could see that Egypt was in ruins:

Pharaoh’s officials now came to Pharaoh and appealed to him. “How long will you let this man hold us hostage? Let the men go to worship the LORD their God! Don’t you realize that Egypt lies in ruins?” Exodus 10:7

Green is a symbol of life and hope. The locusts extinguished all hope for Egypt, preparing them to descend into the deep dark depression of

the ninth plague. Satan tried to extinguish all hope in Christ as He hung upon the Cross. He reminded Christ that all the disciples had forsaken Him. All the nation had turned against Him. The night before He was crucified, His disciples argued about who was the greatest. All hope seemed gone except for two green shoots found in an adulteress and a thief. Mary had anointed His feet and the thief on the cross asked Jesus to remember him when Christ came into His kingdom.

This small amount of light for Christ is symbolised by the flicker of light in the homes of the Israelites during the plague of darkness.

So Moses stretched out his hand toward heaven, and there was thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days. They did not see one another; nor did anyone rise from his place for three days.

**But all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.**

Exodus 10:22-23 (NKJV)

Darkness is the power of Satan. (Acts 26:18). God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. (1 John 1:5). The sufferings of Christ through the decimation of Egypt caused Him terrible grief. Just as Christ was covered by darkness on the Cross, so Egypt was covered in darkness right before the death of their firstborn.

By this time it was about noon, and darkness fell across the whole land until three o'clock. Luke 23:44

Looking into the Old Covenant mirror, one of the most powerful gods in Egypt had turned his back on Egypt and left them in darkness. In the hands of Moses, it represents Yehovah's defeat of their protector, Amen-Ra.

In the New Covenant mirror, Christ is covered in darkness as He suffers with His Egyptian children. Christ does not leave them nor forsake them; He feels their depression, sorrow, and pain. Satan shrouds Egypt in darkness and prepares himself to inflict his most deadly strike against them in the tenth plague.

Does the world learn nothing from the story of the darkness in Egypt? Apparently not:

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Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and **his kingdom was plunged into darkness. His subjects ground their teeth in anguish, and they cursed the God of heaven for their pains and sores.** But they did not repent of their evil deeds and turn to God. Revelation 16:10-11

Egypt did not repent either, thus many had to walk the Egyptian *Via Dolorosa* to be crucified spiritually on the left and right side of the person of Christ. In their dying moments most of those suffering under the final plagues in Revelation will curse Christ, but some of them will say to Jesus, “please remember me when you come in your kingdom.”

The same will happen in the last days of earth’s history. The kings of the earth will enslave the world and grind them with tyranny. The feeble saints among them will cry to the Lord of Sabaoth.

Come now, *you* rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon *you!* Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have heaped up treasure in the last days. **Indeed the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out;** and the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. You have lived on the earth in pleasure and luxury; you have fattened your hearts as in a day of slaughter. You have condemned, you have murdered the just; he does not resist you.

Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See *how* the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain. You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. James 5:1-8 (NKJV)

None of these nine plagues could cause Pharaoh to give up his slaves. This assures us that calamity is not enough to release the human heart from its slavery to sin. In a later period, Israel had a similar response to the Egyptians, showing that we are all of the same nature.



## MIRROR PRINCIPLE

Oh, what a sinful nation they are—loaded down with a burden of guilt. They are evil people, corrupt children who have rejected the LORD. They have despised the Holy One of Israel and turned their backs on Him. Why do you continue to invite punishment? Must you rebel forever?

Your head is injured, and your heart is sick. You are battered from head to foot—covered with bruises, welts, and infected wounds—without any soothing ointments or bandages. Your country lies in ruins, and your towns are burned. Foreigners plunder your fields before your eyes and destroy everything they see. Isaiah 1:4-7

Only the death of the firstborn son of the king could satisfy the mind of Pharaoh that was fully under the control of Satan. If the first-born of the lower ranks of Egypt had been slain it would not have been enough to move the king's heart. The death of the king's son alone could do it.

## CHAPTER 23

# PASSOVER DESTROYER OR PROTECTOR

The slaughter of the firstborn in Egypt is a summit akin to Mt Moriah where Abraham ascended to sacrifice his son. The horror of the previous natural disasters in Egypt fade into the shadows of this event.

Reading in Exodus of the Father's intention to kill Pharaoh's firstborn son along with all of Egypt's firstborn sends a shiver down my spine. I look into the brilliant Milky Way galaxy at night and I wonder, "Would you really do that, my beloved Father? Would you kill every firstborn child in Egypt who were not under the blood of the lamb to force Pharaoh to let the Israelites go free?"

Then you shall say to Pharaoh, "Thus says the LORD: 'Israel is My son, My firstborn. So I say to you, let My son go that he may serve Me. But if you refuse to let him go, indeed I will kill your son, your firstborn.'" Exodus 4:22-23

"I am in an earnest search to know You, my heavenly Father. Is this really who You are? The intimacy You have placed in my heart to love You, the beautiful expression of love demonstrated in Your Son, the love

I experience with my wife and children, all of these beg me to search with all my heart to know the truth.”

“Sometimes tough decisions are required for tough circumstances,” I hear some say. “We must take the Bible as it reads, Adrian,” says another. “Do you dare to question the justice of God in liberating His chosen people?”

But are not the Egyptians also children of God? Doesn't God love them too? It is Pharaoh who is refusing to listen to God, not his son. His son is relatively innocent; why kill the son?

“Would you do that Father? Would You really do that? If such things were true, it feels like You are forcing Pharaoh to submit by seeking to kill the one most precious to him. That sounds more like what Satan would do than what You would do.”

If we are going to ascend to the peak of this story, where the air is so thin that you become light headed, then we must be disciplined to use the tools that we have been given so far.

Let us remind ourselves with the truth that God's ways are not our ways. He does not think like us. We are extremely prone to imagine Him to be like us and project the negative aspects of our natures onto Him.

When God tells Moses that if Pharaoh does not let His son go then He will kill Pharaoh's son, this immediately conflicts with the life demonstrated by Christ on earth. He never killed anyone's son. The Romans were crushing His people. Why didn't Jesus go to Rome and threaten to kill Caesar's son if he didn't stop oppressing the chosen people? Wouldn't that be a consistent line of attack if that is what God did to Egypt?

This threat also conflicts with the sixth commandment – “you shall not kill.” The immediate response to this is to say that God can execute justice on anyone when they are evil. But remember, God did not apparently threaten to kill Pharaoh but his son, who has no crimes listed against him that we are aware of. Apart from this Jesus Christ demonstrated the Ten Commandments in living form. He showed us

how to live the sixth commandment. His life is the greatest light to shine on the meaning of the sixth commandment and we should always look to Him to define its meaning.

We state it again: When a story relating to God's character in the Old Testament contradicts the life of Jesus on earth, then we immediately know that what God says is in fact a mirror of what his listener is thinking.

It is vital to do this because any revelation of God that does not agree with the life of Christ on earth would immediately prove Christ to be a false Messiah because of His claim to Philip that those who have seen Him on earth have seen the Father. Why don't Christians grasp this fundamental point? The entire integrity of Christ is bound up in the ability to present God in the Old Testament as exactly the same as Christ in the New Testament, because Jesus is the express image of the Father. (Heb 1:3). Failure to align the two characters completely destroys the Bible.

Adding to this stark reality, the central reason why this world is heading for destruction on a scale never before witnessed is because it never saw in Christianity a harmonisation of the God of the Old Testament with Jesus in the New.

The Mirror Principle gives to us the key to remedy this terrible tragedy. It is my sincere desire that you as a reader will grasp both the gravity and seriousness of this principle in reading the Bible.

We remember the story when God spoke while Adam listened.

Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever" — therefore the LORD God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken. Genesis 3:22-23 (NKJV)

God speaks what is in Adam's thoughts, not His own. He has to do this because sin causes people to operate with a form of dementia. Have you ever tried to convince a person with dementia of something? Sin

causes people to forget things; it allows them to live in a different reality to the real world. Professional advice tells us that when we communicate with someone who has dementia, we have to live in their world and operate according to their paradigm. Trying to convince them of something they can't see or remember only causes arguments and makes them angry. This is why God speaks to Adam in his own reality.

God also does this in accordance with the principle of causing sin to abound. He can do nothing else than this because of the human trait of projecting its own negative traits onto others. God walks with us in our demented reality to assist in amplifying our problem in the hope that we might see it.

The human heart does not want to accept this simple truth. It seems complex to us; our minds melt down; our intellect rebels because its implications are too horrendous to accept. This is why the path to eternal life is so narrow.

When God spoke to Moses a message to convey to Pharaoh, He is speaking to the corrupted wisdom of men. Pharaoh is outside the New Covenant. His mind only understands the language of death. He does not understand the principles of heaven and so what God speaks to Pharaoh is actually a revelation of the spirit that rules him, Satan. (Eze 29:3).

There is nothing in Exodus 4:22 that contradicts the character of Christ. When God says that Israel is His firstborn or chief son, He speaks reality. But Exodus 4:23 contains a phrase that contradicts the character of Christ and therefore we are beholding the character of Pharaoh and Satan who rules him, and in them we behold the true depravity of every natural man. Man's nature is an enemy of God (Rom 8:7), but his spiritual dementia causes him to conveniently forget this.

The New Covenant reality of this story is that Satan is saying to God "Israel is my chief son to enslave (because of the danger they pose to me through their knowledge) for they live in my land of Egypt. If You don't

let them freely serve me, then I will kill Your Son. You keep trying to draw them away from me by your Spirit and this must stop – or else!”

In the Old Covenant, it reads as God saying He is the killer and destroyer, but in the New Covenant this statement is a mirror into the heart of the dragon and his desire to kill the Son of God.

Oh dear reader, do not shut your mind to this possibility. We may feel lightheaded when we contemplate it. We are now in the clouds of the spiritual Himalayas where it is hard to breath naturally. Some of us want to simply lie down and go to sleep because we are exhausted by this climb, but let us ask for Jesus to breathe His Spirit on us so we can walk a little further. The blessed summit is so near and the picture is glorious beyond comprehension!

Jesus told us that Satan was a murderer from the beginning. (John 8:44). He envisaged a universe without the Son of God. He has wanted Him dead from the beginning. The spirit of this fallen angel comes into the hearts of every human being in his natural state. The death of all the firstborn in Egypt reflects the deep-seated reality that all of humanity in their carnal state hate the Son of God. The Jews and Romans showed us what we all will do with Jesus unaided by divine grace. There is written into every one of us the death of the firstborn – the desire for Jesus to be dead.

Try to grasp the implications. We are indeed at high altitude now. We remind ourselves of the following.

... the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. Revelation 11:8 (NKJV)

He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. John 1:11 (NKJV)

The Israelites needed a substitute to assuage their inherent clamouring for the death of the firstborn Son of God. The shedding of the blood of the lamb was intended to represent, in the New Covenant, their confession of such a deed and receive forgiveness. In the Old Covenant,

the shedding of the blood of the lamb is simply appeasement to a wrathful deity bent on slaughter.

If God was simply seeking to save the children of Israel from the tyranny of Egypt, why does He apparently threaten to kill the firstborn of the Israelites as well as that of the Egyptians? At some point, there must come a light into the soul to recognise that something far deeper is going on in this Exodus story than most Christians have previously believed.

Deeper still is the human belief that God can only solve the sin problem by the death of His Son. We believe that God's justice demands it. This is reflected in these thoughts:

Should we offer Him thousands of rams and ten thousand rivers of olive oil? Should we sacrifice our firstborn children to pay for our sins? Micah 6:7

Abraham revealed to us this deep-seated principle that caused him to understand the words of God as the need to offer his son to remedy his sin problem. But these are not God's thoughts because He never desired sacrifice and offering for sin. (Ps 40:6). The correct understanding of the Abraham and Isaac story reveals to us the human trait of offering the firstborn – that which was most valuable to him – to pay for sin.

Why is offering your firstborn such a deep-seated principle in human hearts? Because Adam was willing to offer up his wife Eve, his firstborn from his very person, that he might escape the punishment which he thought God wished to exercise against him.

Taking this principle back to the war in heaven (Rev 12:7), we discern Satan placing the blame upon God for making His Son equal with Himself while not doing the same for Satan. Satan felt that God needed to appease his wrath by offering to kill His Son to atone for the perceived wrong done to Satan.

Jesus states that Satan was a murderer from the beginning. He was the one who wanted Christ dead. In the clamouring of the leaders of Israel for the death of Jesus we see the cunning, planning, and desire of Satan

to kill Jesus. Once the deed was accomplished, Satan projected the need for the death of Christ onto God, making Him responsible for the death. Satan “framed mischief through the law” (Ps 94:20, KJV), in order to cover his deeds in a counterfeit justice that appeared reasonable to the world.

Let us now address that fearful night when all the firstborn of Egypt died.

“For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I *am* the LORD.” Exodus 12:12 (NKJV)

We remember the words of Abraham when he pleaded for the city of Sodom.

**“Surely You wouldn’t do such a thing, destroying the righteous along with the wicked.** Why, You would be treating the righteous and the wicked exactly the same! Surely You wouldn’t do that! **Should not the Judge of all the earth do what is right?”**  
Genesis 18:25

What about all the firstborn children of the Egyptians that were babies? What about the two year olds? What about the five year olds? What evil had they committed for God to cut them down? We can’t say these children are righteous, but can we say these babies committed crimes worthy of death? Do these questions matter?

What about all the people who had no say in Pharaoh’s refusal to listen? What about all the animals? What crime did they commit to be killed? What about people who may have forgotten to put blood on the doorposts or didn’t hear about it, is that enough to die? Does it matter?

At the heart of this story is the word *Passover*. It is generally understood to mean that in God’s work of slaughtering the firstborn, He would pass over and not kill the firstborn of those who placed the blood of a lamb on the door of their homes.



Curiously we come further down the chapter of Exodus 12 and read:

For the LORD will pass through to strike the Egyptians; and when He sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the LORD will pass over the door and **not allow the destroyer** [Hiph'il] **to come into your houses** to strike *you*. Exodus 12:23 (NKJV)

Who is the destroyer in this verse? Is it a holy angel who destroys or an evil one? We need to return to Psalm 78 to help answer this.

**He cast upon them the fierceness of his anger, wrath, and indignation,** and trouble, **by sending evil angels among them.** He made a way to his anger; he spared not their soul from death, but gave their life over to the pestilence; and **smote all the firstborn in Egypt;** the chief of *their* strength in the tabernacles of Ham... Psalm 78:49-51 (KJV)

The tools of the Angel Hedge and God's anger are activated in these verses. God's anger is to hide His face and let evil angels do a work of destruction. In these verses these evil angels bring pestilence and death to the firstborn of Egypt. This provides evidence that when God says He will not allow the destroyer to come into the houses, it means He will not allow Satan and his angels do their work of destruction.

But how does this explain the word *Passover*? If Satan is doing the work of destruction, then how can God be said to be the one passing over them while destroying those without the blood of the lamb? Notice how the Septuagint translates this passage:

And the blood shall be for a sign to you on the houses in which ye are, and I will see the blood, **and will protect you, and there shall not be on you the plague of destruction,** when I smite in the land of Egypt. Exodus 12:13 (*Brenton's English Translation of the Septuagint*)

Here we see the word *protect* rather than *pass over*. Why did the translators of the Greek use *protect* instead of *pass over*? The Hebrew word is *Pasach*. When we search this word in the Old Testament, we find something interesting. Besides being used three times in Exodus 12, it

is used four more times in the Old Testament. (This is the verb form of the word - H6452, not the noun form which is *Passover* - H6453, which is 'pesach', not 'pasach')

And Jonathan, Saul's son, had a son that was lame of his feet. He was five years old when the tidings came of Saul and Jonathan out of Jezreel, and his nurse took him up, and fled: and it came to pass, as she made haste to flee, that he fell, and became **lame** [pasach]. And his name was Mephibosheth. 2 Samuel 4:4 (KJV)

Here we see that *pasach* means *lame*, implying staying in one place, not moving much.

And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, "How long halt [pasach] ye between two opinions? if the Lord *be* God, follow him: but if Baal, *then* follow him." And the people answered him not a word. 1 Kings 18:21 (KJV)

Here the people of Israel are stuck, rooted in place, between two opinions: to follow God or to follow Baal.

And they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed *it*, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, "O Baal, hear us." But *there was* no voice, nor any that answered. And they leaped [pasach] upon the altar which was made. 1 Kings 18:26 (KJV)

Here the prophets of Baal leaped continually in one spot, the altar to Baal, calling on Baal to respond to their sacrifice. This seems a little different, but it is similar in the sense that it is occurring in one place. They didn't move away from the altar to go elsewhere; they were moving around agitatedly (lame?) at that one spot.

There is one more verse that uses the word *pasach*, and it is the most interesting verse of those outside Exodus 12.

As birds flying, so will the Lord of hosts defend Jerusalem; defending also he will deliver *it*; and passing over [pasach] he will preserve it. Isaiah 31:5 (KJV)

“Passing over He [God] will preserve it”? Here we see that the translation doesn’t make sense. In the Brenton’s Septuagint translation it says this:

As birds flying, so shall the Lord of hosts defend; he shall defend Jerusalem, and he shall rescue, **and save and deliver**. Isaiah 31:5  
(*Brenton’s English Translation of the Septuagint*)

Here we see that rather than passing over, a translation of protect, shelter, stand guard, and standing over would be much better. God is not passing over to not destroy Israel; He is promising to protect Israel as a bird protects its chicks.

When we think of birds flying to protect their young, we think of the terribly sad words of Jesus who wanted to save and protect Israel, but they wouldn’t let Him.

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones God’s messengers! How often I have wanted to gather your children together as a hen protects her chicks beneath her wings, but you wouldn’t let Me.” Matthew 23:37

They would not cover themselves with His character to protect themselves from the destroyer, instead choosing Caesar over Jesus (like the ancient Egyptians followed after Pharaoh rather than God), and inevitably perished. In grief God permitted them to reap what they had sown, and thus they were destroyed by the Romans.

It was this lesson that God was trying to teach humanity in the Passover. And how much more powerful would it have been if the word had been translated just a little differently! Let us reimagine some of these verses in Exodus 12:

“And thus shall ye eat it; *with* your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it *is* the LORD’s **safeguard**.” Exodus 12:11 (KJV)

“And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye *are*: and when I see the blood, I will **guard over you**, and the

plague shall not be upon you to destroy *you*, when I smite the land of Egypt.” Exodus 12:13 (KJV)

“For the LORD will pass through to smite the Egyptians, and when He seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the LORD will **guard over the door**, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite *you*.” Exodus 12:23 (KJV)

“And it shall come to pass, when your children say unto you, ‘What mean ye by this service?’ That ye shall say, ‘It is the sacrifice of the LORD’s **safeguard**, who guarded over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when He smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses.’” And the people bowed the head and worshipped. Exodus 12:26-27 (KJV)

How much more beautiful is the thought of God standing guard over His children to protect them from Satan the destroyer. Those who did not listen to the voice of Moses, the representative of God, were left to the mercy of Satan.

To confirm this again, we find that the statement of God to smite the firstborn of Egypt uses the *Hiph'il* form, meaning that we can read it this way.

“For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will *permit to strike* all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD.” Exodus 12:12 (NKJV)—alternate reading

And it came to pass at midnight that the LORD *permitted to be struck* [Hiph'il] all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of livestock. Exodus 12:29 (NKJV) —alternate reading

Satan knew that in being allowed to do this work, that God would be understood to be the destroyer. Satan hid his deeds in the character of God.

Our dear Father in heaven is not an indiscriminate slaughterer of children. He is a protector for those who listen to His voice and do what He asks them. He can't protect those who do not listen and rebel against Him.

The slaughter of the firstborn in Egypt is not a reflection of God's character but a mirror of Satan's character impressed upon the human heart. The key to unlocking this truth is the Mirror Principle that does not present God as acting differently than Jesus, but sends us to search for the answers where any apparent contradiction emerges.

We have clearly demonstrated through an alternative reading of the word *Passover*, combined with God not allowing the destroyer to enter the homes of the obedient, that God is not a destroyer but a protector. The statement from God that He supposedly intended to kill all the firstborn in Egypt mirrors the hidden treachery of humanity against God and His Son. Every human soul, knowingly or unknowingly, is stamped with this proclivity:

Why are the nations so angry? Why do they waste their time with futile plans? The kings of the earth prepare for battle; the rulers plot together against the LORD and against His anointed one. **“Let us break their chains,” they cry, “and free ourselves from slavery to God.”** Psalm 2:1-3

Satan and the natural man see God as a slave master. By beholding this image, they become changed into it, moulding themselves into a master and slave community. Satan is the actual slaver, and his spirit ruled Pharaoh, thus Pharaoh enslaved the people. The Israelites easily became his slaves because they already perceived God as a slave master, thus they were already conditioned to think as slaves.

In their natural hearts God's followers do not trust God, as evidenced by the refusal to listen to God's proposition to free them by the hands of Moses in Exodus 6. They refused to listen or humble themselves to obey. This in itself is rebellion and hatred against God. As shown in their descendants, when Christ came, they murdered Him.

The delineation between Egyptian and Israelite speaks to the difference between the men of the world and those who profess to serve the Creator God of the universe. Both groups carry the seed of deadly intent towards the Son of God, and their unrealised hatred projects their desires onto God as the one who seeks to kill their firstborn when in reality all men seek to kill the firstborn of God.

The Israelites find atonement in a substitute while the Egyptians are judged as they have judged. The atonement given to the Israelites had only a temporary effect, for nearly all died in the wilderness before reaching the promised land; they did not enter because of unbelief. Only a very small group went into a deeper experience of New Covenant atonement.

All of these details are an important framework for the Cross and our human reaction to it.

There is much more we would like to say about this, but it is difficult to explain, especially since you are spiritually dull and don't seem to listen. You have been believers so long now that you ought to be teaching others. Instead, you need someone to teach you again the basic things about God's word. You are like babies who need milk and cannot eat solid food. Hebrews 5:11-12

I feel a sting in these words. As a man who has believed and preached the gospel for over 35 years, these things I am sharing are very new to me. I should have learnt them years ago, but I was dull of hearing, to my shame.

But now a burst of light dawns in my soul. I am seeking to convey this to you dear reader and I pray this light will also come to you. The story of the plagues is a revelation of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. It offers to us much detail to help us grasp the enormity of human depravity and the sublime mercy, grace, and compassion of our beloved Father.

Pharaoh's willingness to let Israel go once the firstborn was dead, signals to us the reality of Satan bowing before the Cross and accepting it as ransom for his imprisonment of the human race. Not that he would

willingly yield his prey as is evidenced by Pharaoh seemingly awakening from his trance to pursue the runaway slaves, and return them to their prison. The Cross of Christ has momentarily arrested the downward descent of humanity to destruction, but the kings of the earth will eventually awake to enforce the mark of the beast upon all humanity before sudden destruction comes and the world ends.

From the human perspective, the Cross of Christ mysteriously captures the human heart when beheld in sincerity. It has power to release the hearts of men from their prison of darkness, guilt, and sin. But in all this we must never forget that God never desired sacrifice for sin. It is His character in that it manifests His self-sacrifice and willingness to do whatever it takes, but it is human nature that needed suffering and satisfaction. The death of Christ is offering to men salvation in their fallen state of dementia; it is simply to agree with him and give to him the remedy which man believes is necessary. Such a remedy only has a limited capacity to truly reconcile the heart to God. It is the vital start of the journey, but blood sacrifice cannot complete it. When we see the truth of God's character, it causes sacrifice and offering to cease. (Dan 9:27).

The question comes, why do we have to penetrate into so many layers to address this subject of the Cross? Because we are full of layers of self-deception. Any person who has lived a handful of decades has begun to comprehend the layers of subtlety, cunning, and deviousness of the human heart. This subject is complex because of humanity's insane dementia. Our Father can't reason with us because of our darkened perspectives of reality. How could Abraham conceive that his beloved Father would wish him to kill his son as a service to God? From where does this insanity arise? It comes from human hearts dominated by the prince of darkness.

Look upon the plagues of Egypt and see Christ crucified. I confess it to be a narrow path, but any other pathway on this subject leaves you worshipping an arbitrary God who slaughters innocent children. When I look into the face of Jesus Christ, I find no such thing and therefore my

conscience is not bound to submit to such a deranged notion of divine sovereignty.

In reading this story, I am invited to see myself as Pharaoh, leagued with Satan against the firstborn of heaven, projecting my depravity onto the Creator of the universe and making Him responsible. If I should choose to continue in this delusion as Pharaoh did, then our Father would be left with no choice but to allow me to be judged according to my own judgment: the wrath of God causes the hiding of His face, the Angel Hedge is opened and I receive the consequences of my actions from the destroyer himself.

Thankfully, I do not judge my Father in this way. I judge my Father by the man Christ Jesus and this is how He will judge me.

...in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel. Romans 2:16 (NKJV)

What do you see in Jesus Christ? Do you see a being who loves everyone, speaks truth faithfully, and never condemns or kills those who oppose Him? Or do you see a being who tolerates evil for a time, and then wipes out everything that stands in His way?

As you judge, you will be judged. I beg you to choose carefully.



## CHAPTER 24

# SLAYING THE DRAGON IN THE SEA

Our next destination is the crossing of the Red Sea. As we mentioned earlier, at the time Israel had completed their escape and all the Egyptian soldiers were drowned, their praise went to a God of war.

**“The LORD is a man of war;** The LORD *is* His name. Pharaoh’s chariots and his army He has cast into the sea; His chosen captains also are drowned in the Red Sea. The depths have covered them; they sank to the bottom like a stone.” Exodus 15:3-5 (NKJV)

Yet Jesus is revealed to us not as a man of war but as the prince of peace: holy, harmless and undefiled. (Isa 9:6, Heb 7:26). Once again, we have a conflict between the Revelation of God in Jesus Christ and the unmediated reading of this famous story. The mirror once again beckons us to search deeper in order to find harmony between the two Testaments.

As we peruse this story with our natural veil over our eyes, the story appears very simple.

So the people of Israel walked through the middle of the sea on dry ground, with walls of water on each side! Then the Egyptians – all

of Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and charioteers—chased them into the middle of the sea.

But just before dawn the LORD looked down on the Egyptian army from the pillar of fire and cloud, and He threw their forces into total confusion. He twisted their chariot wheels, making their chariots difficult to drive.

"Let's get out of here—away from these Israelites!" the Egyptians shouted. "The LORD is fighting for them against Egypt!"

When all the Israelites had reached the other side, the LORD said to Moses, "Raise your hand over the sea again. Then the waters will rush back and cover the Egyptians and their chariots and charioteers." So as the sun began to rise, Moses raised his hand over the sea, and the water rushed back into its usual place.

The Egyptians tried to escape, but the LORD swept them into the sea. Then the waters returned and covered all the chariots and charioteers—the entire army of Pharaoh. Of all the Egyptians who had chased the Israelites into the sea, not a single one survived.  
Exodus 14:22-28

There is a sense of satisfying resolution when the arch nemesis of God's people is completely wiped out. It appears evident that God stepped in and used His power to drown His enemies.

"And once again I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and he will chase after you. I have planned this in order to display My glory through Pharaoh and his whole army. After this the Egyptians will know that I am the LORD!" So the Israelites camped there as they were told. Exodus 14:4

God stated that He would display His glory through Pharaoh. Do we assume that God's glory is to drown people? Is God's glory found in corpses strewn along the beach? It would be natural to suggest that God displays His love and care by killing those who would kill His children. This makes perfect sense to most people. But we remember that God's thoughts are not our thoughts. We look to Jesus and see that He never

drowned anyone. So, it's time to take up our tools and search for a resolution to how this story of the Red Sea crossing harmonises with the character of Jesus.

Some of us may feel resistance to searching further because it feels right that Pharaoh should be punished for his crimes against God's chosen people. Our natural sense of justice feels irritated by the suggestion that there is more to the story than God personally drowning a horde of evil soldiers and their foolish leaders for pursuing slaves, whom they should have known to just let go due to the plagues.

But the Bible itself wants us to look at this story. How do we know? Because this story is rich with imagery connecting to many other parts of the Bible, and these later verses expand on what is happening. These connections are important because this story, like all stories in the Old Testament, is written for our benefit in the last days.

These things happened to them as examples for us. They were written down to warn us who live at the end of the age.  
1 Corinthians 10:11

The Bible uses the imagery of Pharaoh's death at the Red Sea as an illustration of how Satan himself will come to his end.

Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: "Because you have set your heart as the heart of a god, behold, therefore, I will bring [Hiph'il - permit] strangers against you, the most terrible of the nations; and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of your wisdom, and defile your splendor. They shall throw you down into the pit, and **you shall die the death of the slain in the midst of the seas.**"  
Ezekiel 28:6-8 (NKJV)

Ezekiel uses the king of Tyre as an example of the work of Satan. Earlier in the chapter he states that this being is wiser than Daniel, and later on it mentions that he was in the garden of Eden. In the following chapter Ezekiel employs the same principle in speaking of Pharaoh.

Son of man, set thy face against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and prophesy against him, and against all Egypt: Speak, and say, 'Thus

saith the Lord GOD; “Behold, I *am* against thee, **Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great dragon that lieth in the midst of his rivers**, which hath said, ‘My river *is* mine own, and I have made *it* for myself.’”  
Ezekiel 29:2-3 (KJV)

The great dragon is a symbol of Satan who was cast out of heaven.

This great dragon—the ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, the one deceiving the whole world—was thrown down to the earth with all his angels. Revelation 12:9

There is therefore an evident connection between Satan and Pharaoh, not just because Pharaoh did evil, but his actions reflect the person of Satan to such an extent that Pharaoh is identified with Satan.

Let us now examine this story. We note with interest the place where God brought the Israelites to cross the Red Sea.

“Order the Israelites to turn back and camp by Pi-hahiroth between Migdol and the sea. Camp there along the shore, across from Baalzephon.” Exodus 14:2

Gesenius indicates that the name *Pihahiroth*, the place where the Israelites camped before crossing, means *mouth of the cavern*. The Strong’s Concordance mentions *mouth of the gorges* and Josephus facilitates this with the following account:

Now when the Egyptians had overtaken the Hebrews, they prepared to fight them, and by their multitude they drove them into a narrow place; for the number that pursued after them was six hundred chariots, with fifty thousand horsemen, and two hundred thousand foot-men, all armed. They also seized on the passages by which they imagined the Hebrews might fly, shutting them up between inaccessible precipices and the sea; for there was [on each side] a [ridge of] mountains that terminated at the sea, which were impassable by reason of their roughness, and obstructed their flight; wherefore they there pressed upon the Hebrews with their army, where [the ridges of] the mountains were closed with the sea; which army they placed at the chops of the mountains, that so they

might deprive them of any passage into the plain. Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 2, Chapter 15

It is evident that the Israelites passed between two ridges down to the sea. It seemed impossible for them to escape.

The word *Migdol* means tower or fortress, suggesting a fortified outpost of Egypt for the protection of the nation. *Baalzephon* was an Egyptian town which is defined as follows:

Baal-zephon (Hebrew: בַּעַל צֶפֶן Ba'al Şəfōn; Akkadian: Bēl Ḫazi (dIM ḪUR.SAG); Ugaritic: ba'lu ṣapāni; Hurrian: Tešub Ḫalbaḡe;[1] Egyptian: b'r d'pwn<sup>3</sup>), was **the form of the Canaanite storm god Ba'al** (lit. "The Lord") in his role as **lord of Mount Zaphon**;[1][n 1] **he is identified in the Ugaritic texts as Hadad**.<sup>[6][7]</sup> Because of the mountain's importance and location, it came to metonymously signify "north" in Hebrew;<sup>[8]</sup> the name is therefore sometimes given in translation as **Lord of the North**.<sup>[n 2]</sup> He was equated with the **Greek god Zeus** in his form Zeus Kasios and later with the **Roman Jupiter Casius**.<sup>18</sup>

Both Gesenius and Strong's Concordance indicate that *Baalzephon* is the Egyptian form of Typhon, the destroyer, the Baal or Lord of Winter.

Tyndale's Bible Dictionary states that the god Baal-zephon is mentioned in Ugaritic, Egyptian, and Phoenician writings as a sea and storm god.

"Speak unto the sons of Israel, and they turn back and encamp before Pi-Hahiroth, **between Migdol and the sea, before Baal-Zephon**; over-against it ye do encamp by the sea," Exodus 14:2 (YLT)

In reading the literal Hebrew, there is some suggestion that Baalzephon was across the sea on the other side or over against it or opposite to it; meaning the opposite shore.

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<sup>18</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baal-zephon>

Pharaoh is referred to as a dragon, or monster, of the rivers. The children of Israel appear to be trapped by the gods of Pharaoh. Baalzephon, the god of thunder, storms and lightning comes to the aid of Pharaoh and traps Israel by the sea. The god of the sea seems allied to Pharaoh and helps him to recapture his prey.

But as we have seen in the plagues of Egypt, God directs Moses through the use of the rod to alter the fury of the gods of Egypt towards the Egyptians themselves. The Lord said to Moses just before Passover:

“I will execute judgment against all the gods of Egypt, for I am the LORD!” Exodus 12:12

This is where it is important to note how God brings judgment to those who oppose Him. This is the best place to introduce a **tenth tool** to our toolbox. We will call it **God’s Judgment**.

The LORD is known for His justice. The wicked are trapped by their own deeds. Quiet Interlude Psalm 9:16

The trouble they make for others backfires on them. The violence they plan falls on their own heads. Psalm 7:16

“...I, the LORD your God, *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth *generations* of those who hate Me,...” Exodus 20:5 (NKJV)

Don’t be misled—you cannot mock the justice of God. You will always harvest what you plant. Galatians 6:7

“For you will be treated as you treat others. The standard you use in judging is the standard by which you will be judged.” Matthew 7:2

There were at least three sanctuaries dedicated to Baalzephon in north Egypt.<sup>19</sup> It was a deity worshipped by the Egyptians. As Moses is

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<sup>19</sup> <https://www.bible.ca/archeology/bible-archeology-exodus-route-baal-zephon.htm>

instructed to raise his rod, the waters are divided, smashing the power of Baalzephon. The Psalmist declares:

You split the sea by Your strength and smashed the heads of the sea monsters. You crushed the heads of Leviathan and let the desert animals eat him. Psalm 74:13-14

Israel walks through the sea on dry ground and they come safely to the other side. What happens next is fascinating. We remember that Baalzephon is a storm god, identified with Zeus, the god of thunder and lightning. Let us read what Josephus records of this event.

As soon, therefore, as ever the whole Egyptian army was within it, the sea flowed to its own place, and came down with a torrent raised by storms of wind, and encompassed the Egyptians. Showers of rain also came down from the sky, and **dreadful thunders and lightning, with flashes of fire. Thunderbolts also were darted upon them.** Nor was there any thing which used to be sent by God upon men, as indications of his wrath, which did not happen at this time, for a dark and dismal night oppressed them. And thus did all these men perish, so that there was not one man left to be a messenger of this calamity to the rest of the Egyptians. Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 2, Chapter 16.

The very trap that Pharaoh imagined would work to his favour in capturing the Israelites now turns against him; his army is struck with dreadful thunder and lightning with flashes of fire. The sea monster who had been smashed by the rod of Moses now turns on his master Pharaoh and destroys him.

Baalzephon apparently recovers from being driven back by Israel, the waters roar forward, and Pharaoh, the dragon of the rivers, is slain by the monster of the sea. Thus Pharaoh the dragon, a type of Satan, has his head smashed in the midst of the sea.

The Lord carved a path through the sea monster to save His people. The angels of God were holding this monster at bay, but when Pharaoh enters the water, the rebellion in his soul corrupts the environment and

all nature is at war with him. God does not prevent the destructive forces from bursting forth upon him.

Josephus expresses it this way:

...the Egyptians were not aware that they went into a road made for the Hebrews, and not for others; that this road was made for the deliverance of those in danger, but not for those that were earnest to make use of it for the others' destruction. Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 2, Chapter 16.

We remember that God was holding back elements that were considered allied to Pharaoh. If Pharaoh was the dragon of the rivers, then should he not be able to subdue the serpent monster in the sea?

Added to this thought is the subject of faith. Moses and the Israelites were only able to pass through the waters by faith.

**It was by faith that the people of Israel went right through the Red Sea** as though they were on dry ground. But when the Egyptians tried to follow, they were all drowned. Hebrews 11:29

The path through the sea was a path of faith. Pharaoh and the soldiers had no faith, therefore the path could not possibly remain open for them.

Further evidence that God permitted rather than caused the Red Sea to come upon Pharaoh is found in the Hebrew victory song.

When Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and charioteers rushed into the sea, the LORD brought [Hiph'il – permitted] the water crashing down on them. But the people of Israel had walked through the middle of the sea on dry ground! Exodus 15:19

The text may read, that the Lord permitted the waters to crash down on them in accordance to their faith and action.

In the Old Covenant, God destroys Pharaoh; but in the New Covenant, God allows Pharaoh to destroy himself. The people of Egypt had come



to fear Moses in Egypt, and God allows the Egyptian soldiers to receive what they feared.

...“Let’s get out of here—away from these Israelites!” the Egyptians shouted. “The LORD is fighting for them against Egypt!”  
Exodus 14:25

In the New Covenant, we can see the hedge of protection being removed from Pharaoh and he suffers the consequences of his choices. We see the projection of the events onto God in the following verses:

When all the Israelites had reached the other side, the LORD said to Moses, “Raise your hand over the sea again. Then the waters will rush back and cover the Egyptians and their chariots and charioteers.” Exodus 14:26

Outside of the character of Jesus, it feels very much like God personally killed the Egyptians. All the tools we have learned seemed weak in this story. Should we stop here and just believe that God drowned the Egyptians? What does this do to the witness of Jesus? It makes Him a liar. He is not the complete revelation of the Father if this is the case.

