

## BEHOLDING THE EVIL AND THE GOOD : PART ONE

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Jesus' Final Moments On The Cross, Jesus Bore Our Sins, God Beholds Both Evil And Good, God's All-Seeing Nature, Evil In The Sight Of The Lord, Rebellious Backslidden Israel And Her Wicked Kings, Even The Good Kings Made Serious Errors, False Gods Of The Nations, Delusion Of The Wicked, Our Sins Aren't Hidden From The Lord, Held Accountable And Judged According To Our Works, Depart From Evil, Walk In The Light Of Christ

Some time ago, one of my readers asked me if God is able to look upon evil. Based on Jesus' well-known utterances which He made during His final moments of agony on the Cross, that we find in both the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, this person arrived at the conclusion that in the darkest hour that the world has ever known, when Jesus bore the weight of the sins of the world upon Himself alone, God the Father withdrew Himself. According to this individual, this was signified by an actual physical darkening of the sky. He stated that God was simply unable to bear looking upon the evil which had befallen His Son. Consider the following set of verses which discuss how Jesus became the propitiation for our sins:

"Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"  
Matthew 27:45-46, KJV

"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly . . . But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."  
Romans 5:6, 8, KJV

"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;"  
1 Corinthians 15:3, KJV

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."  
2 Corinthians 5:21, KJV

"Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:"  
Galatians 1:3-4, KJV

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."

1 Timothy 1:15, KJV

"Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;"  
Hebrews 1:3, KJV

"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."  
Hebrews 9:28, KJV

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."  
1 Peter 2:24, KJV

"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."  
1 John 1:7, KJV

"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."  
1 John 2:1-2, KJV

"And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin."  
1 John 3:5, KJV

"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."  
1 John 4:10, KJV

"And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,"  
Revelation 1:5, KJV

As I began to ponder this person's comments, the very first verse that came to my mind is the following one which is found in the Book of Proverbs:

"The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good."  
Proverbs 15:3, KJV

This verse clearly demonstrates that the Lord truly does see all of the works of man upon the face of the Earth, whether they are good, or whether they are evil. During the height of his sufferings, after he had lost most of his family, his wealth and his possessions, and as he sat in ashes scraping off the boils which covered his body from head to toe, the Patriarch Job uttered a similar statement when he said the following:

"For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his

goings."  
Job 34:21, KJV

I will be discussing the story of Job in more detail later on in this same series. As I began to further explore the wonderful Word of God, I discovered quite a few interesting verses which deal with the issues of good and evil, how God turns His face away from evil, Divine Chastisements as well as Divine Blessings, etc. While I can't possibly quote every single verse which I discovered due to their sheer volume, the ones which I have chosen to share in this series provide us with a well-rounded perspective regarding these different topics. In addition to the previous verses which demonstrate God's all-seeing nature, there are quite a few verses which we find throughout the Old Testament which contain the phrase "And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord", or else similar phraseology. Consider these following examples:

"And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of his father, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin."  
1 Kings 15:26, KJV

"And he wrought evil in the sight of the LORD; but not like his father, and like his mother: for he put away the image of Baal that his father had made."  
2 Kings 3:2, KJV

"And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his fathers had done."  
2 Kings 23:32, KJV

"And he caused his children to pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom: also he observed times, and used enchantments, and used witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar spirit, and with wizards: he wrought much evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger . . . But he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, as did Manasseh his father: for Amon sacrificed unto all the carved images which Manasseh his father had made, and served them;"  
2 Chronicles 33:6, 22, KJV

"And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD his God, and humbled not himself before Jeremiah the prophet speaking from the mouth of the LORD."  
2 Chronicles 36:12, KJV

In fact, it may surprise you to know that the phrase "evil in the sight of the Lord" is found a total of forty-four times in the Old Testament of the King James Version of the Bible.

As I point out in articles such as "The Children of God and Politics", "The Fruits of Disobedience", "Is God a Racist?", and a number of others, the Old Testament is one continuous story of the rebellious, spiritually-backslidden condition of ancient Israel under her wicked kings. While it is true that certain kings -- such as David, Solomon, Asa, Hezekiah and Josiah -- pleased the Lord to different degrees, they appear to have been the exception to the rule. In fact, even most of those kings committed some rather gross errors during their lifetimes. For example, King David engaged in adultery and committed murder when he schemed against Uriah the Hittite,

who was the husband of Bathsheba. David's own son, Solomon, became an apostate in his old age, and seriously engaged in idolatry with his non-Jewish wives.

The truth of the matter is that most of the Israelite kings -- meaning the kings of both the northern and the southern kingdoms which resulted from the division -- either actively indulged in, or at least permitted and tolerated such evils as blatant idolatry -- which included the sacrifice of young children to the false god Molech -- and different forms of divination and sorcery. This sad truth is made quite evident by verses such as the following, where we see that the Jews abandoned the Lord, and bowed down to the false gods of the nations which surrounded them:

"And they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that were round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the LORD to anger . . . Nevertheless the LORD raised up judges, which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them. And yet they would not hearken unto their judges, but they went a whoring after other gods, and bowed themselves unto them: they turned quickly out of the way which their fathers walked in, obeying the commandments of the LORD; but they did not so. And when the LORD raised them up judges, then the LORD was with the judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge: for it repented the LORD because of their groanings by reason of them that oppressed them and vexed them. And it came to pass, when the judge was dead, that they returned, and corrupted themselves more than their fathers, in following other gods to serve them, and to bow down unto them; they ceased not from their own doings, nor from their stubborn way."  
Judges 2:12, 16-19, KJV

"And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim, and Ashtaroth, and the gods of Syria, and the gods of Zidon, and the gods of Moab, and the gods of the children of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines, and forsook the LORD, and served not him."  
Judges 10:6, KJV

"And they transgressed against the God of their fathers, and went a whoring after the gods of the people of the land, whom God destroyed before them."  
1 Chronicles 5:25, KJV

"Now it came to pass, after that Amaziah was come from the slaughter of the Edomites, that he brought the gods of the children of Seir, and set them up to be his gods, and bowed down himself before them, and burned incense unto them. Wherefore the anger of the LORD was kindled against Amaziah, and he sent unto him a prophet, which said unto him, Why hast thou sought after the gods of the people, which could not deliver their own people out of thine hand?"  
2 Chronicles 25:14-15, KJV

"And in the time of his distress did he trespass yet more against the LORD: this is that king Ahaz. For he sacrificed unto the gods of Damascus, which smote him: and he said, Because the gods of the kings of Syria help them, therefore

will I sacrifice to them, that they may help me. But they were the ruin of him, and of all Israel. And Ahaz gathered together the vessels of the house of God, and cut in pieces the vessels of the house of God, and shut up the doors of the house of the LORD, and he made him altars in every corner of Jerusalem. And in every several city of Judah he made high places to burn incense unto other gods, and provoked to anger the LORD God of his fathers."  
2 Chronicles 28:22-25, KJV

"But king Solomon loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites; Of the nations concerning which the LORD said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you: for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon clave unto these in love. And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart. For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father. For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. And Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and went not fully after the LORD, as did David his father. Then did Solomon build an high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon. And likewise did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods. And the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the LORD God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice, And had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods: but he kept not that which the LORD commanded."  
1 Kings 11:1-10, KJV

"And he made his son pass through the fire, and observed times, and used enchantments, and dealt with familiar spirits and wizards: he wrought much wickedness in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger."  
2 Kings 21:6, KJV

"And it shall come to pass, that the nation and kingdom which will not serve the same Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, and that will not put their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, that nation will I punish, saith the LORD, with the sword, and with the famine, and with the pestilence, until I have consumed them by his hand. Therefore hearken not ye to your prophets, nor to your diviners, nor to your dreamers, nor to your enchanters, nor to your sorcerers, which speak unto you, saying, Ye shall not serve the king of Babylon: For they prophesy a lie unto you, to remove you far from your land; and that I should drive you out, and ye should perish."  
Jeremiah 27:8-10, KJV

Despite Scriptural examples such as the above which clearly reveal the Lord's all-seeing nature, it seems that for some odd reason, certain people have the mistaken idea that their wickedness is hidden from God. They go about committing evil as if they will never be found out, or be held accountable,

for their actions. This dark, misguided mentality is clearly revealed in the following verses:

"They encourage themselves in an evil matter: they commune of laying snares privily; they say, Who shall see them?"  
Psalms 64:5, KJV

"The eye also of the adulterer waiteth for the twilight, saying, No eye shall see me: and disguiseth his face."  
Job 24:15, KJV

"He sitteth in the lurking places of the villages: in the secret places doth he murder the innocent: his eyes are privily set against the poor. He lieth in wait secretly as a lion in his den: he lieth in wait to catch the poor: he doth catch the poor, when he draweth him into his net."  
Psalms 10:8-9, KJV

"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd."  
John 3:19-20, KJV

Clearly then, we are only deceiving ourselves when we think that our wicked deeds are hidden from the Lord. Be it known to you that there is absolutely nothing hidden from the Face of God. He knows our darkest secrets, and He sees all of our sins. The wickedness of our heart is laid bare before Him. This plain truth is revealed by the following verses:

". . . behold, ye have sinned against the LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out."  
Numbers 32:23b, KJV

"O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from thee."  
Psalms 69:5, KJV

"Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance."  
Psalms 90:8, KJV

"Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the LORD. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the LORD."  
Jeremiah 23:24, KJV

"He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him."  
Daniel 2:22, KJV

". . . Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed? and not to be set on a candlestick? For there is nothing hid, which shall not be manifested; neither was any thing kept secret, but that it should come abroad."  
Mark 4:21b-22, KJV

"For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known."

