

THE MODERN ATHEIST

By David Clarke

James 4

*15 For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this,
or that.*

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Preface

Atheism is the denial of the existence of God and in our modern world some people are forthright in their denial of a belief in the existence of God. Others may profess to believe in God and use the bible to support their belief in Jesus Christ.

I use the term Modern Atheist to describe the person who maintains a belief in God and in Jesus Christ but denies His attributes and His rule over all creation and so robs God of the glory of His perfections, of His attributes and denying the sovereignty of God in creation, providence and redemption. And in connection with providence there is denial that God has preserved His word and has given light on all matters relating to these things.

A person who denies that God created and governs the world, by His providence. Brings all things that come to pass according to His predetermined council, including world pandemics, such as COVID 19, and the world wide flood of Noah, is a Modern Atheist for such a God does not exist. Their God is not the God of the bible.

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MODERN ATHEISM UNFOLDED

THIS FIRST STUDY OPENED UP THE DOOR TO IDENTIFY MODERN ATHEISM

The Bible Study Tuesday 23rd November 2021



Video Link <https://youtu.be/waeCq9F74s>

Subject:

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF THE APOSTLE PAUL TO TIMOTHY.

The first Chapter was read and It was asked what is an Apostle, or why is Paul called an Apostle; and the matter was discussed.

Concluding Notes To The Study

Reference was made to the gospel according to Matthew and Mark.

In Matthew chapter 28 it is written:

Matthew 28 16 Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them.

17 And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted.

18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

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

20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the (age) world. Amen.

Mark 3 12 And he straitly charged them that they should not make him known.

13 And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would: and they came unto him.

14 And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach,

15 And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils:

16 And Simon he surnamed Peter;

17 And James the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James; and he surnamed them Boanerges, which is, The sons of thunder:

18 And Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Canaanite,

19 And Judas Iscariot, which also betrayed him: and they went into an house.

Steadfastly in the Apostles Doctrine

Acts 2 42 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

43 And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. 44 And all that believed were together, and had all things common; 45 And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. 46 And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, 47 Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

Appointment of an Apostle

Acts 1 :

20 For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishoprick let another take.

21 Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us,

22 Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection.

23 And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias.

24 And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of

all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen,

25 That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place.

26 And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon **Matthias**; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

Apostles Doctrine

Acts 2 41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.

42 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

43 And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

Set in the Church

1 Corinth 12

27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

28 And God hath set some in the church, **first apostles**, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. 29 Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? 30 Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? 31 But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.

Revelation 21

12 And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel:

13 On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates.

14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

Called To Be An Apostle

Acts 26

13 At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me.

14 And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. 15 And I said,

Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. 16 But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; 17 Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, 18 To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me. 19 Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: 20 But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.

Paul and Apostle

Galatians 1

Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;)

2 And all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia:

3 Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ,

4 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:

5 To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Paul Called To Be An Apostle

1 Corinthians 1

Paul called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother,

2 Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both their's and our's:

Born Out of Due Time

1 Corinthians 15

1 Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;

2 By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.

3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how

that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;

4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

5 And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve:

6 After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.

7 After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles.

8 And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.

9 For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

10 But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.

Commentary born out of due time by John Gill

1 Corinthians 15:8

And last of all he was seen of me also

Either when the apostle was caught up into the third heaven; or when he was in a trance in the temple at Jerusalem; or rather at the time of his conversion, when he not only heard the voice of Christ, but saw him in the human nature; for he expressly says, that he appeared unto him, and he calls it the heavenly vision, (Acts 26:16 Acts 26:19). This was a sight of Christ in heaven, not on earth, such an one as Stephen had, and was a corporeal one; otherwise it would have been impertinent to have mentioned it, with the rest of the ocular testimonies of Christ's resurrection. Not that this was the last time that Christ was seen, or to be seen, for he was seen after this by the Apostle John in a visionary way, and will be corporeally seen by all the saints at the last day; but Paul was the last of the apostles and brethren before named, and he had his vision of Christ after them all; and perhaps it might be a more clear, full, and distinct one than any of the rest, as the last things are sometimes the most excellent. The apostle adds, as of