A plausible case has been made for an alternative understanding of what happened in this story, but we need to dig deeper. The story of the Red Sea crossing connects us to the week of creation as well as the final events surrounding the destruction of Satan. We need to investigate these events to shine more light on this story.

## CHAPTER 25

# RED SEA GOSPEL

In the previous chapter we placed the story of the crossing of the Red Sea in the context of Pharaoh trapping Israel, only to find himself caught in his own trap and perishing. While this explains many things, it does not provide the full context for why God told Moses to raise his hand and command the waters that were divided to come together, causing the death of Pharaoh and his host. This thought is emphasised in this verse showing that God brought the sea upon the Egyptians and covered them.

“And when they cried unto the LORD, he put darkness between you and the Egyptians, **and brought** [Hiph’il] **the sea upon them, and covered them;** and your eyes have seen what I have done in Egypt: and ye dwelt in the wilderness a long season.” Joshua 24:7 (KJV)

In order to understand this part of the story we must introduce the True Cross of Christ; we must look down upon the Egyptians through the pillar of fire to see what troubled the Egyptians and caused their demise. (Ex 14:24). Christ was the One in the pillar of fire and God was looking down upon the Egyptians through Him.

Then **the angel of God, who had been leading the people of Israel**, moved to the rear of the camp. The pillar of cloud also moved from the front and stood behind them. Exodus 14:19

Paul connects this angel of God with Christ. He is the one who led the children of Israel.

I don't want you to forget, dear brothers and sisters, about our ancestors in the wilderness long ago. All of them were guided by a cloud that moved ahead of them, and all of them walked through the sea on dry ground. **In the cloud and in the sea**, all of them were baptized as followers of Moses. All of them ate the same spiritual food, and all of them drank the same spiritual water. **For they drank from the spiritual rock that traveled with them, and that rock was Christ.** 1 Corinthians 10:1-4

Christ is only connected to the term angel with respect to being a messenger from God. In the book of Daniel He is called Michael, the archangel, and Gabriel called Michael the prince of Daniel's people.<sup>20</sup>

Now we need to step deeper into this story in light of our ninth tool which speaks to the True Cross of Christ. This material is certainly meat, not milk, so it will take some effort to chew and digest it.

The apostle Paul tells us that the gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation.

For I am not ashamed of **the gospel of Christ**: for it is **the power of God unto salvation** to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. Romans 1:16 (KJV)

The gospel, or good news, of Christ is the power of God. Paul defines the power of God a few verses down where he says:

For since **the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even**

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<sup>20</sup> See Daniel 10:13, 21

**His eternal power and Godhead**, so that they are without excuse,  
Romans 1:20 (NKJV)

It is for this reason that the apostle John connects the preaching of the gospel to the worship of the Creator God.

Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, **having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth** to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people—saying with a loud voice, “Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and **worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.**” Revelation 14:6-7 (NKJV)

It requires the creative power of God to save a person, the same power that spoke the world into existence can regenerate the human heart to make it like Christ. In his book *The Everlasting Covenant*, Pastor and medical doctor E.J. Waggoner makes this insightful observation.

That is to say, ever since the creation of the world, men have been able to see the eternal power of God, if they would use their senses, for it is clearly to be discerned in the things which He has made. Creation shows the power of God. **So the power of God is creative power. And since the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation, it follows that the Gospel is the manifestation of creative power to save men from sin.**

But we have also learned that the Gospel is the good news of salvation through Christ. The Gospel consists in the preaching of Christ and Him crucified. The apostle says: “For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel; not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; **but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.**” (1 Cor 1:17,18)

And still further: “**We preach Christ crucified**, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, **Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.**” (1 Cor 1:23,24)

This is why the apostle did as he says: "And I brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." (1 Cor 2:1,2)

The preaching of Christ and Him crucified is the preaching of the power of God, and therefore it is the preaching of the Gospel, for the Gospel is the power of God. And this is exactly in harmony with the thought that the preaching of the Gospel is the setting forth of God as the Creator; for the power of God is creative power, **and Christ is the one through whom all things were created.** No one can preach Christ without preaching Him as the Creator. All are to honour the Son even as they honour the Father. **Whatever preaching fails to make prominent the fact that Jesus Christ is the Creator of all things, is not the preaching of the Gospel.** E.J. Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant* (1900), page 22.

In the work of God saving the Israelites, it is evident that the creative power of God was at work. As we look closely at the Red Sea crossing, we see elements of the Creation week manifesting. Let us consider three points in the Red Sea Crossing that have relevance to the creation story:

And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them: and it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness *to them*, [1] **but it gave light by night to these:** so that the one came not near the other all the night.

And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go *back* by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry *land*, and [2] **the waters were divided.** And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the [3] **dry ground:** and the waters *were* a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left. Exodus 14:19-22 (KJV)

On day one of creation, light appeared and God separated the light from the darkness. We see that when the cloud pillar came between the Israelites and Egyptians that the light was separated from the darkness. On day two of creation God divided the waters above from the waters beneath. Then on the third day the waters beneath were gathered together and the dry land appeared. The exact same word used for the *dry ground* in the creation story is used for the dry land the Israelites crossed over.

In the book *Divine Risk*, we explain in detail the creation story and its significance to the gospel.<sup>21</sup> Before God said let there be light, there was darkness over the face of the earth and it was covered with water. Satan had come to this earth to prevent the work of Christ in the creation of this world and frustrate God's purposes in His Son. In the story of the Red Sea, Satan would frustrate the purposes of God by preventing the escape of Israel because of the sea barrier.

Christ is the light of the world and in the revelation of Him in heaven, there was a separation between light and darkness. This separation was expanded when the waters were separated. The waters above represent the loyal angels who trusted God's revelation of His Son while the waters below represent Satan and his angels that turned away from the light. The waters below God called seas. In the waters below God created great whales. (Gen 1:21). The word for *whale* in this chapter is the same word used for the serpent that came from the rod of Moses, and it is also the same word used in Psalm 74:13 for the dragons who had their heads broken when God divided the Red Sea which we mentioned earlier.

As God's people pass down the gorge to the mouth of the sea, which was the mouth of the serpent/dragon in the waters, we have an illustration echoing back to when the Son of God spoke the world into existence. The serpent of old, the Devil, placed himself to prevent Christ

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<sup>21</sup> *Divine Risk* is available at [fatheroflove.info](http://fatheroflove.info) for download.

from doing His work of creation; he was ready to devour the seed born as soon as it should be created.

For God, who said, “Let there be light in the darkness,” has made this light shine in our hearts so we could know the glory of God that is seen in the face of Jesus Christ. 2 Corinthians 4:6

The revelation of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, caused Satan and his host to retreat, both in the creation story and the crossing of the Red Sea. The imagery of Baalzephon the monster speaks to us of Satan’s domain which the Israelites are entering into by the power of God. The angels of light hold back the forces of darkness to enable God’s people to pass through.

We read of a strong east wind that blew the waters apart and caused them to separate. In the creation story, the Spirit of God, which is sometimes represented by wind, hovered over the dark waters, and on day two the firmament was filled with air between the waters, called a firmament. If there was no firmament, life could not exist. Without the separation of the waters, there would be no dry land for us to live on as we sojourn through this world.

All of this is vital to understand because of what we read next:

Then the Egyptians—all of Pharaoh’s horses, chariots, and charioteers—chased them into the middle of the sea. **But just before dawn the LORD looked down on the Egyptian army from the pillar of fire and cloud**, and He threw their forces into total confusion. He twisted their chariot wheels, making their chariots difficult to drive. “Let’s get out of here—away from these Israelites!” the Egyptians shouted. “The LORD is fighting for them against Egypt!” Exodus 14:23-25

Just before sunrise the presence of God, looking down upon them through the pillar of fire and cloud, caused the host of Pharaoh to tremble. The one who was in the pillar of fire and the cloud was Christ.

The Sun is a symbol of Christ, the light of the world. When the Egyptians were covered in darkness and could see the barrier between

them and the Israelites, they had enough warning to know that it was not wise to try and chase the Israelites. But after the hardening of Pharaoh’s heart through the plagues, Pharaoh had ceased to hear the pricks of conscience, and as soon as the cloud started to move, they continued their determined effort to capture the Israelites.

This is all taking place as the sun begins to dawn, which is reminiscent of the fourth day of creation and the rising of Christ, the Sun of righteousness.

But for you who fear My name, **the Sun of Righteousness will rise with healing in His wings.** And you will go free, leaping with joy like calves let out to pasture. Malachi 4:2

In the story of the Red Sea, we have seen four connecting points to the creation week. But the whole creation week is revealed in this story.

Creation Week	Red Sea Crossing
1. Separate light from darkness. (Gen 1:1-5).	1. Egyptians separated from Israelites by pillar of cloud. Light to the Israelites and darkness to the Egyptians. (Ex 14:20).
2. Waters divided. (Gen 1:6-8).	2. Waters of the Red Sea divided. (Ex 14:21).
3. Dry ground [H3004] appeared which was gathered into one place called Earth; waters gathered together also as Seas. (Gen 1:9-13).	3. Dry ground [H3004] appears and waters went back. (Ex 14:22).
4. Sun and Moon created. (Gen 1:14-19).	4. Sun dawns. (Ex 14:27).
5. Great Creatures [H8577] in the sea. (Gen 1:21).	5. Pharaoh the dragon [H8577] is in the sea. (Eze 29:3).



6. Man is created in freedom. (Gen 1:26-28).	6. Israelites were saved and came forth a new free nation. (Ex 14:30, 15:16) “the people you purchased [H7069] (created).”
7. The power of God manifested. (Rom 1:20).	7. The power of God manifested. (Ex 14:31).

Paul grasped the reality of the gospel manifested in creation when he adapted the words of Psalms 19 to the preaching of the gospel.

**The heavens proclaim the glory of God. The skies display His craftsmanship.** Day after day they continue to speak; night after night they make Him known. They speak without a sound or word; their voice is never heard. Yet **their message has gone throughout the earth, and their words to all the world.** God has made a home in the heavens for the sun. Psalm 19:1-4

So faith comes from hearing, that is, **hearing the Good News about Christ.** But I ask, have the people of Israel actually heard the message? Yes, they have: **“The message has gone throughout the earth, and the words to all the world.”** Romans 10:17-18

This reveals that the redemptive power of God in Christ is manifested in the creation story. The redemption of the Israelites at the Red Sea is stamped with the creation story. They were recreated. That’s why Paul sees they were “baptized” (1 Cor 10:2), meaning they were “born again.”

The same redemptive/creative power is manifested in the story of Noah when the divided waters came together from above and beneath and Noah was saved in the ark with his family. The entire salvation of the human race is expressed in the creation story and might be summarised as follows.

Event	Texts	Representation
1. Light from darkness	Gen 1:1-5	War in Heaven. (Rev 12:7-9). Satan spread darkness about God's character. Light shining in the face of Christ. (2 Cor 4:6). <b>Enoch</b> , whose preaching of righteousness is <b>the light in first period of 1000 years</b> , culminated in his being taken to heaven. (Gen 5:21-24).
2. Separation of the waters	Gen 1:6-8	Gospel light causes darkness to turn. Separation of Satan and his angels from God. (Jude 1:6). Light and darkness now battle for the minds of the universe. (1 John 1:5). <b>Noah the preacher of righteousness in the second period of 1000 years</b> . Endures the coming together of the waters above and beneath. Through the grace of God in the everlasting covenant the waters once again are separated. (Gen 9: 9-17).
3. Waters gathered together and Dry Land appears	Gen 1:9-13	The Sower goes forth to sow the gospel seed. (Matt 13:3). Gospel gives solid ground for the feet and brings us out of the horrible pit. (Gen 1:2, Ps 40:1-2). God restricts Satan's activities and puts bounds on the waters. (Job 26:10). <b>The distinction between the kingdoms of light and darkness are revealed in the lives of Nimrod and Abraham and their descendants through the third period of 1000 years.</b>

MIRROR PRINCIPLE

<p>4. Two Great Lights and the Stars</p>	<p>Gen 1:14-19</p>	<p>Gospel seed manifests in the sky – corresponds to day one. The heavens declare the glory, or character, of God. (Ps 19:1). The framework for the Woman of Rev 12 is ratified. (Rev 12:1). These lights are given for the appointments of God and the stream of life from His throne. (Eze 46 and 47). <b>Christ, the Sun of righteousness, appears at end of fourth period of 1000 years.</b></p>
<p>5. Fish and Birds</p>	<p>Gen 1:20-23</p>	<p>Gospel manifests in the sea and air – corresponds to day two. (Job 12:7-8). The fowls of the air were designed to reveal the character of God. The connection to day two also reveals the <b>separation between the church in the wilderness and the church of Rome in the fifth period of 1000 years.</b> (Rev 12:6). Two different gospels are presented. One becomes the cage of every hateful bird (Rev 18:2) and the other remains as Christ’s fishers of men. (Matt 4:19).</p>
<p>6. Animals and Man</p>	<p>Gen 1:24-31</p>	<p>Man is made in the image of God and created to reveal His character. The animals also were to reveal the light of God’s character. When man comes to completion in the second Adam, then we are prepared for rest. (Gen 1:26, Job 12:7. 1 Cor 15:22). <b>The 144,000 who manifest at the end of the sixth period of 1000 years will reveal the glory of God.</b> (Rev 14:1-5).</p>
<p>7. Sabbath Rest</p>	<p>Gen 2:1-3</p>	<p>The Great Controversy ends and we enter into rest when the darkness is dispelled and there in no more night. The saints are 1000 years in heaven. (Rev 21:23-25).</p>

The pivotal point in this table is that Christ was revealed at the end of the fourth period of human history. He is the light of the world, the Sun of righteousness. The greatest revelation of light came into the world at this time. It is also the time when Christ was crucified.

God mentioned two signs that would cause the people to believe Moses. The first sign was turning the rod into a serpent. The second sign was to put his hand in his bosom and pull it out as leprosy. Moses showed both these signs to the Israelites in Egypt, but to Pharaoh he only showed the rod turning to a serpent. Did Pharaoh experience the second sign?

Why withdrawest thou thy hand, even thy right hand? **pluck it out of thy bosom.** For God is my King of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth. **Thou didst divide the sea by thy strength: thou brakest the heads of the dragons in the waters.** Psalms 74:11-13 (KJV)

Christ is the one who dwells in the bosom of the Father. (John 1:18). Christ is the power of God. (1 Cor 1:24). As Pharaoh and his army were drowning in terror, Christ was with them, suffering with them. Psalm 18 speaks of Christ on the Cross and we see that this language is similar to what Pharaoh experienced at the Red Sea.

The ropes of death entangled me; **floods of destruction** swept over me. The grave wrapped its ropes around me; death laid a trap in my path. Psalm 18:4-5

At the brightness *that was* before him his thick clouds passed, hail *stones* and coals of fire. **The LORD also thundered in the heavens,** and the Highest gave his voice; hail *stones* and coals of fire. Yea, he sent out his arrows, and scattered them; and **he shot out lightnings, and discomfited them.** Then **the channels of waters were seen,** and the foundations of the world were discovered at thy rebuke, O LORD, at the blast of the breath of thy nostrils. Psalm 18:12-15 (KJV)

Leprosy is a symbol of sin (Lev 13) and on the Cross Christ is made sin for us. (2 Cor 5:21). In pulling the leprous hand out of the bosom, we see

Christ crucified in the death of the Egyptians. But in our human state we consider them smitten of God and afflicted.

Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. Isaiah 53:4 (KJV)

The tool of the present Cross reveals to us the sufferings of Christ in the Red Sea experience. But God had to give up the Egyptians as a ransom to save the Israelites because this is the only way that both the Egyptians and the Israelites could reconcile the evil done in Egypt.

Now we come to the crux of all we have been explaining. We recall in chapter six how humanity understands the phrase “My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?” We imagine that God forsakes His Son because His justice demands the death of Christ for our salvation. Exactly the same thing is occurring in the story of the Red Sea Crossing. Our sense of justice causes us to see the raising of the rod and the coming together of the water as God’s vindictive justice destroying the Egyptian people for their sins against Israel. Our sense of justice causes us to see God without His fatherly qualities.

The darkness that covered the earth, the thunder and lightning manifested at the Cross, are understood as God’s anger towards sin, but in Psalm 18 Christ was uttering the words of a broken hearted Father whose Son was just murdered by the human race.

God appears to be the destroyer of Pharaoh even as He appears to be the destroyer of Christ on the Cross. In both cases, Christ was crucified. In both cases redemption takes place for the people of God. When Jesus died on earth, both the innocent and the guilty were hung on crosses. The human heart requires the death of the innocent and the guilty for his sense of justice to be satisfied.<sup>22</sup> This is based on carnal ideas of what we think God wants and is inspired by Satan. I have covered this subject in greater detail in the book *At-one-ment* available at [fatheroflove.info](http://fatheroflove.info).

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<sup>22</sup> See the book *At-one-ment*, chapter 9 for more details on this. Available for download at [fatheroflove.info](http://fatheroflove.info).

The death of the relatively innocent son of Pharaoh and all the firstborn of Egypt became the key to allow the Israelites to leave Egypt, but it was not until the death of the guilty Pharaoh at the Red Sea that Israel experienced full redemption.

There is one more piece of evidence we need to consider with the Red Sea Crossing and it relates to the final destruction of Satan. We briefly spoke about this in the previous chapter. Satan is said to be slain as one in the midst of the sea. (Eze 28:8). Let us consider carefully verse seven of this chapter.

“I will now bring [Hiph'il - permit] against you a foreign army, the terror of the nations. They will draw their swords against your marvelous wisdom and defile your splendor!” Ezekiel 28:7

God tells us that Satan will be assailed by an army that is the terror of the nations. The word in Hebrew for *terror* means *tyrannical, violent oppressor*. Those who Satan has ruled through the ages reflect his character, and when they realise they are lost they turn on Satan and seek to devour him. The chapter in Ezekiel continues:

“Will you then boast, ‘I am a god!’ to those who kill you? To them you will be no god but merely a man! You will die like an outcast at the hands of foreigners [H2114]. I, the Sovereign LORD, have spoken!” Ezekiel 28:9-10

God indicates that *foreigners* will kill Satan. These are people foreign to God because they do not know Him. What is most interesting about the word for foreigners is that it is the exact same word that describes God's strange act.

The LORD will come as He did against the Philistines at Mount Perazim and against the Amorites at Gibeon. He will come to do a strange [H2114] thing; He will come to do an unusual deed: Isaiah 28:21

God's strange act is to turn aside and allow consequences to play out. In the end, God will turn aside and let the evil seeds Satan has planted

in the nations rise up and destroy him. But just like the story of the Red Sea, it will appear that God destroyed Satan.

The waters of the Red Sea represent people and nations.

Then the angel said to me, "The waters where the prostitute is ruling represent masses of people of every nation and language."  
Revelation 17:15

These waters were stirred up by Satan through his violent, tyrannical nature. Leviathan, who also represents Satan, reveals this characteristic.

"Leviathan makes the water boil with its commotion. It stirs the depths like a pot of ointment. The water glistens in its wake, making the sea look white." Job 41:31-32

The rage that Satan inspired in men will come back upon him. He will be drowned in the harvest of the seeds of violence he planted in men. God is not mocked, as Satan sowed so shall he reap. But even in this process Christ is crucified. He created Lucifer and loves him. It is torture to see him come to his end. Every breath of Satan comes from Christ and therefore Christ suffers with him to the end. But humanity considers Christ smitten of God, not smitten of man. Is it not time to come forth out of the blindness of our surface level reading of the Bible?

Will we remain content with a surface level reading of the Scriptures? This story of the Red Sea is so rich in meaning; there are other things we haven't touched yet. There is a connection between Baalzephon, Lord of the North, and the King of the North who pitches his palace between the glorious mountain and the sea in Daniel 11:45. But we won't stop to explore this now. It is just one example of how rich the Word of God is and how much more can be explored here.

We shall be studying these things forever and they will not be exhausted. As I have prayed about this story and asked my Father in heaven to explain it to me; the things I have shared with you are what was given to me. How much richer and more beautiful is this story in this light. Truly God's thoughts are not our thoughts, neither are our ways His ways. Will you believe the Red Sea gospel? Or will you remain

in the gloom of seeing God as the warrior God drowning His enemies?  
As you judge, you will be judged.

Let us summarize this story in relation to our ten tools:

<b>Tools</b>	<b>Application</b>
1. Family	The Egyptians are God's children also, though they know Him less than the Israelites. We can't view them simply as enemies of God. They made themselves into the enemies of God, but God loved them the same as the Israelites. He is not a respecter of persons.
2. Gospel Character	Jesus never drowned anyone while here on earth. The Jewish leaders made themselves His enemy so their house was left to them desolate. He did not kill them but rather allowed them to kill Him.
3. Enmity	Moses stated that they would not see the Egyptians again forever. (Ex 14:13). God didn't say this. He only said He would be honoured through Pharaoh. Pharaoh hardened his heart to such an extent that he did not see the warning signs in the pillar of cloud turning light and dark, nor the warning to turn around when they became stuck.



MIRROR PRINCIPLE

4. Two Mirrors	The command of God to Moses to raise his hand so that the waters will come together appears to be God killing the Egyptians in the Old Covenant mirror. In the New Covenant, Pharaoh came into a path of redemption without faith and the angels could not hold the waters back. The waters symbolise the nations who will finally destroy Satan through the fury he planted in them.
5. Angel Hedge	Angels protected the Israelites through the Red Sea but stopped protecting when the Egyptians came through.
6. Earth Curse	Pharaoh's lack of faith made it impossible for the waters to remain divided. Like in the days of Noah, the waters came together because of their wickedness.
7. Projection	When we read the Bible, we think that God is just like us; and as Pharaoh was a cruel tyrant, we naturally think he deserves to die. We imagine that Pharaoh is smitten of God and afflicted, but in reality Christ suffered the agonies of crucifixion in the death of Pharaoh and the Egyptian soldiers.
8. Two Covenants	The death of Pharaoh and the soldiers magnified the Israelite belief that God was a God of war. This sinful trait was caused to abound in the Red Sea story. It also abounds for all who believe God personally drowned the Egyptians.

RED SEA GOSPEL

9. True Cross	Christ was crucified in the Red Sea in the loss of the Egyptians. They were given as a ransom to save Israel. The innocent first born son of Pharaoh was slain in Egypt and the guilty Pharaoh was slain in the Red Sea, thus completing the atonement process for Israel. Likewise, Christ was first killed to open our minds, but the atonement will be completed for us when the wicked with Satan are destroyed.
10. God's Judgment	Pharaoh thought he had trapped the Israelites, but this trap destroyed Pharaoh himself. God judged Pharaoh by allowing Him to receive the consequences of His choices. If God had lured the Egyptians into the water, then we could say that God killed them; but He tried to prevent them from entering the water and pulled off their chariot wheels to slow them down. (Ps 9:16).

## CHAPTER 26

# AMALEKITE DEFEAT, DEFEATS ISRAEL

Jubilation swept the camp of Israel. The women, led by Miriam, praise the God who had drowned the Egyptians and smashed the enemy.

‘The LORD is a warrior; Yahweh is His name! Pharaoh’s chariots and army He has hurled into the sea. The finest of Pharaoh’s officers are drowned in the Red Sea. The deep waters gushed over them; they sank to the bottom like a stone. Your right hand, O LORD, is glorious in power. Your right hand, O LORD, smashes the enemy.’  
Exodus 15:3-6

This praise to Yehovah masked their deep-seated fear of God which ultimately engendered a lack of trust in Him. 24 hours earlier, the people accused Moses of trying to kill them all. Josephus tells us they wanted to stone him.

As Pharaoh approached, the people of Israel looked up and panicked when they saw the Egyptians overtaking them. They cried out to the LORD, and they said to Moses, **“Why did you bring us out here to die in the wilderness?** Weren’t there enough graves for us in Egypt? What have you done to us? Why did you make us leave Egypt? Didn’t we tell you this would happen while we were

still in Egypt? We said, 'Leave us alone! Let us be slaves to the Egyptians. It's better to be a slave in Egypt than a corpse in the wilderness!'" Exodus 14:10-12

Our ancestors in Egypt were **not impressed by the LORD's miraculous deeds**. They soon forgot His many acts of kindness to them. Instead, **they rebelled against Him at the Red Sea**. Psalm 106:7

When the Hebrews, therefore, were neither able to bear up, being thus, as it were, besieged, because they wanted provisions, nor saw any possible way of escaping; and if they should have thought of fighting, **they had no weapons**; they expected a universal destruction, unless they delivered themselves up to the Egyptians. So they laid the blame on Moses, and forgot all the signs that had been wrought by God for the recovery of their freedom; and this so far, that **their incredulity prompted them to throw stones at the prophet**, while he encouraged them and promised them deliverance... Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 2, Chapter 15:4

Jesus told us that as we judge others, so we shall be judged, meaning we will judge ourselves the same way. While the Israelites revelled in the belief that God was a killer of those who displease Him, they were left with the thought that their own sinfulness might lead God to do the same to them. In order to offset this fear, they needed someone to take the blame for difficulties that occurred, lest it be perceived that God was preparing to kill them for their sinful ingratitude.

Before they left the sea shore, something very significant took place. As they praised the God of war, it appeared to them that this very same God delivered to them the weapons of the Egyptians.

On the next day **Moses gathered together the weapons of the Egyptians, which were brought to the camp of the Hebrews by the current of the sea, and the force of the winds resisting it; and he conjectured that this also happened by Divine Providence**, that so they might not be destitute of weapons. So when he had ordered the Hebrews to arm themselves with them, he led them to Mount

Sinai, in order to offer sacrifice to God, and to render oblations for the salvation of the multitude, as he was charged to do beforehand. Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 2, Chapter 15:6.

Josephus states that Moses *conjectured* that divine providence had given them the weapons. Moses had cared for sheep for 40 years with a rod, and God enabled him to deliver hundreds of thousands of Israelites with the use of a rod without the need for weapons. What caused Moses to think it was divine providence that brought them the weapons out of waters stirred up by Baalzephon?

The Israelites had praised the God of war, while Jesus shows us that His Father is not a God of war. This ignorance of God's true character would prove deadly and lead to one of the greatest misunderstandings of human history by later generations reading of the wars of the Israelites.

Although there were subtle evidences of God's true character throughout God's dealings with humanity, the darkness of the human mind, combined with the lies of Satan, made this very difficult to discern. God was seen to be like all the other gods of the nations; they called upon their gods to help them fight and thus so did the Israelites. He was seduced into the never-ending scheming of kingdoms who fought on behalf of their gods, and generation after generation would understand God to show His pleasure with them by giving victory in war.

It is a terrible tragedy that the human heart can feel the depths of love and intimacy within his own family circle, yet seemingly forget the impact taking the life of someone has on another's family. How hard the human heart is to the tenderness that God intended for us all. Jesus reveals to us the nature of His kingdom:

Jesus answered, "My Kingdom is not an earthly kingdom. **If it were, My followers would fight to keep Me from being handed over to the Jewish leaders. But My Kingdom is not of this world.**"

John 18:36

These words need to sink into our minds. The true followers of Christ do not fight with guns, swords or spears. The kingdom they are a part of is a spiritual kingdom. Even Abraham was seeking for a heavenly kingdom and never claimed ownership of the place where he lived.

By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as *in* a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; **for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.** Hebrews 11:9-10 (NKJV)

“Then he came out of the land of the Chaldeans and dwelt in Haran. And from there, when his father was dead, He moved him to this land in which you now dwell. **And God gave him no inheritance in it, not even enough to set his foot on.** But even when *Abraham* had no child, He promised to give it to him for a possession, and to his descendants after him.” Acts 7:4-5 (NKJV)

Moses was raised in Egypt to be a warrior. He knew the arts of war, but God took him from the palace of Egypt to train him to care for sheep. It was this profession which prepared him to lead God’s people, not the training in Egypt as a warrior.

The Psalmist says, “the Lord is my shepherd.” He is not a warrior. Once again as we look into the face of Jesus, we see no evidence of a warrior prince. We see a humble shepherd caring for His lost sheep.

But one of the men with Jesus pulled out his sword and struck the high priest’s slave, slashing off his ear. **“Put away your sword,” Jesus told him. “Those who use the sword will die by the sword.** Don’t you realize that I could ask My Father for thousands of angels to protect us, and He would send them instantly?” Matthew 26:51-53

It is our duty to look into the Old Testament through these verses. Jesus displays implicit trust in His Father for protection; and if the protection is not there, then He trusts that God’s purpose will be done in the ill treatment He goes through. Christ never defended Himself, even when

men slapped Him, tortured Him, whipped Him. This is such a confronting lesson. As Jesus states:

“But I say, do not resist an evil person! If someone slaps you on the right cheek, offer the other cheek also.” Matthew 5:39

This same Jesus was the one who led Israel through the desert. (1 Cor 10:1-4). We are told that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and forever. (Heb 13:8). Therefore, it is vital for us to look into these stories in the Old Testament where warfare takes place and know for certain that the servants of Jesus do not fight with swords, but trust in God’s protection.

Some might say that Jesus commanded his disciples to sell their garments and buy a sword.

“But now,” He said, “take your money and a traveler’s bag. And if you don’t have a sword, sell your cloak and buy one! For the time has come for this prophecy about Me to be fulfilled: ‘He was counted among the rebels.’ Yes, everything written about Me by the prophets will come true.” “Look, Lord,” they replied, “we have two swords among us.” “That’s enough,” He said. Luke 22:36-38

If Christ told each man to buy a sword, how could two be enough for the twelve disciples? Once again, the Old Covenant mirror beckons us to believe Jesus told these men to buy physical swords, while the New Covenant mirror shows you that Jesus meant, “That’s enough, stop talking like that – by sword I meant spiritual sword, the word of God.” The reader decides the meaning.

After Israel collected the weapons from the dead Egyptian soldiers and marched into the desert, they came to a place of water called Marah. When they discovered that the waters were bitter, they seemed to forget all that God had done for them. Josephus indicates that the women and children “blunted the courage of the men,” which drove them to Moses to complain about not having enough water to drink. Rather than praying to God to help them, they grumbled to Moses. Moses prays to God and deliverance comes through a branch cast into the waters.

Would the Israelites learn to trust God? No, their worship of a killing warrior God caused their psychosis and insecurity to manifest every time they sensed their needs were not instantly met.

Then the whole community of Israel set out from Elim and journeyed into the wilderness of Sin, between Elim and Mount Sinai. They arrived there on the fifteenth day of the second month, one month after leaving the land of Egypt. **There, too, the whole community of Israel complained about Moses and Aaron.**

**"If only the LORD had killed us back in Egypt," they moaned.** "There we sat around pots filled with meat and ate all the bread we wanted. But now you have brought us into this wilderness to starve us all to death." Exodus 16:1-3

Hopefully we can begin to use some of the tools we have learned along this journey to discern the projection in this passage. The whole congregation – note that carefully, *the whole congregation* – suggested there was a conspiracy at work that would lead to their death, and they now questioned why God didn't just kill them in Egypt?

Where does such an absurd notion come from? How does the entire congregation come to the conclusion that they are going to die after all the miracles that God wrought to deliver them from Egypt? Can we see how worshipping a killer God unravels when things seem to go wrong? Believing and wanting God to kill others will turn on us and cause us to believe that God wants to kill us. The Israelites were obsessed with the thought that God preferred them dead.

We see this pattern of thinking in Cain after killing his brother. He imagined everyone wanted to kill him. When Israel delighted in the destruction of Pharaoh, they unwittingly were rejoicing over the piercing of Christ. They believed God had smitten them, but could not see that they desired this because of their internal enmity. The enmity towards the firstborn of heaven was still with them. They projected this evil onto God, thinking that He now wanted to kill them.



Our Father in heaven bears with this false accusation against Him. In return He blesses those who curse Him and does good to those who spitefully use Him. He promises manna from heaven to feed them every day except the Sabbath because of another miracle of a double portion granted on Friday. Such gracious provisions for an ungrateful people.

At the end of Exodus 15, God pleads with the people to just listen to Him so that He can protect them. (Ex 15:26). In Chapter 16, God questions:

...“How long do you refuse to keep My commandments and My laws?” Exodus 16:28 (NKJV)

What happened to the gratitude, jubilation, praise and worship of the God who had brought them out of Egypt? At every step God is met with complaints, accusations, rebellion, and insubordination. In Exodus chapter 17, the water complaint surfaces again.

Then all the congregation of the children of Israel set out on their journey from the Wilderness of Sin, according to the commandment of the LORD, and camped in Rephidim; but *there was* no water for the people to drink. Therefore the people contended with Moses, and said, “Give us water, that we may drink.”

So Moses said to them, “Why do you contend with me? Why do you tempt the LORD?”

And the people thirsted there for water, and the people complained against Moses, and said, “**Why is it you have brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children** and our livestock with thirst?”

So Moses cried out to the LORD, saying, “What shall I do with this people? **They are almost ready to stone me!**” Exodus 17:1-4 (NKJV)

Once again, the people accuse Moses of trying to kill them, but as the text reveals, they are the ones trying to kill him. Patiently, our heavenly Father delivers them by pouring forth water from a rock in the desert, a beautiful symbol of Christ, the fountain of living waters.

But their continual lack of faith brought consequences. The Bible tells us plainly:

He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it; and whoso breaketh an hedge, a serpent shall bite him. Ecclesiastes 10:8 (KJV)

Complaining, murmuring, and accusing God and Moses made a breach in the wall of protection. The Devil declares that the people don't want God's protection, and he demands access. Just as we read in Psalms 78:49 where God released evil angels to do their work of killing because of their refusal to listen, so now God permits the evil angels to stir up the Amalekites to attack them. The King James Version makes the connection between the complaints about lack of water and the attack of the Amalekites:

And he called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the LORD, saying, "**Is the LORD among us, or not?**" **Then came Amalek**, and fought with Israel in Rephidim. Exodus 17:7-8 (KJV)

The word *then* connects the two events as one coming as a consequence of the other. By questioning if the Lord was among them, He naturally had to step back in accordance with their lack of faith.

The attack of the Amalekites was brutal, cowardly, and merciless. So offensive was this attack that the marginal reading of Exodus 17:16 says "the hand of Amalek is against the throne of God."

"Never forget what the Amalekites did to you as you came from Egypt. They attacked you when you were exhausted and weary, and they struck down those who were straggling behind. They had no fear of God." Deuteronomy 25:17-18

There is nothing that can arouse the passions of a man as when the weak and defenceless of his family and tribe are attacked. The words of Jesus cry out to us now because we know them, "He who takes the sword will die with the sword," but what was Moses to do? He had just survived a threat to stone him, and now the edge of their company was being struck down.

Immediate action was required. No time to go and pray quietly! Prayers were said while decisions were being taken. When Moses rose up like a general and began to assemble his forces and appoint leaders to battle, suddenly all the rebellion disappeared; the men came into harmony and worked together in unison to throw off this callous attack. Josephus portrays this important transformation of Israel.

And with these words did Moses encourage the multitude, who then called together the princes of their tribes, and their chief men, both separately and conjointly. The young men he charged to obey their elders, and the elders to hearken to their leader. **So the people were elevated in their minds, and ready to try their fortune in battle, and hoped to be thereby at length delivered from all their miseries: nay, they desired that Moses would immediately lead them against their enemies** without the least delay, that no backwardness might be a hindrance to their present resolution.

So Moses sorted all that were fit for war into different troops, and set Joshua, the son of Nun, of the tribe of Ephraim, over them; one that was of great courage, and patient to undergo labors; of great abilities to understand, and to speak what was proper; and very serious in the worship of God... Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* Book 3, Chapter 16:3

How was Moses transformed from being a man they suspected was trying to kill them to the man they wanted to lead them forward in battle? How do men that were cowardly and depressed become “elevated in their minds” by finding purpose and glory in war? How mysterious the heart of man is!

Moses commanded Joshua, “Choose some men to go out and fight the army of Amalek for us. Tomorrow, I will stand at the top of the hill, holding the staff of God in my hand.” Exodus 17:9

The warrior God that they worshipped on the shore of the Red Sea was now blessing them in giving them a human version of himself – Joshua. Joshua became the incarnate son of God, the chosen one, the warrior they had longed for.

What can God do in this situation? If He abandons them completely, they would have been slaughtered. They had refused His Spirit and had rebelled against Him, so God was not able to drive their enemies out with the hornets (Ex 23:28) of convicting fear. This is where our eighth tool of the Two Covenants is vital. The key reason Amalek was able to attack Israel was because of their murmuring rebellion. They demonstrated a complete lack of faith in God, thus they were not in a saving covenant relationship with God. In this context, the communications of God to them are mirrors of their own thinking. They are not willing to accept anything else. The things God asked them to do they refused to do; therefore, He speaks to them the things they are thinking in order for their sin to abound in the hope of bringing them into the everlasting covenant, also called the New Covenant, through abounding grace.

This is where great misunderstanding occurs when we read the Old Testament. We assume the words God speaks represent His own thoughts. But men's thoughts are not God's thoughts and men naturally resist God's thoughts, so God is forced to step into the Old Covenant with man, agree with him to maintain contact with him and speak his own words back to him, thus allowing the process of sin to grow to the point where it can be revealed to him. God is helping man work through his own thought process so he can realise its sinfulness.

When awareness of sin comes to man, then grace is given to repent and come into the New Covenant. Once this Two Covenant process is grasped, you can read the Old Testament in harmony with the character of Christ.

The transformation of Israel from a fearful, rebellious, doubting band into an ordered army defeating their enemies was what *they* desired. It was what they imagined their destiny should be. God's promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob required that their descendants should not be wiped out, therefore God shielded them and assisted them, not in His killing the enemy, but in protecting the Israelites and giving them courage in the face of danger so that they would learn to depend on God in their extremity. This would build their relationship; their trust

would increase and their fear decrease, and this would allow for a foundation for them to get to know Him better.