Luke 12:2, KJV

"If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin."

John 15:22, KJV

"Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."

Hebrews 4:13, KJV

Furthermore, in God's appointed time, we shall all be held accountable for our actions, whether they are good or evil. The Scriptures inform us that we shall all appear before the great Throne of God, and the Judgment Seat of Christ, as we see by the following verses:

"If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? and shall not he render to every man according to his works?"

Proverbs 24:12, KJV

"For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."

Ecclesiastes 12:14, KJV

"For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works."

Matthew 16:27, KJV

"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world . . . Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:"

Matthew 25:31-34, 41, KJV

"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

John 5:28-29, KJV

"So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."

Romans 14:12, KJV

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

2 Corinthians 5:10, KJV

"And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear:"

1 Peter 1:17, KJV

"Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you: Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead . . . For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?"

1 Peter 4:4-5, 17, KJV

". . . I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works."

Revelation 2:23b, KJV

"And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."

Revelation 14:13, KJV

"And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."

Revelation 20:11-13, KJV

Because God does see all of our evil and sins, and because He knows that He is eventually going to have to judge each of us accordingly, throughout the Bible, through the mouths of His many Prophets and Messengers, He clearly informs us that He has presented us with a choice. The Lord pleads with us to depart from evil, to do good, to choose life, and to be obedient to His Word, in order that we might receive His blessings in our lives, as can be seen by the following sample verses:

"See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; In that I command thee this day to love the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it. But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them; I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, and that ye shall not prolong your days upon the land, whither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it. I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: That thou mayest love the LORD thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them."

Deuteronomy 30:15-20, KJV



"And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding."  
Job 28:28, KJV

Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it."  
Psalms 34:14, KJV

"Depart from evil, and do good; and dwell for evermore."  
Psalms 37:27, KJV

"Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil."  
Proverbs 3:7, KJV

"By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil . . . The highway of the upright is to depart from evil: he that keepeth his way preserveth his soul."  
Proverbs 16:6, 17, KJV

"Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil;"  
Isaiah 1:16, KJV

". . . return ye now every one from his evil way, and make your ways and your doings good."  
Jeremiah 18:11b, KJV

"Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live: and so the LORD, the God of hosts, shall be with you, as ye have spoken."  
Amos 5:14, KJV

"Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."  
Romans 12:21, KJV

Using light and darkness as an analogy, Jesus and the writers of the New Testament inform us that by forsaking evil, we leave the darkness behind and walk in the Light of His fellowship. Once we have begun walking in the Light, we are told to not look back to the darkness, but rather to share the Light of the Gospel with the world. The following verses demonstrate these points:

"Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."  
Matthew 5:14-16, KJV

"But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God."  
John 3:21, KJV

"The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light."  
Romans 13:12, KJV

"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness,

hath shined 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, KJV

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?"  
2 Corinthians 6:14, KJV

"For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light . . . And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them."  
Ephesians 5:8, 11, KJV

"Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:"  
Colossians 1:13, KJV

"But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness."  
1 Thessalonians 5:4-5, KJV

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:"  
1 Peter 2:9, KJV

"If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."  
1 John 1:6-7, KJV

This issue regarding the contrast between the darkness and the light is also discussed at length in articles such as "The Children of Light: Are You One of Us?", "Do You Want Love and Light, or Rod and Wrath?", "Dracula, Nosferatu, Twilight: The Vampire Fad", and "This Little Light, Glory of the Lord and Our Bright Future". Please consider reading them.

Please go to part two for the continuation of this series.

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End Of File

BEHOLDING THE EVIL AND THE GOOD : PART TWO

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Judgment In This Life, Roman Persecution Of The First Century Church, Evangelization Through Persecution, Great Commission, Positive Fruit Results From Persecution, Importance Of Being Consistent With Child Discipline, Fiery Prophets And God's Stiff Warnings, Israelites Refused To Listen, God's Pity For His Children, God Desires Repentance Healing And Restoration

While we all know that we will eventually face judgment if we choose to not turn away from our evil ways, what some people may not realize is that judgment is not necessarily reserved just for the final Day Of Judgment. In the case of God's children who are called by His Name, according to the Apostle Peter, our judgment begins in this very life. As you may already know, the persecution against the First Century Church began in Jerusalem -- instigated by the unbelieving Jewish religious hierarchy in collusion with the local Roman procurator Pontius Pilate -- and grew even worse years later under the tyrannical reign of Roman emperor Nero, and later emperors such as Diocletian during the early Fourth Century. It may very well have been Nero's initial persecution which motivated the Apostle Peter to write the following sentence in his first Epistle:

"For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?"  
1 Peter 4:17, KJV

As I explain in other articles such as "Civil Disobedience and Christian Persecution", I am convinced that God in fact allowed this persecution in order that the Christian Gospel might be carried beyond the borders of Israel, and into all the world, according to Jesus' own mandate. This is evident in the following two verses where we see Jesus' command in Acts 1:8, and the beginning of its fulfillment in Acts 8:1 Please notice the reversed Bible verse references:

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."  
Acts 1:8, KJV

"And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles."  
Acts 8:1, KJV

Following are some additional verses which are found in the pages of the New Testament which clearly describe for us our Great Commission; that is, the Christian evangelization of the whole world under the Guidance and Power of the Lord's Holy Spirit:

"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the

world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

Matthew 24:14, KJV

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:"

Matthew 28:19, KJV

"And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."

Luke 24:46-47, KJV

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

Mark 16:15, KJV

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you."

John 15:16, KJV

"And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house . . . Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears."

Acts 20:20, 31, KJV

"How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things . . . So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

Romans 10:14-15, 17, KJV

"For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!"

1 Corinthians 9:16, KJV

"Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things."

Galatians 6:6, KJV

"Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints, For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel; Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth:"

Colossians 1:4-6, KJV

"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall

be able to teach others also."

2 Timothy 2:2, KJV

"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine."

2 Timothy 4:2, KJV

As you can see, while at first glance, persecution may seem like a bad thing, the truth is that God has a very positive purpose in allowing it to happen. In other words, good fruit -- in the form of greater evangelization and souls being won to the Lord -- can result from it. I am reminded of one of Jesus' Parables that is found in the Gospel of Luke:

"He spake also this parable; A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: And if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down."

Luke 13:6-9, KJV

Digging about the tree, and fertilizing it with dung, can be compared to persecution, in that it caused the tree to become fruitful, whereas before it had been barren. Has God ever lit the fires of persecution under you because you were not being as productive for Him as you should have been? If so, you may wish to read articles such as "Sluggards and Sloths: Are You Diligent and Faithful in the Affairs of God's Kingdom?", "Are You a Burning Ember for the Lord?" and "Endtime Witnessing: Winning the Sheep and Waging the Warfare".

At any rate, based upon the Apostle Peter's previous remarks, I personally believe that the Lord may judge and chastise us on a regular day-to-day basis, just as we likewise judge and chasten our natural children on a daily basis, if and when it becomes necessary. As many experienced parents will know, if we let down our guard for even one day with our children, we are asking for trouble; because this may be viewed as a sign of weakness and a lack of moral conviction by our children. When problems do occur, oft times it is because the parents have failed to be consistent in their dealings with their children. As we are clearly told in the Book of Proverbs, to spare, or to hold back, the rod of correction, is to spoil the child:

"He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes."

Proverbs 13:24, KJV

"Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying."

Proverbs 19:18, KJV

"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it . . . Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him."

Proverbs 22:6, 15, KJV

"Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell."

Proverbs 23:13-14, KJV

"The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame . . . Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul."

Proverbs 29:15, 17, KJV

Following are some additional Scriptures regarding the topic of youthful foolishness, child discipline and our Christian parental responsibilities:

"The proverbs of Solomon. A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother."

Proverbs 10:1, KJV

"A wise son heareth his father's instruction: but a scorner heareth not rebuke."

Proverbs 13:1, KJV

"A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish man despiseth his mother."