one born out of due time:

or "as an abortive"; not that he was really one, but like one: several learned interpreters think the apostle refers to a proverbial way of speaking among the common people at Rome, who used to call such supernumerary senators in the times of Augustus Caesar, who got into the senate house by favour or bribery, "abortives" F9, they being generally very unworthy persons; and therefore calls himself by this name, as being in his own

opinion a supernumerary apostle, and very unworthy of that office: *though others rather think that he refers to a “posthumous” birth, to one that is born after the death of his father; because that the rest of the apostles were all chosen, and called, and sent forth, whilst Christ, their everlasting Father, was living on earth, but he not till after his death, resurrection from the dead, and ascension to heaven:* but it seems best to understand him of an abortion, a miscarriage, or birth before its time; and may respect either the manner of his conversion, which was done both suddenly, immediately, and at once, by a sudden light from heaven, when he little thought of it, and had no expectation of it, which is commonly the case of abortions; and also powerfully and irresistibly, being effected by mighty and efficacious grace, as births before the full time are often occasioned by blows or outward force, and are violent extrusions of the foetus; or else the state and condition in which he was when Christ was first seen by him: as to his bodily state, as soon as ever he saw the light about him, and the object by it, he was struck blind, and continued so some days, like an hidden untimely birth, and like an infant that never saw light, (Job 3:16) . And as to his spiritual estate, his soul was like an unshapen foetus, Christ being not yet formed in him, his image stamped on him, and his grace implanted in him; yea, it may be applied to the present apprehensions he had of himself, and which he expresses without a figure in the next verse, though in a beautiful manner, with a view to what he here says, when he observes that he was “the least of the apostles, and not meet to be called” one; as an abortive, or one born before its time, is imperfect in one respect or another, is not come to its proper size and shape, and scarcely is to be reckoned in the class and number of men.

FOOTNOTES:

F9 Vid. Sueton. in Vita August. c. 35.

1 The Christian religion, or gospel of Christ, was published by the Apostles who were sent personally by Jesus Christ to teach all that he had commanded them. These 12 apostles are named. The Apostle Paul was called personally, by Jesus and sent by him to preach and teach the gospel.

Conclusion of my notes

So we are to Jesus called 12 apostles and they are named. That after Judas had fallen another was chosen to be numbered with the 12. One who had been with them since the baptism of John and witness the death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus.

The Apostles had authority to teach all that Jesus had taught them .
The Church continued in the Apostles doctrine , fellowship and
breaking of bread.

That Paul was call by Christ and sent preach
The Apostle performed signs and wonders

That in the revelation there are 12 foundation stones with the names of
the 12 apostles of the lamb written upon

ARE THERE APOSTLES TODAY?

The next question that needs to be asked and answered to is Are the
Apostles today, and why?

AN ERUPTION AT THE BIBLE STUDY

SUBJECT: COVID, ISAAC, JESS, ALEX, REBEKAH, APOSTLES AND APOSTOLIC AUTHORITY



Video Link <https://youtu.be/1e4pMTRuuLU>

At our bible study, on Tuesday 30th November, an event took place
that took me by surprise and was a shock as it involved me. A lady reacted
to the things I said and she stated she was upset by them and the way I
had spoken.

I acknowledge that this lady was upset and that it was to do with me
and that she expressed her uncomfortable-ness about sitting next to me,
as I spoke them. This took place when I gave my response the question,
‘Were there any Apostles today?’

Quarantine in Vietnam, as Isaac had contracted COVID so they could not return to the UK that day. They were in isolation for at least 14 days and could not return home until well and both clear.

I explained that the very verse we were to discuss, in the bible study that night, was 1 Timothy 2. Where Paul writes, 'I exhort therefore that first of all supplications, prayer and intercessions and giving of thanks be made for all men.'

I stated that Isaac was concerned for Jess' his wife, because she was not a believer and the he had come to terms he could die which would leave Jess alone in Vietnam, alone and unsaved.