Moses raising his hands allowing Israel to prevail was a lesson to a rebellious people encouraging them to trust God. The Amalekites had forsaken God and were not able to be protected further, but like in the plagues of Egypt, God could still teach the Israelites in this valley of the shadow of death. God knew that victory for Israel would have negative consequences, but this was the lesser of two evils. Letting them all die at this point was not an option.

Josephus details for us how the Israelites responded to the victory they gained.

So our forefathers obtained a most signal and most seasonable victory; for they not only overcame those that fought against them, but terrified also the neighboring nations, and got great and splendid advantages, which they obtained of their enemies by their hard pains in this battle: for when they had taken the enemy's camp, they got ready booty for the public, and for their own private families, whereas till then they had not any sort of plenty, of even necessary food.

The forementioned battle, when they had once got it, was also the occasion of their prosperity, not only for the present, but for the future ages also; for they not only made slaves of the bodies of their enemies, but subdued their minds also, and after this battle, became terrible to all that dwelt round about them. Moreover, they acquired a vast quantity of riches; for a great deal of silver and gold was left in the enemy's camp; as also brazen vessels, which they made common use of in their families; many utensils also that were embroidered there were of both sorts, that is, of what were weaved, and what were the ornaments of their armor, and other things that served for use in the family, and for the furniture of their rooms; they got also the prey of their cattle, and of whatsoever uses to follow camps, when they remove from one place to another.

**So the Hebrews now valued themselves upon their courage, and claimed great merit for their valor; and they perpetually inured themselves to take pains, by which they deemed every difficulty might be surmounted. Such were the consequences of this battle.**

Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 3, Chapter 16:4

Note the words, “the Hebrews valued themselves upon their courage, and claimed great merit for their valour.” The question then is who did they thank for winning the battle? When they stood on the shore of the Red Sea, they all attributed glory to God. But in this story, there is no record of the people being filled with gratitude, even with the symbol of Moses holding his hands up. They took the glory to themselves. They used the grace of God to transform themselves into what would become a killing machine which genocided whole nations, men, women, and babies.

It is true that Moses built an altar and called it “the Lord is my banner.” (Ex 17:15). Moses was one of the few with faith. But He still had lessons to learn about the character of God.

So Moses offered sacrifices of thanksgiving to God, and built an altar, which he named The Lord the Conqueror. Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 3, Chapter 16:5

Moses understood God as a conqueror and a destroyer of the enemies of God. This is completely understandable as Christ, the complete revelation of God’s character, had not come into the world yet.

On the next day, Moses stripped the dead bodies of their enemies, and **gathered together the armor of those that were fled**, and gave rewards to such as had signalized themselves in the action; and highly commended Joshua, their general, who was attested to by all the army, on account of the great actions he had done. Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 3, Chapter 16:5

More weapons were gathered and rewards were given to those who had excelled themselves in battle. Is this truly what God wanted? When we

look at the story in the light of Jesus, we must conclude the answer to be no.

The saddest part of this story is that the victory over the Amalekites stripped away the need for repentance for all their former failures. Israel found atonement in killing others rather than confessing their sins. In this darkest sense, the Amalekites become a substitute for repentance.

The Amalekites had been physically defeated, but Israel had defeated themselves by sidestepping repentance, finding meaning and value in war rather than in their relationship with God, and learning to rely on themselves through their obtaining the spoils of war. They would not come to Mt Sinai as a humble, gentle, grateful nation, but they would come with bargaining chips to negotiate a deal with their perceived warrior God.

The covenant God desired to make with Israel was nothing like the one they wanted to make with Him. They wanted a covenant with a God of war who would assist them in battle, while He wanted to fill them with His Spirit of peace. He promised to take them into the land of Canaan. If they would've allowed His Spirit to fill their hearts, they would have cleansed Canaan in the same way that Jesus cleansed the temple: those who clung to their idolatry would have been driven out by their fears. They would have won Canaan without having to kill anyone, thus proving true the words of Jesus, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight..." (John 18:36). But the Israelites lacked the faith to perceive of a "kingdom not of this world," so they would fight to make a kingdom "of this world."

When we read the Old Testament outside of the character of Jesus, the Israelites look triumphantly vindicated. The underdog defeats the aggressor against the odds. Our sense of justice wants to support the Israelites against those who attacked them unprovoked. The assistance God provided appears to give credence to the idea that God wanted them to kill the Amalekites.

Looking into the New Covenant mirror, comparing this story with the character of Jesus, we see human nature resorting to its instincts and

using the grace of God to bolster its sense of identity as a warrior while diverting its mind from the need for repentance.

The precious thing to remember is that God walked with Israel through their Old Covenant misunderstanding. He helped them to develop faith in the context they wanted to operate in. He did not forsake them. Israel wanted to worship a warrior God. It did take faith to go into battle trusting that God would help them to defeat a much greater enemy. God met them where they were.

Another reason why we know God did not want Israel to take the land of Canaan by warfare is because none of them entered the promised land except Caleb and Joshua. God had told them that He had wanted to take them into the land of Canaan. He showed that their enemies could be defeated without the use of weapons when they left Egypt. But they wanted to do things on their own terms and this is why none of them entered the promised land.

And who was it who rebelled against God, even though they heard His voice? Wasn't it the people Moses led out of Egypt? And who made God angry for forty years? Wasn't it the people who sinned, whose corpses lay in the wilderness? And to whom was God speaking when He took an oath that they would never enter His rest? Wasn't it the people who disobeyed Him? So we see that because of their unbelief they were not able to enter His rest.  
Hebrew 3:16-19

There is one more text in this story that we need to address.

And Jehovah saith unto Moses, "Write this, a memorial in a Book, and set *it* in the ears of Joshua, that I do utterly wipe away the remembrance of Amalek from under the heavens;" Exodus 17:14 (YLT)

Josephus records the event in this manner:

He [Moses] also foretold that the Amalekites should utterly be destroyed; and that hereafter none of them should remain, because they fought against the Hebrews, and this when they were in the



wilderness, and in their distress also. Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 3, Chapter 16:5

Who wanted the Amalekites to be completely destroyed? Was it God or was it Moses? The motivation for Moses is clear: he was a human who wanted retribution. Attributing the same motivation to God becomes very difficult in the revelation of Jesus Christ who loved His enemies.

We recall again the word of God to Adam when He said “The man has become as one of us.” God spoke the thoughts of Adam back to him because Adam was operating in an Old Covenant context. The same here. God speaks the thoughts of Moses to him, because Moses did not discern or comprehend another context than the extermination of the Amalekites.

If God wanted the remembrance of Amalek to be wiped out from under heaven, then why would you write a memorial of it? Why is it even in the Bible? Doesn't that preserve a memorial of the Amalekites? Doesn't all the world who read the books of Moses know about the Amalekites?

The question that naturally arises is, why does God do this?! Why does God speak words that are actually the thoughts of Moses? Our natural reaction is to say, “this doesn't make sense at all! It feels like you are twisting the Scriptures!” But to accept that God Himself said this is to accept that God believes in genocide and that He commands His followers to hack babies to death with swords. That is the implication. If you don't have a problem with that, then you have a serious problem.

The Gospel Character does not reveal the attribute of genocide. It lays down its own life for its enemies. Human nature doesn't want anything to do with this; it would rather accept genocide. But what does humanity do with this utterly grotesque and debased attribute within himself? It projects it onto God and makes Him the author of it. That is the meaning of Exodus 17:14. The Scriptures capture the human art of Projection, which in this case is genocide.

I offer these tools to you. I hope your conscience is sensitive enough to look for an alternative to believing God kills innocent babies like vermin

squashed under steel-capped boots. When I look at Jesus, I see a light that illumines the Old Testament and gives me courage to question more deeply; and I marvel at how God manages to interact with His wicked children whose thoughts are nothing like His.

## CHAPTER 27

# THUNDER AND LIGHTNING ON SINAI

As we approach Mt Sinai, we come to the third highest peak after Moriah and Golgotha. We feel the thunder shake the earth beneath our feet and the blinding flash of lightning bursting forth from the mountain. We are instilled with fear as we hear the words of God to Moses:

*“Mark off a boundary all around the mountain. Warn the people, ‘Be careful! Do not go up on the mountain or even touch its boundaries. Anyone who touches the mountain will certainly be put to death. No hand may touch the person or animal that crosses the boundary; instead, stone them or shoot them with arrows. They must be put to death.’ However, when the ram’s horn sounds a long blast, then the people may go up on the mountain.”*  
Exodus 19:12-13

What terror this must have struck into the hearts of the people! As they come to the base of the mountain, we read:

Moses led them out from the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. All of Mount Sinai was covered with smoke because the LORD had descended on it in the form of

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fire. The smoke billowed into the sky like smoke from a brick kiln, and the whole mountain shook violently. Exodus 19:17-18

Blinding lightning, crashing thunder, billowing smoke, and an earthquake-like effect rocks the mountain. Is this the God of Jesus Christ? Is this the God of all comfort, the God who claims to be love, yet here is threatening to kill anyone who gets too close?

Fast forward to the time of Elijah. The prophet is running for his life from the wicked Jezebel to the same Mt Sinai. Elijah spends the night at a cave on the mountain. The next morning, the Lord begins to speak to him. The prophet complains to the Lord of all His servants who have been killed by Jezebel and Ahab. He tells the Lord how zealous he has been for the truth.

The zealousness which Elijah spoke of included his work of slaying the 450 prophets of Baal at Mt Carmel. Zealousness evokes the sense of an indignation at evil done against the Lord; it arouses a man to act in God's defence, cutting down evil in its tracks. Elijah was full of fury at the wickedness of Ahab and his debased prophets.

The Lord beckons Elijah forward to the mouth of the cave. As the Lord comes towards Elijah and passes by, suddenly a mighty wind smashed into the mountain, and tore the rock face apart. Immediately after this, an earthquake violently shakes the mountain. But notice carefully what is recorded about this event.

“Go out and stand before Me on the mountain,” the LORD told him. And as Elijah stood there, the LORD passed by, and a mighty windstorm hit the mountain. It was such a terrible blast that the rocks were torn loose, **but the LORD was not in the wind**. After the wind there was an earthquake, **but the LORD was not in the earthquake**. 1 Kings 19:11

The Lord is not in the wind or the earthquake! If the Lord is not in the wind or the earthquake, then what caused them? Let's continue the story to discover why:

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And after the earthquake there was a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire there was the sound of a gentle whisper. When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. And a voice said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" 1 Kings 19:12-13

God spoke to Elijah with a gentle calming whisper, like a gentle mother calming her agitated child. Elijah had been running for his life. Many conflicting emotions were tumbling through his mind. In his zeal for God he had killed 450 idolatrous men; he carried the disappointed hope of a nation who refused to step into the wake of his actions and help him reform the nation.

Elijah's sense of justice and love for truth moved him to execute vengeance upon those leading the nation to ruin. It was like a fire in his soul that consumed him and made him single in his purpose and mission.

As God approaches Elijah, it acts like a mirror of his soul, intensifying the thoughts and feelings within him. The apostle Paul speaks to this phenomenon in this way:

But sin, taking opportunity by the commandment, produced in me all *manner of evil* desire. For apart from the law sin *was* dead. I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died. Romans 7:8-9 (NKJV)

Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more, Romans 5:20 (NKJV)

God is the living embodiment of the commandments. The law of God is a transcript of His own character. As the living law in the person of God moves towards Elijah, it produces in him all manner of evil desire. It causes sin to revive and become more powerful. But how does this happen? Pastor and teacher, Alonzo T. Jones, explains it this way:

Yet it is also true that the very righteousness of God is in the law; because the law is but the expression of the will of God, it is only the transcript of his character. And since this is so, it follows in the

nature of the case that **nobody can see in the law the righteousness of God, nobody can find in the law the righteousness of God, but God himself.** And this only emphasizes the mighty truth that all that anybody, **whether God or man, can ever see or find in the law is HIS OWN righteousness.** On the part of man, this is sin; because it comes short of the righteousness of God. But on the part of God, it is righteousness; because it is the very righteousness of God in all perfection. A.T. Jones, *Review and Herald*, December 12, 1899

When men look into the law of God, they will use it to judge other men in order to validate or secure their own righteousness. Elijah could see the wickedness of other men, their debauchery and moral depravity. The law of God stirred up in him a sense of justice that encouraged him to execute judgment against evildoers. But on the part of man this is sin because, as Jesus told those who wanted to stone the woman caught in adultery, only those without sin are in a position to execute judgment. Elijah was not without sin.

Now consider carefully the effect of the lawgiver coming towards Elijah. The progression towards him can only increase, intensify or magnify the thoughts Elijah has about God, justice and the demand for the destruction of evil. Elijah was a faithful man of God. He walked in the law of God to the best of his knowledge. This reaction is different to when God or His angels approach wicked men; they do not feel the desire for justice on others but rather feel the terror of God's justice against themselves.

With regard to Elijah, I found that this Bible commentary appears to capture this thought:

As Elijah stepped out of the cave a storm swept across the mountain and an earthquake shook the ground. **All seemed to be in commotion, with the heavens on fire and the earth convulsed by forces that seemed about to rend it asunder. All this was in tune with the convulsive spirit of the prophet.** What he needed to learn was that, mighty and moving though these forces be, they do not of

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themselves portray a true picture of the Spirit of God. – *Adventist Bible Commentary* on 1 Kings 19:11-12

This process reminds me of my time of working on a farm. We prepared the soil, planted the seeds, and began to water the earth. Before the earth was watered, everything looked clean, straight and in order. But when the water soaked into the earth, it caused everything in the earth to grow, both the good and the bad.

The water is a symbol of the work of the Spirit of God. It grows whatever is in the soil. The soil is a symbol of the human heart. Any sin found in the heart will be manifested when the Spirit of God comes into the heart.

“A good person produces good things from the treasury of a good heart, and an evil person produces evil things from the treasury of an evil heart. And I tell you this, you must give an account on judgment day for every idle word you speak. The words you say will either acquit you or condemn you.” Matthew 12:35-37

The Spirit grows the seed in the heart of man. If the seed is bad, it will convulse the soul which in turn will convulse the earth around it. When this principle is understood, so many things which have seemed a mystery to us become clear and simple.

When we understand the Earth Curse tool we have been using, it makes sense that the convulsions within the spirit of the prophet Elijah would manifest themselves in the earth. When the Lord comes close to Elijah, it intensifies this process. To the unobservant, it appears as God causing these violent commotions, but this masks the reality that nature is convulsed by human passion that is outside the commandments of God. This is why God appears hostile towards those who are hostile with wrong intentions towards others.

To the faithful You show Yourself faithful; to those with integrity You show integrity. To the pure You show Yourself pure, but to the wicked You show Yourself hostile. Psalm 18:25-26

Let us never forget our Father in heaven is not in the wind, the earthquake and the fire. These verses pinpoint the reality of natural disasters as we discussed previously.

The earth is also defiled under its inhabitants, because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore the curse has devoured the earth, and those who dwell in it are desolate. Therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men *are* left. Isaiah 24:5-6 (NKJV)

The Elijah story provides for us the context for Israel coming to the mountain of God. Josephus explains what happened when the people first came to the mountain and what they thought God would do to them.

So they passed two days in this way of feasting; but on the third day, before the sun was up, a cloud spread itself over the whole camp of the Hebrews, such a one as none had before seen, and encompassed the place where they had pitched their tents; and while all the rest of the air was clear, **there came strong winds, that raised up large showers of rain, which became a mighty tempest. There was also such lightning, as was terrible to those that saw it; and thunder, with its thunderbolts, were sent down,** and declared God to be there present in a gracious way to such as Moses desired he should be gracious.

Now, as to these matters, every one of my readers may think as he pleases; but I am under a necessity of relating this history as it is described in the sacred books. This sight, and the amazing sound that came to their ears, disturbed the Hebrews to a prodigious degree, for they were not such as they were accustomed to; and then the rumor that was spread abroad, how God frequented that mountain, greatly astonished their minds, so **they sorrowfully contained themselves within their tents, as both supposing Moses to be destroyed by the Divine wrath, and expecting the like destruction for themselves.** Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 3, Chapter 5.2



Notice carefully how the atmosphere changes due to the joy that Moses possessed in His thoughts about God.

When they were under these apprehensions, **Moses appeared as joyful and greatly exalted. When they saw him, they were freed from their fear, and admitted of more comfortable hopes as to what was to come. The air also was become clear and pure of its former disorders**, upon the appearance of Moses; whereupon he called together the people to a congregation, in order to their hearing what God would say to them... Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 3, Chapter 5.2

Moses was faithful to God and God appeared faithful to him. The atmosphere changed. When the people came under the influence of Moses, their fears eased to the point that the stormy conditions abated.

Now we can understand why the Lord sets bounds around the mountain so the people would not come too close to Him. It would intensify their perceptions of deity in the atmosphere. When the commandment comes, the sin within them would have revived and they would have died. (Rom 7:9).

The lightning, the thunder, the violent shaking of the mountain, the thick cloud, all of this was a manifestation of their thoughts of deity, their perceptions of justice and their terror of this being that seemed more like Zeus to them than the Father of Jesus Christ. Our Father desired to speak to them in a gentle whisper, but what they heard when God spoke was like thunder, and their fears returned.

Now all the people witnessed the thunderings, the lightning flashes, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw *it*, they trembled and stood afar off. Then they said to Moses, "You speak with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die." Exodus 20:18-19 (NKJV)

When the people heard the voice of God, they felt they would die in fear. All of this was a mirror of their perceptions of God which,

combined with their own impact on nature, caused the environment around them to convulse.

The sound of the voice of God changes depending on the listener. The Bible records this phenomenon when Jesus was on earth and His Father spoke.

*“Father, bring glory to Your name.” Then a voice spoke from heaven, saying, “I have already brought glory to My name, and I will do so again.” When the crowd heard the voice, some thought it was thunder, while others declared an angel had spoken to Him.*  
John 12:28-29

Those in the Old Covenant hear thunder, while those in the New Covenant hear an angelic voice speaking. As we recall, the New Covenant is looking at the Father through the life of Jesus on earth.

All the events of Mt Sinai might have been different if the people had joyfully listened to what God had asked them. Notice carefully what God said as the literal Hebrew expresses it.

*“And now, if ye really hearken to My voice, then ye have kept My covenant, and been to Me a peculiar treasure more than all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; and ye – ye are to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation:’ these are the words which thou dost speak unto the sons of Israel.” Exodus 19:5-6 (YLT)*

God simply asked them to listen to His voice – His gentle whispering voice. Just listening is keeping the covenant. That was it. He told them that they already were to Him a kingdom of priests. They didn’t have to do anything to become this. It was already a fact because God determined it was so.

And all the people responded together, “We will do everything the LORD has commanded.” So Moses brought the people’s answer back to the LORD. Exodus 19:8

The response of the people was to tell God, “Everything you have commanded, we will do.” But there was only one thing to do and that

was to listen. The rest was already given to them. They didn't have to do anything. This proves they were not truly listening. They heard God's words but they did not do them. They heard the law but they forgot their inability to do anything, and this prevented God from helping them into His path, His way of thinking.

For if you listen to the word and don't obey, it is like glancing at your face in a mirror. You see yourself, walk away, and forget what you look like. James 1:23-24

Israel told God that they would do the things God had already given to them. What should have happened is that they should have wept for joy at the goodness of God in giving them everything for free. They should have confessed their sins and told the Lord they were sorry for all they had done to Him and they should have said, "we believe you will do what you have said." But they didn't. Paul tells us that Mt Sinai represents bondage. The people promised the impossible. No man can promise to fulfill God's commandments, because none of us have any ability to do righteousness from ourselves.

We note what Paul says about the Mt Sinai experience:

These two women serve as an illustration of God's two covenants. The first woman, Hagar, represents Mount Sinai where people received the law that enslaved them. And now Jerusalem is just like Mount Sinai in Arabia, because she and her children live in slavery to the law. Galatians 4:24-25

It would be better to say that the people enslaved themselves to the law by trying to do themselves what God promised to do for them. Paul calls this experience the first or Old Covenant.

Israel was doing exactly what Abraham did with Hagar; trying to fulfill the promises of God themselves. Once they committed themselves to this process, God could only reveal to the people their own thinking; He could only cause "sin to abound" in them in the hope of bringing them to the New Covenant, or Jerusalem above.

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The people said they would do everything God wanted. He asked them to listen. When He spoke, they told Moses to tell God to stop speaking because they feared they would die. Right here they broke the covenant with God; they disobeyed Him.

In addressing the people in the Old Covenant, God still is seeking to teach them and draw them into the New. As He introduces the Ten Commandments, He says:

“I am the LORD your God, who rescued you from the land of Egypt, the place of your slavery.” Exodus 20:2

In the context of being already rescued, God then speaks the commandments. I will quote from our usual version of the New Living Translation to show what they heard and then I will quote from the Young’s Literal Translation to show what God said. You will easily see the difference. I will condense the longer commandments in this list.

“You must not have any other god but Me.

“You must not make for yourself an idol of any kind or an image of anything in the heavens or on the earth or in the sea....

“You must not misuse the name of the LORD your God...

“Remember to observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy....

“Honor your father and mother....

“You must not murder.

“You must not commit adultery.

“You must not steal.

“You must not testify falsely against your neighbor.

“You must not covet your neighbor’s house. You must not covet your neighbor’s wife....” Exodus 20:3-17 (NLT)

Now once again as God intended it:

“Thou hast no other Gods before Me.

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“Thou dost not make to thyself a graven image, or any likeness which *is* in the heavens above, or which *is* in the earth beneath, or which *is* in the waters under the earth....

“Thou dost not take up the name of Jehovah thy God for a vain thing,...

“Remember the Sabbath-day to sanctify it;...

“Honour thy father and thy mother,...

“Thou dost not murder.

“Thou dost not commit adultery.

“Thou dost not steal.

“Thou dost not answer against thy neighbour a false testimony.

“Thou dost not desire the house of thy neighbour, thou dost not desire the wife of thy neighbour,..." Exodus 20:3-17 (YLT)

The two different translations reflect the Two Covenants. The first translation interprets the text and a demand that God requires of them. But God only told them to listen to His voice. He did not tell them to do anything else. The literal Hebrew version shows you the true meaning of what God told them. Because I have rescued you, you will not do these things because you will have my Spirit in you.

But the people were terrified listening to God speak. To them it felt like Zeus talking with thunder and lightning. Moses was much calmer than the rest of the people and as mediator he helped them so much.

“Don’t be afraid,” Moses answered them, “for God has come in this way to test you, and so that your fear of Him will keep you from sinning!” Exodus 20:20

But even though Moses was less fearful than the others, the Bible still tell us that Moses became afraid.

For they heard an awesome trumpet blast and a voice so terrible that they begged God to stop speaking. They staggered back under

God's command: "If even an animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned to death." **Moses Himself was so frightened at the sight that he said, "I am terrified and trembling."** Hebrews 12:19-21

This reveals that Moses still partly looked at God through the Old Covenant lens. His perception of God was not perfect. We know this in part because 13 chapters later, Moses says "show me your glory," meaning he wants to know God's character. If Moses knew God already, he would not have asked this question. It was evident that He still had things to learn about God's character. The fear Moses experienced reveals He was not yet made perfect in love.

Such love has no fear, because perfect love expels all fear. If we are afraid, **it is for fear of punishment, and this shows that we have not fully experienced His perfect love.** 1 John 4:18

Moses still held the view of the need for punishment for sin. This leads to fear of punishment ourselves. In this context, Moses shows an amazing level of love for his people when he offers his own life in place of sinful Israel.

"But now, if You will only forgive their sin—but if not, erase my name from the record You have written!" Exodus 32:32

It is a beautiful gesture in a wrong context. Moses shows he still believed death was needed for gross sinful conduct, and thus his dying for another would be acceptable to God. This is the reason he was still succumbed to terrified trembling.

Due to the fact that Israel was not listening to God and that they also didn't want to, the Lord had to give them instructions which reflected their own way of thinking. Telling the Lord "All that the Lord has commanded we will do," was a pivotal moment. It meant everything that God spoke from this point forward was a reflection of their own thinking.

The people believed in stoning, killing and destroying those considered evil. They desired sacrifice and offering, and so the Lord gave to them the things they wanted to magnify their own thinking.

“Therefore I also gave them up to statutes *that were* not good, and judgments by which they could not live;” Ezekiel 20:25 (NKJV)

We will cover this in more detail in a future chapter, but it is vital to understand that many of the statutes and judgments God gave were statutes in harmony with the people’s own thinking. Why did He do this? For the simple reason that they were not listening to what He was saying. He could only give them what they wanted or they would refuse to listen. How wicked is the human heart. How gracious is our Father to walk with His deluded children who are wise in their own eyes and do things according to their own desires.

Exodus 21 begins to list commands which the people want.

“However, if someone deliberately kills another person, then the slayer must be dragged even from My altar and be put to death. Anyone who strikes father or mother must be put to death. Kidnappers must be put to death, whether they are caught in possession of their victims or have already sold them as slaves. Anyone who dishonors father or mother must be put to death.”  
Exodus 21:14-17

If the people had believed God and listened to His voice, He could have given them His Spirit to be able to do the 10 commandments. But seeking to do them in their own strength, which is enslaving themselves to the commandments, meant God had to condescend to give them death penalties, sacrifices and commands to deal with the hardness of their hearts.

If Israel had listened to God’s voice, they never would have committed adultery or desired a second wife. But by saying “All that the Lord has said, we will do,” God had to give them laws like this.

“If a man who has married a slave wife takes another wife for himself, he must not neglect the rights of the first wife to food, clothing, and sexual intimacy.” Exodus 21:10

This is a commandment for a man who has hardened his heart. Taking a second wife is cruel to both wives. It simply says to the first wife, “you

are not enough for me.” Jesus spoke specifically of the divorce commandment as having been given due to man’s hardness of heart.

“Suppose a man marries a woman but she does not please him. Having discovered something wrong with her, he writes her a letter of divorce, hands it to her, and sends her away from his house. When she leaves his house, she is free to marry another man.”  
Deuteronomy 24:1-2

Some Pharisees came and tried to trap Him [Jesus] with this question: “Should a man be allowed to divorce his wife?”

Jesus answered them with a question: “What did Moses say in the law about divorce?”

“Well, he permitted it,” they replied. “He said a man can give his wife a written notice of divorce and send her away.”

But Jesus responded, **“He wrote this commandment only as a concession to your hard hearts.”** Mark 10:2-5

Jesus tells us plainly the true intention of marriage:

“But ‘God made them male and female’ from the beginning of creation. ‘This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one.’ Since they are no longer two but one, let no one split apart what God has joined together.” Mark 10:6-9

Marriage was intended for the entire period of this earthly life. God never wanted divorce. In fact, the Bible says He hates divorce.

“For I hate divorce!” says the LORD, the God of Israel. “To divorce your wife is to overwhelm her with cruelty,” says the LORD of Heaven’s Armies. “So guard your heart; do not be unfaithful to your wife.” Malachi 2:16

In this context we can see many of the statutes God gave were given because of the hardness of the hearts of the people. They do not reflect the character of our Father. But they were given because the people



would not listen to the gentle whispering voice of God, but understood God as thunder and lightning, and determined to do God's commandments in their own way.

How sad to realise that as the Israelites looked to the top of Mt Sinai, they only saw God as a destroying, consuming fire.

To the Israelites at the foot of the mountain, the glory of the LORD appeared at the summit like a consuming fire. Exodus 24:17

For all these reasons, it is not safe to go up Mt Sinai outside the mediation of the character of Christ. The closer you come to God on this mountain, the more likely you will destroy yourself. Promising to keep God's commandments, while not resting in His Spirit and pleading for grace, leads to insanity or death.

Some of the most horrendous communities of human history have fashioned themselves around the laws of Moses and tried to enforce them according to their own understanding.

How then can we know which commandments reflect the character of God and which ones are rules given to accommodate man in His fallen thinking? Look to Jesus – what commandments did He live by? Christ is the positive expression of the law. He kept all of the 10 commandments. He kept the Sabbath and the Feasts. He believed in the sanctity of marriage and of course there are more, but Jesus shows us which are the positive commandments to observe. All the rest are accommodations to men seeking to serve God in their own way.

But didn't Jesus say, "I have not come to destroy the law or the prophets, not in the slightest amount"? (Matt 5:17-18). This is true, because the law given to Moses was the "schoolmaster to bring us to Christ." (Gal 3:24). It must not be removed. It must not be discarded. It must be studied and followed for all who begin the Christian journey. For all have sinned and are unconverted when they begin. The law as given is the diagnostic tool to reveal the true depravity of the human condition. You can't remove any of it because much of it is a mirror into the human heart.

## THUNDER AND LIGHTNING ON SINAI

As we grow in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus, He teaches us which laws were given which are not good and reflect human nature, and which are truly of His character. He teaches us how to “cause sacrifice and offering to cease.” (Dan 9:27).

I hope that, after giving this subject some consideration, Mt Sinai does not give to us a picture of God who uses lightning and thunder to terrify people into obedience, but rather a mirror of human perceptions of God.

It is a tragic tale of caution which landed the Israelites outside the desires of our Father in heaven. Yet regardless of all these things, we still received the 10 Commandments, the most precious document ever given to the human race. May we hear them through the still small voice rather than through lightning and thunder.

## CHAPTER 28

# LIGHT THROUGH DARKNESS

While we linger at the foot of Mt Sinai and recalibrate our thoughts to realise that all the elements released in violence upon the mountain were coming from men, not God, we notice Moses approaching God in a dark cloud.

As the people stood in the distance, Moses approached the dark cloud where God was. Exodus 20:21

We ask the simple question, “What is God doing in a dark cloud?” Darkness is normally associated with Satan and evil. The Bible refers to his kingdom as a kingdom of darkness.

For He has rescued us from **the kingdom of darkness** and transferred us into the Kingdom of His dear Son, Colossians 1:13

Curiously enough, the Bible speaks in a number of places of God being surrounded by darkness.

**He shrouded Himself in darkness**, veiling His approach with dark rain clouds. Thick clouds shielded the brightness around Him and rained down hail and burning coals. Psalm 18:11-12

## LIGHT THROUGH DARKNESS

The LORD is king! Let the earth rejoice! Let the farthest coastlands be glad. **Dark clouds surround Him.** Righteousness and justice are the foundation of His throne. Psalm 97:1-2

Then Solomon prayed, "O LORD, You have said that You would **live in a thick cloud of darkness.**" 2 Chronicles 6:1

This darkness appears to be present around Him to such an extent that He is said to live in the darkness. But the Bible also says that there is no darkness in God at all.

This is the message we heard from Jesus and now declare to you: **God is light, and there is no darkness in Him at all.** 1 John 1:5

Jesus spoke to the people once more and said, "**I am the light of the world. If you follow Me, you won't have to walk in darkness,** because you will have the light that leads to life." John 8:12

How can there be no darkness in God and yet He is surrounded by darkness? When Saul of Tarsus encountered Jesus on the road to Damascus and was converted to become Paul the apostle, the Lord Jesus instructed Him as follows:

"Now get to your feet! For I have appeared to you to appoint you as My servant and witness. You are to tell the world what you have seen and what I will show you in the future. And I will rescue you from both your own people and the Gentiles. Yes, I am sending you to the Gentiles to open their eyes, **so they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God.** Then they will receive forgiveness for their sins and be given a place among God's people, who are set apart by faith in Me." Acts 26:16-18

The parallel of turning from darkness to light is being released from the power of Satan unto God. Darkness therefore is the power of Satan.

Don't team up with those who are unbelievers. How can righteousness be a partner with wickedness? How can light live with darkness? 2 Corinthians 6:14

## MIRROR PRINCIPLE

He who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness until now. 1 John 2:9 (NKJV)

The way of the righteous is like the first gleam of dawn, which shines ever brighter until the full light of day. But the way of the wicked is like total darkness. They have no idea what they are stumbling over. Proverbs 4:18-19

The principle of light is a manifestation of the life that is in the Son of God, Jesus Christ.

The Word [Christ] gave life to everything that was created, and **His life brought light to everyone.** John 1:4

In its simplest form, light = life, and darkness = death. When we look to God and see Him surrounded in darkness, this reflects the human perception of God as a God of death. The reason we see Him as a God of death is because we are looking through dark glasses.

For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known. 1 Corinthians 13:12 (NKJV)

We read in 1 John 2:9 that those who hate are in darkness. Darkness entered into the universe when Lucifer began to hate the Son of God. This hatred led to a desire to murder Christ. Christ spoke of this in John 8:44 when He called Satan a murderer from the beginning.

Satan cleverly projected his desire to have Christ killed onto God by introducing a theory of justice that made forgiveness impossible without the death of the transgressor or a worthy substitute.<sup>23</sup>

Satan attached the desire to murder to his interpretation of the law of God. He introduced the idea that every sin must be punished with death unless a substitute could be found. In introducing the idea of a

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<sup>23</sup> For a detailed explanation of this subject see the book *Divine Risk* chapters 12 and 13, available for download on [fatheroflove.info](http://fatheroflove.info).

substitute, Satan hoped to drag Christ down to be murdered for the crimes of the wicked, crimes which Satan himself inspired people to do.

To believe that God's justice demands death is to believe that God is a God of death, ruling the universe through fear of death. But it is Satan on his throne of iniquity who developed this concept of justice.

Shall the throne of iniquity, which devises evil by law, have fellowship with You? Psalm 94:20 (NKJV)

The story of Daniel in the lion's den provides an illustration of how a death decree was introduced in the beginning. The king intended to make Daniel second ruler in the kingdom.

The king also chose Daniel and two others as administrators to supervise the high officers and protect the king's interests. Daniel soon proved himself more capable than all the other administrators and high officers. Because of Daniel's great ability, the king made plans to place him over the entire empire. Then the other administrators and high officers began searching for some fault in the way Daniel was handling government affairs, but they couldn't find anything to criticize or condemn. He was faithful, always responsible, and completely trustworthy. Daniel 6:2-4

When God placed His Son as ruler of the entire universe, Satan, and soon after, some of the other "administrators" devised a plan to kill the Son of God. In the story of Daniel, a petition was brought to the king that allowed no one to petition any "God" except Darius. This was a plan that seemed to honour the king, but it was designed to destroy Daniel.

Satan introduced a theory of justice incompatible with mercy. He claimed that God needed to rule with complete authority and to violate any of His laws should lead to the death of the transgressor. In the case of Darius, he approved the law because he was ignorant of its true intent. In the case of God, He could not prevent the death decree because Satan, as the first created being, had infected the entire universe with his theory. The creation of this earth gives us a clue to the power

ruling in the universe by the fact that darkness was the starting point of creation.

The earth was formless and empty, and **darkness** covered the deep waters. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters. Genesis 1:2

God is light and life. The presence of darkness is no accident. It is telling us that the power of darkness had taken hold in the universe. The justice system of Satan had surrounded God and His Son, and they were encased in a cloud of darkness. Satan had subtly influenced all created beings to view justice through the false lens that he had created.

Satan applied the same principle when seeking to take control of Israel through Absalom. The son of David introduced himself as being for improved justice, and presented his case to the nation that he was best suited to implement the needed changes in the king's court.

After this, Absalom bought a chariot and horses, and he hired fifty bodyguards to run ahead of him. He got up early every morning and went out to the gate of the city. When people brought a case to the king for judgment, Absalom would ask where in Israel they were from, and they would tell him their tribe. Then Absalom would say, "You've really got a strong case here! It's too bad the king doesn't have anyone to hear it. **I wish I were the judge. Then everyone could bring their cases to me for judgment, and I would give them justice!**"

When people tried to bow before him, Absalom wouldn't let them. Instead, he took them by the hand and kissed them. Absalom did this with everyone who came to the king for judgment, and **so he stole the hearts of all the people of Israel.** 2 Samuel 15:1-6

Absalom was inspired by Satan, using his methods to take control of the kingdom. Satan stole the hearts of heavenly beings by introducing his justice system requiring death. The angels did not realise this was all a plot to kill the Son of God. Only when Satan murdered Christ on the Cross did the angels fully realise what was happening.

## LIGHT THROUGH DARKNESS

For God in all His fullness was pleased **to live in Christ, and through Him God reconciled everything to Himself.** He made peace with everything **in heaven and on earth** by means of Christ's blood on the cross. Colossians 1:19-20

What things needed reconciling in heaven? Christ revealed Satan's true motivation through His bearing the Cross. All this talk about justice and punishment was a cover for Satan's plan to murder Christ. This is the dark glass or mirror that we look through when we look at God. Adam embraced Satan's justice system, but believed that it was God's justice system. This plunged the whole world into darkness. Satan worked mischief through God's own law and convinced us all that God demanded death. Beholding a God of death will kill you.

Sin took advantage of those commands and deceived me; it used the commands to kill me. Romans 7:11

Through this lie Satan, like Absalom, took control of the throne.

"For you [Satan] said to yourself, 'I will ascend to heaven and set my throne above God's stars. I will preside on the mountain of the gods far away in the north. I will climb to the highest heavens and be like the Most High.'" Isaiah 14:13-14

Satan achieved his goal of setting his throne, the throne of iniquity, above the stars of God. He made himself as the Most High. It was his justice system that ruled the minds and hearts of many and influenced to some degree all the rest. This same justice system now rules our world almost entirely, and therefore Christ calls Satan the prince of this world for good reason.

Back to the creation week, we see that out of this darkness, the light which is in Jesus, the Son of God, shone out.

For it is the God who commanded light to **shine out of darkness**, who has shone in our hearts to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. 2 Corinthians 4:6 (NKJV)



The light had to shine out of darkness because Satan had stolen the hearts of the kingdom. Satan made the bold claim that sin can't simply be forgiven, it must be atoned through death. It is in this context that Acts 26:18 makes much more sense. Moving from darkness to light means moving from an impossibility to forgive to free forgiveness.