Proverbs 15:20, KJV

"A whip for the horse, a bridle for the ass, and a rod for the fool's back."

Proverbs 26:3, KJV

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

Ephesians 6:1-4, KJV

"Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord. Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged."

Colossians 3:20-21, KJV

"Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;"

1 Timothy 3:3-4, KJV

Returning to our main topic, considering the fact that the Lord clearly beholds our evil ways, if the judgment of His children begins in this life, what form does this judgment usually take? As I pointed out earlier, a clear answer can be found in the Old Testament by examining His many dealings with the rebellious children of Israel. God exercised a lot of patience with them, and continually warned them to repent of their evil deeds through the mouths of His fiery Prophets. In some instances -- such as with the young Prophet Jeremiah who warned his rebellious brethren for approximately forty years -- these warnings to repent were sometimes issued for

many years before the judgment actually befell them. Sadly, in many cases, the foolish Israelites refused to listen, and did not take heed to the Lord's warnings, as we can determine by the following set of verses:

"Surely none of the men that came up out of Egypt, from twenty years old and upward, shall see the land which I swear unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob; because they have not wholly followed me:"  
Numbers 32:11, KJV

"And the LORD said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them."  
1 Samuel 8:7, KJV

"Neither will I make the feet of Israel move any more out of the land which I gave their fathers; only if they will observe to do according to all that I have commanded them, and according to all the law that my servant Moses commanded them. But they hearkened not: and Manasseh seduced them to do more evil than did the nations whom the LORD destroyed before the children of Israel."  
2 Kings 21:8-9, KJV

"Now therefore, our God, the great, the mighty, and the terrible God, who keepest covenant and mercy, let not all the trouble seem little before thee, that hath come upon us, on our kings, on our princes, and on our priests, and on our prophets, and on our fathers, and on all thy people, since the time of the kings of Assyria unto this day. Howbeit thou art just in all that is brought upon us; for thou hast done right, but we have done wickedly: Neither have our kings, our princes, our priests, nor our fathers, kept thy law, nor hearkened unto thy commandments and thy testimonies, wherewith thou didst testify against them. For they have not served thee in their kingdom, and in thy great goodness that thou gavest them, and in the large and fat land which thou gavest before them, neither turned they from their wicked works."  
Nehemiah 9:32-35, KJV

"Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness: When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work. Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways: Unto whom I swear in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest."  
Psalms 95:8-11, KJV

"They have not known nor understood: for he hath shut their eyes, that they cannot see; and their hearts, that they cannot understand."  
Isaiah 44:18, KJV

"And I brought you into a plentiful country, to eat the fruit thereof and the goodness thereof; but when ye entered, ye defiled my land, and made mine heritage an abomination."  
Jeremiah 2:7, KJV

"For my people is foolish, they have not known me; they are sottish children, and they have none understanding: they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge."  
Jeremiah 4:22, KJV

"O LORD, are not thine eyes upon the truth? thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved; thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive correction: they have made their faces harder than a rock; they have refused to return."  
Jeremiah 5:3, KJV

"Hear, O earth: behold, I will bring evil upon this people, even the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not hearkened unto my words, nor to my law, but rejected it."  
Jeremiah 6:19, KJV

"But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you. But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but walked in the counsels and in the imagination of their evil heart, and went backward, and not forward. Since the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto this day I have even sent unto you all my servants the prophets, daily rising up early and sending them: Yet they hearkened not unto me, nor inclined their ear, but hardened their neck: they did worse than their fathers. Therefore thou shalt speak all these words unto them; but they will not hearken to thee: thou shalt also call unto them; but they will not answer thee. But thou shalt say unto them, This is a nation that obeyeth not the voice of the LORD their God, nor receiveth correction: truth is perished, and is cut off from their mouth."  
Jeremiah 7:23-28, KJV

"But they obeyed not, neither inclined their ear, but made their neck stiff, that they might not hear, nor receive instruction."  
Jeremiah 17:23, KJV

"Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Behold, I will send upon them the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, and will make them like vile figs, that cannot be eaten, they are so evil. And I will persecute them with the sword, with the famine, and with the pestilence, and will deliver them to be removed to all the kingdoms of the earth, to be a curse, and an astonishment, and an hissing, and a reproach, among all the nations whither I have driven them: Because they have not hearkened to my words, saith the LORD, which I sent unto them by my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them; but ye would not hear, saith the LORD."  
Jeremiah 29:17-19, KJV

"And they came in, and possessed it; but they obeyed not thy voice, neither walked in thy law; they have done nothing of all that thou commandedst them to do: therefore thou hast caused all this evil to come upon them . . . And they have turned unto me the back, and not the face: though I taught them, rising up early and teaching them, yet they have not hearkened to receive instruction."  
Jeremiah 32:23, 33, KJV



"Therefore thus saith the LORD God of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring upon Judah and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem all the evil that I have pronounced against them: because I have spoken unto them, but they have not heard; and I have called unto them, but they have not answered."  
Jeremiah 35:17, KJV

"And I will punish him and his seed and his servants for their iniquity; and I will bring upon them, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and upon the men of Judah, all the evil that I have pronounced against them; but they hearkened not."  
Jeremiah 36:31, KJV

"Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Ye have seen all the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem, and upon all the cities of Judah; and, behold, this day they are a desolation, and no man dwelleth therein, Because of their wickedness which they have committed to provoke me to anger, in that they went to burn incense, and to serve other gods, whom they knew not, neither they, ye, nor your fathers. Howbeit I sent unto you all my servants the prophets, rising early and sending them, saying, Oh, do not this abominable thing that I hate. But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear to turn from their wickedness, to burn no incense unto other gods."  
Jeremiah 44:2-5, KJV

"Thus saith the Lord GOD; This is Jerusalem: I have set it in the midst of the nations and countries that are round about her. And she hath changed my judgments into wickedness more than the nations, and my statutes more than the countries that are round about her: for they have refused my judgments and my statutes, they have not walked in them. Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because ye multiplied more than the nations that are round about you, and have not walked in my statutes, neither have kept my judgments, neither have done according to the judgments of the nations that are round about you; Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I, even I, am against thee, and will execute judgments in the midst of thee in the sight of the nations. And I will do in thee that which I have not done, and whereunto I will not do any more the like, because of all thine abominations."  
Ezekiel 5:5-9, KJV

"They will not frame their doings to turn unto their God: for the spirit of whoredoms is in the midst of them, and they have not known the LORD."  
Hosea 5:4, KJV

"Woe unto them! for they have fled from me: destruction unto them! because they have transgressed against me: though I have redeemed them, yet they have spoken lies against me. And they have not cried unto me with their heart, when they howled upon their beds: they assemble themselves for corn and wine, and they rebel against me. Though I have bound and strengthened their arms, yet do they imagine mischief against me. They return, but not to the most High: they are like a deceitful bow: their princes shall fall by the sword

for the rage of their tongue: this shall be their derision in the land of Egypt."

Hosea 7:13-16, KJV

"Therefore say thou unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Turn ye unto me, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will turn unto you, saith the LORD of hosts. Be ye not as your fathers, unto whom the former prophets have cried, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Turn ye now from your evil ways, and from your evil doings: but they did not hear, nor hearken unto me, saith the LORD."

Zechariah 1:3-4, KJV

"But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear. Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the LORD of hosts hath sent in his spirit by the former prophets: therefore came a great wrath from the LORD of hosts."

Zechariah 7:11-12, KJV

"These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me."

John 16:1-3, KJV

"But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?"

Romans 10:16, KJV

"When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways. So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.) Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."

Hebrews 3:9-13, KJV

For literally hundreds and hundreds of years, the Lord kept sending them His anointed Judges and Prophets. He begged the rebellious descendants of Abraham to forsake their sins, and to return to Him with their whole hearts. As a result, no one can say that God does not pity His weak children. Consider the following verses which clearly demonstrate His patience, love and mercy. As you will see, God's desire is definitely not to destroy His children. Rather, it is that we reach a point of repentance, so that He can heal us, and restore us to our fellowship with Him:

"Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust."

Psalms 103:13-14, KJV

"I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the LORD, and the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of

Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his lovingkindnesses. For he said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie: so he was their Saviour. 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 bare them, and carried them all the days of old. But they rebelled, and vexed his holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them."

Isaiah 63:7-10, KJV

"For the Lord will not cast off for ever: But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies. For he doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men."

Lamentations 3:31-33, KJV

"Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?"

Ezekiel 33:11, KJV

"But I had pity for mine holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the heathen, whither they went."

Ezekiel 36:21, KJV

"Then will the LORD be jealous for his land, and pity his people."

Joel 2:18, KJV

"Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven. For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost. How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray? And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray. Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish . . . Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee?"

Matthew 18:10-14, 33, KJV

"And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem, And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him. And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem. And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village."