I informed Isaac that the scripture teaches we are directed to pray for all men for God is the saviour of all men, especially for them that believe. I informed him I would relay their cause to the Church that night and that not him but also Alex who had contracted COVID, and now Rebekah were all in quarantine, due to Alex having COVID and also you and Jess were locked in isolated in Vietnam indefinitely, and without medical insurance, or work. Very serious.

When I express my belief the COVID was sent by God it caused protests denying the fact and I think this added to the already agitated situation. So I was shocked and I stated that I was not going to argue about it but ask the question who sent the plagues upon the Egyptians, and I could have added who sent the word flood in Noah's day and if God is not sovereign how can He be implored to show mercy for that is what was needed.

When it came back to the question regarding, are there apostles today?. I reminded the group that an Apostle is one called and sent by the Lord, as the 11 apostles, and the one chosen by lot being directed by the scripture, who was required to be a witness of the resurrection and then Paul as born like one out of time. All were sent by the Lord.

I stated that there were no apostles today. Also that the church at Ephesus we commend for trying those who said they were apostles and were not. Rev. 2:2. I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars:

I stated that there were no apostles, today as the scripture were clear that an apostle was to be one who had been chosen by the Lord, and had witnessed the resurrection of Christ, And also sent by the Lord Himself, to preach the Gospel. As recorded in Matthew 28 16, where He sent the 11 apostles, whom he had chosen and appointed, at which time they were commanded to go and preach all of the things that he had taught them and that was to the whole world.

During the study I asked the group if there were any Apostles to day, which was an extension of our study that we had conducted the week before, after which discussion took place.

The week before summery notes on apostles

<https://www.biertonparticularbaptists.co.uk/resources/Apostles%20Bible%20Study%20HPB.pdf>

The week before I had stated that Jesus had chosen his apostles and sent them, commanding them to go into the world and teach all he had taught them, and that the early church continued steadfastly in the Apostles doctrine, breaking of bread and fellowship. 1 Corinthians 12. That it was the apostles who had the authority to do so.

The reason for the choice of apostles was to give authority in the church. The doctrines of the Apostles were the gospel of Christ that would be challenged by men, and the truth of the gospel would be distorted.

As had happened already at Ephesus where Timothy had been commissioned , by Paul, to go and ensure the elders of the church at Ephesus maintained the doctrines that had been delivered them by the Apostle himself. Paul write to 1 Timothy 3, ‘ I charge thee to charge them that they tech no other doctrine , as some were doing desiring to be teachers of the Law and circumcision.

It had been outlined the week before, in our study, that instructions were given to the church how to behave among them selves in the house of God which was the church of the living God , in society and the world.

At the meeting I related how Isaac, my son and Jess had been in

The reason why I was so forthright was because the church had been effected by much false teaching and I had witness this for over two years but I had kept quiet. When I first went to the Church the subject of apostles was brought up along with other issue in our bible studies on the book of Ephesians. It was then maintained by the pastor's wife that there were apostle today, to which I stated what the New Testament teaching was concerning an Apostle. The subject was dropped and other issues relating to the doctrines of the apostle was denied and predestination too. In all of this I remained silent, as I was not a Church member and I felt further discussion relating to the subject could not be carried out.

When I stated there were no Apostles today the lady sitting next to me lady erupted, in a passionate response, stating I made her very, very uncomfortable and she did not like the way I asserted these things, and that I did not allow her to express her views. She hit the table saying she was upset.

The matter was closed when the issue of COVID was brought up again as another lady member, who had lost her son due to COVID, asked for the subject to be dropped.

My concern relating to this matter is why would some of be so distressed by me asking the question were there apostles today, and asserting there were no apostles today. If they disagree with me they were free to do so, and to my mind a church could not accept such teachings as this was the very reason why Timothy was sent the correct errors of false teachers at the church in Ephesus.

The other issue that raised itself being that we were about to discuss the next section in 1 Timothy chapter 2:11 . Where we are taught, 'let the women learn in silence with all subjection, but I suffer not a woman to teach nor to usurp authority over a man, but to learn in silence.