...to open their eyes, so they may turn from **darkness to light** and from the **power of Satan to God**. Then they will **receive forgiveness for their sins** and be given a place among God's people, who are set apart by faith in Me. Acts 26:18

The only way to free the human race from Satan's lie that sin must be punished with death was for Christ to die for the human race. This action returned humanity to the possibility to believe that death was abolished and life and immortality returned to us.

...but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, **who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel**, 2 Timothy 1:10 (NKJV)

The gospel of Jesus Christ brought light back into the human mind; it opened our mind to believe in the forgiveness of sin. Once we were in Satan's grasp, the only thing that could save the human family was for Christ to die.

In the beginning, Satan did not know of the resurrection of the dead, for no one had died. He felt secure that his plan for justice would secure the death of the Son of God. But the trap he laid for Christ will fall upon himself. Just as Haman, who built the gallows to kill Mordecai, fell victim to his own plot, so Satan will die according to his own principles of justice.

The conclusion of what we are saying is that as long as men believe God demands death for sin, they are looking at God through a dark glass. He appears to us in a dark cloud. Jesus has released us from our deceived ideas through bringing mercy to us in a context we understand. Now that we know God is merciful, we can go on to know the truth of the Father's character.

Darkness is associated with sin and death. There is no darkness in God at all. Therefore, there is no death in God at all. The principle of death for sin creates the fear of death. If our Father punishes sin with death then we will always be afraid of Him and we can never truly love Him.

Such love has no fear, because perfect love expels all fear. **If we are afraid, it is for fear of punishment, and this shows that we have not fully experienced His perfect love.** 1 John 4:18

To experience perfect love is to lose all fear of punishment. Christ abolished death at the Cross (2 Tim 1:10), therefore God will never use death to instil fear into us.

The truth of these things will soon lighten the whole earth with the glory of God's true character. This will finally lead to death being cast into the lake of fire.

Then death and the grave were thrown into the lake of fire. This lake of fire is the second death. Revelation 20:14

For death to be destroyed means that the idea of death as punishment will be banished from the minds of all creatures in God's universe. Death comes from being disconnected from God, not from God lashing out to kill. Once we realise that God wants us to be reconciled to him in our minds to save us, then His enemy – death – will be destroyed.

And the last enemy to be destroyed is death. 1 Corinthians 15:26

Darkness will have then been completely defeated and praise God, there will be no more night.

And there will be no night there—no need for lamps or sun—for the Lord God will shine on them. And they will reign forever and ever. Revelation 22:5

This is eternal life, that we know God and His Son (John 17:3), and that we know there is no death in them. They do not kill anyone even as their commandments teach us how to live.

## MIRROR PRINCIPLE

We give praise to Jesus, who defeated Satan and the dominion he had over us through fear of death. In paying Satan's ransom price, our minds can be set free from darkness and we can receive forgiveness of sin.

Because God's children are human beings—made of flesh and blood—the Son also became flesh and blood. For only as a human being could He die, and **only by dying could He break the power of the devil, who had the power of death. Only in this way could He set free all who have lived their lives as slaves to the fear of dying.** Hebrews 2:14-15

Death where is your sting? Once we learn through Christ that God's justice never demanded death, but rather, in great love, God gave His Son as a ransom for our darkened understanding, then we can sing:

The LORD is my light and my salvation—so why should I be afraid? The LORD is my fortress, protecting me from danger, so why should I tremble? Psalm 27:1

## CHAPTER 29

# THE DEATH PENALTY

When Israel came through the Red Sea, they praised God as a killing warrior. When Israel was thirsty, they wanted to stone Moses to death. When Israel defeated the Amalekites, they did to others what they thought God did to the Egyptians. When God asked Israel to listen to His voice, He said to them, "You do not kill"; but they told Moses, "we don't want God to speak to us." When Israel said, "all that the Lord has spoken, we will do," they meant they would fulfil the promises of God themselves, revealing themselves truly in the spirit of Hagar and the Old Covenant.

The refusal to listen left God with the sad task of enacting laws that reflected their own thinking. When we look into the face of Jesus Christ, we see no killing in Him. When we listen to the words of the Ten Commandments, we hear that no killing is part of what is promised.

Every penalty in the Bible which includes death is a reflection of the minds of men and not of God. Christ is life itself. (1 John 1:1-3). He has nothing to do with death. Death is the dominion of Satan. (Heb 2:14). Therefore, all death penalties are causing sin to abound in men. They are allowing God's commandments to be enforced using men's thinking. They are to satisfy man's need to feel there is justice. As we

considered in the previous chapter, God gave Israel over to laws which were not good.

“I also, I have lifted up My hand to them in the wilderness, to scatter them among nations, and to spread them through lands. Because My judgments they have not done, and My statutes they have despised, and My sabbaths they have polluted, and after idols of their fathers have their eyes been. And I also, **I have given to them statutes not good, and judgments by which they do not live.**”  
Ezekiel 20:23-25 (YLT)

You can't live in judgments where there is a death decree. So we see all through the books of Moses the words: “Must be put to death.”

Anyone who assaults and kills another person **must be put to death.** Exodus 21:12

Anyone who strikes father or mother **must be put to death.**  
Exodus 21:15

Kidnappers **must be put to death,**... Exodus 21:16

Anyone who has sexual relations with an animal **must certainly be put to death.** Exodus 22:19

You must keep the Sabbath day, for it is a holy day for you. Anyone who desecrates it **must be put to death;**... Exodus 31:14

If any of them offer their children as a sacrifice to Molech, **they must be put to death....** Leviticus 20:2

Anyone who dishonors father or mother **must be put to death.**  
Such a person is guilty of a capital offense. Leviticus 20:9

If a man commits adultery with his neighbor's wife, both the man and the woman who have committed adultery **must be put to death.** Leviticus 20:10

The man who lies with his father's wife has uncovered his father's nakedness; both of them **shall surely be put to death.** Their blood *shall be* upon them. Leviticus 20:11(NKJV)

## THE DEATH PENALTY

If a man lies with his daughter-in-law, both of them **shall surely be put to death**. They have committed perversion. Their blood *shall be* upon them. Leviticus 20:12 (NKJV)

If a man practices homosexuality, having sex with another man as with a woman, both men have committed a detestable act. They **must both be put to death**, for they are guilty of a capital offense. Leviticus 20:13

If a man has sex with an animal, he **must be put to death**, and the animal must be killed. Leviticus 20:15

If a woman presents herself to a male animal to have intercourse with it, she and the animal **must both be put to death**. You must kill both, for they are guilty of a capital offense. Leviticus 20:16

Men and women among you who act as mediums or who consult the spirits of the dead **must be put to death** by stoning. They are guilty of a capital offense. Leviticus 20:27

Anyone who blasphemes the Name of the LORD **must be stoned to death** by the whole community of Israel. Leviticus 24:16

Anyone who takes another person's life **must be put to death**. Leviticus 24:17

God gave to Israel laws after their own thinking. All of Israel had been raised in Egypt. Take adultery for instance. In Egypt it was punishable by death.

Although there was no official sanctioned punishment for adultery, those who commit adultery get the death penalty by burning, mutilation, stoning, and beating. These penalties were applied to preserve the morals and values of society and prevent its spread.<sup>24</sup>

To blaspheme any of the gods of Egypt would cause a person to be stoned.

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<sup>24</sup> <https://pcweb.info/adultery-in-ancient-egypt-and-india>

Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron. "All right! Go ahead and offer sacrifices to your God," he said. "But do it here in this land."

But Moses replied, "That wouldn't be right. The Egyptians detest the sacrifices that we offer to the LORD our God. Look, if we offer our sacrifices here where the Egyptians can see us, they will stone us." Exodus 8:25-26

God was giving to Israel more of what they were familiar with. They refused to listen to God's voice, so God gave them laws by which they could not live. It is well known today that death penalties do not deter crime.<sup>25</sup> Death penalties create fear of punishment and fear of punishment never produces love, which means that death penalties are not part of God's character because God is love.

...If we are afraid, it is for fear of punishment, and this shows that we have not fully experienced His perfect love. 1 John 4:18

We see how Jesus navigates the death penalties written in the law of Moses when a woman is brought to him caught in adultery.

"Teacher," they said to Jesus, "this woman was caught in the act of adultery. The law of Moses says to stone her. What do You say?" They were trying to trap Him into saying something they could use against Him, but Jesus stooped down and wrote in the dust with His finger.

They kept demanding an answer, so He stood up again and said, "All right, but let the one who has never sinned throw the first stone!" Then He stooped down again and wrote in the dust. When the accusers heard this, they slipped away one by one, beginning with the oldest, until only Jesus was left in the middle of the crowd with the woman.

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<sup>25</sup> <https://www.amnesty.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/act500062008en.pdf>

## THE DEATH PENALTY

Then Jesus stood up again and said to the woman, "Where are your accusers? Didn't even one of them condemn you?"

"No, Lord," she said.

And Jesus said, "Neither do I. Go and sin no more." John 8:4-11

Jesus is the lawgiver. He did not call for the woman to be stoned to death. He was the only one in the crowd who had not sinned. If Jesus believed in the death penalty, then He should have stoned the woman. But He didn't do this. Jesus gave the woman His Spirit to give her power not to commit adultery. He could do this because she listened to His voice.

The Mirror Principle reveals that all death penalties in the Bible are a reflection of the minds of men. God gave them laws after their own heart in order to allow their evil character to develop further. The harsh life lessons that come from developing evil makes them a schoolmaster to bring men to Christ. We see how the death penalty in the law of Moses caused the woman caught in adultery to be brought to Christ. This is what God intended to do through the Old Covenant understanding of the law. The death penalty caused sin to abound and brought her to the lawgiver. Grace and mercy are then freely offered and forgiveness secured, causing gratitude to our Father in heaven.

To remove the death penalties in the law of Moses is to break the mirror that shows men their harsh, evil way of dealing with law breakers. We dare not remove this diagnostic tool. Inevitably, lawbreaking does lead to death. But we look into the eyes of Jesus and find, love, mercy and forgiveness, and the power to stop doing evil. He will solve the problem not by killing us, but by making us right with the law.

The laws of Moses would never have been needed if Israel had listened to God's voice. It is interesting that Josephus states that it was Israel's idea for God to give them more instruction about the words God spoke on Mt Sinai.

...on the following days they came to his tent, and desired him to bring them, besides, other laws from God. Accordingly he



## MIRROR PRINCIPLE

appointed such laws, and afterwards informed them in what manner they should act in all cases... Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 3, Chapter 5:6

If Israel had listened to God, they never would have needed all these laws with death penalties. All they would have needed is to ask forgiveness and receive the Spirit of God to stop doing evil.

With regard to death penalties, the Mirror Principle once again shows us that such laws are a reflection of men. The Two Covenant tool shows us that God uses such reflected laws to bring men to Christ for forgiveness.

I pray, dear reader, that you can see our Father in a completely different light than previously. Death penalties equal darkness. There is no darkness in God at all. Let the light of Jesus shine into the darkness of these laws which are not good that we may hear the words, "neither do I condemn you, receive My Spirit and sin no more."

## CHAPTER 30

# THE SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM AND THE SANCTUARY

In chapter 17 we explored the deeper meaning of the offering of Isaac. We discovered the natural tendency of men to kill something of value to them in order to atone for their sins. All men are pagans at heart because they have enmity towards God and aim to appease their perceptions of Him through sacrifice.

At the edge of the garden of Eden, Adam and his sons came to offer a lamb as a sacrifice for sin. The Bible gives a clue to how often as follows:

**And it cometh to pass at the end of days** that Cain bringeth from the fruit of the ground a present to Jehovah; and Abel, he hath brought, he also, from the female firstlings of his flock, even from their fat ones; and Jehovah looketh unto Abel and unto his present, Genesis 4:3-4 (YLT)

The meaning of the text is *at the end of a cycle*. It is not exactly clear whether this cycle is a year or a week. John Wesley seems to favour once a year by suggesting it first, but also suggests it might be once a week:

In process of time - At the end of days, either at the end of the year when they kept their feast of in-gathering, or at the end of the days of the week, the seventh day; at some set time Cain and Abel brought to Adam, as the priest of the family, each of them an offering to the Lord; - John Welsey, Commentary on Genesis 4:3

The more often a person kills animals, the less feeling they maintain through the process. After a while, killing a lamb once a year would be far more painful than once a week. Within a year or two, the heart would feel almost nothing after killing an animal more than 100 times.

As we have stated previously, God gave the sacrificial system to Adam as a mirror of what Adam was doing to His Son. It was intended to show him the true horror of what his sin does to Christ. The act of devotion in offering a lamb was not to satisfy the Creator through sacrifice, but to confess to the Creator the evil deed which was in his heart, and trust that God forgives him for such evil.

The entire sacrificial system contained within the Sanctuary service revolves around the priest sacrificing animals and offering blood in the temple. How could God set up such a system for Israel when He doesn't desire sacrifice?

You take no delight in sacrifices or offerings. Now that You have made me listen, I finally understand—You don't require burnt offerings or sin offerings. Psalm 40:6

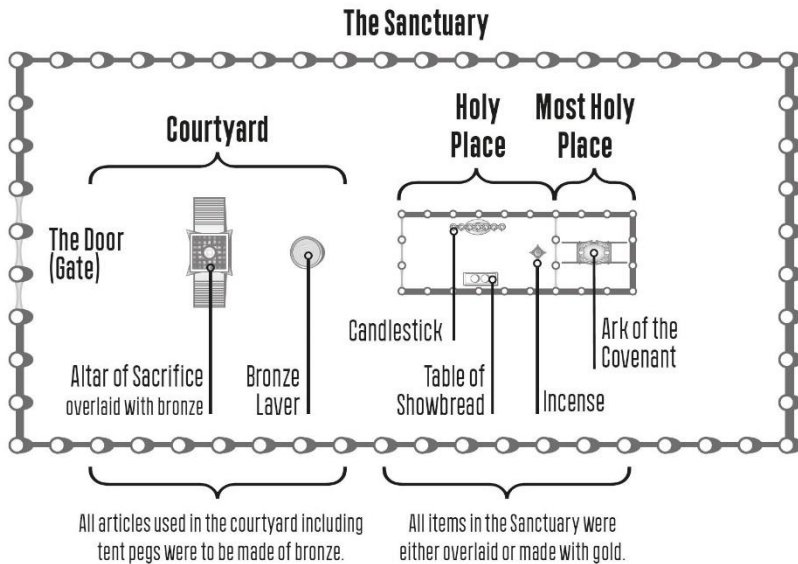
As we considered in chapter 27, the entire Sinai experience was an Old Covenant mirror. The people refused to listen to God or do things His way. If our Father in heaven wanted to walk with His children, He had to do things their way and seek to teach them through their incorrect perceptions.

God told Moses that He wanted them to build a Sanctuary:

## THE SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM AND THE SANCTUARY

“Have the people of Israel build Me a holy sanctuary so I can live among them.” Exodus 25:8

In order for God to live with Israel, He had to come to them through the way they live, act, and think. He could not come to them as He thinks because they knew nothing of How God lives. Exodus chapter 25 to 27 record the details of the Sanctuary.



The people were to bring their sacrifices to the courtyard. They were to take the life of the animal, and then the priest would apply the blood to the horns of the altar of sacrifice. Then the priest would strip the animal of all its fat and then lay the remaining part of the animal on the altar to be burnt.

Apart from the sin offerings that the people would bring, the priests would offer a lamb twice a day, one in the morning and one in the evening. (Num 28:4). Then on Sabbath they would offer four lambs instead of two. (Num 28:9-10). That is 834 lambs killed every year. Every new moon they would offer 7 lambs. (Num 28:11). During the Feast of Unleavened Bread they would offer 7 every day besides the daily

offering. (Num 28:19,24). On Pentecost they offered 7 lambs, Trumpets 7 lambs, Atonement 7 lambs and Tabernacles 98 lambs. That comes to a total of 1086 lambs a year apart from the rams, bullocks and sin offerings brought by individuals every year. Did God require all this slaughter of animals?

But Samuel replied, “What is more pleasing to the LORD: your burnt offerings and sacrifices or your obedience to His voice? Listen! Obedience is better than sacrifice, and submission is better than offering the fat of rams.” 1 Samuel 15:22

Did the slaughter of animals stop people from sinning?

For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins. Hebrews 10:1-2 (NKJV)

As we read through Exodus and Leviticus, and we see all the instructions about how many lambs were to be killed and how they were to be offered, we have to align all this with what God said in the time of Jeremiah.

**“When I led your ancestors out of Egypt, it was not burnt offerings and sacrifices I wanted from them. This is what I told them: ‘Obey [listen to] Me, and I will be your God, and you will be My people. Do everything as I say, and all will be well!’**

**“But My people would not listen to Me. They kept doing whatever they wanted, following the stubborn desires of their evil hearts. They went backward instead of forward. From the day your ancestors left Egypt until now, I have continued to send My servants, the prophets—day in and day out. But My people have not listened to Me or even tried to hear. They have been stubborn and sinful—even worse than their ancestors.”** Jeremiah 7:22-26

Can you see what God is saying? He never wanted all these sacrifices. All these things were a reflection of what they thought was needed to please God. The entire sacrificial system is a mirror of human thought.

We remember from chapter eight the six parts of how the mirror works:

1. He reflects their own thoughts back to them.
2. At the same time, He seeks to teach them something through their preconceived erroneous opinions.
3. If they miss his true meaning, a greater manifestation of their evil character is revealed through their misunderstanding.
4. Christ says or does something that contradicts their world view.
5. They have a choice to make: to accept a new understanding or remain in their sin.
6. He gives those who accept the truth His Spirit to draw them into changing the way they think.

With references to the sacrifices, we observe:

1. God gave them sacrifices according to their own desires.
2. God tried to teach important truths through their preconceived erroneous opinions. Deep spiritual truth is connected to the sufferings of Christ in the animal sacrifices.
3. God sent prophets to encourage them to obedience rather than sacrifice, but the people hardened their hearts.
4. Christ offered them forgiveness by looking at the brass serpent rather than sacrifice, but they did not discern its deeper meaning.
5. They refused a new understanding of things.
6. They never reached this point, so they remained in their deception.

Israel rejected the deeper meaning of the sacrifices as a reflection of what they were doing to Him. Therefore, they could not avoid actually killing Jesus when He came to earth.

The prophet Daniel prophesied that when Messiah came, He would cause sacrifice and offering to cease.

Then he [Christ] shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; but in the middle of the week **He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering.** Daniel 9:27 (NKJV)

The teachings of Jesus concerning loving your neighbour, loving even your enemy, and forgiving those who hurt you, revealed the path to end sacrifice and offering. But the people rejected Him. God had to end the sacrifices in a way the people understood; He allowed the Romans to destroy the temple in 70 AD and the sacrifices were stopped.

The critical point in all this is that the entire sanctuary system was developed as a revelation of human perceptions of atonement. Into this system God spoke precious truth through their erroneous ideas.

As further proof of the sacrificial system reflecting human perceptions, we consider the brass metal used in the furniture of the courtyard. This metal is not made by God. Brass is an alloy of copper and zinc. It is a man-made metal developed by Tubal-Cain, the son of Cain.

And Zillah, she also bare Tubalcain, an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron: and the sister of Tubalcain *was* Naamah. Genesis 4:22 (KJV)

If God originated the sacrifices as part of His thinking, the altar of sacrifice would have been made of gold and silver, or at least copper; these are metals which He had made. But the use of a man-made metal for the altar of sacrifice tells us that the sacrifices are what men desire to atone for sin.

How precious is the Mirror Principle to reveal to us the truth of both human nature and God's character. Our Father never wanted animals slaughtered. Lambs are pure, innocent creatures. He didn't want over

1000 of these lambs killed a year. When Solomon dedicated the temple in Jerusalem, he killed 120,000 sheep! (1 Kings 8:63). Is this what God wanted? No, never did He desire this. Our Father is the life-giver, not the destroyer.

The sacrificial system was developed because Israel told God, "everything you command, we will do." They told God they would follow the Hagar solution of doing things their own way.

God instituted the sacrificial system in Eden for a lamb to probably be offered once a year, but men turned this into a blood orgy of over 1000 lambs a year for the temple and 1000's more for each individual sinner.

Now that we understand this truth, we can now begin to appreciate the words of John in Revelation.

Then I was given a measuring stick, and I was told, "Go and measure the Temple of God and the altar, and count the number of worshipers. But **do not measure the outer courtyard, for it has been turned over to the nations.** They will trample the holy city for 42 months." Revelation 11:1-2

The outer courtyard is where the sacrifices were offered. God showed John that a message would come in the last days in which the principle of sacrifice would be identified as a human desire inspired by Satan.

One man who began to open the light of truth on this subject was a Doctor and Theologian named E.J. Waggoner. Notice what he said about the principle of sacrifice and where it came from.

"But," someone will say, "You have made the reconciliation all on the part of men; I have always been taught that the death of Christ reconciled God to man; that Christ died to satisfy God's justice, and to appease Him." Well, we have left the matter of reconciliation just where the Scriptures have put it; and while they have much to say about the necessity for man to be reconciled to God, **they never once hint of such a thing as the necessity for God to be reconciled to man. To intimate the necessity for such a thing is to bring a grave charge against the character of God. The idea has come into**



**the Christian Church from the Papacy, which in turn brought it from Paganism, in which the only idea of God was of a being whose wrath must be appeased by a sacrifice.** *Present Truth UK*, September 21, 1893, page 386.7

The idea of a propitiation or sacrifice is that there is wrath to be appeased. But take particular notice that it is we who require the sacrifice, and not God. He provides the sacrifice. **The idea that God's wrath has to be propitiated in order that we may have forgiveness finds no warrant in the Bible. It is the height of absurdity to say that God is so angry with men that He will not forgive them unless something is provided to appease His wrath,** and that therefore He Himself offers the gift to Himself, by which He is appeased... *Present Truth UK*, August 30, 1894, page 549.8

Now it is time for us to repent of believing God wanted blood sacrifice.

We can now see that God gave up His Son to die for us in order to break us free from the delusion that God would only forgive through the sacrifice of blood. The law mirrors human perceptions when it says there can be no forgiveness without the shedding of blood. (Heb 9:22).

There is such precious light in this realisation. The law of Moses speaks to us of the human problem of blood sacrifice. God now calls us to repent of these things and turn to His Son and receive His Spirit.

I give thanks that Jesus was willing to die to reach me in my wrong understanding of atonement. Nothing else could reach me except the death of Christ. I am forever thankful for this. But now that I am released, I can leave the outer court behind and go onto perfection in Christ. Will you join me?

## CHAPTER 31

# GOLDEN CALF

The worship of the golden calf revealed that although Israel had left Egypt, Egypt had not left Israel. The shame of this event to the Jewish people is revealed in the fact that Josephus omits this from his history of them.

In Egypt, Moses had encouraged the people to trust the Lord and follow Him. At the Red Sea, he told them to trust the Lord and see His salvation. When they grumbled about food and water, he prayed to God and received what they needed. In return they accused him of trying to kill them in the desert while planning to stone him for not supplying their immediate wants.

Now that Moses was apparently delayed, the true character of the Israelites began to manifest.

When the people saw how long it was taking Moses to come back down the mountain, they gathered around Aaron. "Come on," they said, "make us some gods who can lead us. We don't know what happened to this fellow Moses, who brought us here from the land of Egypt." Exodus 32:1

Fuelled by the spirit of the mixed multitude (Ex 12:38, NKJV), Israel was not able to wait patiently. They did not pray and seek the Lord's guidance. They did not meditate on the precious words of the Ten

Commandments, but they did take matters into their own hands and did as the Egyptians had shown them while in Egypt: they made gods akin to those which the Egyptians worshipped.

Aaron, fearing the people who had threatened to stone his brother in previous situations, compromised his position to become complicit in the evil of the nation. After all that God had done to save and care for them, they made an image of a calf and declared it to be their saviour.

Then Aaron took the gold, melted it down, and molded it into the shape of a calf. When the people saw it, they exclaimed, "O Israel, these are the gods who brought you out of the land of Egypt!"  
Exodus 32:4

Aaron attempted to blend the worship of the calf with the worship of Yehovah by proclaiming a feast unto the Lord.

Aaron saw how excited the people were, so he built an altar in front of the calf. Then he announced, "Tomorrow will be a festival to the LORD!" Exodus 32:5

Such is the temptation that men fall into whenever a desire exists to preserve position and power, the worship of the true God is blended with the worship practices of men.

We see further evidence of the people's desire for burnt offerings in their worship of the golden calf.

The people got up early the next morning to **sacrifice burnt offerings and peace offerings**. After this, they celebrated with feasting and drinking, and **they indulged in pagan revelry**.  
Exodus 32:6

The people had heard the voice of God telling them not to make any image of anything on earth to worship. They had pledged to do whatever the Lord had said to them. Within a few weeks they catastrophically abandoned their vow to God. Engaged in pagan revelry, they violated the rest of the commandments God had given them.

They made a calf in Horeb, and worshiped the molded image. Thus they changed their glory into the image of an ox that eats grass. They forgot God their Savior, Who had done great things in Egypt, Psalm 106:19-21 (NKJV)

Was He who knows the end from the beginning surprised by this apostasy? Not at all. God allowed Israel to make promises to Him which He knew they could not keep. He could do nothing else. In their complete apostasy they might begin to see their complete helplessness and turn to God in faith and prayer.

As we have observed in previous stories, wilful disobedience leads to God's anger. God's anger means the hiding of His face. The hiding of His face means that the angels are not able to protect people as they did previously, which creates a breach.

Therefore He said that He would destroy them, had not Moses His chosen one stood before Him **in the breach**, to turn away His wrath, lest He destroy *them*. Psalm 106:23 (NKJV)

The Psalmist reveals to us the breach of protection in response to God's wrath or hiding His face. When we read the words that God would destroy the people, the natural heart thinks immediately of God killing the people. But when we look into the face of Jesus, we understand that God is saying that He can't protect them anymore because of their spirit of rebellion.

It should not escape our notice that in worshipping the golden calf, Israel was beckoning Satan to come be their leader. In stating that the golden calf had brought them out of Egypt, the people were driving God away from them.

As God's representative, Moses felt keenly this rejection himself. After all Moses had done to save the people, natural feelings for justice would rise within. The spirit of ingratitude is perfect fuel for the desire for punishment within a leader. In this event, God takes the opportunity to develop the character of Moses. When Moses realised what a terrible sin the people had committed, he was tempted to wonder if the people

could indeed be forgiven. It is in this context that God speaks to Moses about what He apparently plans to do.

Then the LORD said, "I have seen how stubborn and rebellious these people are. Now leave Me alone so My fierce anger can blaze against them, and I will destroy them. Then I will make you, Moses, into a great nation." Exodus 32:9-10

Reading this text without the mediation of the life of Christ leads to some very difficult conclusions.

But Moses tried to pacify the LORD his God. "O LORD!" he said. "Why are You so angry with Your own people whom You brought from the land of Egypt with such great power and such a strong hand? Why let the Egyptians say, 'Their God rescued them with the evil intention of slaughtering them in the mountains and wiping them from the face of the earth'? Turn away from Your fierce anger. Change Your mind about this terrible disaster You have threatened against Your people!" Exodus 32:11-12

If Moses is actually seeking to pacify God, could we draw the conclusion that Moses is more merciful than God? The Bible tells us that God's mercy lasts forever. (Ps 136, NKJV). Our knowledge of the natural enmity in man tells us that man has no ability to do anything good unless it comes from God first.

Why then does God tell Moses to leave Him alone so He might destroy Israel? Why does Moses not obey God's command? Is Moses trying to pacify God? Or is God bringing to Moses his internal thoughts and taking them to their logical conclusion in order to give Moses the ability to come deeper into the grace of God?

Later in the chapter we see Moses wrestling with the enormity of Israel's sin. He pleads with God to forgive Israel, but then pauses and offers himself as a sacrifice to appease the justice of God.

"But now, if You will only forgive their sin—**but if not**, erase my name from the record You have written!" Exodus 32:32

As we have stated previously, Moses makes a beautiful gesture in a wrong context. Like Abraham, he struggles to escape from the thought of the need of death for sin.

Just before this Moses had ordered that those who refused to repent be put to death. The guilty ones perished in the slaughter. Moses still fears that it is not enough and offers himself as an innocent victim, like a type of Christ, in order to satisfy the justice which he believed needed to be satisfied. In the slaughter of the wicked along with the offering of the innocent Moses, we see once again the atonement principles of men revealed in the same manner as Christ – the innocent sacrificed alongside the two guilty thieves.<sup>26</sup>

The story of Moses pleading with God to not kill His children, seeking to appease His anger, speaks directly into the human perception of God. God can do nothing but appear this way to us because of our enmity against Him. Our inability to take responsibility for our actions means that when the Angel Hedge of protection is removed, any calamity that falls upon mankind is projected onto God, who is perceived to do the destroying in a foul mood.

As we have indicated several times, God's thoughts are not our thoughts. Within the commandments of God we are told that when we worship false gods, God *becomes* jealous. Most Bibles simply translate the text as 'God is jealous'. But the word "is" is supplied. God appears jealous because when consequences fall upon the evildoer, he blames God as the aggressor, just as Adam blamed God for creating the woman.

In chapter 20, we looked at how the hedge works. When people transgress God's law, it opens gaps in the wall of protection. Moses stepped into the gap and pled for the people of Israel. He did exactly what God wanted him to do because later on in Israel's history, we see God looks for a man to stand in the gap to save Israel.

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<sup>26</sup> For more on this see *At-One-Ment* pages 60-63 available for download from [fatheroflove.info](http://fatheroflove.info).

“So I sought for a man among them who would make a wall, and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one.” Ezekiel 22:30 (NKJV)

Thankfully God found a man in Moses to stand in the gap which Israel had made. How easily Moses could have taken the command of God to leave Him alone to heart because it agreed with his natural thinking. God would not force Moses to lead the Israelites, and He really would have made a new nation from Moses’s seed if that’s what Moses wanted.

But the Spirit of God was striving with Moses to draw him into Christ’s likeness. Moses responded beautifully, and in his pleading with God on his knees we see Christ manifest in the flesh of Moses, in exactly the same way as it was manifest in the flesh of Abraham when he pled for Sodom. Where most men would say “Amen” to God destroying wickedness, Moses saw hope in these words of God: “Leave me alone.” Moses read the heart of God beautifully in this case.

The expression of God, “leave me alone,” is the same as when Christ said to the woman, “It is not right to take the children’s food and give it to dogs.” The mirror is in operation here. Moses possibly perceives that God will be intent on seeking justice and that the time for discussion is over. But when God verbalises the thought and magnifies it, Moses switches to the position of mercy just as God desired him to do.

The alternative view of Moses seeking to pacify God and appease Him through reminding Him of how bad He will look to the other nations is simple foolishness. It is time to take off the veil which hides the character of God from us and see Him in the light of the character of Christ.

God told Moses about what the Israelites had done in corrupting themselves. God saw exactly what they had done and had forgiven them for their wickedness, but when Moses saw it, his anger became red hot.

## GOLDEN CALF

When they came near the camp, Moses saw the calf and the dancing, and he burned with anger. He threw the stone tablets to the ground, smashing them at the foot of the mountain. He took the calf they had made and burned it. Then he ground it into powder, threw it into the water, and forced the people to drink it.  
Exodus 32:19-20

Moses breaks those precious commandments which God had written with His own hand as a symbol of what the people had done to the words of God. There is a sense of resolution in the actions of Moses. That dumb lifeless idol turned to powder and put into water for the people to drink carries with it a feeling of justice for a wicked and ungrateful people.

Aaron feels the heat of the question of Moses: "What did these people do to you for you to do such a terrible thing?" The pathetic response of Aaron in claiming that he threw the gold into the flames causing a calf to magically come out would have not satisfied Moses in the least.

Israel was now in a terrible crisis. There were several issues that needed to be addressed.

1. Worshipping the Golden Calf caused a breach to be made allowing Satan to enter.
2. When entering the land of Canaan, the pagan nations could point to the idolatry of Israel as support for their own. Some evidence of God's displeasure had to be displayed.
3. Israel had not listened to the voice of God and had chosen to enter into a covenant with Him of their own choosing. God could not fix this situation the way He wanted, so He had to do it according to Israel's perceptions of justice and atonement for sin.
4. Israel worshipped a god of war who put evildoers to death. Their own judgment of others must now judge them.



5. The history of Adam seeking atonement through placing the blame on God and his wife is still a core part of their nature and is manifested in this story.
6. The story of Abraham who perceived that God wished him to offer his innocent son to atone for his sins also factored into this equation.

Moses was seeking to make atonement for the children of Israel.

Now it came to pass on the next day that Moses said to the people, "You have committed a great sin. So now I will go up to the LORD; perhaps I can **make atonement for your sin.**" Exodus 32:30 (NKJV)

Moses beckons the people who repented of their wickedness forward to receive forgiveness. Those who did not come to Moses, refusing to repent, would keep the breach open against Israel. If they continued to remain part of Israel, Satan would have continual access to the whole camp. He could stir up the surrounding nations and they would be allowed to destroy the Israelites because of this sin.

In order for Israel and the surrounding nations to understand that idolatry is an offense to God and will never be accepted, judgment had to fall upon the nation and the breach had to be closed.

We notice carefully the words of Moses in dealing with this situation.

**...then Moses stood in the entrance of the camp, and said,** "Whoever *is* on the LORD's side—*come* to me!" And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together to him. And he said to them, "Thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'Let every man put his sword on his side, and go in and out from entrance to entrance throughout the camp, and let every man kill his brother, every man his companion, and every man his neighbor.'" **So the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses.** And about three thousand men of the people fell that day. Exodus 32:26-28 (NKJV)

The thing to note here is that Moses does not include the conversation he had with God. In other places Moses writes things like this:

And God said to Moses, "I am Yahweh—'the LORD.' I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob as El-Shaddai—'God Almighty'—but I did not reveal My name, Yahweh, to them. And I reaffirmed My covenant with them..." Exodus 6:2-4

So Moses told the people of Israel what the LORD had said...  
Exodus 6:9

And again:

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Pay close attention to this. I will make you seem like God to Pharaoh, and your brother, Aaron, will be your prophet." Exodus 7:1

So Moses and Aaron did just as the LORD had commanded them.  
Exodus 7:6

And again:

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Look, I'm going to rain down food from heaven for you..." Exodus 16:4

So Moses and Aaron said to all the people of Israel, "By evening you will realize it was the LORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt." Exodus 16:6

And again:

Then Moses climbed the mountain to appear before God. The LORD called to him from the mountain and said, "Give these instructions to the family of Jacob; announce it to the descendants of Israel..." Exodus 19:3

So Moses returned from the mountain and called together the elders of the people and told them everything the LORD had commanded him. Exodus 19:7

This process is repeated over and over in the writings of Moses. When we come to the story of the defeat of the Amalekites and the slaying of the three thousand at Mt Sinai, this pattern is not followed. Moses does not write "The Lord instructed Moses – slay everyone that is

unrepentant.” Why does Moses not record the conversation he had with God in this case?

The Levites obeyed Moses’ command, and about 3,000 people died that day. Exodus 32:28

Why did Moses write that this was a command of Moses? Why doesn’t he write this was a command of God? This question is critical to this story.

God knows the principles of atonement upon which men operate. When the Israelites demanded water in the story of Exodus 17, Moses was commanded to strike the rock so water might come forth. The striking of the rock is a symbol of Christ, the rock which followed them. (1 Cor 10:4). The striking of the rock reveals the smiting of Christ in order to give us life.

Towards the end of their desert wanderings, Moses was asked to speak to the rock rather than strike it, but he struck it twice in anger, repeating the symbol of resolution through death.<sup>27</sup>

Our Father in heaven knows the thoughts of men and the principles of atonement through sacrifice. He knows that Israel can’t believe in the forgiveness of God without a sacrifice, therefore He permits Moses to act upon his thoughts of restitution in calling for the slaughter of those who refused to repent. In the act of not preventing Moses from following through on his thoughts about this situation, God places His authority upon it.

This is exactly the same outcome as the death of Pharaoh in the sea. God must be seen as the destroyer for men to sense that atonement and restitution has been achieved. In this way God punishes the sin of those who rebelled through their own justice system. God as a person is not represented in these actions, as we see reflected in the omission by

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<sup>27</sup> I cover this in much more detail in chapter 8 of *At-One-Ment* available for download at [fatheroflove.info](http://fatheroflove.info).

Moses to state that God instructed him to do this. This clearly makes it a process of permission rather than Him being the initiator of the action.

Through God allowing the sin of men's atonement principles to punish the transgressors, the breach was closed, the heathen nations understood God's displeasure and Israel were ready to believe they could be forgiven.

God blessed the Levites for the action they took in accordance with their perception of atonement. When a child makes a clumsy attempt at some life skill, the wise parent will not scold the child, but rather bless it in order to encourage it to keep them moving forward.

The downside for the Levites that few people consider is that they had to live with the images of death and destruction they unleashed upon their brethren. It would have been very traumatic for many of them. But they determined to make restitution to God in the best way they understood and God blessed this.

As we discussed earlier, the death of the guilty was not enough for Moses to believe that God would forgive Israel. He offered himself as the innocent sacrifice.

When God refused Moses as an innocent victim, it was hard for Israel to grasp forgiveness in its completeness. Therefore in the minds of Moses and the people, the breach still existed which allowed Satan to continue to plague them.