Luke 9:51-56, KJV

"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which

was lost."  
Luke 19:10, KJV

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."  
John 3:16-17, KJV

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."  
2 Peter 3:9, KJV

"And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed."  
Hebrews 12:5-13, KJV

Please go to part three for the continuation of this series.

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End Of File

BEHOLDING THE EVIL AND THE GOOD : PART THREE

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God's Quick Harsh Judgments, Divine Chastisements Are Also A Form Of Divine Love, America's Godless Spoiled Generation, I Will Bring Evil: God Creates And Sends Evil, The Twoedged Sword: Dual Nature Of God's Word, Life Or Death And Blessing

Or Curse, Satan Serves As Executioner Of God's Chastisements, Afflictions Of Patriarch Job, Extent Of Satan's Powers, False Prophets Of Baal And Second Beast Of Revelation, False God Of This World, Unseen Spiritual Warfare, Satan Tempts Jesus In The Wilderness, Our Temporal World And Futility Of Laying Up Riches, Chastisements Against Unrepentant Backslidden America, Repentance And Fruit Of Chastisements, Of Temporary Duration

Continuing our discussion from part two, on the other hand, as some of the previous verses reveal, when the children of Israel failed to heed the Lord's admonitions after a fair amount of time, then the Rod of His judgments fell upon them harshly, and without pity. Just as God is quick to extend His Love, Mercy and blessings to an obedient people, He is also quick to pour out His judgments upon a rebellious people who harden their hearts and refuse to accept His Will. His good intentions can easily turn to evil; and His great Love and Mercy can be replaced by unrelenting Wrath, as becomes clear by the following verses:

"Therefore it shall come to pass, that as all good things are come upon you, which the LORD your God promised you; so shall the LORD bring upon you all evil things, until he have destroyed you from off this good land which the LORD your God hath given you."  
Joshua 23:15, KJV

"For I have set my face against this city for evil, and not for good, saith the LORD: it shall be given into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire."  
Jeremiah 21:10, KJV

"For thus saith the LORD; Like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people, so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them."  
Jeremiah 32:42, KJV

"And though they go into captivity before their enemies, thence will I command the sword, and it shall slay them: and I will set mine eyes upon them for evil, and not for good."  
Amos 9:4, KJV

"And I will dash them one against another, even the fathers and the sons together, saith the LORD: I will not pity, nor spare, nor have mercy, but destroy them."  
Jeremiah 13:14, KJV

"Wherefore, as I live, saith the Lord GOD; Surely, because thou hast defiled my sanctuary with all thy detestable things, and with all thine abominations, therefore will I also diminish thee; neither shall mine eye spare, neither will I have any pity."  
Ezekiel 5:11, KJV

"And mine eye shall not spare thee, neither will I have pity: but I will recompense thy ways upon thee, and thine abominations shall be in the midst of thee: and ye shall know that I am the LORD . . . And mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: I will recompense thee according to thy ways and thine abominations that are in

the midst of thee; and ye shall know that I am the LORD that smiteth."  
Ezekiel 7:4, 9, KJV

"Therefore will I also deal in fury: mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: and though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them."  
Ezekiel 8:18, KJV

"And as for me also, mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity, but I will recompense their way upon their head."  
Ezekiel 9:10, KJV

For certain traditional Christians who maintain that our God is only a God of love -- such as certain Roman Catholics -- the idea that the Lord might purposely allow evil to befall His own children is quite difficult to accept. These people can't begin to fathom God acting in any way that is contrary to what they have erroneously been taught by their spiritual elders. Sadly, as I mention in articles such as "Love, Mercy, Forgiveness and Chastisement", what they fail to realize, is that Divine Chastisement is in fact a part of Divine Love. I am reminded of the following verse that is found in the Book of Proverbs:

"Open rebuke is better than secret love."  
Proverbs 27:5, KJV

You see, it is because God does love us, that He rebukes us and chastises us when it becomes necessary. He does not do it out of hate, He does it so that we will learn our lesson and turn back onto the path of righteousness. In similar fashion, it is because we do love our children, that we also choose to punish them as well; or at least that is what should motivate us to do so. In my opinion, to adopt the "God is only love" position is similar to saying that we are supposed to simply ignore our children when we see them misbehaving. What kind of parents would we be if we did that? Not very good ones.

Tragically, many American parents have done this very thing; and I imagine that parents in other countries have followed suit. As I point out in the articles entitled "The Plight of the Children: School Gun Violence!" and "What is Wrong With Modern America?", not only have they spared the rod, but they have likewise not given their children a godly education, and society is now paying for it. Furthermore, many children have been spoiled by a spirit and attitude of extreme selfishness, as well as by materialism.

Continuing our earlier discussion, the previous Scriptures point out very clearly that both good and evil proceed from the hand of the Lord. Those people who refuse to accept this aspect of God's nature are simply rejecting a part of the full counsel of the Word of God. Following are additional verses which confirm this same point that God creates evil, He sends evil, and He creates wicked people in order to fulfill His Divine Purposes, whatever they may be:

"Therefore, behold, I WILL BRING EVIL upon the house of Jeroboam, and will cut off from Jeroboam him that pisseth against the wall, and him that is shut up and left in

Israel, and will take away the remnant of the house of Jeroboam, as a man taketh away dung, till it be all gone."  
1 Kings 14:10, KJV

"Behold, I WILL BRING EVIL upon thee, and will take away thy posterity, and will cut off from Ahab him that pisseth against the wall, and him that is shut up and left in Israel,"  
1 Kings 21:21, KJV

"Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I WILL BRING EVIL upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, even all the words of the book which the king of Judah hath read:"  
2 Kings 22:16, KJV

"Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I WILL BRING EVIL upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, even all the curses that are written in the book which they have read before the king of Judah:"  
2 Chronicles 34:24, KJV

"The LORD hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil."  
Proverbs 16:4, KJV

"I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things."  
Isaiah 45:7, KJV

"Set up the standard toward Zion: retire, stay not: for I WILL BRING EVIL from the north, and a great destruction."  
Jeremiah 4:6, KJV

"Hear, O earth: behold, I WILL BRING EVIL upon this people, even the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not hearkened unto my words, nor to my law, but rejected it."  
Jeremiah 6:19, KJV

"Therefore thus saith the LORD, Behold, I WILL BRING EVIL upon them, which they shall not be able to escape; and though they shall cry unto me, I will not hearken unto them."  
Jeremiah 11:11, KJV

"And there shall be no remnant of them: for I WILL BRING EVIL upon the men of Anathoth, even the year of their visitation."  
Jeremiah 11:23, KJV

"And say, Hear ye the word of the LORD, O kings of Judah, and inhabitants of Jerusalem; Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I WILL BRING EVIL upon this place, the which whosoever heareth, his ears shall tingle."  
Jeremiah 19:3, KJV

"Wherefore their way shall be unto them as slippery ways in the darkness: they shall be driven on, and fall therein: for I WILL BRING EVIL upon them, even the year of their visitation, saith the LORD."  
Jeremiah 23:12, KJV

"And seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not: for, behold, I WILL BRING EVIL upon all flesh, saith the

LORD: but thy life will I give unto thee for a prey in all places whither thou goest."  
Jeremiah 45:5, KJV

"For I will cause Elam to be dismayed before their enemies, and before them that seek their life: and I WILL BRING EVIL upon them, even my fierce anger, saith the LORD; and I will send the sword after them, till I have consumed them:"  
Jeremiah 49:37, KJV

"Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid? shall there be evil in a city, and the LORD hath not done it?"  
Amos 3:6, KJV

"Out of the mouth of the most High proceedeth not evil and good?"  
Lamentations 3:38, KJV

Please take note of the final verse above that is found in the Prophet Jeremiah's Book of Lamentations. As you can see, we are told that both evil and good proceed out of the mouth of the Lord. Furthermore, speaking on behalf of the Lord, the Prophet Isaiah likewise tells us "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil." It becomes evident then that there are two sides to God's nature, just as there are two ways in which His Word can be used. Please consider the following verses:

"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."  
Hebrews 4:12, KJV

"And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength."  
Revelation 1:16, KJV

"And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God."  
Revelation 19:15, KJV

As you can plainly see, in the Scriptures, the Word of God is represented by a twoedged sword. This sword appears to represent the dual nature of God's Word. As I point out in the article entitled "Do You Want Love and Light, or Rod and Wrath?", for those people who receive the Lord's Word into their hearts and obey it, this sword is a blessing. However, for those people who reject the Words of the Lord and rebel against His Will for their lives, it is a bitter curse. In fact, as we learned in part one, during Old Testament times, to reject God's Word could even amount to a death sentence. Through the mouth of His Prophets and holy men, God asked the people to choose between good and evil, and life and death. Even more importantly, when it comes to Jesus Christ -- who is the living Word of God -- we are asked to choose between Eternal Life and Eternal Damnation. Following are



some additional verses which prove this point:

"Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you this day: And a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known."  
Deuteronomy 11:26-28, KJV

"And unto this people thou shalt say, Thus saith the LORD; Behold, I set before you the way of life, and the way of death. He that abideth in this city shall die by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence: but he that goeth out, and falleth to the Chaldeans that besiege you, he shall live, and his life shall be unto him for a prey."  
Jeremiah 21:8-9, KJV

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."  
John 5:24, KJV

"For if by one man's offence [Adam's] death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.) . . . That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."  
Romans 5:17, 21, KJV

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."  
Romans 6:23, KJV

Allow me to point out here that while God will indeed permit evil to befall His children when they are disobedient, He is not necessarily the One who carries out the actual sentence. As I explain in articles such as "Satan: His Origin, Purpose and Future", that task has been delegated to Satan and his minions who are already in rebellion against the Lord; and who thus serve as His instruments of chastisement.