I thought to my self how could this subject be taught without issue arising causing upset

The importance of answering this question biblically is because the Roman Catholic and Ecumenical and Pentecostal groups maintain there are Apostle today and so have apostolic power to authorise religious doctrine and practice in the Christ in religion and lead people astray. I

believe we should safe guard against this by teaching truth and addressing error. It was noted that it was women who opposed my views. My statement and assertion was the there are no Apostles today. The doctrine of inspiration is that such canonical writings and teachings died with the Apostles.

In all of this exchange I was unaware of the temperature rising, except that relating to the issue of COVID, and the previous mention of Apostles

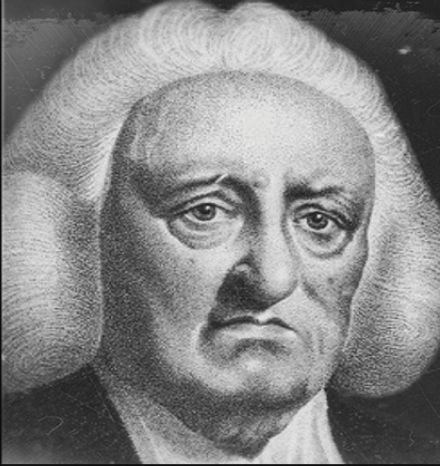
This was only the second bible study held since our return from lock down and I now feel it reasonable to reserve my comments to see how things will turn out.

I am well able to remain silent in and such study, as I have no need to express by views, unless I am invited to do so. It is not my intention to upset or cause any distress and can conduct myself in a decent fashion among those who disagree with me, as demonstrated during the previous two years.

Mean while I have prayed to the Lord for you all and look to the Lord to show mercy to us all.

A COMMENTARY ON 1 TIMOTHY 2**By DR. John Gill. D.D.****INTRODUCTION**

Video Presentation

Video Link <https://youtu.be/uaAJPBdAumY>

In this chapter the apostle exhorts to prayer for all sorts of men, gives rules and directions about the dress of women, and their subjection to their husbands; and concludes with some comfort to them. The apostle exhorts to prayer in the first place, directs to the several parts and branches of prayer, and points to the persons to be prayed for, and what should be prayed for on their account, 1 Timothy 2:1. And next follow the reasons or arguments engaging to it, which are taken from the agreeableness of it in the sight of God; from the will of God, that all men should be saved: from there being but one God of all, and one Mediator between God and men; from Christ's giving himself a ransom price for all; and from the apostle being a preacher of the Gospel to the Gentiles, as well as Jews, 1 Timothy 2:3 wherefore he concludes and determines, according to his apostolical power and authority, that prayer be made in any place, provided there were faith and purity, and wrath and doubting were laid aside, 1 Timothy 2:8. Also, he exhorts women to appear, especially in public service, in a modest and becoming dress, and to adorn themselves with good works, 1 Timothy 2:9, and that they should be silent learners, and not teachers, and be in subjection to their husbands, 1 Timothy 2:11. The reasons of which subjection are taken from the formation of Adam before Eve, and from Eve's being deceived, and not Adam, 1 Timothy 2:13. However, for

the comfort of women, it is observed, that though in sorrow they bring forth children, yet through the birth of a Son, the promised Messiah, they shall be saved, who continue in faith, charity, and holiness, with sobriety, 1 Timothy 2:15.

1 Timothy 2:1

I exhort therefore, that first of all,....