“Now therefore, go, lead the people to *the place* of which I have spoken to you. Behold, My Angel shall go before you. Nevertheless, in the day when I visit for punishment, I will visit punishment upon them for their sin.” So the LORD plagued the people because of what they did with the calf which Aaron made. Exodus 32:34-35 (NKJV)

Moses had asked God to forgive His people. In the verses just quoted, we see the appearance of what seems like a lack of forgiveness by God because He continues to plague and punish them. It is true that God does not clear the guilty of their actions, they will reap what they sow,

but the plague comes from the people's own sense of guilt which opens them to Satan's temptations to fall back into sin.

If the people could have embraced complete forgiveness in the death of the guilty, things would have been less troublesome for them. But when the guilty saw the death of the unrepentant ones, it caused doubt for themselves as to whether God still wanted to kill them for their sins.

How slow is the human heart to discern the true love of God for His people and the quickness with which human nature attributes retribution to the hand of God. How wise is our Father in heaven to resolve this complex situation with the Golden Calf and deliver Israel from complete extermination by Satan.

In summary, we see the death of the 3000 formed part of the permissive will of God to satisfy human atonement principles. The way Moses wrote about this story clearly reveals that the command to kill was a command of Moses. When our Father did not object or prevent the actions of Moses, God became responsible for all that took place and therefore His judgment was revealed and the rebellious were caught in their own justice system and destroyed.

I hope you can see the true character of our Father in this story. He did not want anyone to be killed, but human principles of atonement demanded it so God gave it to them. Christ was crucified in those who died because Christ is close to every one of us and feels our pain and sorrow. But in order to save the nation, the rebellious had to die; the rock had to be struck.

Can you see the precious light in these stories? I pray our Father help you see the beauty of this truth and how God meets men where they are in their own thoughts to save them.

## CHAPTER 32

# NADAB AND ABIHU

As we continue our march through the stories of the Old Testament, hopefully the tools we have acquired become easier to use with each new story we come to. I found for myself at first that without the knowledge and skill needed to apply the New Covenant principles, I would sometimes lose courage when finding a certain story that seemed at first glance to so obviously point to our beloved Father as the destroyer.

Often, I would fall to my knees and ask our Father to show me how to understand a story in question. As I look into the face of Jesus and watch Him forgive those who hate Him and do good to those who seek to kill Him, I am drawn in hope to believe His Father is the same. I remind myself that our Father has told me of my infinite value to Him through His Son and how He has taught me of the tenderest intimacy that He created through the family.

I then remember that my nature is evil, and I confess that by nature I am at war with my Father. I acknowledge that my default is to misread the Bible and turn it against my dear Father, and this causes me to tremble.

In the past, I would instinctively read the text of the Old Testament and assume that I am understanding what is said, not realising that I am

unwittingly seeking to walk into the presence of my heavenly Father without the mediation of the character of Jesus.

I am reminded that if I possess any feelings of animosity to others, I will irresistibly read the Old Testament picture of God as punishingly violent. I then recall the true meaning of God's wrath as hiding His face and allowing men to receive the consequences of what they determine to do. This involves the stepping down of angels from their post in tears as they are forced to give up the guardianship of someone they might have protected for decades. And why must they turn aside from their work of protection? Because of the persistent refusal to listen to the Father's voice through His word and through His Spirit. In grief, our Father is forced to bury His face in His hands and leave the rebellious to the mercies of Satan and the elements of the earth which they have corrupted by their influence.

Everything we have learned we must bring to the next story of Nadab and Abihu.

And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not. And there went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD. Leviticus 10:1-2 (KJV)

Can you discern what has occurred in this story? The direct reading of it without Christ confirms our natural thinking that evildoers must be destroyed; atonement is only effected through death. Looking into the face of Jesus, we prayerfully look for more clues.

So they came forward and **picked them up by their garments** and carried them out of the camp, just as Moses had commanded. Leviticus 10:5

An initial reading might suggest that Nadab and Abihu were burnt to death. This would mean their bodies would be a charred, distorted mess. But the Bible tells us they were carried out in their garments. This

proves that literal fire did not destroy them. John Wesley offers this insightful comment on this passage.

From the Lord – From heaven, or rather from the sanctuary. Devoured them – Destroyed their lives; for their bodies and garments were not consumed. Thus the sword is said to devour, 2 Sam 2:26. Thus lightning many times kill persons, without any hurt to their garments. Wesley Commentary on Leviticus 10:2

The discernment of Nadab and Abihu was obviously impaired by their use of alcohol.

Then the LORD said to Aaron, “You and your descendants must never drink wine or any other alcoholic drink before going into the Tabernacle. If you do, you will die. This is a permanent law for you, and it must be observed from generation to generation.” Leviticus 10:8-9

Nadab and Abihu were intoxicated before they entered the Tabernacle. These men were not novices. They were part of the seventy men who saw God in Mt Sinai.

Then Moses went up, also Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and they saw the God of Israel. And *there was* under His feet as it were a paved work of sapphire stone, and it was like the very heavens in *its* clarity. Exodus 24:9-10 (NKJV)

The wavering nature of their father, Aaron, as revealed in the Golden Calf incident, suggests that faithfulness to God’s instructions was not diligently taught to his sons. When Aaron mixed the worship of Yehovah with the worship of pagan religions, he taught his sons the principle of mixing different spirits together. The recipe ended in disaster.

As we apply the tool of Gospel Character, we never find Jesus striking people with lightning to kill them. We do know the Israelites worshipped a god of war akin to Zeus who obviously loved to hurl lightning bolts at people.



If we recall the story of Elijah when God came close to him, there came forth wind, earthquake and fire. As Nadab and Abihu approached the Sanctuary where God's presence dwelled, the spirit in them was intensified. God could not protect them because of their disregard of His commandments. Their worship of a warrior god like Zeus may have manifested in lightning striking forth from the Most Holy Place of the Sanctuary in the exact manner in which they perceived God.

What I find fascinating is the word used to describe the fire at the beginning of this story.

And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered **strange** [H2114] fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not. Leviticus 10:1 (KJV)

The word strange means the following:

Zûr [H2114] to *turn* aside (especially for lodging); hence to *be a foreigner, strange, profane*; specifically (active participle) to *commit adultery*: - (come from) another (man, place), fanner, go away, (e-) strange (-r, thing, woman).

This is exactly the same word God uses when expressing His strange act.

For the LORD shall rise up as *in* mount Perazim, he shall be wroth as *in* the valley of Gibeon, that he may do his work, his strange [H2114] work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act. Isaiah 28:21 (KJV)

The fire which Nadab and Abihu offered was fire which turned aside. In what way was the fire profane? It was not the fire which God had kindled in the beginning. It was common fire. But what made it different? Simply this: it was fire offered outside the commandments of God. Therefore, God had to turn aside and hide His face. Or we might read it that Nadab and Abihu turned aside from the path of life, forfeiting God's protection.

How vital it is for us to understand the mediatorial work of Christ. Do we comprehend the fact that approaching God with an imagination of Him which is false must be mirrored back to us, except that Christ intercede to cover our ignorant foolishness?

I urge you to consider the implications of the mirror. To approach God outside of the character of Christ will cause whatever erroneous, unstable thinking about God to manifest itself. We are hardwired to nature, it responds to what we think, act, and feel. God told Cain that the curse would come “from the earth” when we violate God’s commandments.

All who harbour thoughts of vengeance towards others or have a spirit of unforgiveness desiring punishment of others will have this manifested to them in the natural world as they approach God. Therefore, let us approach the Father without any idols of our imagination. If we do, we shall perish through our own judgment of divinity.

I feel a deep sense of urgency on this question and I pray the Father will impress upon you the seriousness of knowing who the Father is. There is no shortcutting this issue. If you have any shred of idolatry in your thinking, it will destroy you. The begotten Son of God is the full revelation of the Father. Only those who believe in His name, meaning character, can be saved.

Consider the men of Bethshemesh in the time of Eli the High Priest. The ark of God had been taken by the Philistines. The possession of the ark plagued them to the point they wanted to get rid of it. The ignorance of the Philistines lessened the direct effect of the ark, a symbol of the presence of God, on the people. But eventually, they could not handle it any more.

When it came back to Israel, it came to Bethshemesh. The people were overjoyed. But Israel knew that it represented God’s holy presence. Yet like Nadab and Abihu, some of the men approached the ark without thinking of the sacredness of it.

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But the LORD killed seventy men from Beth-shemesh because they looked into the Ark of the LORD. And the people mourned greatly because of what the LORD had done. "Who is able to stand in the presence of the LORD, this holy God?" they cried out. "Where can we send the Ark from here?" 1 Samuel 6:19-20

When the men looked into the Ark, they gazed directly upon the law of God which is a mirror to all who look upon it. Without the mediation of an intercessor, the warlike God which the Israelites worshipped manifested in the creation and cut them down. Seventy were killed as a result.

The remaining people asked a critical question which the wicked will ask when the God of heaven approaches the earth at the end of time.

And they cried to the mountains and the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of the One who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb. **For the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to survive?**" Revelation 6:16-17

As we today look into the face of Jesus, we can see there is no condemnation for us because we see that Jesus condemns no one.

You judge Me by human standards, but I do not judge anyone.  
John 8:15

When we embrace this Spirit of Christ, we will cease to condemn; and when we cease to condemn, we can enter the presence of the Father without fear of death because the mirror in our souls will match the face of Christ. Zeus, the lightning and thunder God, will be dead to us and we to him. We will live in the presence of God without an intercessor to cover our spirit of condemnation, for there will be none.

If you have discerned the true meaning of these facts, then you are called to be part of the 144,000 who follow the lamb wherever He goes. For those who have ears to hear, listen to what the Spirit is saying.

## CHAPTER 33

# STONED FOR BLASPHEMY

As we venture further into the book of Leviticus, we come across the story of the man who blasphemed the name of God for which he was stoned to death.

If we remember from chapter 29, God gave laws to Israel according to their own mind or their own thinking. We must always remember that Israel never accepted God's desire to teach them about Himself. They thought God was just like them. (Ps 50:21, NKJV). Therefore to the wicked, God shows Himself hostile. (Ps 18:26).

The man who blasphemed God did not possess pure Israelite blood. He was half Israelite and half Egyptian.

One day a man who had an Israelite mother and an Egyptian father came out of his tent and got into a fight with one of the Israelite men. Leviticus 24:10

To blaspheme an Egyptian god meant a person was stoned to death.

But Moses replied, "That wouldn't be right. The Egyptians detest the sacrifices that we offer to the LORD our God. **Look, if we offer**

**our sacrifices here where the Egyptians can see us, they will stone us.” Exodus 8:26**

If the Israelites had sacrificed an ox or cow in Egypt, it would have been considered blasphemy and the Egyptians would have stoned them.

What happens next in the story is fascinating.

During the fight, this son of an Israelite woman blasphemed the Name of the LORD with a curse. So the man was brought to Moses for judgment. His mother was Shelomith, the daughter of Dibri of the tribe of Dan. **They kept the man in custody until the LORD’s will in the matter should become clear to them.**

**Then the LORD said to Moses, “Take the blasphemer outside the camp, and tell all those who heard the curse to lay their hands on his head. Then let the entire community stone him to death.** Say to the people of Israel: Those who curse their God will be punished for their sin.” Leviticus 24:11-15

Most people would see this passage as clear evidence that God wanted His people to stone to death those who blasphemed the name of God. But when we compare this with what Jesus says in the New Testament, we find an immediate conflict.

**“So I tell you, every sin and blasphemy can be forgiven—except blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, which will never be forgiven.** Anyone who speaks against the Son of Man can be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven, either in this world or in the world to come.” Matthew 12:31-32

Did this man blaspheme the Holy Spirit? How can you blaspheme Jesus and be forgiven and yet you can’t blaspheme the Holy Spirit and be forgiven? The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus. (John 20:22). It is the Spirit of Christ that speaks into the conscience of a person. When you reject that voice inside you that pleads with you not to do certain things, then you have exhausted all possibility of being forgiven. He who sins against his conscience can’t forgive himself. The Scriptures warn us of this fact as follows:

For merely listening to the law doesn't make us right with God. It is obeying the law that makes us right in His sight. Even Gentiles, who do not have God's written law, show that they know His law when they instinctively obey it, even without having heard it. They demonstrate that God's law is written in their hearts, **for their own conscience and thoughts either accuse them or tell them they are doing right.** Romans 2:13-15

As we have stated previously, we are judged as we judge others. This applies most directly to God. If we judge God to be a certain way, then our Father can do nothing but allow us to receive what we have judged.

"[The servant said to the master:] 'For I feared you, because you are an austere man. You collect what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.'

And he [the master] said to him, '**Out of your own mouth I will judge you,** *you* wicked servant. You knew that I was an austere man, collecting what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow.'" Luke 19:21-22 (NKJV)

The word used to describe *blasphemy* in this story in Leviticus is not the regularly used Hebrew word for blasphemy.

Naqab – Strong's Concordance H5344. A primitive root; to puncture, literally (to perforate, with more or less violence) or figuratively (to specify, designate, libel): – appoint, blaspheme, bore, curse, express, with holes, name, pierce, strike through.

The curse of these words against God pierced the Father's heart. How sad for our Father to hear a son speak to him in anger, cursing Him. This man knew the law. The law said:

"You must not dishonor God or curse any of your rulers."  
Exodus 22:28

In cursing God with words that pierce and puncture, this man can only have reflected back to him what has come from his own mouth. The children of Israel come to God to know His will. God gives to them the

thoughts of the man himself. The man knows he has blasphemed, and he knows the punishment for this which all Israel agreed to do.

All God can do is to allow the thoughts of this man and all Israel to be magnified. If God had said, show him mercy, it would have overturned the thoughts of the whole nation who had all bound themselves to punish those who blaspheme God.

But in an effort to save this man, the Lord says something to them that should have stopped them from going forward to kill this man.

“Anyone who takes another person’s life must be put to death.”

Leviticus 24:17

The Israelites did not connect this statement to the act of slaying this man. It seems they didn’t think twice; though succeeding generations may have, because the death penalty faded from use in ancient Israel’s later history.<sup>28</sup>

Regardless, if the man had thought to ask for mercy upon repentance, the Lord could have given him mercy.

With the merciful You will show Yourself merciful; with a blameless man You will show Yourself blameless; Psalm 18:25 (NKJV)

Neither the man facing sentence, nor any of the people present, thought to ask for mercy – because none expected it.

After Moses gave all these instructions to the Israelites, they took the blasphemer outside the camp and stoned him to death. The Israelites did just as the LORD had commanded Moses. Leviticus 24:23

This poor man had punctured God with his words and so according to his own judgment, he was punctured with stones. When we attack the

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<sup>28</sup> <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/the-death-penalty-in-jewish-tradition/>

very conception of God that we hold, we can receive nothing but what we have uttered ourselves.

How the Lord wanted to deliver this man from death as Jesus did when He delivered the woman caught in adultery. But He was not able to because there was no one to stand in the gap for him.

When the Lord told Moses to stand back that He might destroy Israel, Moses stood in the gap between what Israel thought God would do and the truth of God's character. Moses might have done the same for this man. He might have pleaded with God to save this man and show him mercy. But the whole nation was not at stake. This man had blasphemed the name of God. If punishment was not secured, the problem would spread. Something had to be done.

As this man was being stoned, Jesus was there feeling everything this man felt. Christ was crucified with him. In order for Israel to receive the favour of God, the man had to be sacrificed. It was expedient that one man die so that the whole nation would not perish. (John 11:50).

As we read these passages, we are tempted to think that the man was smitten of God and afflicted, but the truth is that God could only give to the man what both he and the nation believed would atone for this sin.

God wanted to bring them into a New Covenant understanding by saying, if anyone puts anyone to death, then they must be put to death. He was warning them that those who kill like this will face the same situation when they sin or make a mistake. Their own judgement against another will prove to be their own destruction in the end.

Jesus never stoned anyone to death. Isn't this obvious? He worked to save people from being stoned. That is the character of Jesus. That is the character of God.

When men in the Old Covenant want to know what God's will is, He can only give them their own will, because they will not accept God's will or His way of thinking. Israel had refused to listen to God when the 10 Commandments were given. They wanted death decrees and



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punishments like they had in Egypt. So, God gave them the desires of their hearts.

Is this so hard to understand? As we stated earlier – when you try to talk with someone with dementia, all you can do is agree with them and go along with their version of reality. To give them reality only causes conflict, distress and a breakdown in communication.

## CHAPTER 34

# FIRE IN THE CAMP!

Let us lower our gaze from the abstract things of heaven and picture a father listening to his children complaining. We see him become angry to such an extent that he ignites a fire which leaves his complaining children engulfed in flames. Do we dare to maintain our gaze and look upon the faces of the children? Do we behold their realisation that their value to their dad was so little that their dad not only contemplated burning them to death, but actually did it? Do we block our ears as they shriek in agony, their bodies melting away under the searing heat of the flames?

In the human realm, surely we must recoil in horror from such a ghastly thought. But how is it that the human mind banishes this horror when it looks into the heavenly realm? Somehow notions of divine justice extinguish the horror, silence the questioning looks, and seem to satisfy many into the belief that God burns His wicked children alive in His quest for justice.

Let us look upon the naked texts of Scripture outside of the face of Christ and let us contemplate its meaning:

Now *when* the people complained, it displeased the LORD; for the LORD heard *it*, and His anger was aroused. So the fire of the LORD

burned among them, and consumed *some* in the outskirts of the camp. Numbers 11:1 (NKJV)

Do we rub our eyes and read the text a second time to ensure that we read this correctly? Is it true that a change in God's mood can turn Him into a fire breathing machine which exterminates those who displease Him? Why does it seem this way? Have the tools we have collected found a place in our consciousness yet? Can we see in the text a reflection of our own face? Can we see the images of men and women in the dark ages tied to stakes and burnt alive in the name of religion?

We remind ourselves that in order to be certain that God acts in a certain way, we must look upon the face of Jesus in the Gospels to see if He took such an action. There is no such action recorded. Therefore, we can be certain we are looking into the mirror of human depravity. The Scripture captures perfectly the reflection of the human face capable of becoming irritated to the point of destroying those who displease him.

Let us now set about to remove the veil covering our eyes and look into the face of the Son of God to bring this story into harmony with the revelation of Jesus Christ.

**And the people is evil**, as those sighing habitually in the ears of Jehovah, and Jehovah heareth, and His anger burneth, and the fire of Jehovah burneth among them, and consumeth in the extremity of the camp. Numbers 11:1 (YLT)

When we read the literal Hebrew, the first thing we notice is that the people were acting in an evil manner through their complaining. This is not a simple complaint; it is something evil which they are doing.

By now we should recognise the term *God's anger* as hiding His face in sorrow to let those in rebellion reap what they have sown. One thing we have not considered previously is the word for God's anger in this story.

H639 Aph From H599; [Anaph: To breathe hard] properly the nose or nostril; hence the face, and occasionally a person; also (**from the rapid breathing in passion**) ire: - **anger** (-gry), + before,

countenance, face, + forbearing, forehead, + [long-] **suffering**, nose, nostril, snout, X worthy, wrath.

The Hebrew word means *rapid breathing through the nose*. This can be from anger or suffering and grief. Knowing that His children, ignoring His appeals to turn from sin will inevitably bring them suffering, we have a picture of God crying in sorrow. This is the picture we see of Jesus speaking to the Jewish leaders in Matthew 23; His eyes are filled with tears as He speaks burning words to them. He doesn't want them to die in their sins; He wants to save them, so He appears to be angry. This is what is happening in the story of Numbers 11. The very term "His anger was aroused" connects us directly into our definition of God's anger.

**"Then My anger shall be aroused** against them in that day, and I will forsake them, and **I will hide My face from them**, and they shall be devoured. And many evils and troubles shall befall them, so that they will say in that day, 'Have not these evils come upon us because our God *is* not among us?'" Deuteronomy 31:17 (NKJV)

As we have stated previously, God's anger and the Angel Hedge go together. When God hides His face, this means the angels slowly step back from protecting people.

He cast upon them the fierceness of his anger, wrath, and indignation, and trouble, by sending [releasing] evil angels *among them*. Psalm 78:49 (KJV)

As God hides His face, Satan and his angels are released to do a work of destruction. The word for *sending* in Hebrew can also be translated as *releasing*. The reader decides the meaning. God does not work with evil angels; they are not working for God. Good angels love to save, but evil angels love to destroy – thus they encourage men to break the law, so that they then may demand the right to inflict pain on us.

When Satan is enabled to more directly affect people, he can stir up their minds with violence and evil to such an extent that the earth begins to vomit them out.

The earth is also defiled under its inhabitants, because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore the curse has devoured the earth, and those who dwell in it are desolate. Therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men *are* left. Isaiah 24:5-6. (NKJV)

As we have seen in the story of the plagues in Egypt, God's withdrawal is by degrees. He does not immediately leave people unless they are in complete rebellion. He desires for people to be aware of their situation and will withdraw gradually. The more God withdraws, the more that Satan can tempt people to rebel which in turn can affect the earth more extensively.

Using the tools of the Gospel Mirror, the Two Mirrors, the Angel Hedge and the Earth Curse, this story begins to make sense. Looking again into the life of Christ we discover another vital clue as to why God did not personally send the fire upon the people.

Now it came to pass, when the time had come for Him to be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem, and sent messengers before His face. And as they went, they entered a village of the Samaritans, to prepare for Him. But they did not receive Him, because His face was *set* for the journey to Jerusalem.

And when His disciples James and John saw *this*, they said, "Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, just as Elijah did?"

But He turned and rebuked them, and said, "**You do not know what manner of spirit you are of. For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives but to save *them*.**" And they went to another village. Luke 9:51-56 (NKJV)

Jesus rebukes the disciple for their attitude towards the Samaritans. He did not say, "now is not the right time for these things;" He said "this is not my Spirit." As we look deeper into the Greek of this word spirit, we see the following:

G4151 *pneuma*. From G4154; a current of air, that is, breath (blast) or a breeze; by analogy or figuratively a spirit, that is, (human) the rational soul, (by implication) **vital principle, mental disposition**, etc., or (superhuman) an angel, daemon, or (divine) God, Christ's spirit, the Holy spirit: – ghost, life, spirit (-ual, -ually), mind. Compare G5590.

Jesus tells the disciples that it is not His vital principle to burn people alive; it is not His mental disposition to consume those who disrespect Him. The implications of this statement of Jesus are so startling that it is not surprising that many translations do not include it. But I believe this is vital evidence of what God's character is really like.

The complete refusal of Jesus to destroy the Samaritans with fire, citing that it is against His Spirit to do this, is the key piece of the puzzle to show that God did not burn up the Israelites in the edge of the camp. If Jesus is the revelation of the Father as He claims to be, then such ideas are impossible.

We recall from chapter 27 that the darkness, lightning and fire at Mt Sinai reflect the thoughts of the people rather than God. This principle manifests in this story also.

And the sight of the glory of the LORD *was* like devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel.  
Exodus 24:17 (NKJV)

The children of Israel imagined God to be a devouring fire, therefore when God hid His face the elements, aided by Satan's influence, allowed fire to enter into the camp and destroy the people. As these people judged God to be, so they were judged by the elements according to their own thoughts. The people watching could only imagine that God had killed these people; human nature attributes calamity ultimately to God or their highest perception of the divine.

How wonderful is the Word of God to discern the thoughts and intent of the heart! The text of Scripture reveals the process of men projecting calamity onto God and making Him the aggressor. God is forced to

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accept the verdict because men do not read the Scriptures through the revelation of His Son. I pray that the principles we are sharing are making the stories of the Old Testament clearer. I pray that you can sense in your heart that overflowing joy which comes to us when we realise our Father does not harm anyone.

## CHAPTER 35

# LIVING BY EVERY WORD OF GOD

Now that we have covered quite a number of the stories from the books of Moses, it is important to clarify aspects of the Mirror Principle which ensure the integrity of the whole Bible as the inspired Word of God.

One of the most difficult things for people when they are introduced to the Mirror Principle is they often quickly develop the sense that the Bible no longer means what it says. People say things like, "If the Bible says God sent fire down from heaven, then that is what it means!" Often there is a feeling of hostility to the idea that maybe they are not reading the Bible correctly when it seems to them to be very plain.

Take the subject of judgment for example. The Bible has plenty to say about this.

But the LORD reigns forever, executing judgment from His throne.  
Psalm 9:7

Our God approaches, and He is not silent. Fire devours everything in His way, and a great storm rages around Him. He calls on the heavens above and earth below to witness the judgment of His people. Psalm 50:3-4



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God will judge us for everything we do, including every secret thing, whether good or bad. Ecclesiastes 12:14

But then we read the words of Jesus which say:

“In addition, the Father judges no one. Instead, He has given the Son absolute authority to judge,” John 5:22

“You judge Me [Christ] by human standards, but I do not judge anyone.” John 8:15

How do we put these texts together? If we read Psalms or Ecclesiastes, it seems evident that God judges, but Jesus tells us that neither He nor His Father judge in a condemning way. It is true they judge righteously, they determine to give mercy and to save, but they never condemn any person.

One of the ways that people try to resolve this conflict is to suggest that the prophets who wrote the Bible in the Old Testament didn't understand the truth or that they had a limited understanding. The danger in taking this approach is that we begin to segment the Bible into what is inspired and what is not. Yet the Bible is clear that the entire Bible is inspired.

All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right.  
2 Timothy 3:16

Jesus adds to this:

But Jesus told Him, “No! The Scriptures say, ‘People do not live by bread alone, but by **every word that comes from the mouth of God.**’” Matthew 4:4

Jesus answered them, “Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and **the scripture cannot be broken...**” John 10:34-35 (KJV)

If we desire to know what the Bible teaches, we must include everything which is written in it. We can't ignore any part of it. When people read the text that God will judge everyone, they often forget or ignore the words of Jesus which say that God does not judge. They find harmony by eliminating parts of the Bible from their mind.

On the other hand, those who seek to show that God and His Son don't judge are tempted to present the Bible writers who wrote of judgment as lacking knowledge or understanding of the truth. But this creates doubt in the Bible and will certainly lead a person into danger if they embrace this idea.

It is so wise of our Father to have the Bible written this way because we are invited in every story of the Bible to choose Christ or Barabbas. The Cross is a revelation to our dull senses of the suffering God and His Son have endured from the entrance of sin. All condemnation, violence, and murder come from Satan and men. Christ forgives his murderers for their wickedness. This is the reality of every violent story in the Bible. The Cross is erected every time someone is hurt or killed. Satan inspires the violence; Christ suffers the agony of separation and loss.

Our Father does not force us to believe in Him. He knows us intimately, and discerns the thoughts and intents of our heart through how He inspired the Bible. We are the ones who decide what we will believe. Christ and Barabbas are standing side by side in every act of violence in Scripture. It must be this way. Our natural heart will grasp the images of God appearing to condemn, kill, and destroy while Jesus calls to us with His gentle voice to look to Him, the light of the world, and pray for resolution without removing anything from Scripture.

For those who patiently endure, seeking wisdom from the Father, the Mirror Principle beckons us. When the Bible writers wrote about God in a manner that is not like the revelation of Jesus Christ, we are beholding our own face in a mirror. The Bible is giving us a diagnosis of our problem. The human heart is so deceptive that it is impossible to receive rebuke unaided by the Spirit of God. Therefore, God reveals our

diagnosis through allowing the Bible to be written in a way that reveals what we think of Him.

These *things* you have done, and I kept silent; **you thought that I was altogether like you;** *but* I will rebuke you, and set *them* in order before your eyes. Psalm 50:21 (NKJV)

We are rebuked when we look into the face of Jesus Christ. Then we begin to see that God is not like us. The work of salvation is to restore us to full relationship with God. First, we need to know our terrible condition, we must begin to see ourselves in the mirror of God's word. Then, as we look to the beautiful person of Jesus, we are convicted of sin, righteousness, and judgment. (John 16:8). The Bible reveals both our sinful nature and God's perfect character. But it is the character of Jesus that unlocks what part of the mirror is being shown to us. His character removes the veil from our eyes and then the glory of the Lord is revealed. (2 Cor 3:14).

When the Bible appears to present God as burning, destroying, and wiping out nations, it is our human nature which is revealed for these things contradict the person of Jesus. If these things were not in the Bible, we could not truly grasp the depth of our depravity. We can't remove them; they must remain in Scripture as a vital diagnostic tool.

We don't need to discount any portions of the Bible. We can freely embrace every part of it without concern. How beautiful to have a clear path to reconcile the loving Jesus with what we previously knew as an angry wrathful God. All is resolved in understanding the work of the gospel to expose our true nature and contrast it with God's character. Then we are granted grace to leave the old man and become a new creature in Christ. Bless you Lord Jesus for showing us the Father! You are the door to eternal life.

## CHAPTER 36

# MIRIAM'S LEPROSY

In any forward movement of human endeavour, the positions of leadership which must be filled open the door for the spirit of rivalry to manifest. The origins of the great controversy between Christ and Satan find their genesis in the spirit of rivalry which entered Satan's heart in relation to the exalted position given to Christ, the Son of God.

Satan invests special energies to influence those close to the chosen leaders of God. He looks for breaches in their thinking, luring them into jealousy against the Lord's anointed. Their continual association with those in responsible positions can often draw those unprepared into the cauldron of jealousy through claiming authority and power not given to them.

While they were at Hazeroth, Miriam and Aaron criticized Moses because he had married a Cushite woman. They said, "Has the LORD spoken only through Moses? Hasn't He spoken through us, too?" But the LORD heard them. Numbers 12:1-2

Miriam is listed first, followed by Aaron. The word *criticized* is actually in the feminine singular syntax, clearly showing Miriam as the instigator of the jealousy against Moses and, more particularly, his wife.

Miriam was the one who was used of God to save the life of Moses and place him in Pharaoh's household. It would be tempting for Miriam to

assume authority over Moses as his older sister. She led the women in praise to God in their victory over the Egyptians. Gifted, clear-headed under pressure, Miriam was drawn into contempt of the timid and gentler Zipporah. We remember Moses' wife recoiled from the thought of circumcising her son, being distressed at the thought of such suffering.

This contrast in character seduced Miriam into thinking of herself as altogether superior. When Moses received instruction from his father-in-law with regard to appointing seventy elders, Miriam and Aaron were not consulted. Zipporah was concerned for her husband's burdens and relayed these to her father.

Miriam felt her influence waning in comparison to Zipporah and subsequently became filled with a taste of the same spirit which filled the first great rebel of heaven. As is always the case, the aggrieved finds a listening ear to pour forth the poison of jealousy. Aaron should have cautioned his sister to remember that God has called the elder to serve the younger and that God spoke to Moses face to face rather than simply through visions. Sadly, Aaron instead fuelled the fire within Miriam, and once again placed Israel in danger by facilitating a potential coup against the Lord's anointed as he had done with the golden calf incident.

If this crisis was not immediately checked, it could split the entire nation, as had happened in heaven when one third of the angels left their first estate. (Jude 1:6). The sorrow for God and His Son here was reminiscent of that deeper sorrow over what had happened in heaven. Lucifer had been lavished with the love of God and His Son. For Lucifer to turn away from this love required such deadening of feeling, best symbolised by leprosy.

As the Son of God dwells in the bosom of the Father, so Lucifer had dwelt in the bosom of the Son of God. Lucifer withdrew his hand from the place of tender parental love; he deadened his feeling towards his maker, he dreamed of murdering his life-giver.

Without realising the destination, Miriam was being drawn down a similar path. God had to intervene to save Miriam and Aaron.

Then the LORD came down in the pillar of cloud and stood *in* the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam. And they both went forward. Then He said, "Hear now My words: If there is a prophet among you, *I*, the LORD, make Myself known to him in a vision; I speak to him in a dream. Not so with My servant Moses; he *is* faithful in all My house. I speak with him face to face, even plainly, and not in dark sayings; and he sees the form of the LORD. Why then were you not afraid to speak against My servant Moses?"

So the anger of the LORD was aroused against them, and He departed. And when the cloud departed from above the tabernacle, suddenly Miriam became *leprous*, as *white as snow*. Then Aaron turned toward Miriam, and there she was, a leper. Numbers 12:5-10 (NKJV)

By now we should be quick to discern the connection between the anger of the Lord and the leprosy which fell upon Miriam. God did not intervene to prevent the lack of feeling Miriam was nurturing against Zipporah, and consequently Moses, from manifesting itself. Rather the "law entered" and caused this sin to abound in order for Miriam and Aaron to discern the path of their feet. Miriam vibrated with a lack of due care for her anointed brother. She was inviting disease into her being. The Lord in His anger, meaning to hide His face, allowed the seed Miriam had sown to manifest. This was to warn her of her danger.

In this context, God applied the rod of correction. Aaron immediately confessed his sin and that of his sister. Miriam said and felt nothing in her spiritually palsied state. Moses interceded for his sister in love. His feelings were not paralysed with leprosy against her. As Moses prays, the Lord says something fascinating.

So Moses cried out to the LORD, "O God, I beg You, please heal her!" But the LORD said to Moses, "If her father had done nothing more than spit in her face, wouldn't she be defiled for seven days? So keep her outside the camp for seven days, and after that she may be accepted back." Numbers 12:13-14

The spirit in Satan inspired his followers to spit in the face of Jesus as he was prepared to be crucified. Miriam spat in the face of her Maker in seeking to undermine His anointed servant, Moses. But the Lord comes down to the place of human understanding. Although the Lord was giving Miriam time to repent, the leprosy and isolation would be understood as God spitting in her face. The natural man always projects his actions onto God as a defence mechanism.

There was one time Jesus spat in a man's eyes, but it was only to restore his sight.

Jesus took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the village. Then, spitting on the man's eyes, He laid His hands on him and asked, "Can you see anything now?" The man looked around. "Yes," he said, "I see people, but I can't see them very clearly. They look like trees walking around." Mark 8:23-24

Jesus led Miriam out of the camp, even as He led the man out of the village. During those seven days Jesus worked a miracle on the eyes of Miriam, that she might discover the danger she had been in and repent.

We have considered a view of this story in Numbers 12 through the life of Jesus Christ. The alternative view, looking directly into the face of God without our mediator is to entertain the idea that God inflicts His children with debilitating and life-threatening diseases in order to frighten them into submission. Outside of Christ, God appears to be like us but the reality is vastly different.

Disease is the result of sin; it is a disordering of the body in response to moral failure. It is the inevitable results of walking outside of the commandments of God. As darkness is the absence of light, so disease is the evidence of the absence of righteousness.

Out of the person of Christ flows a life-giving Spirit. Wherever that Spirit finds entrance there is life, (John 7:38; Eze 47:9). The very essence of Jesus is life. As the apostle John states:

We proclaim to you the One who existed from the beginning, whom we have heard and seen. We saw Him with our own eyes

and touched Him with our own hands. He is the Word of life. This One who is life itself was revealed to us, and we have seen Him. And now we testify and proclaim to you that He is the One who is eternal life. He was with the Father, and then He was revealed to us. 1 John 1:1-2

Jesus does not simply possess eternal life; He is eternal life. Everything He touches is restored, healed, and made new. There is no darkness in Him. He does not have disease in His being to spread to others. He does not ever dream of inflicting someone with a deadly disease. It is for this reason that Jesus had to stay away from Lazarus for a number of days to let him die. If Jesus had been in the presence of Lazarus, then he could not have died. As a believer in the life-giver, the Spirit in Jesus would not have allowed Lazarus to die. In going away, Jesus allowed the destroyer to do his work. Then Jesus came and overturned it, revealing to all the depth of His life-giving power over death.

It is completely impossible for a life-giving Spirit to put disease on someone. The only way God can do this is to hide His face or, as the Bible states it, become angry, so that disease can manifest itself; and the only reason God does this is for the purpose of making sin abound in the hope that He can make grace much more abound.

Do you see God as striking down His children with deadly intent? If so, then you potentially worship a god of disease and death. If we behold such a god, we must become diseased and die. It really is not complex to understand.

Let us look to Jesus to grasp the story of Miriam. Let us see the agony that her actions evoked from the beginning when Satan withdrew his leprous hand, dead to feeling, turning against his Maker.

Will our Father have to put saliva on our eyes to help us see the truth of this story? Would it not be better to look to Jesus, remove the veil and see the tender love of the Father for Miriam and Aaron, seeking to save them from destruction?



## CHAPTER 37

# MUTINY ON THE BORDER

The apparent divine providence in collecting the weapons of the drowned Egyptians at the Red Sea, combined with the Israelite celebration of their God of war, were the beginning of what was destined to happen when Israel came to the borders of Canaan. The defeat of the Amalekites served to cement the Israelites in the thought that what God had promised to give them, they must obtain through their own valour, using God as a lucky charm around their necks to speed them on their way to victory.

Just as Abraham faltered in believing God would give him a son through Sarah, so Israel faltered in believing God would give them the promised land.

The command of God in Numbers 13 to spy out the land of Canaan was actually a request of the Israelites to size up their foes.

“Look! He has placed the land in front of you. Go and occupy it as the LORD, the God of your ancestors, has promised you. Don’t be afraid! Don’t be discouraged! But you all came to me and said, ‘First, let’s send out scouts to explore the land for us. They will advise us on the best route to take and which towns we should

enter.' This seemed like a good idea to me, so I chose twelve scouts, one from each of your tribes." Deuteronomy 1:21-23

Ten of the twelve men who went to spy out the land made their estimations based upon their own perceived abilities; they gave no thought to what God could do for them. At first, a good report was given of the land, but this soon changed after they described the size of the men of Canaan.

After exploring the land for forty days, the men returned to Moses, Aaron, and the whole community of Israel at Kadesh in the wilderness of Paran. They reported to the whole community what they had seen and showed them the fruit they had taken from the land. This was their report to Moses: "We entered the land you sent us to explore, and it is indeed a bountiful country—a land flowing with milk and honey. Here is the kind of fruit it produces. But the people living there are powerful, and their towns are large and fortified. We even saw giants there, the descendants of Anak! The Amalekites live in the Negev, and the Hittites, Jebusites, and Amorites live in the hill country. The Canaanites live along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea and along the Jordan Valley." Numbers 13:25-29

Only Caleb and Joshua looked upon the cities of Canaan in the context of what God could do for them.