The story of the Patriarch Job is one clear example of this. As you may know, in this particular story, the Lord points out Job's righteousness to Satan. Satan's sarcastic rebuttal is that Job only praises the Lord because he has been blessed in a material sense. Thus, on two different occasions, Satan convinces the Lord to allow him to test Job. Before long, Job has lost his oxen, asses, camels and sheep; his servants have been slain; and his children have all been killed when their older brother's house caves in on them when a tornado strikes it. Poor Job himself is finally afflicted with boils, while his three friends -- and even his wife -- taunt him. Could a man be in a more miserable state? Please notice that in these verses, the Lord is not the actual executioner of the various tests:

"But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face. And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon

himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD."

Job 1:11-12, KJV

As you can see, while Satan tells the Lord to "put forth thine hand now", what actually happens is that God grants Satan permission to put forth his own hand against Job. In other words, what we see is that without God's permission, Satan is powerless to do anything against Job. However, in spite of all of his troubles, Job simply refuses to curse the Lord. It is at that point that Satan then asks God for permission to threaten Job's very life, as we read in the following verses:

"And Satan answered the LORD, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face. And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life. So went Satan forth from the presence of the LORD, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown."  
Job 2:4-7, KJV

From reading the story of Job, we can learn several things regarding Satan's powers. For example, we see that he has been given power over the elements; that is, over air and fire. We also see that he has power to influence people so that they will do harm to Job. The fact that Satan is able to call fire down from the sky -- similar to Elijah -- is very interesting. You may recall that when the prophets of Baal tried to do the same thing with the Prophet Elijah, they were put to shame when nothing happened. Eventually, after revealing the power of the true God -- who sent fire to consume Elijah's offering -- Elijah slew all of those false prophets with a sword. You will find the story in the first book of the Kings, chapter eighteen.

On the other hand, according to Revelation chapter thirteen, the second Beast -- who appears to be synonymous with the False Prophet -- is likewise able to call down fire from the sky in order to deceive those who dwell upon the Earth, as we see by the following verse:

"And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men,"  
Revelation 13:13, KJV

Upon examining other verses in the Bible, we learn that the reason why Satan is able to control the elements, as well as manipulate certain political, military and religious events down through history, is because he is currently the god of this world. Based upon my current understanding of the Bible, it seems that the Earth and the surrounding atmosphere have been given into Satan's hand for a set time until God's Plan of Salvation is fulfilled, and the great Mystery of the Ages has been completed. The Scriptures clearly inform us that a great spiritual battle is currently being waged on the Earth, and in the atmospheric heavens around us, even though we are not capable of seeing it with our physical eyes. Consider the following verses which confirm these points:

"In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of

them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

2 Corinthians 4:4, KJV

"Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:"

Ephesians 2:2, KJV

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

Ephesians 6:12, KJV

On a related note, it is because Satan is the god of this world, that he was able to offer the things of the world to Jesus during His time of temptation following His forty-day fast in the wilderness, as we see by these verses:

"And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

Luke 4:5-8, KJV

Of course, both Jesus and a number of the Apostles repeatedly warn us regarding the futility, vanity and pitfalls of laying up temporal treasures upon the Earth. We are told that such things are simply snares which distract us from serving the Lord, and that we should be content with whatever we have, as we see by the following sample verses:

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also . . . No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

Matthew 6:19-21, 24, KJV

"For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Mark 8:36-37, KJV

". . . Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!"

Mark 10:24b, KJV

"Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man

shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed."  
John 6:27, KJV

"Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices."  
2 Corinthians 2:11, KJV

"While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."  
2 Corinthians 4:18, KJV

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth."  
Colossians 3:1-2, KJV

"But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content."  
1 Timothy 6:6-8, KJV

"Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."  
Hebrews 13:5, KJV

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world."  
1 John 2:15-16, KJV

Returning to our discussion regarding the scope of Satan's powers, as we saw with the story of Job, because Satan is the god of this world, he and his minions -- by the Lord's permission -- are apparently allowed to influence both the elements and the powers of the Earth, in order to chastise the wayward souls of men. I am reminded of the United States and her current sinful, backslidden condition. Even though war may be far from her shores at this present time, God's chastisements are nevertheless being felt in various places in the form of floods, droughts, earthquakes, mudslides, brushfires, tornadoes, lightning strikes, hailstones, severe snow storms, prolonged freezing temperatures and other forms of so-called "natural disasters".

While hard-hearted men may try to downplay God's involvement in such events -- preferring instead to blame them on "Mother Nature", "El Niño", or "La Niña" -- the truth of the matter is that such disasters affect how and where people can live, how much food is produced to feed the population, the growth of the national economy, etc. While some countries may be punished for their sins and unbelief through invasion and war, all of these other less obvious forms of chastisement can be just as effective in the Lord's hands. What is truly sad is the fact that while certain Israelites viewed similar events as the Lord's punishments upon a very idolatrous and backslidden nation -- as occurred during the drought which

they experienced in the days of the Prophet Elijah -- many Americans remain totally oblivious to these things. I have mentioned on previous occasions that in a spiritual sense, the backslidden United States is following a path that is very similar to ancient Israel. Thus, I am reminded of the following verse:

"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."  
2 Chronicles 7:14, KJV

As we discussed in part two of this series, just as parents do not delight in having to punish their children when they do something wrong, so likewise, the Lord would much prefer that we heed His warnings, so that we can avoid the different chastisements He may choose to send our way. As I mentioned earlier, we need to remember that the Lord does not willingly punish His children. The truth of the matter is that we bring His wrath upon ourselves when we choose to rebel against Him. Furthermore, being the Good Parent that He is, God will not just idly stand by and watch us repeatedly ignore His Word, and His Rules. He will become upset eventually. His Patience and His Mercy will reach a breaking point. If we consciously and defiantly break His Rules of Love, then we must expect to pay the consequences and not complain about it.

As I explain in "Love, Mercy, Forgiveness and Chastisement", we need to repent, ask for forgiveness, and make things right again in order to be restored to our proper relationship with our Heavenly Father, as well as with anyone who we may have possibly offended. As long as we are just complaining about the punishment, we are not really showing true repentance for anything. Consider the sharp truth that is revealed in the following verses:

"Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins? Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the LORD. Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the heavens."  
Lamentations 3:39-41, KJV

During the time of our chastisement, we need to remember that, as with our natural children, punishment is normally only a temporary situation, and is used to bring us to our senses. Once that occurs, once we learn the lesson that the Lord is trying to teach us, like most parents, He eases up on us, and brings us back into the circle of His fellowship. If He did not do this, none of us would certainly survive, and we would all surely lose hope. So thank the Lord that His mercy endures forever. Following are a few more verses for your contemplation:

"If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?"  
Psalms 130:3, KJV

"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;"  
2 Corinthians 4:17, KJV

"Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."  
Hebrews 12:11, KJV

"It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness."  
Lamentations 3:22-23, KJV

"For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer."  
Isaiah 54:7-8, KJV

"Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord GOD."  
Ezekiel 39:29, KJV

Please go to part four for the continuation of this series.