The two principal parts of public worship, being the ministry of the word and prayer; and the apostle having insisted on the former, in the preceding chapter, in which he orders Timothy to charge some that they teach no other doctrine than that of the Gospel, gives an account of his own ministry, and call to it, and of the glorious Gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to his trust, and stirs up Timothy to the faithful and diligent discharge of his work and office; now proceeds to the latter, to prayer, and exhorts unto it; either Timothy in particular, for so read the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, “I exhort thee”, or “desire thee”; or else the church in general; unless it should rather be thought to be a charge to Timothy to exhort, and so Beza’s Claromontane copy reads, “exhort thou therefore”: but it is commonly considered as an exhortation of the apostle’s, which he was very urgent in: it was what lay much upon his mind, and he was greatly desirous that it should be attended unto; for so the words may be read, “I exhort first of all”, or before all things; of all things he had to say, this was the chief, or it was what he would have principally and chiefly done by others: for this does not so much regard the order of time, that prayer should be made early in the morning, in the first place, before anything else is done, and particularly before preaching, which seems to have been the custom of the primitive saints, Acts 4:31 but the pre-eminence and superior excellency of it; though the words may be rendered, “I exhort, that first, the supplications of all be made”: and so may regard public prayer, the prayer of the whole church, in distinction from private prayer, or the prayer of a single person; which is expressed by different words,

supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks:

the first of these, “supplications”, signifies such petitions for things that are wanted by men, either by themselves or others; and that either for their bodies or souls, as food and raiment for the one, and discoveries of pardoning love, supplies of grace, spiritual peace, comfort, &c. for the other: and the second word, “prayers”, signifies good wishes and desires, directed and expressed to God for things that are in themselves to be

wished for, and desired of God, either for ourselves or others: and the next word, “intercessions”, intends either complaints exhibited in prayer against others that have done injuries; or prayers put up for others, either for the averting of evil from them, or for the bestowing some good thing on them: and the last word, “thanksgivings”, with which requests should always be made known to God, designs that branch of prayer in which thanks are given to God for mercies received, whether temporal or spiritual: and these are to

be made for all men;

not only for all the saints, for all the churches of Christ, and, ministers of the Gospel; nor only for near relations and friends, according to the flesh; but for all the inhabitants of the country and city in which men dwell, the peace and prosperity of which are to be prayed for; yea, for enemies, and such as reproach, persecute, and despitefully use the saints, even for all sorts of men, Jews and Gentiles, rich and poor, high and low, bond and free, good men and bad men: for it cannot be understood of every individual that has been, is, or shall be in the world; millions of men are dead and gone, for whom prayer is not to be made; many in hell, to whom it would be of no service; and many in heaven, who stand in no need of it; nor is prayer to be made for such who have sinned the sin unto death, 1 John 5:16 besides, giving of thanks, as well as prayers, are to be made for all men; but certainly the meaning is not, that thanks should be given for wicked men, for persecutors, and particularly for a persecuting Nero, or for heretics, and false teachers, such as Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom the apostle had delivered to Satan. But the words must be understood of men of all sorts, of every rank and quality, as the following verse shows.

1 Timothy 2:2

For kings, and for all that are in authority,....

For supreme governors, as the emperor of Rome, and kings of particular nations; and for all sub-governors, or inferior magistrates, as procurators or governors of provinces, and proconsuls, and the like; all that were in high places, and acted under the authority of those that were supreme; these are particularly mentioned, the then governors, whether supreme or subordinate, who were avowed enemies, and violent persecutors of the saints; and it might be a scruple with some of them, whether they should pray for them, and therefore the apostle enjoins it; and this in opposition to the notions and practices of the Jews, who used to curse the Heathens, and pray for none but for themselves, and those of

their own nation:

that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty;

which does not merely design the end of civil government by kings and magistrates, which is to preserve the peace and quiet of the commonwealth; to protect the persons and properties of men, that they may possess their own undisturbed; and to secure to them their civil and religious rights and liberties, that they may have the free use and exercise of religion, signified by “all godliness”; and to encourage morality and virtue, expressed by “honesty”; and so is an argument for prayer, taken from the advantage of civil government: nor does this clause only point out the duty of saints to live peaceably under the government they are, and not disturb it; to mind only their religious exercises among themselves, and behave honestly and morally among men, as they generally speaking are, the quiet in the land; but also expresses the thing to be prayed for; and the sense is, that since the hearts of kings are in the hands of the Lord, and he can turn them as he pleases, prayer should be made to him for them, that he would either convert them, and bring them to the knowledge of the truth, they now persecuted; or at least so dispose their hearts and minds, that they might stop the persecution, and so saints might live peaceably under them, enjoy their religious liberty, and be encouraged in their moral conversation. The Arabic version renders it, “that they may be preserved”: that is, kings, and all in authority. It is a saying of R. Hananiah, or Ananias, the sagan of the priests¹,

“pray for the peace or safety of the kingdom (one of their commentators on it adds (²), even of the nations of the world, which is remarkable, and agrees with the exhortation of the apostle); for if there was no fear of that, men would devour one another alive.”