But Caleb tried to quiet the people as they stood before Moses. "Let's go at once to take the land," he said. "We can certainly conquer it!" But the other men who had explored the land with him disagreed. "We can't go up against them! They are stronger than we are!" So they spread this bad report about the land among the Israelites: "The land we traveled through and explored will devour anyone who goes to live there. All the people we saw were huge. We even saw giants there, the descendants of Anak. Next to them we felt like grasshoppers, and that's what they thought, too!" Numbers 13:30-33

The faith of Caleb and Joshua was not enlightened by the truth of God's non-violent character as expressed in the person of Jesus Christ. But God met them where they were. In the context of their understanding, Caleb and Joshua demonstrated great faith in God. For them to look at these giant warlike men in heavily fortified cities and continue to believe God would help them defeat these nations was incredible faith.

Just as Jesus patiently led his erring disciples who did not comprehend the kingdom of heaven with regard to the use of swords, so He was leading the children of Israel. It was never God's desire for Israel to take the land of Canaan by warfare, but simply to trust Him as He had shown them in the crossing of the Red Sea. The victory over the Amalekites convinced Joshua and Caleb that God would lead them in battle with the sword. God did not abandon them because of this misunderstanding. He met them where they were and continued to seek to build their faith and trust in Him through their Old Covenant perspective.

In this context, Caleb and Joshua stood head and shoulders above their brethren, who revealed themselves to be faithless. The ten spies' evil report spread through the whole camp. None of them remembered the words of God that He would give to them the promised land.

Then the whole community began weeping aloud, and they cried all night. Their voices rose in a great chorus of protest against Moses and Aaron. "If only we had died in Egypt, or even here in the wilderness!" they complained. "Why is the LORD taking us to this country only to have us die in battle? Our wives and our little ones will be carried off as plunder! Wouldn't it be better for us to return to Egypt?" Then they plotted among themselves, "Let's choose a new leader and go back to Egypt!" Numbers 14:1-4

In His love and care, God had freed Israel from their bondage even though they did not trust or believe in Him. He fed them with manna, He gave them water to drink, and shielded them from all the dangers of the desert. Moses had interceded for them and saved them from destruction in pleading for their lives several times. He had taught them

the ways of God and patiently dealt with their complaints. How did the people respond to all this kindness? They accuse God of trying to kill them. They protested against Moses and Aaron, and planned to kill them and replace them with leaders that pleased them.

Accordingly they passed that night very ill, and with contumelious language against them; but in the morning they ran to a congregation, **intending to stone Moses and Aaron**, and so to return back into Egypt. Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 3 Chapter 14:3

This will always be the result of seeking to work out difficulties from our own resources. God had given plenty of evidence of His ability to deliver them. They continued to doubt Him. The underlying fear of death kept manifesting in their thinking that God wanted to kill them. As we discussed previously, this psychosis was a projection of their hidden enmity against God and their desire to kill Him.

Moses and Aaron did not retaliate. They fell to the ground and began to intercede for the people. Caleb and Joshua tried to arouse the people to the blessings that awaited them if they would simply listen in faith.

Then Moses and Aaron fell face down on the ground before the whole community of Israel. Two of the men who had explored the land, Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh, tore their clothing. They said to all the people of Israel, "The land we traveled through and explored is a wonderful land! And if the LORD is pleased with us, He will bring us safely into that land and give it to us. It is a rich land flowing with milk and honey. Do not rebel against the LORD, and don't be afraid of the people of the land. They are only helpless prey to us! They have no protection, but the LORD is with us! Don't be afraid of them!" But the whole community began to talk about stoning Joshua and Caleb. Then the glorious presence of the LORD appeared to all the Israelites at the Tabernacle. Numbers 14:5-10

Just as the Jews in the time of Jesus planned to murder Lazarus who stood as a witness to the power of Jesus (John 12:10), so their forefathers

planned to murder Joshua and Caleb for expressing faith in God's word. The spirit of Cain was alive in Israel, while the spirit of Abel rested upon Caleb and Joshua in their appeals to the people.

We remind ourselves of the principles we learned in chapter 21 concerning hedge mechanics. In rejecting the Word of God and attributing to God lies about His character, the hedge of protection was once again breached.

If Moses does not stand in the gap for the people, they will immediately perish. As Moses receives the word that the nation wants to choose new leaders, Satan would certainly be pressing Moses with the thought that the people will be destroyed for their faithless ingratitude and cruel lies about God, Moses and Aaron.

As in the case of the golden calf incident, the Lord reflects to Moses the fears being pressed upon him by the enemy.

And the LORD said to Moses, "How long will these people treat Me with contempt? Will they never believe Me, even after all the miraculous signs I have done among them? I will disown them and destroy them with a plague. Then I will make you into a nation greater and mightier than they are!" Numbers 14:11-12

The Spirit of Christ in Moses immediately steps into the gap and intercedes for the people. Moses clings to the revelation given him of God's mercy and love.

"Now if You slaughter all these people with a single blow, the nations that have heard of Your fame will say, 'The LORD was not able to bring them into the land He swore to give them, so He killed them in the wilderness.' **Please, Lord, prove that Your power is as great as You have claimed. For You said, 'The LORD is slow to anger and filled with unfailing love, forgiving every kind of sin and rebellion.** But He does not excuse the guilty. He lays the sins of the parents upon their children; the entire family is affected—even children in the third and fourth generations.' **In keeping with Your magnificent, unfailing love, please pardon the sins of this**

**people, just as You have forgiven them ever since they left Egypt.”** Numbers 14:15-19

After creating the breach, the destiny of Israel had been placed in the hands of Moses. The cruel plot to replace Moses would test any man in such a position of leadership. Moses remained completely in the hands of Christ. His pride was crucified with Christ, denying the natural human desire for revenge on those who mistreated him. Truly Moses was the humblest man who had lived on the earth to this point. No man would come near to this revelation of humility until Jesus walked upon the earth more than 1400 years later.

Then the LORD said, “I will pardon them as you have requested.”  
Numbers 14:20

Our Father in heaven successfully closed the breach around Israel through the intercession of Moses. This is exactly what God desired to happen. Once again, we make the point that it is impossible for Moses to be more merciful than God. All mercy that exists in this world comes from God. Moses is actuated by the mercy of God and manifests it in this time of crisis.

As Moses indicated, if Israel completely perished at this point, the surrounding nations would naturally scorn this God which could not bring His people out of Egypt. For their sake, Israel had to be spared and thus the breach had to be closed.

Despite this saving grace, the sin committed by Israel this time placed them in the same position as the angels which fell from heaven; they sinned against the light of the glory of God clearly shown to them. They had cut off all hope of believing the truth of God's character and therefore they would die in their sins.

**“But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD.** Because all those men which have seen my glory, and my miracles, which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have tempted me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice; surely they shall not see the land which I swore unto their

fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked me see it: But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it." Numbers 14:21-24 (KJV)

The Lord points forward to the time when the whole world will be full of His glory because of the people who will arise to fully manifest the character of God. This is a reference to the 144,000, mentioned in the book of Revelation, who believe the truth of God's character as manifested in the Bible and especially in the life of Jesus.

After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was **illuminated with his glory**. Revelation 18:1 (NKJV)

The same thoughts are expressed by Isaiah.

They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. And in that day there shall be a Root of Jesse, Who shall stand as a banner to the people; for the Gentiles shall seek Him, and His resting place shall be glorious. Isaiah 11:9-10 (NKJV)

The glory of the Lord is manifested in those who do not hurt or destroy. The Israelites wanted to kill Caleb and Joshua and believed in a God who wanted to destroy them. Such people can never reveal God's glory. This same thought is expressed in Habakkuk.

**Woe to him who builds a town with bloodshed**, who establishes a city by iniquity! Behold, *is it not of the LORD of hosts* that the peoples labor to feed the fire, and nations weary themselves in vain? For the **earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD**, as the waters cover the sea. Habakkuk 2:12-14 (NKJV)

Israel wanted to build their nation on bloodshed. Their praise of a god of war, their response to the Amalekites, and their thoughts about God wanting to kill them all pointed towards the building of a kingdom that was completely different to God and His Son. The Lord was willing to bring them through this to a correct understanding, but when the

people rejected the Lord's anointed in the person of Moses, they rejected Him in exactly the same way that the Jews rejected Jesus. Consequently, their house was left unto them desolate. (Matt 23:38).

As we look through the filter of the life of Jesus, we see that the Israelites were judged as they had judged. They feared God would kill them in the wilderness, and so God allowed them to die believing it was God who caused them to perish when it was simply the natural consequences of their choices.

*"Judge not, that you be not judged. **For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged;** and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you." Matthew 7:1-2 (NKJV)*

*"And he said to him, '**Out of your own mouth I will judge you,** you wicked servant. You knew that I was an austere man, collecting what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow.'" Luke 19:22 (NKJV)*

*"How long must I put up with this wicked community and its complaints about Me? Yes, I have heard the complaints the Israelites are making against Me. Now tell them this: 'As surely as I live, declares the LORD, **I will do to you the very things I heard you say.** You will all drop dead in this wilderness! Because you complained against Me, every one of you who is twenty years old or older and was included in the registration will die.'" Numbers 14:27-29*

God's judgement that the Israelites would drop dead in the wilderness was simply their own judgment. God did not want them to die, but they "limited the Holy One of Israel" (Ps 78:41, NKJV) and they confessed like Cain that their iniquity was greater than could be forgiven.

When God says in Number 14:23 that these Israelites will certainly not see the land of promise, it is because this is what they believed. They feared the Canaanites, and thought they were all going to die. God's words are simply a reflection of their own. This is how the mirror works.



While Jesus spoke to the woman caught in adultery the words “neither do I condemn you” according to the woman’s faith, He spoke the words “you will drop dead in the wilderness” to the Israelites according to theirs.

“So I was angry with them, and I said, ‘Their hearts always turn away from Me. They refuse to do what I tell them.’ So in My anger I took an oath: ‘They will never enter My place of rest.’”  
Hebrews 3:10-11

And to whom was God speaking when He took an oath that they would never enter His rest? Wasn’t it the people who disobeyed Him? So **we see that because of their unbelief they were not able to enter His rest.** Hebrews 3:18-19

The anger of God is to allow the people to receive what they believe, no longer interfering to stop them from destroying themselves. Just as Pharaoh could not pass through the Red Sea without faith, neither could the Israelites pass through the wilderness without faith. Both Pharaoh, his soldiers, and the Israelites will end up in the same place when the entire wicked world stands before God.

Outside the city are the dogs—the sorcerers, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idol worshipers, and all who love to live a lie.  
Revelation 22:15

What a lesson this is for us! Lord deliver us from that hidden enmity which sees everything through the lens of death. Let us trust the words of God that He will deliver us and bring us into the heavenly Canaan. The giant corporations of this world seem invincible. Big Tech and Big Pharma seem certain to destroy us, but their protection has departed from them in their efforts to deceptively slaughter millions. We are well able to defeat them by walking in the laws and statutes of our God. Let us pray for the Spirit of Jesus which animated Caleb and Joshua, and believe God will keep His promise to save us and our children.

## CHAPTER 38

# REBELLION OF KORAH

The Israelites would wander one year in the wilderness for every day the spies had spent storing up their unbelief. This measure is not arbitrary on the part of God but reflects the revengefulness the Israelites believe exists in God. As Jesus stated “with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you.” (Matt 7:2, NKJV).

“After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, *even* forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, *even* forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise.”  
Numbers 14:34 (KJV)

The Lord tells them of their breach of His promise. All those twenty years of age and older would begin to die, starting with the guiltiest. This is judgment as they judge, directly connected to the age at which a man became a soldier who was enabled to kill. (Num 1:3). It is a fulfilment of the word to Noah that God would require the life of a man who shed the blood of another man. (Gen 9:6). All those twenty and older had been involved in killing others. To kill others is to destroy oneself, for the guilt of killing another child of God rests heavy on the soul.

The ten spies who had instigated this disaster were completely unprotected. God spoke to His angels to no longer guard those who persistently refuse to believe Him.

The ten men Moses had sent to explore the land—the ones who incited rebellion against the LORD with their bad report—were struck dead with a plague before the LORD. Of the twelve who had explored the land, only Joshua and Caleb remained alive.  
Numbers 14:36-38

Moses' explanation only fuels their stubbornness against him. If the people had a spirit to repent, the Lord never would have prevented them from entering the promised land. Instead, the people now foolishly decide to do the very thing which they previously felt was impossible. Rather than repent of their sins, they would rather try and take the land of Canaan in their own strength.

When Moses reported the LORD's words to all the Israelites, the people were filled with grief. Then they got up early the next morning and went to the top of the range of hills. "Let's go," they said. "We realize that we have sinned, but now we are ready to enter the land the LORD has promised us."

But Moses said, "Why are you now disobeying the LORD's orders to return to the wilderness? It won't work. Do not go up into the land now. You will only be crushed by your enemies because the LORD is not with you. When you face the Amalekites and Canaanites in battle, you will be slaughtered. The LORD will abandon you because you have abandoned the LORD."  
Numbers 14:39-43

The people acknowledged they had sinned, not like Peter but like Judas. Peter repented, but Judas did not. Moses warns the people, but as they are so self-willed and completely resistant to listening to God's appointed agents, they now enter upon their suicide mission.

But the people defiantly pushed ahead toward the hill country, even though neither Moses nor the Ark of the LORD's Covenant

## REBELLION OF KORAH

left the camp. Then the Amalekites and the Canaanites who lived in those hills came down and attacked them and chased them back as far as Hormah. Numbers 14:44-45

The settled insubordination of the people leaves God with no option but to instruct those nineteen and younger – the ones who will survive the forty-year death march in the wilderness.

Then the LORD told Moses, “Give the following instructions to the people of Israel. ‘When you finally settle in the land I am giving you...’” Numbers 15:1-2

These instructions concerning sacrifices and offerings provide assurance that the next generation of Israelites will certainly enter the promised land.

Those destined to die in the wilderness naturally continue to rebel. Satan seduces them to plot the overthrow of God’s established government. Satan moves upon Korah the Levite, with Dathan and Abiram, both Reubenites, to plan a coup against Moses and Aaron, and lead the people back to Egypt.

One day Korah son of Izhar, a descendant of Kohath son of Levi, conspired with Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On son of Peleth, from the tribe of Reuben. They incited a rebellion against Moses, along with 250 other leaders of the community, all prominent members of the assembly. They united against Moses and Aaron and said, “You have gone too far! The whole community of Israel has been set apart by the LORD, and He is with all of us. What right do you have to act as though you are greater than the rest of the LORD’s people?” Numbers 16:1-3

Josephus adds a little more detail.

Corah, a Hebrew of principal account, both by his family and by his wealth, one that was also able to speak well, and one that could easily persuade the people by his speeches, saw that Moses was in an exceeding great dignity, and was at it, and envied him on that account, (he of the same tribe with Moses, and of kin to him,) was

particularly grieved, because he thought he better deserved that honorable post on account of great riches, and not inferior to him in his birth....

“For what account,” added he, “is Moses able to give, why he has bestowed the priesthood on Aaron and his sons? For if God had determined to bestow that honor on one of the tribe of Levi, I am more worthy of it than he is; I myself being equal to Moses by my family, and superior to him both in riches and in age: but if God had determined to bestow it on the eldest tribe, that of Reuben might have it most justly; and then Dathan, and Abiram, and [On, the son of] Peleth, would have it; for these are the oldest men of that tribe, and potent on account of their great wealth also.” Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 4, Chapter 2:2

Just as Satan felt aggrieved that God would place his own Son as King and Priest over them, so Korah was aggrieved that Moses should appoint his own brother to the position of high priest.

And now they all were, in a tumultuous manner, raising a clamour before the tabernacle of God, to prosecute the tyrant, and to relieve the multitude from their slavery under him who, under color of the divine commands, laid violent injunctions upon them; for that had it been God who chose one that was to perform the office of a priest, he would have raised a worthy person to that dignity, and would not have produced such a one as was inferior to many others, nor have given him that office; and that in case he had judged it fit to bestow it on Aaron, **he would have permitted it to the multitude to bestow it, and not have left it to be bestowed by his own brother.** Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 4, Chapter 2:3

Korah wanted to have the priesthood determined in a “democratic” fashion rather than Moses installing a family member by himself to such a position.

Moses does not defend himself, but places the situation in the hands of God. He invites his antagonists to step up to the priesthood role they were seeking. They were to take their censers, fill them with incense,

## REBELLION OF KORAH

and present them before the Lord. The Lord would decide who would be accepted. The people are satisfied with this contest, and await with anticipation the outcome.

Moses warns Korah as to his path of ingratitude for what God had already bestowed upon him. Korah was one of the seventy elders who went with Moses up the mountain and beheld the glory of God. He was one of the leading men of the nation and his position caused him, like Satan, to assume a position greater than what God had granted.

When Korah was told his sin would prevent him from going into the promised land, he rebelled and orchestrated a rebellion that led to the death of nearly 15,000 people. (Num 16:35,49). When Moses was told he would not go into the promised land because of his sin, he faithfully submitted to the sentence without a murmur. What a contrast of characters! How different the history of Korah might have been if he had but simply trusted God's wisdom and accepted the sentence. During their wandering in the wilderness, the Israelites had plenty of time for repentance, to see the wickedness of their hearts, and be saved.

When Moses spoke to Dathan and Abiram, they poured forth their accusations against him. Their complaints were focused on real estate and prosperity.

Then Moses summoned Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, but they replied, "We refuse to come before you! Isn't it enough that you brought us out of Egypt, a land flowing with milk and honey, to kill us here in this wilderness, and that you now treat us like your subjects? What's more, you haven't brought us into another land flowing with milk and honey. You haven't given us a new homeland with fields and vineyards. Are you trying to fool these men? We will not come." Numbers 16:12-14

The Israelites scapegoated Moses and made him the cause of all their calamity. They didn't desire the meekness of Moses; they wanted fields and vineyards.

Moses was deeply grieved by their accusations. He had given himself completely to the task of delivering the children of Israel. Now most of the congregation were siding with Korah and his associates. 250 Israelite princes joined the revolt and eagerly pressed forward to offer incense to the Lord.

And Moses said to Korah, "You and all your followers must come here tomorrow and present yourselves before the LORD. Aaron will also be here. You and each of your 250 followers must prepare an incense burner and put incense on it, so you can all present them before the LORD. Aaron will also bring his incense burner."

So each of these men prepared an incense burner, lit the fire, and placed incense on it. Then they all stood at the entrance of the Tabernacle with Moses and Aaron. **Meanwhile, Korah had stirred up the entire community against Moses and Aaron, and they all gathered at the Tabernacle entrance.** Then the glorious presence of the LORD appeared to the whole community... Numbers 16:16-19

Korah has led almost the entire host in rebellion against God. The breach created in this event should have allowed Satan to have complete access to the whole camp. Without the mediation of Jesus, looking into the veil, we read God's action like this.

'Get away from all these people so that I may instantly destroy them!' Numbers 16:21

Looking through the lens of the life of Christ, it reads this way.

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones God's messengers! How often I have wanted to gather your children together as a hen protects her chicks beneath her wings, but you wouldn't let Me. And now, look, your house is abandoned and desolate. For I tell you this, you will never see Me again until you say, 'Blessings on the One who comes in the name of the LORD!'" Matthew 23:37-39

The jealousy of Caiaphas and the other Jewish leaders against Christ, leading to their desire to murder Him, opened a breach in the entire

community. Christ's declaration concerning their house being left desolate opened the way for Satan to destroy Israel, culminating in the destruction of Jerusalem forty years later.

The murderous jealousy of Korah and the other leaders of Israel against Moses opened a breach in the entire community. God's declaration that He would consume them in a moment opened the way for Satan to destroy Israel, culminating in the destruction of the entire adult population.

As Jesus spoke with tears in His eyes to the Jewish leaders, so Moses spoke with tears in his eyes to Korah and his associates.

**When Moses had said this, with tears in his eyes,** the ground was moved on a sudden; and the agitation that set it in motion was like that which the wind produces in waves of the sea. Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 4, Chapter 3:3

As the Israelite leadership was swallowed up and the nation perished over the next forty years, so those who killed Christ were overwhelmed by the preaching of the gospel leading to the perishing of the nation forty years later.

But we need to examine more carefully what God means when He says: I will instantly destroy them or consume them. The same sequence occurs in the golden calf incident, on the borders of Canaan, and in the rebellion of Korah.

We need to retrace our steps to the court of Pharaoh, where the rod of Moses turned into a serpent and then swallowed the serpents of the magicians, to begin to put these pieces together correctly to remove the veil over Korah's rebellion.



## CHAPTER 39

# THE EARTH SWALLOWED THEM UP

God spoke to Pharaoh through Moses in language that he understood. God could not possibly speak to him of spiritual things he could not comprehend. In chapter 19, we mentioned the first Egyptian god, Atum, who brought forth the other gods. Atum would eventually destroy everything and become a serpent.

Aaron's casting down of the rod of Moses to become a serpent, was an omen of coming destruction. The lesson was amplified when the Egyptian magician's serpents, were swallowed by the serpent which had come from the rod of Moses.

They threw down their staffs, which also became **serpents!** But then Aaron's staff **swallowed** up their staffs. Exodus 7:12

The exact same words for *serpent* and *swallowed* are used much later in the Israelite history to describe the work of Nebuchadnezzar in crushing Israel.

“King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon has eaten and crushed us and drained us of strength. He has **swallowed** us like a **great monster** and filled his belly with our riches. He has thrown us out of our own country.” Jeremiah 51:34

The Lord sent a message to Pharaoh in a language he understood. A work of destruction would swallow up his nation if he did not repent and let Israel go. When Pharaoh and his host drowned in the Red Sea, Israel praised God as one who swallowed them up.

“You raised Your right hand, and the earth swallowed our enemies.” Exodus 15:12

The important point about Israel’s praise of God is their delight in an enemy-swallowing god.

“Your right hand, O LORD, is glorious in power. Your right hand, O LORD, smashes the enemy. In the greatness of Your majesty, You overthrow those who rise against You. You unleash Your blazing fury; it consumes them like straw.” Exodus 15:6-7

Israel worshipped a god similar to the Egyptians: one who smashes and consumes his enemies.

The next piece of the puzzle was previously discussed in chapter 27, where we were considering the law given at Mt Sinai. Israel, flush from their victory over the Amalekites, entrenched themselves in the worship of a destroying deity. The thunder, the fire, the earthquake were all manifestations through nature of Israel’s conceptions of God.

To the Israelites at the foot of the mountain, the glory of the LORD appeared at the summit like a consuming fire. Exodus 24:17

We discussed the parallel to Elijah at Mt Sinai where God was not in the wind, the fire, or the earthquake; but as God comes close to His people, their perceptions of deity are manifested through the elements of nature. Their internal thoughts are mirrored back to them through the same elements by which they were created. Because these elements begin to destroy as they come into the presence of God, the human heart

projects the responsibility for these calamities onto God as part of His character, and ignore or deny them as a reflection of their own character.

At Mt Sinai, God told the people to simply listen to His voice, but the people refused. Then, in their fear of God, they promised to fulfil by themselves whatever God had promised to do for them because they simply wanted to appease their perceptions of God.

Their failure to listen to God and obey Him resulted in them looking into the mirror and holding fast their former destructive ideas.

For if you listen to the word and don't obey, it is like glancing at your face in a mirror. You see yourself, walk away, and forget what you look like. James 1:23-24

Clinging to notions of a destroying god brings little comfort, so they soon fell into idolatry with the golden calf. Their refusal to actually listen to God and perceive the grace in the light shining from the face of Moses, locked them in fear to a God who was planning to kill them. Their idolatry caused a constant breach, bringing pestilence and disease. Their praise of a god who swallows his enemies resulted in their fear of a God swallowing them up in his wrath.

So the LORD plagued the people because of what they did with the calf which Aaron made. Exodus 32:35 (NKJV)

As a result, God had to remove the Tabernacle from amongst them. If God's presence manifested in the Tabernacle with them close by, the natural elements would again begin to destroy the people according to their own ideas.

Moses took his tent and pitched it outside the camp, far from the camp, and called it the tabernacle of meeting. And it came to pass *that* everyone who sought the LORD went out to the tabernacle of meeting which *was* outside the camp. Exodus 33:7 (NKJV)

If only the Israelites surrendered their false ideas about God! If only they comprehended that when God said, "You do not kill", it was an expression of His own character!

The only way that the Israelites could approach the Sanctuary was through the mediation of the Levites. Without intercession, the natural elements would manifest the destruction the people imagined.

“And I have given the Levites as a gift to Aaron and his sons from among the children of Israel, to do the work for the children of Israel in the tabernacle of meeting, and to make atonement for the children of Israel, **that there be no plague among the children of Israel when the children of Israel come near the sanctuary.**”  
Numbers 8:19 (NKJV)

The report of the spies into Canaan revealed once again Israel’s delusion regarding a god who swallows things up.

And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying, “The land, through which we have gone to search it, **is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof;** and all the people that we saw in it *are* men of a great stature.” Numbers 13:32 (KJV)

In light of all these things, the natural elements were destined to manifest the thoughts of the people, because Korah brought all of Israel to the Tabernacle where God’s presence appeared.

Meanwhile, Korah had stirred up the entire community against Moses and Aaron, and **they all gathered at the Tabernacle entrance. Then the glorious presence of the LORD appeared to the whole community...** Numbers 16:19

Korah and his associates had rejected the mediation of Aaron in approaching the sanctuary. Therefore, according to Numbers 8:19, a plague of some description could not be stopped. The people’s perceptions of deity would surely manifest.

This is the reason behind why God kept saying that He would destroy the people in an instant. It was their own perceptions of deity vibrating the earth which were intensified in the approaching presence of God. When the law entered, their sin abounded, and nothing could stop this once the people had committed themselves to do evil. Of course, God’s

words are a reflection of Israelite Projection. They were the ones that kept saying God wanted to kill them, so that is how the language is expressed. God could only speak their language. They would be judged by their own judgment.

But Moses and Aaron interceded for the people, and God heard their prayer and spared them the consequences of their actions.

In their desire to kill and replace Moses, Korah, Dathan, and Abiram had been the source of the rebellion and they prevented the breach from being closed for them. They had drunk down the report of the evil spies that the land eats up its inhabitants. On the shores of the Red Sea, they praised the God who swallows His enemies. Now the earth would manifest their perceptions while they were in the presence of deity.

So all the people stood back from the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. Then Dathan and Abiram came out and stood at the entrances of their tents, together with their wives and children and little ones.

And Moses said, "This is how you will know that the LORD has sent me to do all these things that I have done—for I have not done them on my own. If these men die a natural death, or if nothing unusual happens, then the LORD has not sent me. But if the LORD does something entirely new and the ground opens its mouth and swallows them and all their belongings, and they go down alive into the grave, then you will know that these men have shown contempt for the LORD."

He had hardly finished speaking the words when the ground suddenly split open beneath them. The earth opened its mouth and swallowed the men, along with their households and all their followers who were standing with them, and everything they owned. So they went down alive into the grave, along with all their belongings. The earth closed over them, and they all vanished from among the people of Israel. Numbers 16:27-33

As Pharaoh was swallowed by the waves, so Korah, Dathan, and Abiram were swallowed up by the earth. As Moses had raised his serpent rod, bringing the waters together, so Moses was the instrument that announced the doom of these men that would lead to the earth coming together upon them.

God allowed all Israel to believe that He was the one that swallowed them up because this is the God which they believed in. Their worship of God was actually the worship of the dragon. In their delusion, God allowed these wicked men to be snared in the work of their own hands. (Ps 9:16).

Satan is the destroyer. When God withdrew His protection from both the people and the elements, Satan was free to destroy them. God knew that the earth would swallow up these men because of what they already believed. God hid His face while the people believed He was the one destroying them.

Many question, "But why would God do this?" Because of the simple fact that our thoughts are not God's thoughts. We can't actually hear what He wishes to tell us. He can only meet us in our deluded state of mind and try to lead us out. If we refuse, then death is the result.

Due to all the tools we have discovered in this journey, it is impossible to accept God actually destroyed these men with His own hand. As we look at the face of Jesus we question, "Would you cause little children to be swallowed alive by the earth?"

So all the people stood back from the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. Then Dathan and Abiram came out and stood at the entrances of their tents, together with their wives and **children and little ones**. Numbers 16:27

The only way these children could die is because of this principle:

"...you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth *generations* of those who hate Me..." Exodus 20:5 (NKJV)

God allowed the earth to visit the children of Korah, causing them to perish, because they were trained to hate the God of Moses by their parents. These children had heard their parent's accusations about God and Moses supposedly wanting to kill them all in the wilderness; they were imbued with the spirit of their parents and so they suffered along with them. The seeds of the parents were planted in the children. Although the seeds may not have manifested, they were there. It is a fearful thing for parents to train their children in the paths of wickedness.

When reading this story outside of Christ, we see the God that Korah and the Israelites saw: we see God as the dragon who swallowed up His enemies. Our nature tends to cheer such activity because it is what we naturally believe about Him. But we notice that the dragon did not just swallow the leading conspirators, he also breathed fire upon the 250 princes and destroyed them.

Then fire blazed forth from the LORD and burned up the 250 men who were offering incense. Numbers 16:35

The same thing which happened to Nadab and Abihu happened to these 250 men. As they approached the presence of God with strange fire, believing in a god who destroys, the elements burst forth upon them according to their judgement. The fire on Mt Sinai was a manifestation of their own ideas. It is exactly the same as the fire which manifested in the time of Elijah. The fire came forth but God was not in the fire.

This would warn the Israelites that no unauthorized person—one who was not a descendant of Aaron—should ever enter the LORD's presence to burn incense. If anyone did, the same thing would happen to him as happened to Korah and his followers. So the LORD's instructions to Moses were carried out. Numbers 16:40

Reading this passage with the veil over our eyes, it simply sounds like a death threat; but within the character of Jesus, it is a plea to listen to God's voice and not approach Him filled with idolatry. As Numbers 8:19 said, people could not approach the Tabernacle without the mediation

of Aaron and his sons. This is not because God would kill them, but because their own destructive views of deity would manifest in the elements around them and kill them.

In men's eyes, the mediators are those who are most eloquent at pacifying the angry deity. The Lord works with this principle in providing Aaron and his sons as priests to shield the people. But once people cast off this mediation process, there is no shelter from Satan, the destroyer.

As we would expect, those remaining after the carnage refused to accept that their heroes, who would have led them back to Egypt, were in fact wicked men who perished through their own folly.

But the very next morning the whole community of Israel began muttering again against Moses and Aaron, saying, "You have killed the LORD's people!" Numbers 16:41

The people projected the guilt of the death of their cherished leaders onto Moses and Aaron. In their rebellion, they came into the presence of God at the Sanctuary which they were warned not to do or there would be a plague.

**As the community gathered to protest against Moses and Aaron, they turned toward the Tabernacle** and saw that the cloud had covered it, and the glorious presence of the LORD appeared. Moses and Aaron came and stood in front of the Tabernacle, and the LORD said to Moses, "Get away from all these people so that I can instantly destroy them!" But Moses and Aaron fell face down on the ground. Numbers 16:42-45

As God spoke to Pharaoh through the serpent which swallowed the other serpents, God once again mirrors the people's perception of Himself as a destroyer. To Moses and Aaron, it was actually a plea for them to step into the gap and intercede for the people. Because the people had opened the breach once again, it allowed Satan, the destroyer, to again come in and do his evil work.



Notice the words of the Apocryphal book, *Wisdom of Solomon*, and how it describes this event.

For then the blameless man made haste, and stood forth to defend them; and bringing the shield of his proper ministry, even prayer, and the propitiation of incense, **set himself against the wrath, and so brought the calamity to an end**, declaring that he was thy servant. **So he overcame the destroyer, not with strength of body, nor force of arms, but with a word subdued him that punished, alleging the oaths and covenants made with the fathers.**

For when the dead were now fallen down by heaps one upon another, standing between, he stayed the wrath, and parted the way to the living. For in the long garment was the whole world, and in the four rows of the stones [the breastplate] was the glory of the fathers graven, and thy Majesty upon the daidem of his head. **Unto these the destroyer gave place, and was afraid of them:** for it was enough that they only tasted of the wrath. *Wisdom of Solomon* 18:21-25

We are told here of Aaron overcoming the destroyer. The apostle Paul speaks of this event when he writes:

...nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer. 1 Corinthians 10:10 (NKJV)

The word *destroyer* in the Greek actually means *venomous serpent*. The Lord could not protect the people completely. 14,700 died because of their worship of a destroying deity. The intercession of Aaron saved the rest of the congregation from the same destruction. Aaron overcame the destroyer by pleading for mercy for their lives.

Several pieces are needed to explain this story. It is so tempting to just read the story without the mediation of the life of Jesus, but if we do this then we, like the Israelites, will be confirmed in the worship of a deity that swallows up His enemies, including little children, and breathes fire and plagues people.

If we believe this, then we should expect this will happen to us in the last plagues to come upon the earth. As you judge God, so the earth will manifest your beliefs about God when His presence comes near to you. Let us carefully consider these things as the Second Coming of Jesus approaches.

Let us look to Jesus, meek and mild. Let us believe that our Father is like Him! Then the earth will be at peace with us. We will be able to live in the sight of a holy God without a mediator to intercede for us with our false views of God. There is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus because the life of Jesus on earth removes all condemnation from God's character.

To those who believe, all this is possible.

## CHAPTER 40

# SONG OF MOSES AND THE LAMB

Over the next 38 years in the wilderness, we read nothing about the Israelites coming to their senses and realizing how evil they had acted towards God and His chosen leaders. How wonderful it would have been to learn that Israel had a revival experience. Sadly, this never happened. They never said sorry, and therefore they never abandoned the idea that God was a destroying, warrior King. How different things would have been if Israel could have done what the pagan Ninevites did.

The people of Nineveh believed God's message, and from the greatest to the least, they declared a fast and put on burlap to show their sorrow. When the king of Nineveh heard what Jonah was saying, he stepped down from his throne and took off his royal robes. He dressed himself in burlap and sat on a heap of ashes.

Then the king and his nobles sent this decree throughout the city: "No one, not even the animals from your herds and flocks, may eat or drink anything at all. People and animals alike must wear garments of mourning, and everyone must pray earnestly to God. They must turn from their evil ways and stop all their violence.

## SONG OF MOSES AND THE LAMB

Who can tell? Perhaps even yet God will change His mind and hold back His fierce anger from destroying us." Jonah 3:5-9

For forty years, Israel had received manna in the desert. The pillar of cloud and fire had shaded and warmed them. Yet, in all this goodness, Israel never repented.

"Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, 'They do always err in *their* heart; and they have not known my ways.'" Hebrews 3:8-10 (KJV)

They did not know God's ways. Therefore, they could not teach their children God's ways.

"And the time we took to come from Kadesh Barnea until we crossed over the Valley of the Zered *was* thirty-eight years, until all the generation of the men of war was consumed from the midst of the camp, just as the LORD had sworn to them. For indeed the hand of the LORD was against them, to destroy them from the midst of the camp until they were consumed." Deuteronomy 2:14-15 (NKJV)

All those who took the sword when they left Egypt perished in the wilderness, proving true the principle that Jesus taught: that all those who take the sword will die with the sword.

The only inheritance that the generation of men twenty years old and up gave to their children was murmuring and complaining. There was no example of repentance, confession, and restoration. So, when Israel came to the border of Canaan again, the children repeated the sins of their fathers.

There was no water for the people to drink at that place, so they rebelled against Moses and Aaron. The people blamed Moses and said, "If only we had died in the LORD's presence with our brothers! Why have you brought the congregation of the LORD's people into this wilderness to die, along with all our livestock? Why did you make us leave Egypt and bring us here to this terrible

place? This land has no grain, no figs, no grapes, no pomegranates, and no water to drink!" Numbers 20:2-5

The children repeated the sins of their fathers. They believed God wanted to kill them in the wilderness. In this frame of mind, it would be impossible for Israel to cleanse Canaan as Jesus did the temple. They did not have the Spirit of God in them which would cause their enemies to flee with the hornet sting (or terror) of conviction. (Ex 23:28, NLT).

After all that the Lord had done for Israel, Moses became distressed. All the instruction, prayer, and guidance which Moses had given them from the Lord was cast aside. Jesus faced the same thing on the night before He died.

"But here at this table, sitting among us as a friend, is the man who will betray Me. For it has been determined that the Son of Man must die. But what sorrow awaits the one who betrays Him."

The disciples began to ask each other which of them would ever do such a thing. Then they began to argue among themselves about who would be the greatest among them. Luke 22:21-24

Just as Jesus was about to face His greatest test, the disciples are arguing about which of them is the greatest. Is it any wonder that Christ felt such a weight come upon Him as He went into the Garden of Gethsemane! All of His prayers, teaching, and love seemed to vanish in a moment. How easy it would have been for Christ to do as Moses did and strike the rock twice. But who of us could endure such a test as this? The entire lifework of Moses seemed pointless. Surely they were all going to perish, leaving no inheritance. The people just kept bleating like dumb sheep, "God is going to kill us in the wilderness", all the while feeding their faces with bread from heaven and water springing forth in the desert!

Moses went out from the camp to the sanctuary to seek the Lord and pray. He was wrestling with his deep sorrow for the children of Israel and their failure to take hold of the arm of the Lord and trust Him.