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BEHOLDING THE EVIL AND THE GOOD : PART FOUR

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Was Jesus Really Forsaken As He Died On The Cross?, Messianic Prophecies In Psalm 22 And Isaiah 53, We Have No Hope Without Christ Who Is Our Blessed Hope, By His Stripes We Are Healed, Christ's Sufferings And Our Weak Body Of Flesh, A Temporary Victory For The Wicked, Does God Turn Away Due To Pain Or To Weep?, Queen Esther's Lament For Her People, Jeremiah Was A Weeping Prophet, Jesus Weeps And Raises Lazarus From The Dead, God Turns Away His Face In His Anger, Unbelieving Jews Turned Their Faces Away From Jesus, God Sometimes Refuses To Listen To Our Prayers, Without Faith It Is Impossible To Please God, David Pleas Before The Lord, When God Hides His Face, Curses Or Blessings, The Lord Curses Adam And Eve Due To Their Sin

This series began with a question regarding whether or not there might be times when God cannot look upon evil. The case cited was that of Jesus on the Cross. In an effort to explain that God did not really forsake His Son as He hung

dying on a Roman Cross, some Bible students have suggested that when the Lord cried out "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" -- see Matthew 27:46 and Mark 15:34 -- it was not because He was actually doubting His Father's presence; rather it was because He simply wanted to make it known to the people who were present at the foot of His Cross, that He was fulfilling the following Scripture that is found at the beginning of Psalm Twenty-Two:

"[To the chief Musician upon Aijeleth Shahar, A Psalm of David.] My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?"  
Psalms 22:1, KJV

While that is one possible explanation, I tend to view the Crucifixion event -- and Jesus' words -- differently. Allow me to inform you that the original Hebrew word that has been translated in the previous verse from Psalm 22 as "forsaken" is "azab". According to the Brown, Driver, Briggs, Gesenius Hebrew Aramaic English Lexicon, this word means to leave or leave behind, forsake, depart, let alone, abandon or desert. The meaning of this Hebrew word is rather clear. Thus, in my opinion, there is no doubt that this is precisely what Jesus meant. Perhaps during His greatest moment of suffering, God the Father actually allowed His Son to indeed think that He had been abandoned. In order for Jesus to become the Perfect Sacrifice for sin, perhaps it was necessary for Him to feel the full weight of what it means to be a condemned sinner who has been totally abandoned by God, and who is without hope in this world. As if to confirm my thoughts, I was reminded of the following verse which I shared with you at the end of part three:

"For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer."  
Isaiah 54:7-8, KJV

As you can see, the verse states in part "For a small moment have I forsaken thee." The reason why I find this significant is because this chapter is a continuation of Isaiah 53, which as many of my readers will no doubt know, vividly describes the sufferings of Christ on the Cross, just like Psalm 22. In other words, both chapters contain Messianic Prophecies about Jesus Christ. Regarding sinners who are without hope in the world, consider what the Apostle Paul wrote in his Epistle to the Christian brethren at Ephesus, and how he describes them as "having no hope, and without God in the world", before they came to Jesus Christ:

"Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, HAVING NO HOPE, AND WITHOUT GOD IN THE WORLD: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ."  
Ephesians 2:11-13, KJV

This issue regarding hope forms an integral part of Paul's writings, and can also be seen in the Epistles of Peter and John as well. Whereas those people who do not know Christ are indeed hopeless, over and over again Paul emphasizes that not only should we be filled with hope, but that we belong to the God of hope. Furthermore, our blessed hope is the redemption of our bodies through our faith in Jesus Christ. Consider the following verses and be inspired:

"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."  
Romans 8:18-25, KJV

"Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost."  
Romans 15:13, KJV

"For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith."  
Galatians 5:5, KJV

"That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,"  
Ephesians 1:17-18, KJV

"For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreproveable in his sight: If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister; Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church: Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God; Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to



his saints: To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:"  
Colossians 1:19-27, KJV

"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope;"  
1 Timothy 1:1, KJV

"Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness; In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;"  
Titus 1:1-2, KJV

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;"  
Titus 2:11-13, KJV

"That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."  
Titus 3:7, KJV

"And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end."  
Hebrews 3:5-6, KJV

"And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end . . . That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;"  
Hebrews 6:11, 18-19, KJV

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time . . . Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ . . . Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God."  
1 Peter 1:3-5, 13, 21, KJV

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself,

even as he is pure."  
1 John 3:2-3, KJV

Returning to the sufferings of Jesus Christ, in addition to the clear meaning of the Hebrew word "azab", if we stop to consider for a moment what intense pain Jesus must have no doubt endured prior to His horrific Death, it seems even more plausible that He may have felt temporarily abandoned by His Father. After all, Jesus was whipped until His back was probably a raw mess. If you are wondering why tradition holds that He was beaten thirty-nine times -- even though the Gospels do not say this explicitly -- then consider the following verses:

"If there be a controversy between men, and they come unto judgment, that the judges may judge them; then they shall justify the righteous, and condemn the wicked. And it shall be, if the wicked man be worthy to be beaten, that the judge shall cause him to lie down, and to be beaten before his face, according to his fault, by a certain number. Forty stripes he may give him, and not exceed: lest, if he should exceed, and beat him above these with many stripes, then thy brother should seem vile unto thee."  
Deuteronomy 25:1-3, KJV

"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."  
Isaiah 53:5, KJV

"Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified."  
Matthew 27:26, KJV

"And so Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified."  
Mark 15:15, KJV

"Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him."  
John 19:1, KJV

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."  
1 Peter 2:24, KJV

"Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one."  
2 Corinthians 11:24, KJV

As you can see, according to the Mosaic Law, a man could be beaten no more than a total of forty times. The Apostle Paul notes that he was beaten five times with "forty stripes save one", meaning that Paul was beaten thirty-nine times on each of the five occasions. However, please carefully notice that this was a Jewish form of punishment, and not a Roman custom. Thus, in actuality, we really don't know how many times Jesus may have been scourged by Pilate's soldiers.

In addition to being buffeted, spat upon and scourged, the Gospels tell us that a crown of thorns pierced Jesus' head. After carrying the beam of His Cross for some distance, His

hands and feet were pierced in a very excruciating manner. His body had been hanging for hours, stretched out in an unnatural manner upon the Cross making breathing difficult. Jesus was no doubt hot, tired, thirsty, and very near death. In short, the Lord was probably at the weakest moment of His entire human existence. While in His heart and spirit Jesus knew who He was, where He had come from, and where He was going, in my opinion, it just seems possible that in that final hour of agony, He may have been overcome by His flesh, so that He cried out with that famous statement "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Consider the following verses which seem to support this idea:

"And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed, Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done. And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground."  
Luke 22:41-44, KJV

"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."  
Matthew 26:41, KJV

"Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour."  
John 4:6, KJV

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."  
Hebrews 4:15, KJV

In the eyes of His unbelieving Jewish enemies, and perhaps in the eyes of Satan himself, as Jesus hung on that Cross, slowly dying for the sins of the world, it must have seemed like their moment of victory. In their foolish pride, they probably erroneously assumed that they had silenced the Son of God once and for all. Satan too must have thought that he had dealt a death blow to God's plans. However, in actuality, we know that he had done the exact opposite. It was the very wrath of the corrupt Jewish religionists, and the wrath of Satan himself, which has resulted in the highest praise, the greatest hope, and the greatest victory this world will ever know. As the Patriarch Job wrote in the verses below, while they boasted of their deeds, the victory of the wicked was indeed short, and they perished long ago:

"Knowest thou not this of old, since man was placed upon earth, That the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment? Though his excellency mount up to the heavens, and his head reach unto the clouds; Yet he shall perish for ever like his own dung: they which have seen him shall say, Where is he? He shall fly away as a dream, and shall not be found: yea, he shall be chased away as a vision of the night. The eye also which saw him shall see him no more; neither shall his place any more behold him."  
Job 20:4-9, KJV

As the sky over Jerusalem grew dark that "tragic" day, I believe that God the Father may have temporarily turned away His face from His Son, not because He was truly abandoning or forsaking Him, but possibly because He simply could not endure to see the suffering of His beloved Son at the hands of the wicked unbelieving Jews who were making Jesus suffer such an agonizing and humiliating death. I am reminded of the words spoken by Queen Esther after she was informed of the evil plot which Haman had planned against her people:

"For how can I endure to see the evil that shall come unto my people? or how can I endure to see the destruction of my kindred?"

Esther 8:6, KJV

In similar fashion, the Prophet Jeremiah has been dubbed by some people as the "weeping prophet" because he wept for his stubborn people, the Jews, who felt the Wrath of God under the powerful hand of the Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar, as we see by the following verses:

"Mine eye runneth down with rivers of water for the destruction of the daughter of my people. Mine eye trickleth down, and ceaseth not, without any intermission, Till the LORD look down, and behold from heaven. Mine eye affecteth mine heart because of all the daughters of my city."  
Lamentations 3:48-51, KJV

Thus, it is possible that in the final hour, God may have turned away His face because He could not endure to watch His Son suffer on the Cross for the sins of an undeserving world.

Another possibility is that God may have turned away to weep because of their lack of faith in His Son. You may recall that when Jesus saw the unbelief of the Jews, He likewise wept just prior to raising Lazarus from the dead. Some people have suggested that the Lord wept because He loved Lazarus so much. While this may possibly be true, I really don't believe that this was the case, because Jesus already knew that He was going to raise Lazarus from the dead. Therefore, it does not make much sense that He would weep over Lazarus. Thus, I believe that it was primarily their lack of faith which may have saddened Jesus the most. Consider the following verses:

"When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled, And said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see. Jesus wept. Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him! And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died? Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it. Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days. Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?"