For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour;

For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour. Not only to live peaceably and quietly under the government men are, since that is the ordination of God, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, which his grace teaches; but to pray for all sorts of men, and for those who are set in the highest place of government, even though enemies and

1 Pirke Abot, c. 3. sect. 21 Timothy 2:3

2 Bartenora in Pirke Abot, c. 3. sect. 2.

persecutors: this is good in itself, and in the sight of an omniscient God, who sees not as man seeth; and it is acceptable unto him through Jesus Christ, by whom every sacrifice of prayer or praise is so; for by God our Saviour is meant God the Father, who is the Saviour of all men, in a way of providence, and the Saviour of all the elect in a way of special grace; See Gill on 1 Timothy 2:1.

1 Timothy 2:3

For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour.

Not only to live peaceably and quietly under the government men are, since that is the ordination of God, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, which his grace teaches; but to pray for all sorts of men, and for those who are set in the highest place of government, even though enemies and persecutors: this is good in itself, and in the sight of an omniscient God, who sees not as man seeth; and it is acceptable unto him through Jesus Christ, by whom every sacrifice of prayer or praise is so; for by God our Saviour is meant God the Father, who is the Saviour of all men, in a way of providence, and the Saviour of all the elect in a way of special grace; (See Gill on 1 Timothy 2:1).

1 Timothy 2:4

Who will have all men to be saved,....

In order to have a more fuller understanding of this passage of scripture it will be necessary to understand one of the attributes of God.

This may be considered in the following presentation accessed by the above mentioned hyperlink.

Then it is the following comments will be helpful. **Who will have all men to be saved.**

The salvation which God wills that all men should enjoy, is not a mere possibility of salvation, or a mere putting them into a salvable state; or an offer of salvation to them; or a proposal of sufficient means of it to all in his word; but a real, certain, and actual salvation, which he has determined they shall have; and is sure from his own appointment, from the provision of Christ as a Saviour for them, from the covenant of grace, in which everything is secured necessary for it, and from the mission of Christ to effect it, and from its being effected by him: wherefore the will of God, that all men should be saved, is not a conditional will, or what depends on the will of man, or on anything to be performed by him, for then none

might be saved; and if any should, it would be of him that willeth, contrary to the express words of Scripture; but it is an absolute and unconditional will respecting their salvation, and which infallibly secures it: nor is it such a will as is distinguishable into antecedent and consequent; with the former of which it is said, God wills the salvation of all men, as they are his creatures, and the work of his hands; and with the latter he wills, or not wills it, according to their future conduct and behaviour; but the will of God concerning man's salvation is entirely one, invariable, unalterable, and unchangeable: nor is it merely his will of approbation or complacency, which expresses only what would be grateful and well pleasing, should it be, and which is not always fulfilled; but it is his ordaining, purposing, and determining will, which is never resisted, so as to be frustrated, but is always accomplished: the will of God, the sovereign and unfrustrable will of God, has the governing sway and influence in the salvation of men; it rises from it, and is according to it; and all who are saved God wills they should be saved; nor are any saved, but whom he wills they should be saved: hence by all men, whom God would have saved, cannot be meant every individual of mankind, since it is not his will that all men, in this large sense, should be saved, unless there are two contrary wills in God; for there are some who were before ordained by him unto condemnation, and are vessels of wrath fitted for destruction; and it is his will concerning some, that they should believe a lie, that they all might be damned; nor is it fact that all are saved, as they would be, if it was his will they should; for who hath resisted his will? but there is a world of ungodly men that will be condemned, and who will go into everlasting punishment: rather therefore all sorts of men, agreeably to the use of the phrase in 1 Timothy 2:1 are here intended, kings and peasants, rich and poor, bond and free, male and female, young and old, greater and lesser sinners; and therefore all are to be prayed for, even all sorts of men, because God will have all men, or all sorts of men, saved; and particularly the Gentiles may be designed, who are sometimes called the world, the whole world, and every creature; whom God would have saved, as well as the Jews, and therefore Heathens, and Heathen magistrates, were to be prayed for as well as Jewish ones. Moreover, the same persons God would have saved, he would have also