The Lord patiently instructs Moses as to the procedure to be done to give them water to drink. He was to simply speak to the rock; a symbol of Christ. (1 Cor 10:4). At the beginning of their journey, Moses was instructed to strike the rock, a symbol of Christ taking punishment before God will show mercy to Israel. But now on the borders of Canaan, a new symbol was to be employed: simply speak to the rock. Sacrifice and offering were not required.<sup>29</sup>

The grief in Moses, caused by the sins of Israel, turned to human wrath. The urge for punishment sends forth a pulse from the mind of Moses manifesting in a double striking of the rock. The patient meekness of Moses had extended further than any other human which had ever lived, but this event found that last remnant of self, bringing it to the surface. The powerful arms of Jesus can carry us through all these trials if we sense our total, helpless dependence, but how easy is it for us to express our anger when people fail to do the right thing. Our sense of condemning judgment rises instantly, expressing itself in violent force.

In this present age when humanity has seemingly lost its ability to define what is a man or woman, driving us towards a complete breakdown of social structures as defined in Scripture, many are sensing that impulse to arise and strike in retaliation to such rebellion against God who made us male and female. (Gen 1:27).

Regardless of the fact that the people had pushed Moses and Aaron to this point, it was evident that they had not done what the Lord commanded them. Yet our Father is ever merciful – why couldn't He just forgive them for their mistake? Why did they also have to die in the wilderness?

“The time has come for Aaron to join his ancestors in death. He will not enter the land I am giving the people of Israel, because the two of you rebelled against My instructions concerning the water at Meribah.” Numbers 20:24

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<sup>29</sup> For an expanded view of this, see the book *At-One-Ment* chapter 8. Available for download from [fatheroflove.info](http://fatheroflove.info).

One day the LORD said to Moses, “Climb one of the mountains east of the river, and look out over the land I have given the people of Israel. After you have seen it, you will die like your brother, Aaron, for you both rebelled against My instructions in the wilderness of Zin. When the people of Israel rebelled, you failed to demonstrate My holiness to them at the waters.” (These are the waters of Meribah at Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin.)

Then Moses said to the LORD, “O LORD, You are the God who gives breath to all creatures. Please appoint a new man as leader for the community.” Numbers 27:12-16

Moses does not resist the command of God. He simply asks the Lord to appoint a new leader. But why did God require this? We look to Jesus to understand this mystery.

“For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you.” Matthew 7:2 (NKJV)

“For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son,” John 5:22 (NKJV)

“You judge according to the flesh; I judge no one.” John 8:15 (NKJV)

It was not the Lord that determined Moses and Aaron should die, but it was the justice system that Moses and Aaron understood that determined this. We recall what Moses said to the Lord when Israel had sinned a great sin.

“But now, if You will only forgive their sin—but if not, erase my name from the record You have written!” Exodus 32:32

In the case of the golden calf, Moses had judged that the people were worthy of death. He lovingly asked the Lord if he could take their place. When he struck the rock twice, he felt terrible for what he had done. He passed sentence on himself. God could only judge him as he himself had judged, because as Jesus tells us, the Father does not judge anyone.

Secondly, the people were aware that Moses did not do exactly as God commanded. They did not believe in a God who simply forgives. They believed sin must be punished. If God simply forgave Moses, the people could think that it didn't matter if you obey the Lord or not. God had to uphold the sacredness of the law in the eyes of the people.

Thirdly, when the people saw Moses and Aaron punished, their own guilt rose up in them. They knew they were largely responsible for what happened. The death of Moses and Aaron acted as part of an atonement for their sins. In punishing Moses and Aaron, the Israelites could begin to feel free knowing the issue was dealt with, and God was appeased through their death. But more sacrifice was required. As we see in the Cross of Christ, not only the death of the innocent is required, but also the death of the guilty. Immediately after the death of Aaron, Israel made a vow to destroy a tribe of the Canaanites. This would complete the atonement for them.

But like Christ who was raised shortly after his death, our Father in heaven had far greater plans for Moses. Shortly after he died, God called him forth from the grave and took him to heaven.

Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!"  
Jude 1:9 (NKJV)

The Lord could see that the weight of the people was wearing Moses out. In allowing him to die, He could take His dear friend to heaven to live with Him forever. God might have told Moses, I forgive you, but He had a better and more merciful plan. He did not take him to the earthly Canaan but the heavenly Canaan, the true fulfilment of the promise to Abraham.

To Moses, all seemed a complete failure just before he died. But he held on in faith and trusted the Lord implicitly. This is a song which both Moses and the Lamb sing (Rev 15:3): a song of complete trust. When all the disciples forsook Jesus and fled, all seemed lost. But Jesus committed Himself to God and trusted His Father completely. This



story is important for us living in the last days, for the 144,000 will go through the same test. All will seem lost, they will feel a complete failure, yet they will trust God's promises and overcome the beast and his image.

What a precious thought: God did not condemn Moses for his actions right on the borders of the promised land; Moses condemned himself and therefore walked through a sorrowful path into death. But God turned the curse into a blessing and took him to heaven. How wonderful to look at these events through the life of Jesus with the veil removed.

## CHAPTER 41

# A VOW TO DESTROY

While in Egypt, God had promised to give the Israelites the land of Canaan – just as He had promised Abraham a son.

*“Therefore, say to the people of Israel: ‘I am the LORD. I will free you from your oppression and will rescue you from your slavery in Egypt. I will redeem you with a powerful arm and great acts of judgment. I will claim you as My own people, and I will be your God. Then you will know that I am the LORD your God who has freed you from your oppression in Egypt. I will bring you into the land I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. I will give it to you as your very own possession. I am the LORD!’” Exodus 6:6-8*

No where does God say, I will help you kill all the Canaanites; but rather God would simply give the land to them. At Mt Sinai, God asked Israel to listen to Him and trust that He loved them and would provide for them. They responded by saying “Everything You have said, we will do.” After victory over the Amalekites with the sword, Israel convinced themselves that God wanted them to kill all the Canaanites to establish themselves in the land of Canaan. They praised the God of war and they clung to their notions of their God as a destroyer.

In order to get to the land of Canaan, Israel had to pass through Edom and Moab. God instructed them not to make war with these tribes.

“Give these orders to the people: ‘You will pass through the country belonging to your relatives the Edomites, the descendants of Esau, who live in Seir. The Edomites will feel threatened, so be careful. Do not bother them, for I have given them all the hill country around Mount Seir as their property, and I will not give you even one square foot of their land.’” Deuteronomy 2:4-5

Edom would not let them go through their land. God restrained Israel from slaughtering the Edomites. The cup of their iniquity was not full. Israel was forced to backtrack and go another way.

“Please let us travel through your land. We will be careful not to go through your fields and vineyards. We won’t even drink water from your wells. We will stay on the king’s road and never leave it until we have passed through your territory.”

But the king of Edom said, “Stay out of my land, or I will meet you with an army!”

The Israelites answered, “We will stay on the main road. If our livestock drink your water, we will pay for it. Just let us pass through your country. That’s all we ask.”

But the king of Edom replied, “Stay out! You may not pass through our land.” With that he mobilized his army and marched out against them with an imposing force. Because Edom refused to allow Israel to pass through their country, Israel was forced to turn around. Numbers 20:17-21

The same thing happened with the Moabites. God instructed Israel not to make war with Moab. (Deut 2:9). The Israelites obeyed God’s command, which is unusual for them. The Lord then explains the process of how Israel will conquer Canaan. He cannot help them in the way He originally wished to because they consistently rebelled against Him. The only way that God can help Israel now was by allowing the warlike tribes, who had conquered the previous nations who had lived in Canaan, to receive the same punishment.

This tells us that God will allow the sins of the fathers to be visited upon the children to the third and fourth generation. The nations of Canaan had come there through removing other tribes by warfare. God is not mocked, as these nations had sowed, so would they reap. God would punish the sin of the Canaanites with the sin of the Israelites. Israel would become God's agent of punishment on Canaan.

The Lord had wanted Israel to become His agents of blessing to win the Canaanites to the truth and repent of their sins. It was not impossible for Israel to fulfil this goal. Israel had determined to do things their own way, and so now the men of Israel would fill their minds with images of slaughtered Canaanites; men, women and babies, all put to the sword.

God explains this process clearly as follows:

“...the LORD warned us, ‘Do not bother the Moabites, the descendants of Lot, or start a war with them. I have given them Ar as their property, and I will not give you any of their land.’”

(A race of giants called the Emites had once lived in the area of Ar. They were as strong and numerous and tall as the Anakites, another race of giants. Both the Emites and the Anakites are also known as the Rephaites, though the Moabites call them Emites. **In earlier times the Horites had lived in Seir, but they were driven out and displaced by the descendants of Esau, just as Israel drove out the people of Canaan** when the LORD gave Israel their land.)  
Deuteronomy 2:9-12

The words in parenthesis were added after Israel entered Canaan. It speaks of how the descendants of Esau had wiped out the Horites who had lived there previously. We are then told that Israel drove out the people of Canaan *in the same* way that the Edomites drove out the Horites. This means that the same sin which the Edomites committed in slaughtering the Horites was done by Israel in removing the Canaanites.

The Lord suffered the Israelites to do this because the cup of iniquity of the Canaanites was full and, as Caleb stated to Israel, “their defence had departed.” (Num 14:9, KJV). The hedge of protection around these other nations had been completely removed because of their rejection of God’s commandments and statutes.

After the event of Moses striking the Rock on the borders of Canaan, a Canaanite king from the region of Arad attacked Israel.

The Canaanite king of Arad, who lived in the Negev, heard that the Israelites were approaching on the road through Atharim. So he attacked the Israelites and took some of them as prisoners.  
Numbers 21:1

What had Israel learned in forty years? Did they look to see why there was a breach in the camp? Did they repent of their murmurings and confess the error of their ways? No, the children repeated the exact same process as their parents, yielding the same result.

Therefore the people contended with Moses, and said, “Give us water, that we may drink.” So Moses said to them, “Why do you contend with me? Why do you tempt the LORD?” And the people thirsted there for water, and the people complained against Moses, and said, “Why *is* it you have brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?” Exodus 17:2-3 (NKJV)

Now there was no water for the congregation; so they gathered together against Moses and Aaron. And the people contended with Moses and spoke, saying: “If only we had died when our brethren died before the LORD! Why have you brought up the assembly of the LORD into this wilderness, that we and our animals should die here?” Numbers 20:2-4 (NKJV)

When the parents complained, they caused a breach which allowed the Amalekites to attack them. When the children complained of the same thing, it allowed Canaanites to attack them. Once again, the Israelites substituted vengeance against their attackers in place of repentance;

they would kill the Canaanites to atone for their sins and fix the problem.

Then **the people of Israel made this vow to the LORD: “If You will hand these people over to us, we will completely destroy all their towns.”** The LORD heard the Israelites’ request and gave them victory over the Canaanites. The Israelites completely destroyed them and their towns, and **the place has been called Hormah ever since.** Numbers 21:2-3

The name *Hormah* means *devoted to destruction* or *laid waste*. Israel were the ones who put the request to God. The vow they made was an act of devotion to their God. If God was indeed a destroying God, what better act of devotion could you offer than to kill those who are opposed to the God of heaven? The place only became known as Hormah after Israel wiped it out.

There is potentially a deeper motivation for why Israel wished to slaughter the nation which took some of them as prisoners of war.

“When you face the Amalekites and Canaanites in battle, you will be slaughtered. The LORD will abandon you because you have abandoned the LORD.” But the people defiantly pushed ahead toward the hill country, even though neither Moses nor the Ark of the LORD’s Covenant left the camp. Then the Amalekites and the Canaanites who lived in those hills came down and attacked them and chased them back as far as Hormah. Numbers 14:43-45

Thirty-eight years earlier, Israel had suffered a terrible defeat by the Amalekites and the Canaanites when they foolishly tried to take the land of Canaan after God had told them not to go up because of their rebellion. The slaughter ended in Hormah. Is it possible that Israel was partly seeking to avenge the slaughter of their fathers one generation earlier?

In any case, Israel were subdued through the death of Miriam, Aaron, and the announcement that Moses would also die. They also were humiliated by Edom when they were refused passage through to get to

the promised land. We remember how the previous generation forged their identity and sense of purpose in slaughtering the Amalekites.

**So the Hebrews now valued themselves upon their courage, and claimed great merit for their valor; and they perpetually inured themselves to take pains, by which they deemed every difficulty might be surmounted. Such were the consequences of this battle.**

Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 3, Chapter 16:4

This also played into the vow of Israel to genocide the people of Arad. It would help them regain their sense of valour, and above all avoid the need to repent of their sins which caused the death of Aaron and Moses.

If we compare the meek and lowly Jesus, taking children up into his arms and blessing them, with the Israelite soldier putting small children to death with the sword, are we not compelled to ask: how can this contrast find harmony in the character of God? It reminds me of the German concentration camp leader who daily oversaw the death of thousands of prisoners only to be reduced to tears when he came home one day to discover his faithful dog had died. How can such contradiction exist in the hearts of men?

To believe that the God of heaven ordered his own people to slaughter hundreds of thousands of people reveals a deep lack of understanding in human psychology. Talk to any soldier returned from fierce fighting in war. Rarely, if ever, do they wish to talk about the details of battle. Night after night, their dreams are haunted by the screams of the dying which they perpetrated and witnessed. The night often becomes an unwelcome experience where the horrors of the past are lived out over and over.

Is this the land God promised His people? A land where PTSD-affected Israelite men are unable to express love to their families? For the human heart to harden itself to kill another man is one thing, but to harden yourself to kill women and small defenceless children requires such hardening as to permanently mar the serenity of men's souls.

The stories of the Old Testament have been used by men through the centuries to justify their own wars on other nations. The war God of Israel has been eagerly embraced by other nations to justify their murderous plans.

When Donald Trump was running for the presidency of the United States, he was asked what his favourite Bible text was.

“Well, I think many. I mean, you know, when we get into the Bible, I think many. So many,” he responded. “And some people—look, an eye for an eye, you can almost say that. That’s not a particularly nice thing. But you know, if you look at what’s happening to our country, I mean, when you see what’s going on with our country, how people are taking advantage of us, and how they scoff at us and laugh at us.”

<https://www.politico.com/blogs/2016-gop-primary-live-updates-and-results/2016/04/trump-favorite-bible-verse-221954>

What a contrast to the person of Jesus who stated:

“You have heard the law that says the punishment must match the injury: ‘An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.’ But I say, do not resist an evil person! If someone slaps you on the right cheek, offer the other cheek also.” Matthew 5:38-39

As we explored in chapter 29, the reason God gave the Israelites violent and vengeful laws, such as an eye for an eye, was because this reflected their own thinking. He could only give them what they wanted in the hope they would begin to learn the folly of such things and turn to what He wanted. Jesus reveals the true desire of God when He says that we should not resist an evil person.

The witness of Jesus to the world has been almost completely swallowed up by how Christians interpret the Old Testament. Instead of turning the other cheek, we can simply turn to the Old Testament to justify acts of aggression, murder, and revenge.



Yet despite this tragedy, even some of the most hardened men have recognised that Christ's kingdom does not involve the use of force. Most notable is the witness of one of the most famous men of war the world has ever seen.

“Alexander, Cæsar, Charlemagne and myself founded empires. But on what did we rest the creations of our genius? Upon sheer force. **Jesus Christ alone founded His empire upon love; and at this hour millions of men will die for Him.** In every other existence but that of Christ how many imperfections!” – Napoleon

It must have been that the Christianity that Napoleon encountered was one where Christians were willing to lay down their lives for the sake of the gospel, not in acts of war but in refusing to resist evil with violent force.

Jesus forever settles the question of the use of the sword when He said:

Jesus answered, “My Kingdom is not an earthly kingdom. If it were, My followers would fight to keep Me from being handed over to the Jewish leaders. But My Kingdom is not of this world.”  
John 18:36

The Lord Jesus punctuated this point to Peter when He healed the ear that Peter had cut off in seeking to defend Jesus. Jesus trusted in His Father's care as opposed to the sword.

“Put away your sword,” Jesus told him. “Those who use the sword will die by the sword. Don't you realize that I could ask My Father for thousands of angels to protect us, and He would send them instantly?” Matthew 26:52-53

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever. (Heb 13:8). It is not His character to use sharpened steel to hack to death the fine machinery He has created. Every act of destruction dishonours the one who created the things destroyed.

No Christian can appeal to the stories of the Old Testament as justification for war. God was bearing with the Israelites in an effort to

bring them to a true understanding of His character. As God revealed to Isaiah:

The LORD will mediate between nations and will settle international disputes. They will hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. **Nation will no longer fight against nation, nor train for war anymore.** Isaiah 2:4

The only possible way for nations to cease the desire for war is to come to the realisation that the God of the Bible does not use the principles of force to establish His kingdom. As long as we entertain the idea that God uses force to build His kingdom, war can never cease nor be removed from the earth.

Reading the conquest of Canaan through the life of Jesus, we see the mercy and longsuffering of God in refusing to abandon His people who devoted themselves to war and vowed to genocide nations in order to honour and worship the God they wanted.

The Canaanites were destroyed because they had destroyed. As they judged, they were judged. Israel was an instrument of punishment against the Canaanites in exactly the same way that the Canaanites had acted as instruments of punishment against the nations before them.

This lesson is important for us, because as the nations of the west have dominated the world through war, so it must come that the current world order must be overthrown in the same manner. Now there is war in Ukraine and rumours of war between USA and China. All these things are the fruit of believing in a God of war.

But into this present theatre of war a movement will finally come which builds upon the principles which were grasped by Ghandhi – a Hindu, not a Christian. While he framed the life of Jesus in the framework of resistance, he still could see the central theme of love in His life.

“What does Jesus mean to me? To me, he was one of the greatest teachers humanity has ever had.” “Jesus lived and died in vain if He did not teach us to regulate the whole of life by the eternal law of love.”

“Jesus was the most active resister known perhaps to history. **His was non-violence par excellence.**” “Jesus expressed as no other could the spirit and will of God. It is in this sense that I see him and recognize as the Son of God. **And because the life of Jesus has the significance and the transcendence to which I have alluded, I believe that he belongs not solely to Christianity but to the entire world, to all races and people.** It matters little under what flag, name or doctrine they may work, profess a faith or worship a God inherited from their ancestors.”<sup>30</sup>

Shall we continue to read the Old Testament stories as a vindication of a violent, genocidal god? Or will we finally allow Jesus to beat our swords into ploughshares?

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<sup>30</sup> [https://www.mkgandhi.org/articles/gandhi\\_christ.html](https://www.mkgandhi.org/articles/gandhi_christ.html)

## CHAPTER 42

# HONOURING THE SERPENT

It was very important for Israel to attribute their slaughter of the Canaanites to God. Although it was their idea, how do they justify to themselves the slaughter of women and babies? In praising God for their victory, they can project all of the horror of it onto Him as something that He wished to be done.

If God truly was in their victory, we should see evidence of lasting gratitude with growing trust in God's leading. What happens is exactly the opposite.

Then the people of Israel set out from Mount Hor, taking the road to the Red Sea to go around the land of Edom. But the people grew impatient with the long journey, and they began to speak against God and Moses. "Why have you brought us out of Egypt to die here in the wilderness?" they complained. "There is nothing to eat here and nothing to drink. And we hate this horrible manna!"  
Numbers 21:4-5

What psychology is involved in transitioning from a triumphant defeat of your enemies, with God on your side, to the point of accusing God of trying to kill them in the wilderness? Understanding the human trait of

Projection, it makes perfect sense. The Israelite soldiers have all these horrendous images in their minds from all the carnage they created. In killing others, their fear of being killed increased. In projecting their murderous deeds onto God, it merely increased their own anxiety that this God of death would now kill them for the acts of violence they committed.

Blinded by their fears, the Israelites were not able to discern from cause to breach effect of the impact of complaining against God and Moses. Satan knew though, and he encouraged these feelings, filling their minds with doubt and dread.

It was their judgment that God wanted to kill them in the wilderness. As they judged, so God allowed the wilderness to begin to do just as they stated. When Israel ceased to fear God, and accused Him of neglect, He could not protect them from Satan because of their breach.

So the LORD sent poisonous snakes among the people, and many were bitten and died. Numbers 21:6

All of the translations I checked state that God *sent* the serpents among the people. When you hold the idea of a killing, thunderous God who punishes with death, then it makes complete sense to believe that God punished the Israelites for their ingratitude and false accusations against Him.

The Israelites perceived that God had sent the serpents to punish them, and they confessed to Moses that they had sinned and pleaded with Moses to ask God to take the serpents away.

Then the people came to Moses and cried out, "We have sinned by speaking against the LORD and against you. Pray that the LORD will take away the snakes." So Moses prayed for the people. Numbers 21:7

God does not instruct Moses to tell the people that it was not Him who sent the serpents, because the people would not comprehend this. They knew they had sinned against God, and in their own minds it made complete sense that God would punish them, and even kill some of

them in anger, because of their sins. When you observe the meaning of the Hebrew word for *send* in the tense given, we see the following:

Piel Tense

1c1) to send off or away or out or forth, dismiss, give over, cast out

1c2) to let go, set free

1c3) to shoot forth (of branches)

1c4) to let down

1c5) to shoot

Did God send them directly to harm the Israelites? Is this consistent with the character of a loving Father? Did Jesus send snakes in the temple to destroy the Jewish leaders?

Israel, inspired by Satan, believed in a destroying, punishing God. Would it make sense that when you entertain the principles of the serpent Satan, that this could attract the very thing they believed? Were some of the Israelites still infected with Egyptian ideas of Atum coming as a serpent to destroy them? The apostle Paul gives us a very interesting insight into this story:

...nor let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by **serpents**; [G3789] nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the **destroyer**. [G3644]  
1 Corinthians 10:9-10 (NKJV)

The Greek word that Paul uses for serpent is used in a number of other places to refer to Satan.

So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent [G3789] of old, called the Devil and Satan,... Revelation 12:9 (NKJV)

He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent [G3789] of old, who is *the* Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years.  
Revelation 20:2 (NKJV)

On top of this, the Strong's definition for the word *destroyer* in the next verse means "a ruiner, venomous serpent." We consider also the words of Jesus about His character.

"For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives but to save *them*." Luke 9:56 (NKJV)

All of this points strongly towards the thought that God let the snakes go free from restraint because of the Israelites beliefs, and Satan then used them to harm and kill the Israelites. The snakes had lived in the wilderness already, but the Israelites had been protected from them. So, when the snakes started flooding the camp, Israel thought it was God that was killing them through the serpents; when in fact it was Satan taking control of the serpents because Israel had made a hole in the wall of God's protection through their ingratitude, false accusations, and idolatry regarding God's character.

In order to meet the people's thinking, God gave Moses a very strange instruction.

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Make a fiery [H8314] *serpent*, and set it on a pole; and it shall be that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, shall live." So Moses made a bronze serpent, and put it on a pole; and so it was, if a serpent had bitten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived. Numbers 21:8-9 (NKJV)

God told Moses to make a bronze image of the serpents that were biting them, put it on a pole, and invite the people to look upon the metal serpent – and then they would live.

This practice was common among heathen nations to appease angry gods. We see this done in the story of the Philistines when they took the ark of Israel and consequently experienced plagues of mice and were struck with haemorrhoid tumours. They made idols of that which was afflicting them: "five gold tumours and five gold rats".

The Ark of the LORD remained in Philistine territory seven months in all. Then the Philistines called in their priests and diviners and

asked them, "What should we do about the Ark of the LORD? Tell us how to return it to its own country."

"Send the Ark of the God of Israel back with a gift," they were told. "Send a guilt offering so the plague will stop. Then, if you are healed, you will know it was His hand that caused the plague."

"What sort of guilt offering should we send?" they asked.

And they were told, "Since the plague has struck both you and your five rulers, make five gold tumors and five gold rats, just like those that have ravaged your land. **Make these things to show honor to the God of Israel. Perhaps then He will stop afflicting you,** your gods, and your land. Don't be stubborn and rebellious as Pharaoh and the Egyptians were. By the time God was finished with them, they were eager to let Israel go." 1 Samuel 6:1-6

Why does God use a pagan practice to heal the Israelites? As Israel is operating in the Old Covenant, all God can do is speak to them through their own ideas giving the effect of a mirror because their thoughts were not His thoughts. The raised snake on the pole was an idea they could grasp. From a certain perspective, looking upwards to the serpent on the pole was an act of homage, it was honouring the power of the serpent, which was killing them. This is exactly what the Philistines did, they made metal images of the things killing them, to honour the God of Israel.

Through the wrong conceptions of the Israelites the Lord was trying to teach them something. He wanted to teach them through the process of Moses simply speaking to the rock that the blessing of life-giving water would come. By simply looking up to the snake on the pole, they could find forgiveness and healing. Obviously if God healed them, they would know they are forgiven. No animal sacrifices were needed, no blood needed to be shed for atonement to be effected. This is the lesson God wished to teach them through their wrong ideas.

The implications of this story are far reaching because Jesus speaks of this story as follows:



And as Moses lifted up the bronze snake on a pole in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in Him will have eternal life. John 3:14-15

Notice carefully: "As Moses lifted up the bronze snake... so the Son of Man must be lifted up." As Israel was under the false idea that God wanted to kill them in the wilderness for their sinfulness, so the whole world wrongly believes God has sentenced us all to death for our sinfulness. As God spoke to Israel through their false ideas of appeasing an angry God, so He speaks to the whole world of appeasing His justice through the death of His Son. In the character of Christ, the false principle of death in God is torn down. God has never desired sacrifice and offering for sin, but rather has met man in his darkened thinking and offered him forgiveness in a package he can understand.

The idea that God needed His Son to be bloodied and battered to forgive us comes from the serpent/dragon, Satan. The Christian churches speak of God's wrath being satisfied in the uplifted Saviour, but what they are unwittingly lifting up are the ideas of the serpent which God had to meet. Christ crucified is a vital step to salvation, but *why* it is needed is completely misunderstood. This is the startling truth in the story of the uplifted serpent.<sup>31</sup>

For many people, this idea comes as a complete shock. The natural impulse is to reject it, but consider it carefully: *how can the lifting up of Jesus be in any possible way compared to the lifting up of a snake?*

This comes to the heart of the Mirror Principle. What does the sinner actually see when looking at the mangled form of Jesus on the Cross? Does he see God's wrath satisfied, or does he see his own conceptions of justice satisfied in order that he might find forgiveness?

Ponder carefully these thoughts. Do we actually believe that God wants His people to look up and honour the idea that there must be blood and death for us to be forgiven? Or is this the idea of God that Satan had

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<sup>31</sup> For an in-depth discussion on this question, see the book *At-One-Ment* available for download from [fatheroflove.info](http://fatheroflove.info).

trapped us into, and therefore Jesus had to be lifted up like the snake on the pole because of our darkened minds, it was the only way to reach and ransom us.

“...to open their eyes, so they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God. Then they will receive forgiveness for their sins and be given a place among God’s people, who are set apart by faith in Me.” Acts 26:18

Amazingly, the word used for *fiery serpent* in the story of the bronze snake is found in another place in the Bible referring to an angel.

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His *robe* filled the temple. Above it stood **seraphim**; [H8314] each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. Isaiah 6:1–2 (NKJV)

Is it a coincidence that the exact word for *fiery serpent* is also used to refer to the seraphim that stand before the throne of God? Who is the angel that became a serpent who once stood in the throne room of God? The symbol of the serpent is a reference to Satan. Why is Moses being asked to make a symbol of Satan and follow the pagan customs of other nations to provide a path to redemption for the bitten Israelites? Because their ideas of appeasement demanded this type of ritual for the people to believe that God would forgive and accept them.

What is fascinating is that later in the history of Israel we discover the Israelites actually worshipped the bronze serpent made by Moses and sacrificed to it.

He [Hezekiah] removed the pagan shrines, smashed the sacred pillars, and cut down the Asherah poles. **He broke up the bronze serpent that Moses had made, because the people of Israel had been offering sacrifices to it.** The bronze serpent was called Nehushtan. 2 Kings 18:4

Rather than discern God’s intent through the symbolism of the raised serpent, the Israelites came to worship it instead. Can we say the same

of the Cross today? People wear crosses, put them on churches, and carry them like some form of lucky charm. It would appear that for many, not much has changed through the centuries.

The use of bronze or brass as expressed in some translations is also an indication of the origin of the raised serpent. Bronze is a man-made metal, from the line of Cain. (Gen 4:17-22). The Bible prophets often spoke of the sinfulness of man through the imagery of brass. (Isa 48:4; Jer 6:28; Eze 22:18 NKJV). If the sacrifice of Christ was God's desire, then why not raise up a golden lamb or dove? Why brass and why a snake, a symbol of Satan? Let us lift the veil over this story that points to the Cross, and see who really demanded it. In the uplifted serpent, we see a symbol of Satan's principles of appeasement, which the Lord takes to speak through it principles of forgiveness and acceptance.

How far our Father has had to come down to meet our twisted notions of forgiveness and atonement. He draws us to Himself through the symbols we understand and appreciate.

## CHAPTER 43

# GENOCIDE OF THE AMORITES

In vain we look for a record from Moses that the children of Israel repented, confessed their sins, and came into a deeper appreciation of God's character anything like what Jesus reveals to us. They only cried out like Pharaoh did when they suffered the consequences of their own wrong course of action. Their failure to repent kept the breach open and caused Israel more trials. It sadly seems that the people of God had to go through this dark history to wake up to the value of another way of living.

Until their victory over the Canaanites in Arad, Israel had not experienced a major victory in battle since defeating the Amalekites forty years earlier. They maintained the protocol of asking nations if they could pass through, when they approached the Amorites.

Sihon, king of the Amorites, rejected their request and mobilized a force to attack Israel. Like the attack of the Amalekites forty years earlier which resulted from Israel's murmuring against God, so also, the Amorites were stirred up by Satan to attack Israel for the same reason.

The Amorite reaction to Israel's courteous appeal sealed their fate. God could no longer protect them from the consequences of their ruthless

decision to attack. Israel made the vow to God to slaughter the Canaanites in Arad, and encouraged by this victory, they continued in this path of slaughter. King Sihon was receiving the natural consequences of the slaughter he had inflicted upon the Moabites.

Heshbon had been the capital of King Sihon of the Amorites. He had defeated a former Moabite king and seized all his land as far as the Arnon River. Numbers 21:26

The Lord would have spared the Amorites if they had allowed Israel to pass through their land unmolested. God had already spared and protected the Amorites for 400 years from the full consequences of their evil. The Lord told Abraham of the Amorites and how their consciences were not fully seared.

“But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.” Genesis 15:16 (NKJV)

But when Sihon attacked Israel unprovoked, in light of all of God’s evident leading of Israel, the cup of iniquity was full. The Lord would no longer shield them from the natural results of their evil.

As Sihon had sown, now he would reap. God punished the sin of the Amorites with the sin of the Israelites. We repeat the point that Israel’s refusal to come into the everlasting covenant, by promising to do themselves all that God had promised, placed Israel in a position where they had to fight the Canaanites themselves to take the promised land by their own works. The Lord was reduced to developing faith within the hearts of men of war, but oh how He wanted to teach them the ways of peace – but they were not willing.

As men like Joshua and Caleb moved forward in faith, placing their lives in the hands of God, their faith developed. God could send His angels to protect and shield Israel in their encounters as they showed faith in Him. They would need help, because after 40 years Israel had lost all its men of war. Only the protection of God could preserve Israel from being slaughtered by the experienced Amorite warriors.

God's protecting Israel could easily be interpreted as His desire for these pagan nations to be destroyed, but we know that our Father is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. (2 Pet 3:9). Christ's statements about the use of the sword in the New Testament provide the only true way to read these stories of slaughter in the Old Testament.

If only Israel had been willing to listen more intently to what God wanted to tell them. If only they believed what God had shown to Moses about His character 40 years earlier.

Now the LORD descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. And the LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing *the guilty*, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation." Exodus 34:5-7 (NKJV)

Love, mercy, compassion, and forgiveness are the qualities revealed along with allowing people to receive the fruits of their works, good or bad. There is nothing about killing, slaughter, or destroying mentioned in this description. But the Lord condescends to work with Israel through their preconceived opinions, and their attachment to war and death. How incredibly merciful is our Father to walk with men so ignorantly opposed to His character, seeking always to the very last to draw them through the darkened perception into the light.

As we discussed in chapter 12, the Old Covenant experience is a ministration of death. (2 Cor 3:7). When men refuse to accept the truth, God uses the Old Covenant as a mirror. He does this by allowing men's wrong ideas to grow and abound, so that men might have the chance to see more clearly their errors. Israel might have freely walked in the light of the New Covenant experience, but now this is the path they must walk, in order to see in the mirror the true depravity of their natures in their desire for slaughter.

Over the following centuries, Israel would be embroiled in many wars. But as they killed with the sword, so they were killed with the sword – especially through their destruction by Assyria, Babylon, and Rome. A death march of over 1400 years until the time of Christ when, finally, it was revealed that we should love our enemies, not hate and kill them.

God did not change His character. He was not a violent destroyer in the Old Testament and a gentle lamb in the New. He has been the same all the way through, but we have been blinded by the veil, that we made and inherited, in which we desired to hide the true glory of God.

Having defeated the Amorites to the south, Israel then spied out the northern Amorite territory led by King Og. Speaking to Israel according to their understanding, the Lord tells Moses:

The LORD said to Moses, “Do not be afraid of him, for I have handed him over to you, along with all his people and his land. Do the same to him as you did to King Sihon of the Amorites, who ruled in Heshbon.” And Israel killed King Og, his sons, and all his subjects; not a single survivor remained. Then Israel occupied their land. Numbers 21:34-35

Reading the above translation, it appears that God is commanding Israel to slaughter these people, including every single woman, child and baby. Is this truly what God’s character is like? When we read the literal Hebrew, we gain a different picture.

And Jehovah saith unto Moses, “Fear him not, for into thy hand I have given him, and all his people, and his land, **and thou hast done to him as thou hast done to Sihon** king of the Amorite, who is dwelling in Heshbon.” Numbers 21:34 (YLT)

The Lord knew what Israel had determined against the Amorites in their hearts. He knew their ideas of a God of death. Because the cup of iniquity was full for the Amorites, God did not protect them, but He preserved the Israelites because their iniquity was not full. But remember, eventually Israel’s cup would also be full if they didn’t come to repentance. So, when the Lord told Moses not to be afraid, He was

seeking to build the faith of Israel despite their wrong perceptions of His character, in the hope that they would be prepared to accept Him more fully in the future – most particularly to accept Him in the person of the Messiah.

Their victory over the Amorites once again should have produced gratitude and thanks and confidence in the Lord's protection. But their confidence in war led them to be seduced by Balaam at the behest of Balak, the king of Moab and Midian. If God could protect Israel from the Amorites, then why couldn't he warn them of Balak's plot to destroy them? Why didn't Moses and the Israelites discern Balaam's intentions?

A possible answer to this might be found in the story of Samuel's killing of Agag, the Amalekite king. After Samuel takes this action, he becomes afraid Saul will kill him when God instructs him to anoint David as king. (1 Sam 16:1-2). Why would Samuel be afraid unless his actions created a breach through a violation of the Ten Commandments to not kill?

When Samuel went to Jesse's home to anoint the Lord's chosen, he did not discern which of Jesse's sons should be anointed.

When they arrived, Samuel took one look at Eliab and thought, "Surely this is the LORD's anointed!" But the LORD said to Samuel, "Don't judge by his appearance or height, for I have rejected him. The LORD doesn't see things the way you see them. People judge by outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart." 1 Samuel 16:6-7

Could not the Lord tell him beforehand who to choose, as He did when giving specific instructions concerning the anointing of Saul?

"About this time tomorrow I will send you a man from the land of Benjamin. Anoint him to be the leader of My people, Israel. He will rescue them from the Philistines, for I have looked down on My people in mercy and have heard their cry." When Samuel saw Saul, the LORD said, "That's the man I told you about! He will rule My people." 1 Samuel 9:16-17



Why was Samuel judging by outward appearance? The Lord was still speaking to Samuel, but He told him that all of the older sons were not the ones to be anointed. When David finally came, the Lord told him, this is the one. But why was this situation different to the anointing of Saul where there was no misunderstanding at all? Did his killing of Agag blunt the impressions of the Spirit of God? Could this explain why the Israelites did not discern Balaam's motives – due to all their killing?

## CHAPTER 44

# BALAAAM IN THE MIRROR

The Moabites and Midianites trembled realizing the Amorite nation, who had defeated them previously, were obliterated by the Israelites. King Balak consults with his elders to conceive a plan to defeat Israel through divination or sorcery. (Num 22:7). So desperate was the king that he called for a man named Balaam from the distant region of Mesopotamia.

Balaam had developed a reputation as a godly man and a prophet of God. As happens to many religious men who encounter fame, he became corrupted by covetousness.

The delegation of Moab and Midian delivered their request to Balaam to come and curse the Israelites for them. The gifts they had brought enticed Balaam to go with them, but he determined to follow protocol and ask God what course of action he should take.

But God told Balaam, "Do not go with them. You are not to curse these people, for they have been blessed!" The next morning Balaam got up and told Balak's officials, "Go on home! The LORD will not let me go with you." Numbers 22:12-13

Josephus offers the following in this regard:

Balsam [Balaam] received the ambassadors, and treated them very kindly; and when he had supped, he inquired what was God's will, and what this matter was for which the Midianites entreated him to come to them. But when God opposed his going, he came to the ambassadors, and told them that he was himself very willing and desirous to comply with their request, but informed them that God was opposite to his intentions, even that God who had raised him to great reputation on account of the truth of his predictions; for that this army, which they entreated him to come and curse, was in the favor of God; on which account he advised them to go home again, and not to persist in their enmity against the Israelites; and when he had given them that answer, he dismissed the ambassadors. Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 4, Chapter 6:2

If Balaam had not expressed his desire to go with the men in opposition to God, then Balak might not have appealed to him again with his request. Balak increases his grip on Balaam by sending more eminent men from Moab with more riches to entice the covetous prophet. In the story we sense a man wrestling with his conscience. He knew that God had clearly said not to curse the Israelites. But as the son of *Peor*, which means "burning," Balaam burned with desire for the wealth and honour of men.