John 11:33-40, KJV

Based upon other Scriptures, another strong possibility is that God was really turning away His face from the sins of the people in anger and in disgust, and not away from His own Son who He loved dearly. The Lord was totally outraged by the sins and hard-heartedness of the unbelieving Jews. Is it possible then that God the Father turned His face away from the Jews, just as they had turned their faces away from His Son in disbelief? As I mentioned earlier, Isaiah 53 is a powerful prophetic chapter which concerns the sufferings of Jesus Christ. In this chapter we find the following verse which describes how the unbelieving Jews turned their faces away from Jesus:

"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not."  
Isaiah 53:3, KJV

Throughout the Old Testament we find Scriptures which support the view regarding God turning away from His people in anger. For example, in the case of the destruction of Jerusalem and Solomon's Temple by the military forces of Nebuchadnezzar, the Prophet Jeremiah informs us that in His anger, the Lord ignored their pleas. He was not even interested in hearing their prayers because He was so upset with them. Consider the following verses:

"Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to me: for I will not hear thee."  
Jeremiah 7:16, KJV

"Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift up a cry or prayer for them: for I will not hear them in the time that they cry unto me for their trouble."  
Jeremiah 11:14, KJV

"Thus saith the LORD unto this people, Thus have they loved to wander, they have not refrained their feet, therefore the LORD doth not accept them; he will now remember their iniquity, and visit their sins. Then said the LORD unto me, Pray not for this people for their good."  
Jeremiah 14:10-11, KJV

"We have transgressed and have rebelled: thou hast not pardoned. Thou hast covered with anger, and persecuted us: thou hast slain, thou hast not pitied. Thou hast covered thyself with a cloud, that our prayer should not pass through."  
Lamentations 3:42-44, KJV

"Then my anger shall be kindled 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, Are not these evils come upon us, because our God is not among us? And I will surely hide my face in that day for all the evils which they shall have wrought, in that they are turned unto other gods."  
Deuteronomy 31:17-18, KJV

"And he said, I will hide my face from them, I will see what

their end shall be: for they are a very froward generation, children in whom is no faith."  
Deuteronomy 32:20, KJV

"When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble? and when he hideth his face, who then can behold him? whether it be done against a nation, or against a man only:"  
Job 34:29, KJV

"But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear."  
Isaiah 59:2, KJV

"Then shall they cry unto the LORD, but he will not hear them: he will even hide his face from them at that time, as they have behaved themselves ill in their doings."  
Micah 3:4, KJV

"Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth."  
John 9:31, KJV

To have the Lord turn His face against us is definitely a very serious matter. It is a sure indication that we have truly displeased Him in a very major way. In like manner, our own natural children know that when we don't even want to look at them, or have them in the same room as us, that they have passed the point of no return in their testing of our patience.

Please notice that in the previous set of verses, part of the reason why Moses says that the Lord is going to turn His face away from the children of Israel, is because of their lack of faith. Moses writes "children in whom is no faith." As we saw earlier, the unbelieving Jews lacked faith at the time that Jesus was crucified as well. Furthermore, we know that without faith, it is impossible to please God, as we can determine by the following verse:

"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."  
Hebrews 11:6, KJV

Despite the fact that King David was a man after God's own heart, he also felt abandoned by the Lord as a result of his own sins. His wonderful Psalms are full of pleas before the Lord. Consider the following examples:

[To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.] How long wilt thou forget me, O LORD? for ever? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me?"  
Psalms 13:1, KJV

"Hide not thy face far from me; put not thy servant away in anger: thou hast been my help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation."  
Psalms 27:9, KJV

"LORD, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong: thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled."

Psalms 30:7, KJV

"And hide not thy face from thy servant; for I am in trouble: hear me speedily."

Psalms 69:17, KJV

"Hide not thy face from me in the day when I am in trouble; incline thine ear unto me: in the day when I call answer me speedily."

Psalms 102:2, KJV

"Hear me speedily, O LORD: my spirit faileth: hide not thy face from me, lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit."

Psalms 143:7, KJV

It should be evident to you by now that when God hides His face in the Bible, it is usually symbolic of His abandoning His people and leaving them to their own evil devices while He chastises them. On the other hand, when the Lord does not hide His face from us, depending on our personal standing with Him, it usually means one of two things. Either He is about to curse us in some way, or bless us in some way. As I point out in the article entitled "The Salvation of Animals: Fact or Fiction?", in the case of Adam and Eve, we know that when they chose to transgress God's Word by partaking of the forbidden fruit -- which exposed their lack of respect and love for the Lord -- the situation deteriorated quickly. In the following verses, we find the First Pair trying to hide themselves from the face of the Lord:

"And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden. And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself."

Genesis 3:8-10, KJV

When Adam and Eve again encountered the Lord sometime after their rebellion, He pronounced a variety of curses against everyone concerned. He cursed Satan so that he was forced to crawl upon the ground. He made Eve submissive to Adam and told her that she would bring forth children in sorrow. He informed them that there would be enmity between Eve's seed and the serpent's seed. He told Adam that he would have to sweat and toil to bring forth his own food from the ground which was also cursed. Last of all, the Lord drove them out of the Garden of Eden completely. After wicked Cain slew his righteous brother Abel, part of Cain's curse was also that God would turn His face against him for evil, as we see by this verse:

"Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me."

Genesis 4:14, KJV

Please go to part five for the conclusion of this series.

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BEHOLDING THE EVIL AND THE GOOD : PART FIVE

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God Is Grieved By The Wickedness Of The World And Decides To Destroy It, God Causes Philistine Idol Dagon To Fall On His Face, Wicked Men Try To Hide From God's Face In Revelation, I Will Set My Face Against, Blessing Of Seeing God's Face, Moses Communes With The Lord Face To Face, His Face Shines, The Special Blessing Pronounced By The Levitical Priesthood, King David Prophecies Regarding His Resurrection And Seeing The Lord's Face, Our Guardian Angels Behold Our Heavenly Father's Face, Which Way Is God's Face Turned In Your Life?, Fruit Of Willful Disobedience, Blasphemy Against The Holy Ghost, Personal Choice, God's Everlasting Love And Mercy

Continuing our discussion from part four, following the Fall of Adam and Eve, a few short chapters later, when God turned His face to look down upon the world, we are told that His heart was so grieved by the profound wickedness of man, that He decided that it was time to take stern measures in order to correct the situation. As you may know, that measure was of course the global Flood, which arrived about one hundred and twenty years later during the days of the Patriarch Noah. Consider the following verses:

"And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them."  
Genesis 6:5-7, KJV

In the first Book of the Prophet Samuel, we discover that after the Philistines had stolen the Ark of the Covenant from the children of Israel and taken it to Ashdod, the Lord caused the statue of their idol Dagon to fall to the ground a number of times. What is significant about this event is that we are told that Dagon fell upon his face. Perhaps the Lord was trying to show the Philistines that they had their faces turned towards a false god. Consider these verses:

"When the Philistines took the ark of God, they brought it



into the house of Dagon, and set it by Dagon. And when they of Ashdod arose early on the morrow, behold, Dagon was fallen upon his face to the earth before the ark of the LORD. And they took Dagon, and set him in his place again. And when they arose early on the morrow morning, behold, Dagon was fallen upon his face to the ground before the ark of the LORD; and the head of Dagon and both the palms of his hands were cut off upon the threshold; only the stump of Dagon was left to him. Therefore neither the priests of Dagon, nor any that come into Dagon's house, tread on the threshold of Dagon in Ashdod unto this day."

1 Samuel 5:2-5, KJV

In the Book of Revelation, when the Lord finally looks down upon the Earth -- or turns His face towards it -- and decides that it is time to put a stop to the wickedness of man, the reaction of the evildoers is to try to hide themselves from the face of the Lord, as we see by these verses:

"And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:"

Revelation 6:15-16, KJV

Upon further examining the Scriptures, we discover that when the Bible tells us that God has set His face against someone or something, more often than not, it is usually to pronounce some judgement against them. This also holds true when the Lord instructs His Prophets to do same thing. This is rather evident in verses such as the following:

"And whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, that eateth any manner of blood; I will even set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people."

Leviticus 17:10, KJV

"And I will set my face against that man, and will cut him off from among his people; because he hath given of his seed unto Molech, to defile my sanctuary, and to profane my holy name . . . Then I will set my face against that man, and against his family, and will cut him off, and all that go a whoring after him, to commit whoredom with Molech, from among their people. And the soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits, and after wizards, to go a whoring after them, I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people."

Leviticus 20:3, 5-6, KJV

"And I will set my face against you, and ye shall be slain before your enemies: they that hate you shall reign over you; and ye shall flee when none pursueth you."

Leviticus 26:17, KJV

"For I have set my face against this city for evil, and not for good, saith the LORD: it shall be given into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire."

Jeremiah 21:10, KJV

"Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will set my face against you for evil, and to cut off all Judah."  
Jeremiah 44:11, KJV

"Moreover take thou unto thee an iron pan, and set it for a wall of iron between thee and the city: and set thy face against it, and it shall be besieged, and thou shalt lay siege against it. This shall be a sign to the house of Israel."  
Ezekiel 4:3, KJV

"Likewise, thou son of man, set thy face against the daughters of thy people, which prophesy out of their own heart; and prophesy thou against them,"  
Ezekiel 13:17, KJV

"And I will set my face against that man, and will make him a sign and a proverb, and I will cut him off from the midst of my people; and ye shall know that I am the LORD."  
Ezekiel 14:8, KJV

"And I will set my face against them; they shall go out from one fire, and another fire shall devour them; and ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I set my face against them."  
Ezekiel 15:7, KJV

"Son of man, set thy face against the Ammonites, and prophesy against them;"  
Ezekiel 25:2, KJV

"Son of man, set thy face against Zidon, and prophesy against it,"  
Ezekiel 28:21, KJV

"Son of man, set thy face against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and prophesy against him, and against all Egypt:"  
Ezekiel 29:2, KJV

"Son of man, set thy face against mount Seir, and prophesy against it,"  
Ezekiel 35:2, KJV

"Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him,"  
Ezekiel 38:2, KJV

Clearly then, it is not a good idea to have God turn His Face against us; because if He does, it usually means that we are in very serious trouble with Him. Of course, there is also a positive side to seeing God's face as well. As I explain in the article "The Seeing God Face to Face Dilemma", sometimes God's face can be turned towards us in a demonstration of His love, support and fellowship. Such was clearly the case with Moses who saw the Lord face to face on quite a few occasions. As many of you will know, this positive experience resulted in the Commandments, which to this very day have formed the basis for many of the laws which govern human behavior. This was such a wonderful experience for Moses, that we are told that his face actually shone for some time after each of his encounters with the Lord; so much so that he was even forced

to wear a veil, as we see by the following verses:

"And it came to pass, when Moses came down from mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in Moses' hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with him. And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone; and they were afraid to come nigh him. And Moses called unto them; and Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation returned unto him: and Moses talked with them. And afterward all the children of Israel came nigh: and he gave them in commandment all that the LORD had spoken with him in mount Sinai. And till Moses had done speaking with them, he put a vail on his face. But when Moses went in before the LORD to speak with him, he took the vail off, until he came out. And he came out, and spake unto the children of Israel that which he was commanded. And the children of Israel saw the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses' face shone: and Moses put the vail upon his face again, until he went in to speak with him."  
Exodus 34:29-35, KJV

Sometime later, Moses taught Aaron and his sons -- who were Israel's Levitical priesthood -- a special blessing, as he had been commanded to do by the Lord. This special blessing has been pronounced by many Christians and Jews ever since the time that it was first spoken. It is significant how the Lord chooses to symbolize His blessings upon His children by turning His face towards us, as we see by these verses:

"Speak unto Aaron and unto his sons, saying, On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them, The LORD bless thee, and keep thee: The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace."  
Numbers 6:23-26, KJV

In one of his Psalms, King David -- who was a direct ancestor of Jesus Christ -- also prophesied concerning how it would be such a great blessing to be able to behold the Lord's face at the time of his glorious resurrection from the dead, when he would be transformed, and possess a body just like the Lord. Consider this verse:

"As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."  
Psalms 17:15, KJV

A few verses earlier in the very same Psalm, King David also besought the Lord that He would keep him as the apple -- that is, as the pupil -- of His eye. In other words, the king was asking the Lord for His blessing and protection, as we see by this verse:

"Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wings,"  
Psalms 17:8, KJV

You may also recall that in the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus made mention of the fact that the Guardian Angels of our children always behold the face of our Heavenly Father, as we see by the following verse:

"Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven."  
Matthew 18:10, KJV

Having now studied such a wide selection of Scriptures, we can see that the direction in which God's face is turned is very important. We have also seen that the reasons why God may choose to look upon us, or else to turn away from us, are varied. It all depends upon our personal life and walk with Him. If we please Him, just as a child tries to please his parents through obedience, then the Lord will likewise look upon us with favor and smiling approval. However, if we are disobedient, then as occurs with our natural parents, we can expect to see the Lord's stern look of disapproval, and should be in fear of judgment. In his discussion concerning people who know God's Word, yet who continue to sin in spite of it, the Apostle Paul offers us a very fitting example when he writes the following:

"For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries."  
Hebrews 10:26-27, KJV

Paul then explains that those people who initially accept Christ's Atonement, and then later reject it -- or call it "an unholy thing" -- through unbelief, should look forward to the most severe chastisement of all, as we see by this verse:

"Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?"  
Hebrews 10:29, KJV

This is indeed a very serious sin. As I have explained on a number of other occasions, I believe that this is what Jesus was referring to in the Gospel of Matthew when He warned us about blasphemy against the Holy Ghost being the only sin which shall not be forgiven, as we see by these verses:

"Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come."  
Matthew 12:31-32, KJV

My understanding is that to blaspheme the Holy Ghost is to reject the Salvation that God offers through the witness of the Spirit of Truth. What is the witness of the Spirit of Truth? It is that Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God who died for the sins of the world. It is through this act of Divine Love that God the Father has manifested His Grace -- which Paul refers to as "the Spirit of grace" --

as well as His Love, to the world. When Paul talks about doing "despite" to the Spirit of Grace, he is referring to insulting God Himself, and calling Him a liar, by rejecting the Salvation that He offers us through Jesus Christ.

The word "despite" is derived from the Greek word "enubrizo". Pronounced en-oo-brid'-zo, this word means to insult. Stated another way, I believe that the Holy Ghost -- or the Spirit of Truth -- is an extension of God the Father. Therefore, to blaspheme the Holy Ghost and the things that it is revealing to us concerning Christ, is actually to blaspheme or insult God the Father Himself. It is a very foolish thing to do.

As I point out in articles such as "Free Will and Personal Choice" and "Do You Want Love and Light, or Rod and Wrath?", in the final analysis, what it really comes down to is our personal choice. Since the Garden of Eden, this is what the Lord has been trying to teach all of us. In other words, we can either be wise and choose God's way, or else we can be stubborn and rebellious and choose Satan's way. If we make the right choices, then we will continually behold the good side of the Lord's face. On the other hand, if we foolishly make the wrong choices, then the Lord will have to show us His stern countenance. If we continue to ignore the Lord's pleas, He may even be forced to turn away from us for a while in His anger, until we have learned the lessons that He is trying to teach us.

Whatever the case may be, let us never forget that we have the promise that He will never leave us or forsake us, once we have been called by His name, for His Love and Mercy are truly everlasting, as we see by the following verses:

"For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations."  
Psalms 100:5, KJV

"But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children; "  
Psalms 103:17, KJV

"The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee."  
Jeremiah 31:3, KJV

"Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee."  
Psalms 139:7-16, KJV

"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."  
John 6:37, KJV

"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."  
John 10:28, KJV

"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."  
Romans 8:38-39, KJV

"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."  
2 Timothy 2:19, KJV

". . . for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."  
Hebrews 13:5b, KJV

With these inspiring verses, I will bring this series to a close. It is my hope that you have found it informative and enlightening, and I pray that it has been a blessing in your life as well. If you have an account with Facebook, Twitter or Google+, I would really appreciate if you would take the time to click on the corresponding link that is found on this page. Thanks so much, and may God bless you abundantly!

For additional information, you may want to refer to the list of reading resources below which were also mentioned in this series, or which are related to this series, and which are likewise located on the Endtime Prophecy Net web server.

Are You a Burning Ember for the Lord?  
Civil Disobedience and Christian Persecution  
Do You Want Love and Light, or Rod and Wrath?  
Dracula, Nosferatu, Twilight: The Vampire Fad  
Endtime Witnessing: Winning the Sheep and Waging the Warfare  
Free Will and Personal Choice  
Is God a Racist?  
Love, Mercy, Forgiveness and Chastisement  
Satan: His Origin, Purpose and Future  
Selfishness: A Prophesied Sign of the Endtime  
Sluggards and Sloths  
The Children of God and Politics  
The Children of Light: Are You One of Us?  
The Fruits of Disobedience  
The Plight of the Children: School Gun Violence!  
The Salvation of Animals: Fact or Fiction?  
The Seeing God Face to Face Dilemma  
The Urantia Book: A Dangerous New Age Doctrine!  
The Urantia Book: An Attack on the Blood Atonement!  
This Little Light, Glory of the Lord and Our Bright Future  
Under the Cloud: UFO's and the Holy Bible  
What is Wrong With Modern America?  
Who is Hindering The Ant-Christ?

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