But Balaam responded to Balak's messengers, "Even if Balak were to give me his palace filled with silver and gold, I would be powerless to do anything against the will of the LORD my God. But stay here one more night, and I will see if the LORD has anything else to say to me." Numbers 22:18-19

Balaam does not speak as God's representative but as one powerless to oppose Him. He already knows the answer to this question, but he does all he can to keep the door open for some change in God's mind.

The Lord might have said no to Balaam again, but this would conceal the true state of his covetousness. God instructs Balaam to do the very thing he wanted.

That night God came to Balaam and told him, "Since these men have come for you, get up and go with them. But do only what I tell you to do." Numbers 22:20

Having learned what God's anger means in the Bible, we can know for certain that God did not want him to go, but gave to Balaam what he wanted.

**Then God's anger was aroused because he went**, and the Angel of the LORD took His stand in the way as an adversary [Satan] against him. And he was riding on his donkey, and his two servants *were* with him. Numbers 22:22 (NKJV)

To believe that God wanted Balaam to go only to become angry about it presents God as fickle like humans, but when we let the Bible define what God's anger is, then we can resolve the apparent conflict. The Lord allows Balaam to go in order to cause his sin to become more apparent to him. But Balaam believes God wants him to go because this is in harmony with his evil desire. Therefore, any attempt of God to block Balaam could be interpreted as Satan trying to stop him.

The term *Angel of the Lord* often refers to Christ. (See Ex 3:2; 3:14; 23:20; 32:34). Christ, in love to Balaam, was seeking to save him. The faithful donkey which had served Balaam for many years begins to act erratically. Balaam should have discerned what was happening, but his covetousness blinded him to reality. He beat the donkey without mercy. God gives the donkey the ability to speak, yet in his rage, Balaam seems oblivious to the miracle of the donkey speaking.

Then the LORD gave the donkey the ability to speak. "What have I done to you that deserves your beating me three times?" it asked Balaam. "You have made me look like a fool!" Balaam shouted. "If I had a sword with me, I would kill you!" Numbers 22:28-29

The cruelty within Balaam and the desire to kill his faithful donkey is mirrored perfectly by Christ when He says to Balaam:

“Three times the donkey saw me and shied away; otherwise, I would certainly have killed you by now and spared the donkey.”  
Numbers 22:33

Here it is vital for us to discern how the mirror works. Christ can't say to Peter, “put your sword away” on the one hand and to Balaam, “I would have killed you with a sword.” Christ speaks to Balaam his own thoughts in order to encourage him to repent. It is impossible for God to forgive Balaam unless he confesses his sin and repents by going back home. Christ spoke the words, “I would have killed you” because this is what Balaam thought God wanted to do to him, because he knew what he was doing was wrong. He manifested his internal thoughts by beating and wishing to kill the donkey.

We must look for consistency in the story. If we believe Jesus would have actually killed Balaam, then the words of Jesus to Pilate are false when He said, “my kingdom is not of this world, otherwise my servants would fight.” When the disciples told Jesus they had two swords, thinking Jesus wanted to use them to fight, Jesus said “That's enough!” (Luke 22:38) as translated in the NLT. The translation “It is enough” in other versions is foolish – as we stated earlier, two swords is not enough to deal with a band of Roman soldiers. Christ did not wish to kill Balaam, but to bring to him a reflection of what Balaam actually thought. Why? To bring him to repentance. This is how the gospel works. Balaam came close to repenting but fell short.

Then Balaam confessed to the angel of the LORD, “I have sinned. I didn't realize you were standing in the road to block my way. I will return home if you are against my going.” Numbers 22:34

Balaam confessed his sin, but clings to the hope of still going by saying he will return home IF Christ was against him going. Balaam ignores all the evidence that Christ said to him:

“Why did you beat your donkey those three times?” the angel of the LORD demanded. **“Look, I have come to block your way because you are stubbornly resisting me.”** Numbers 22:32

How can Balaam suggest the word IF, when Christ had clearly told him, "I am blocking your way because you are stubbornly resisting me!" How easily sin blinds the eyes of a man. Since Balaam was locked onto his desire, Christ lets him do as he wants. He instructs him to do as Balaam wishes.

Balaam tries his best to curse the people of Israel as Balak wanted. But the only inspiration which came to Balaam were words of blessing. God could not force Balaam to speak something he was not willing to say. The Spirit of God was striving with Balaam and somehow he was still influenced by it.

This frustrated Balak terribly. He tried four times to get Balaam to curse Israel. Why has God taken three whole chapters of the Bible to describe this event? All these things have been written for our admonition who will pass through the final events of earth's history.

Could it be that a type of Balaam will appear as God's people are at the edge of the heavenly Canaan at the end of time, with knowledge of how to create a breach in the defence of the Israelites? Though he himself could not curse the Israelites, he cunningly suggests sending Moabite women to seduce Israel into apostasy – we will discuss this in the next chapter.

When the fourth angel of Revelation 18 lightens the earth with its glory, the kingdoms of this world will be in terror. They will seek a person, group, or organisation which was once faithful to God, but has become corrupted by the desire for power and position. This organisation will fail in stopping the work of the fourth angel, but as it will know some of the principles of God's kingdom, it will show the kings of the earth a way to create a breach in the defence of God's people, and send a portion of them to their death.

Let us learn from history. We should be aware of what could be coming. We ourselves have the potential to be like Balaam. The secret to remaining pure and faithful to God is to refuse to drink the wine of Babylon, nor serve her god. For an in-depth analysis of how to escape

## MIRROR PRINCIPLE

this process, see the book *Escaping the Pentagon of Lies* available for download at [fatheroflove.info](http://fatheroflove.info).

CHAPTER 45

# APOSTASY AT THE JORDAN

It was no accident that the Moabite women came into the Israelite camp to entice the men of the nation into intimate encounters.

Now Israel remained in Acacia Grove, and the people began to commit harlotry with the women of Moab. They invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods. Number 25:1-2 (NKJV)

This terrible scheme was hatched by Balaam who was frustrated by his failure to help Balak as he wished. He knew how the hedge of protection worked, and knew that if they could get the Israelites to sin, then they could be destroyed. Josephus explains the background story.

But Balak being very angry that the Israelites were not cursed, sent away Balaam without thinking him worthy of any honor. Whereupon, when he was just upon his journey, in order to pass the Euphrates, he sent for Balak, and for the princes of the Midianites, and spake thus to them: – “O Balak, and you Midianites that are here present, (for I am obliged even without the will of God to gratify you,) it is true no entire destruction can seize upon the nation of the Hebrews, neither by war, nor by plague, nor by



scarcity of the fruits of the earth, nor can any other unexpected accident be their entire ruin; **for the providence of God is concerned to preserve them from such a misfortune; nor will it permit any such calamity to come upon them whereby they may all perish;** but some small misfortunes, and those for a short time, whereby they may appear to be brought low, may still befall them; but after that they will flourish again, to the terror of those that brought those mischiefs upon them.

“So that if you have a mind to gain a victory over them for a short space of time, you will obtain it by following my directions: – **Do you therefore set out the handsomest of such of your daughters as are most eminent for beauty, and proper to force and conquer the modesty of those that behold them, and these decked and trimmed to the highest degree you are able.** Then do you send them to be near the Israelites’ camp, and give them in charge, that the young men of the Hebrews desire their company, they allow it them; and when they see they are enamored of them, let them take their leaves; and if they entreat them to stay, let them not give their consent till they have persuaded them to leave off their obedience to their own laws, the worship of that God who established them, and to worship the gods of the Midianites and the Moabites; for by this means God will be angry at them.” Accordingly, when Balaam had suggested counsel to them, he went his way. Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 4, Chapter 6:6

Balaam’s plan worked perfectly. Israel bowed at the feet of false gods, arousing the anger of the Lord. The Angel Hedge was broken and the Lord would not prevent the consequences of idolatry. As He spoke in the second commandment:

“You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of *anything* that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. **For [or because] I, the LORD your God, am [become] a jealous God,** visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon

the children to the third and fourth *generations* of those who hate Me," Exodus 20:4-5 (NKJV)

God appears to become jealous when His people enter into idolatry, because God hides His face when they turn to other Gods. When calamity comes, the people imagine God is the one directly bringing the arrows of death in an act of aggression, when in reality He endures grief in having to let the people suffer the results of their own choices.

I have added some words in brackets in the text above. The word *for* can be translated *because*. The word *am* is a supplied word. It might as easily be read as *becomes*. God is not jealous as humans understand the term, but He appears to become jealous to us, when He allows consequences to fall upon us when we break His commandments.

As soon as Israel bowed before the gods of the Moabites, a plague began to destroy them. The people perceived God as the architect of their death. The Adamic principle of atonement demanded both representatives of both innocent and guilty human sacrifices to satisfy Israel's perception of God's wrath. Adam had blamed God, the innocent, and Eve, the guilty, as the ones worthy of death instead of himself. Israel now walks in the same footsteps.

As we discussed in the story of the final plague in Egypt, the death of the firstborn involved the death of small children as well as adults. This fulfils the death of the guilty and the innocent. This was the only thing that caused Pharaoh to relinquish his grip on Israel. The release of Israel represents what the carnal human mind requires before it will release itself from guilt. God does not desire sacrifice and offering for sin, but the fallen nature of Adam does. God must pay the ransom demanded by Satan in the form of a Penal Substitutional sacrifice for man before he will believe he is forgiven.

Most of Israel had entered into a relationship with another god. Obviously, all gods other than the true God are inspired by Satan. Israel chose to leave the protection of God and come under the "care" of Satan. They knew the commandments concerning bowing to other gods, yet they did it anyway.

If a woman leaves her husband and enters into a relationship with another man who then beats and kills her, shall we blame the first husband for causing her death? If we would blame the first husband, then we are entitled to blame God for killing the Israelites.

This is the context of the events that happened in Numbers 25 in the death of the guilty ringleaders in the apostasy, and the plague which killed 24,000 people. The atonement process is completed in Numbers 31, where the guilty from Moab are killed along with their innocent male children. Only then could the Israelites grasp forgiveness and believe that God was appeased, stopping His anger against them.

So Israel was joined to Baal of Peor, and the anger of the LORD was aroused against Israel. Then the LORD said to Moses, "Take all the leaders of the people and hang the offenders before the LORD, out in the sun, that the fierce anger of the LORD may turn away from Israel." Numbers 25:3-4 (NKJV)

As we look into the face of our Father as He speaks the words, "Take all the leaders of the people and hang the offenders before the Lord," do we dare attempt to discern its meaning without the life of Christ, the mediator? God is required by the people to assume the character of a judge, demanding the people offer Him a human sacrifice to appease Him. They need to see justice served before they can believe their killer God is appeased. God has no choice but to give over the offenders to death, because this is the process of atonement they understand.

This was the only way in which the people would accept mercy; a sacrifice or Penal Substitution was required. The whole nation had been involved in the feast, but those most notable in encouraging them to evil were now hung up in the sight of the people.

As the people looked upon the men hung up before the sun, like the process of looking up to the brass serpent, the people could begin to believe that God would forgive them so they could be healed of the plague.

While the plague was striking terror through the camp, one of the princes of Israel brought a Midianite woman into the middle of the camp, in the sight of the corpses hanging in the air, intending to have sex with her.

Just then one of the Israelite men brought a Midianite woman into his tent, right before the eyes of Moses and all the people, as everyone was weeping at the entrance of the Tabernacle.  
Numbers 25:6

Although many in the camp had sinned, the actions of this man provided a lightning rod for human justice to manifest itself. Zimri the Simeonite became a sin-bearer, not only for himself but for the entire nation.

When Phinehas son of Eleazar and grandson of Aaron the priest saw this, he jumped up and left the assembly. He took a spear and rushed after the man into his tent. Phinehas thrust the spear all the way through the man's body and into the woman's stomach. So the plague against the Israelites was stopped, but not before 24,000 people had died. Numbers 25:7-9

When Phinehas (which means *mouth of a serpent*, other variants include *mouth of brass*) saw the brazen actions of Zimri, his sense of justice was aroused. While Israel was stricken with fear and plague for their sins, this wicked man flouted his sin before them. Phinehas, following the principles of human justice (mouth of the serpent) and judgment, took a javelin and killed Zimri and Cosbi in the act of sexual intercourse. This felt right to the nation, and they believed it would satisfy God's justice (though it was actually human justice that was projected onto God which was appeased).

It was after this act that the plague was stopped. God then placed a blessing on Phinehas in the following way:

Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, has turned back My wrath from the children of Israel, because he was zealous with My zeal among them, so that I did not consume the children

of Israel in My zeal. Therefore say, **“Behold, I give to him My covenant of peace; and it shall be to him and his descendants after him a covenant of an everlasting priesthood,** because he was zealous for his God, and **made atonement for the children of Israel.”** Numbers 25:11–13 (NKJV)

In the action of killing Zimri and Cosbi, Phinehas made atonement for Israel. Just as healing came to Israel by looking to the serpent, now Israel was healed by the mouth of the serpent bringing appeasement to God for Israel. This was an atonement process which they understood. This is what atonement looks like in the mirror of the Old Covenant.

This follows the same pattern as the striking of the rock. Israel could not have believed that God would forgive them until Zimri was dead, because human justice demands death before forgiveness can occur. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. (Heb 9:22).

We notice the process by which Phinehas obtained an everlasting priesthood; he offered a human sacrifice by which God was appeased. This is exactly how the Christian world views Christ. He offered Himself as a human sacrifice to appease God’s wrath. Since He was raised from the dead, He obtained an everlasting priesthood.

And in another passage God said to Him, “You are a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek.” Hebrews 5:6

But because Jesus lives forever, His priesthood lasts forever.  
Hebrews 7:24

God blessed Phinehas because Israel needed a mediator to intercede for them. Aaron had died and Phinehas takes a central role as the priest of the people. All of this process is satisfying the wrong perceptions of the people, but there is no other way for God to reach them. So God blesses Phinehas according to the desire of the people.

If Phinehas had not done what he did, Israel would have remained under the perceived condemnation of God as they understood it. They would not have been able to believe God would forgive them.

Therefore, the plague would have continued until the majority of the camp would have perished. It is only forgiveness which releases the human heart from the power of Satan.

“...to open their eyes, *in order* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and **from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins** and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.” Acts 26:18 (NKJV)

If Israel had understood that sacrifice is not part of the truth of God’s character, they could have come and asked for forgiveness and been accepted. They could have spoken to the rock and received the waters of life freely. But man’s ways are not God’s ways, therefore Zimri had to die by the *mouth of the serpent* so that the whole nation would not perish.

Later in the history of Israel, we gain a deeper insight into men’s thinking behind hanging men up before the Lord.

Now there was a famine in the days of David for three years, year after year; and David inquired of the LORD. And the LORD answered, “*It is* because of Saul and *his* bloodthirsty house, because he killed the Gibeonites.” So the king called the Gibeonites and spoke to them. Now the Gibeonites *were* not of the children of Israel, but of the remnant of the Amorites; the children of Israel had sworn protection to them, but Saul had sought to kill them in his zeal for the children of Israel and Judah.

Therefore David said to the Gibeonites, “What shall I do for you? And **with what shall I make atonement**, that you may bless the inheritance of the LORD?” And the Gibeonites said to him, “We will have no silver or gold from Saul or from his house, nor shall you kill any man in Israel for us.” So he said, “Whatever you say, I will do for you.” Then they answered the king, “As for the man who consumed us and plotted against us, *that* we should be destroyed from remaining in any of the territories of Israel, **let seven men of his descendants be delivered to us, and we will hang them before the LORD in Gibeah of Saul**, *whom* the LORD chose.” And the king said, “I will give *them*.” 2 Samuel 21:1–6 (NKJV)

We see in these actions the principles of man's atonement. Famine had fallen upon Israel. In order to remedy the curse, seven men had to die. In this case, the men were relatively innocent. They had not personally committed any crime against the Gibeonites. Yet they were chosen as a Penal Substitution for the sin of their father. Once this action was taken, Israel believed the sin was forgiven and therefore the rain could return.

As we stated previously, this element of the death of the innocent is an important part of human atonement. As we see in the story of the Cross of Christ, the innocent must be slain alongside the guilty.

Then one of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, "If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us." But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, "Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation? And **we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong.**" Luke 23:39-41 (NKJV)

It is my fervent prayer that you can see that God had to provide Israel with a sacrifice which would satisfy their thoughts of justice and atonement. God did not desire sacrifice, but without one, the whole nation would have perished. God had to respond to this thought process:

"You don't realize that it's better for you that one man should die for the people than for the whole nation to be destroyed."  
John 11:50

Caiaphas is not inspired by God when he speaks these words, but by Satan. The Lord had to pay Satan's ransom demands in order to save Israel from being completely destroyed by the plague.

Now that the plague had been stayed, an innocent victim must be secured to complete the atonement process. We will see this in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER 46

# THE SLAUGHTER OF THE MIDIANITES

We have discussed how within one of the most beautiful statements of Scripture there is contained an unrealised enmity.

“Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written.” Exodus 32:32 (KJV)

At Mt Sinai, Moses wrestles in his mind between the limits of God’s forgiveness and the justice system that all men understand – death as the punishment for transgression. As a young man, Moses demonstrated his belief that the guilty must be punished with death.

Now it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out to his brethren and looked at their burdens. And he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his brethren. So he looked this way and that way, and when he saw no one, **he killed the Egyptian** and hid him in the sand. Exodus 2:11-12 (NKJV)

Forty years in the wilderness caring for sheep softened this principle of retribution in Moses. But without the complete revelation of God’s character as revealed in Christ, it was extremely difficult to totally remove this false idea.



God, knowing how hard it is to eliminate such deep-rooted misconceptions in man and being unwilling to force a different understanding upon man, teaches man where he is, chronicling the details of His attempts to reach him, so that one day in the future man can put the pieces together and come to a more accurate understanding of God's character and His justice. This is all that God can do and what He has done for 6000 years: He walks with men through their darkened understanding as they eat the bitter fruit of their choices, all the while speaking gently to them through His Spirit of a better way.

Now the man Moses *was* very humble, more than all men who *were* on the face of the earth. Numbers 12:3 (NKJV)

Moses was the most patient, caring man on the earth at that time, and there would be very few after him who would possess his level of humility. Yet the hidden treachery from the time of Adam was still concealed in the character of Moses. Our heavenly Father wanted to free Moses from this hidden hostility.

The only way to do this was to allow the natural tendencies of Moses to abound in a tough situation. This would allow God's grace to much more abound. At the moment that Moses struck the rock twice in anger because of the faithless ingratitude of the people, the hidden enmity in Moses surfaced. The striking of the rock was a symbol of the striking of Christ. Before Moses would climb Mt Nebo and go to the grave, God would reveal the depth of hostility within Moses to such an extent that it could be seen that Moses possessed the same nature as the Pharaoh who tried to kill him as an infant.

In the last chapter we saw the killing of the guilty within Israel for allowing false worship and sexual immorality into the camp. Now it was time for the guilty nations of Moab and Midian to reap what they had sown. God speaks to Moses:

"Take vengeance on the Midianites for the children of Israel. Afterward you shall be gathered to your people." Numbers 31:2 (NKJV)

Here is the final task for Moses before he dies; vengeance on the Midianites. But whose vengeance was being satisfied here? Consider two other translations:

“Execute the vengeance of the sons of Israel against the Midianites – afterwards thou art gathered unto thy people.” Numbers 31:2 (YLT)

“Let [avenge with punishment the sons of Israel] on the Midianites; and at *the* last you shall be added to your people.” Numbers 31:2 (Apostolic Polyglot)

What did Moses and the Israelites understand by vengeance?

So Moses spoke to the people, saying, “Arm some of yourselves for war, and let them go against the Midianites to take vengeance for the LORD on Midian.” Numbers 31:3 (NKJV)

Vengeance to Moses meant to kill and destroy those who had done wrong. Moses expressed human vengeance as God’s vengeance. This is projecting onto God the character traits of Israel, including Moses. The cunning treachery of Balaam in league with the Midianites stirs the wrath of Moses and causes the offense of Moses to abound. (Rom 5:20).

God spoke to Moses of the vengeance of the sons of Israel. Moses spoke of the vengeance of Jehovah. Moses tells the Israelites to arm themselves for war. God did not mention the word *war* or being armed. How does God avenge Himself on His enemies?

Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but *rather* give place to wrath; for it is written, “vengeance is mine, I will repay,” says the Lord. Therefore **“If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head.”** Romans 12:19–20 (NKJV)

God’s vengeance feeds His enemies and gives them something to drink. When your enemy is kind to you, it tortures your conscience (if there is any conscience left) and it causes great discomfort to the soul. This is how God turns His enemies, which include all men in their natural

state, into His friends — His goodness towards us leads us to repentance and reconciliation. (Rom 2:4).

How did Elisha treat his enemies?

Now when the king of Israel saw them, he said to Elisha, “My father, shall I kill *them*? Shall I kill *them*?” But he answered, “You shall not kill *them*. Would you kill those whom you have taken captive with your sword and your bow? Set food and water before them, that they may eat and drink and go to their master.”

Then he prepared a great feast for them; and after they ate and drank, he sent them away and they went to their master. So the bands of Syrian *raiders* came no more into the land of Israel.  
2 Kings 6:21-23 (NKJV)

Why did the bands of Syrian raiders no longer come into the land of Israel? It is because of the coals of fire on their heads. These soldiers thought they were going to die. To instead be treated to a great feast reached into their hearts and made them ashamed of their desire to kill the Israelites, so they stopped.

But as we stated, it was not God’s vengeance that was being executed; it was the vengeance of Israel. Moses struck the rock, a symbol of Christ, again by saying it was God’s vengeance executed. It was a manifestation of the hidden enmity which originated in the heart of Adam.

The meekest man in all the earth suddenly reveals the hidden hostility within him in the desire to slaughter the Midianites. If God had not said what He did, this hidden hostility might not have surfaced.

It is the misunderstanding of what God means that causes Him to be shrouded in darkness. Put another way, it is the projection of men’s thoughts onto God’s words that causes God to appear clothed in darkness. There is no darkness in God, but as men who represent God misunderstand His character, this causes darkness to surround God. The darkness is God misrepresented by His followers.

## THE SLAUGHTER OF THE MIDIANITES

It is vital that the depth of hostility in Moses be revealed before he dies. God does not do this to condemn Moses, but that Moses might receive abounding grace. God never condemns; He only convicts to bring healing of the enmity for deeper reconciliation. It is man that, in his misunderstanding, perceives this work of conviction as being condemning, and in guilt and fear he perishes.

Israel went to war with Midian with the thought that they were fighting God's war and taking His vengeance. The Midianites were decimated. Israel made certain that Balaam, that false prophet, was destroyed also. But when they return, Moses reacts with great anger.

But Moses was angry with the officers of the army, *with* the captains over thousands and captains over hundreds, who had come from the battle. And Moses said to them: "Have you kept all the women alive? Look, these *women* caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to trespass against the LORD in the incident of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the LORD. Now therefore, kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman who has known a man intimately." Numbers 31:14-17 (NKJV)

Did God say anything to Moses about killing baby boys? In what way had the baby boys of Midian seduced Israel, causing a plague to destroy 24,000 Israelites? All women that have ever slept with a man were put to death. But the girls who had not slept with a man were kept alive to be groomed to sleep with Israelite men and to be their slaves.

It is not hard to understand the human logic of why the women were put to death, but in the light of the character of Jesus who forgave the woman caught in adultery, it reveals to all of us where our hearts are on this question.

Moses' life was spared when the Pharaoh of Egypt commanded that all Israelite baby boys were to be killed and the baby girls were to be spared.

Then the king of Egypt spoke to the Hebrew midwives, of whom the name of one *was* Shiphrah and the name of the other Puah; and he said, “When you do the duties of a midwife for the Hebrew women, and see *them* on the birthstools, if it *is* a son, then you shall kill him; but if it *is* a daughter, then she shall live.” Exodus 1:15–16 (NKJV)

It is also of interest that when Moses fled Egypt, he found refuge in the land of Midian.

When Pharaoh heard of this matter, he sought to kill Moses. But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh and dwelt in the land of Midian; and he sat down by a well. Exodus 2:15 (NKJV)

Moses married the daughter of Jethro, the priest of Midian. (Ex 2:16-21). All of these things should cause us to tremble. Moses was the meekest man that lived. When the right test came, it was revealed that Moses could display the same attributes as Pharaoh who sought to slay the Israelite children.

If you truly want to know what is hidden deep in your soul, look into the face of Moses and see yourself. All these things were written for our learning. (Rom 15:4). There is nothing good in man; there are none who seek after God. (Rom 3:11–12). As Jesus told us, there is none good but One, God.

In the slaughter of the kings of Midian and their men, we see the sacrifice of the guilty. In the women who had seduced Israelite men, we also see the sacrifice of the guilty. In the death of the women who had not seduced Israel and the baby boys of Midian, we see the sacrifice of the innocent – and this completes the atonement of Penal Substitution. All of this has echoes of the garden accusation: “the woman whom you, (the Son), gave to me...”: the guilty woman and the innocent Son are condemned to death in order to complete the atonement for Adam.

The rest of the chapter speaks of the spoils of war and how they were divided and what was devoted to God. Then we read something extremely important on the subject of the atonement.

## THE SLAUGHTER OF THE MIDIANITES

“Therefore we have brought an offering for the LORD, what every man found of ornaments of gold: armlets and bracelets and signet rings and earrings and necklaces, **to make atonement for ourselves** before the LORD.” Numbers 31:50 (NKJV)

In putting the Midianites to death and taking the spoils of war and making an offering to God, the Israelites made atonement *for themselves*. But how do men make atonement for themselves when there is none righteous, no not one? As God had stated, it was Israel’s vengeance that was being satisfied, therefore the atonement was for themselves.

For a brief moment, Moses appears like Pharoah, with the same seed of enmity driven by the desire to preserve his nation. The critical point to remember is that God does not condemn any person for their failures, but He will show them the truth so that He might give them mercy and spiritual healing if they accept the truth.

Many people are horrified at the suggestion that Moses acted wrongly. This is an attempt to justify the hidden hostility in their hearts. Jesus never ordered the slaying of anyone; it is not part of His character. Christ endured the Cross in the death of all those Midianites, so that the gospel process in Moses could be completed.

Make no mistake, the Midianites received the natural consequences of their choices. They were seeking to destroy Israel, so God allowed the iniquities of the fathers to be visited upon the children. God did not prevent the consequences to fall, but God’s character is not represented in the slaughter of the Midianites.

It is my prayer that in reading these stories with fresh eyes the Mirror Principle will take on a far greater significance. What we read in Scripture as atonement is a reflection of men’s atonement. God’s thoughts are not our thoughts, but He meets us where we are. I pray that the depravity of all human nature will be revealed and laid in the dust so that all of us will cling to Christ as our only hope of salvation. There is no one who is good, no not one. This is why this history is given to us:

## MIRROR PRINCIPLE

“These things happened to them as examples for us. They were written down to warn us who live at the end of the age.”  
1 Corinthians 10:11

We all have the same flesh as Moses and Pharoah. We have the potential to do exactly as they did even if we are the meekest person on earth.

## CHAPTER 47

# WITH VEIL REMOVED

So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like Him as we are changed into His glorious image.  
2 Corinthians 3:18

In this quest to find my Father in heaven, I confess to the reality that He found me like the lost sheep. The Father I have found through the Scriptures is love from beginning to end. The Scriptures, combined with my personal experiences with my parents, wife, and children, validate the tenderness which must be found in the heart of our Creator, for I could not conceive such tender heart longings myself, due to the darkness I know dwells in my heart.

Satan has done his uttermost to prevent me from finding my Father by placing the path of the Old Testament through his own house of mirrors. Discerning the true from the false becomes virtually impossible, because in reading these ancient Scriptures outside of Christ, they only present to me a God who is like me. My flesh is content with such a revelation, but the faithful witness of Jesus beckons me to search further and deeper.

I have done my diligence to navigate through the stories of the first five books of the Bible to harmonize the person of God in the Torah with the



person of Christ in the New Testament. I have tried to show in these stories what is man's thinking and what is God's thinking. In this volume, I have laid before you ten principles by which the confusion of the house of mirrors is removed.

Jesus Christ is the revelation of the Father. He is the only key to removing the veil in our reading of the Old Testament. It is tempting to think we can read the Old Testament directly and discern the stories in it. But if the Bible is correct in pronouncing the human heart completely deceitful, then we are wise to exercise humility in coming to it, question our assumptions, and look for complete harmony across the entire Bible.

I have met so many people that feel very sceptical of the idea that often what they are reading is a mirror of their own thinking. At first this feels very destabilising, but the alternative is to unwittingly believe that Jesus is not the complete revelation of God, and that God does not live by His own Ten Commandments.

The greatest point which perplexes me is the ease with which so many Christians justify the genocide of nations, and the slaughter of innocent children. The justification of such deeds as sanctioned by the God of heaven is to harden one's heart to such an extent, that our humanity is vulnerable to careering into the ditch of condemnation. A man set in this mindset will call for destruction of all who disagree with him and think that God approves.

The worship of a God of violence, genocide, and burning to death of billions is the single greatest cause of violence and destruction in this world, for we become what we believe in; we are ambassadors for the deity we venerate.

Many Christians dismiss questions from thoughtful atheists and agnostics; it is easy to (especially if you believe in predestination) when they are already deemed wicked, destined for hell. Christianity lacks penetration into the world because of its defence of the violence of God. The sensitivities of men and women, horrified by the atrocities attributed to God, cause them to turn in other directions for answers to

perplexing questions. Rather than sympathising and studying deeper for better answers, Christians too often disparage them as faithless and unbelieving.

I pray the material presented in this volume will give pause for reflection, nurturing a seed of hope in the joyful thought that the Creator of all is not the destroyer of most. If the truth of the Scriptures rings true that by beholding we become changed, then ought we not to behold an image of complete benevolence, love, mercy, and grace without the threat of violence? Any image of violence must ensure, based on this principle, that violence is destined to be enshrined forever in the human experience. If we would banish violence from ourselves, then we must banish it from the God we worship. The simplicity of this argument should be plain to any candid thinker.

Would we expect a young woman to rest completely in the arms of a lover who has murdered thousands of infants, plus millions of men and women? How is there peace in the bosom of such a destroyer? Isaiah describes the effect of looking with open face into the face of the true God:

In that day the wolf and the lamb will live together; the leopard will lie down with the baby goat. The calf and the yearling will be safe with the lion, and a little child will lead them all. The cow will graze near the bear. The cub and the calf will lie down together. The lion will eat hay like a cow. The baby will play safely near the hole of a cobra. Yes, a little child will put its hand in a nest of deadly snakes without harm. **Nothing will hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain, for as the waters fill the sea, so the earth will be filled with people who know the LORD.** Isaiah 11:6-9

Nothing will hurt or destroy in God's holy mountain because His subjects are caressed by a Spirit that has never hurt or destroyed anyone, ever. Can't we confidently assert that we hold this truth to be self-evident to every liberty, freedom seeking mind?

In my life, I have felt overwhelmed at times at the thought of the wars that ravaged our world shortly before I was born. My father lived

through World War II in the Netherlands, and his experience affected him the rest of his life. I have studied that era to try and grasp the horrors my father had to endure, such as the sight of dead bodies blown apart in the street from screaming bombs dropped from above.

I have grieved at the inhumanity of men towards men through the centuries of time. Why is the history of man so full of war and bloodshed? So many times, after a crime against humanity has occurred, man has said “never again,” only for it to be repeated; it seems a legacy of rage and madness we cannot be free from.

I have longed for some principle by which to live where I could know for certain that I had found a path to escape repeating these atrocities, not only with my hands but in my heart. Oh, to be completely cleansed of the desire for violence towards any man or woman!

In Jesus Christ I find a man who is free of this evil that exists in men. My dilemma has been the character of His Father, which seemed so impossibly contrasted to that of His Son. Yet in the space of the last several years I have been joyfully gripped by a growing certainty that my Father in heaven is not a being of force, violence, or death. This once flickering hope has now blazed into the sweetest assurance – God is love, not only in words but in every deed of His existence! Not only in letter, but in spirit and in truth!

I have searched for this Father with all my heart; I have dedicated myself to this pursuit, sometimes trembling, sometimes confused, often in prayer, many times in tears when the evidence finally comes after many hours of mining the Scriptures seeking its veins of gold.

Now as I look into the face of Jesus who walked this earth, I have the certainty that I am seeing the Father. God truly is in Christ reconciling myself to Himself. I find His love compelling, His patience unfathomable, His mercy sublime, and His forgiveness my delight.

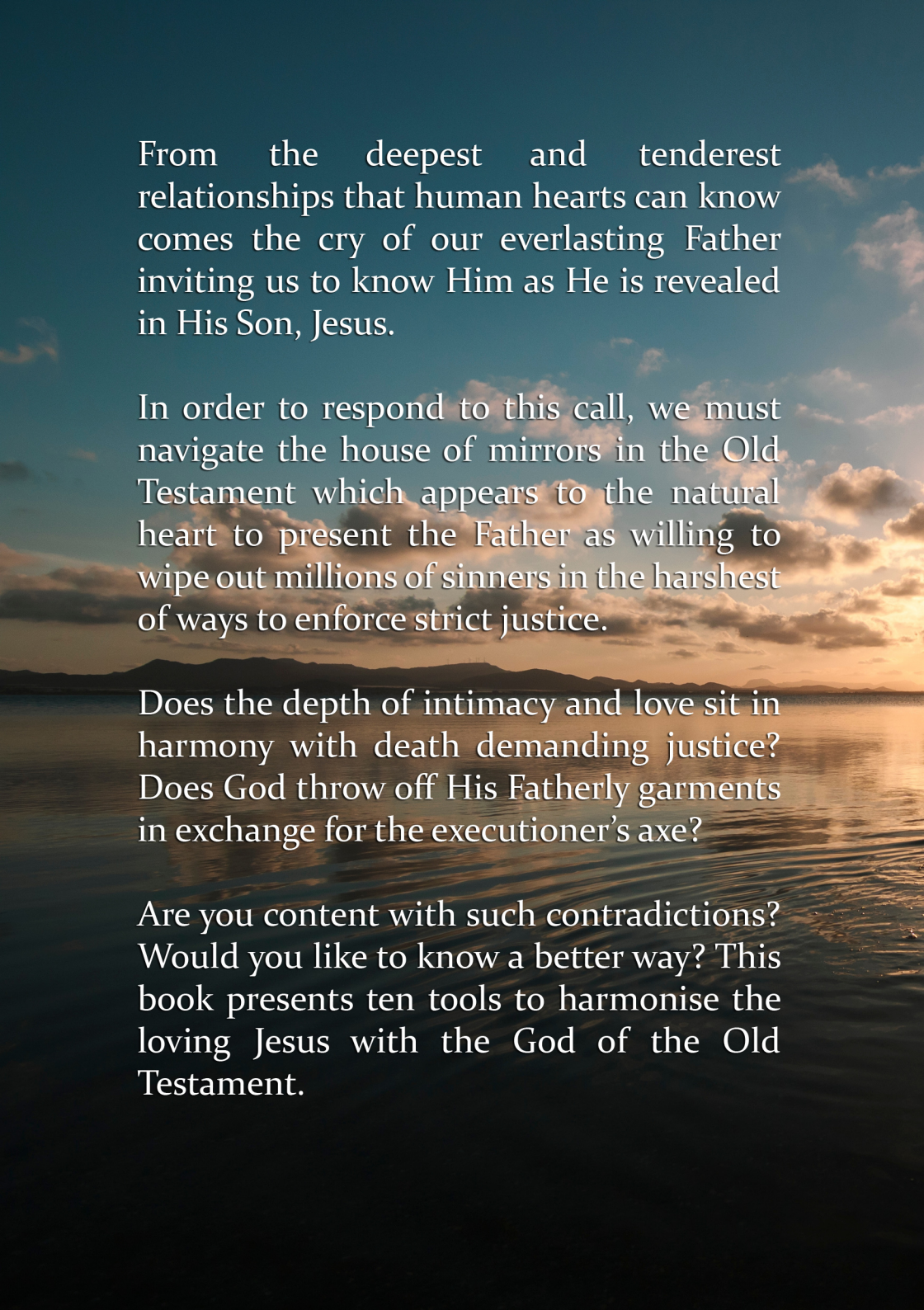
I pray with the fondest of hopes that my feeble efforts to speak of the divine have opened a window in your mind to grasp the beauty of the infinite God, to sense His true splendor as a tender, gentle Father, and

to know He has done all in His vast power to reconcile our deluded minds, infected by Satan's lies, back to Himself.

Taste and see that the Lord is good. Take the principles I have provided and test them to your own satisfaction, and may you find, dear reader, the same precious joy I have found in the bosom of our loving Father through Jesus Christ our Lord.

No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared *him*. John 1:18 (KJV)



A sunset over a body of water with mountains in the distance. The sky is a mix of blue and orange, with clouds catching the low sun. The water reflects the colors of the sky.

From the deepest and tenderest relationships that human hearts can know comes the cry of our everlasting Father inviting us to know Him as He is revealed in His Son, Jesus.

In order to respond to this call, we must navigate the house of mirrors in the Old Testament which appears to the natural heart to present the Father as willing to wipe out millions of sinners in the harshest of ways to enforce strict justice.

Does the depth of intimacy and love sit in harmony with death demanding justice? Does God throw off His Fatherly garments in exchange for the executioner's axe?

Are you content with such contradictions? Would you like to know a better way? This book presents ten tools to harmonise the loving Jesus with the God of the Old Testament.