come to the knowledge of the truth:

of Christ, who is the truth, and to faith in him, and of all the truth of the Gospel, as it is in Jesus; not merely to a notional knowledge of it, which persons may arrive unto, and not be saved, but a spiritual and experimental knowledge of it; and all that are saved are brought to such a knowledge,

which is owing to the sovereign will and good pleasure of God, who hides the knowledge of Gospel truths from the wise and prudent, and reveals them to babes: whence it appears, that it is not his will with respect to every individual of mankind; that they should thus come to the knowledge of the truth; for was it his will they should, he would, no doubt, give to every man the means of it, which he has not, nor does he; he suffered all nations to walk in their own ways, and overlooked their times of ignorance, and sent no message nor messenger to inform them of his will; he gave his word to Jacob, and his statutes unto Israel only; and the Gospel is now sent into one part of the world, and not another; and where it does come, it is hid to the most; many are given up to strong delusions to believe a lie, and few are savingly and experimentally acquainted with the truths of the Gospel; though all that are saved are brought to the knowledge of such truths as are necessary to salvation; for they are chosen to it through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth.

1 Timothy 2:5

For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;

For there is one God,.... This does not so much regard the unity of God, with respect to himself, or his divine essence, though that is a truth; but does not carry in it any apparent and forcible reason why all men should be prayed for, for which it is produced; but the unity of God with respect to men, as that there is but one God, who is the Creator of all men, and who, in a providential way, is the Saviour of all men; and in a way of special grace is the one God, the one covenant God of all sorts of men, of Jews and Gentiles; for he has taken of the latter into the covenant of his grace, as well as the former, and has loved them with a special and distinguishing love, has chosen them in Christ to salvation, and has sent his Son to redeem them; and of these he calls by his grace, regenerates, sanctifies, adopts, pardons, and justifies; see Romans 3:29 and therefore all sorts of men, Gentiles as well as Jews, are to be prayed for: another argument follows,

and one Mediator between God and men;

a Mediator is of more than one, and has to do with two parties; and these at variance among themselves, between whom he stands as a middle person; his business is to bring them together, and make peace between them; and such an one is Christ: the two parties are God and his elect, who in their natural state are at a distance from God, and at enmity to him, and who have broken his law, and affronted his justice; Christ stands as a

middle person, a daysman between them, and lays his hands upon them both; has to do with things pertaining to the glory of God, and makes reconciliation for the sins of the people; brings them that were afar off nigh to God, and makes peace for them by the blood of his cross, by fulfilling the law, and satisfying justice for them; in consequence of this he appears for them in the court of heaven, intercedes and pleads for them, is their advocate, and sees that all covenant blessings, of which he is the Mediator, are applied unto them, and preserves their persons, which are committed to his care and charge, safe to everlasting happiness; and this Mediator is

the man Christ Jesus;

not that he is a mere man, for he is truly and properly God; or that he is a Mediator only according to the human nature: it was proper indeed that he should be man, that he might have something to offer, and that he might be capable of obeying, suffering, and dying, and so of making satisfaction in the nature that had sinned; but then, had he not been God, he could not have drawn nigh to God on the behalf of men, and undertook for them, and much less have performed; nor would his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, have been available to cleanse from sin, to procure the pardon of it, justify from it, make atonement for it, or make peace with God: the reason why he is particularly mentioned as man, is, with a view to the argument in hand, praying for all men; since he who is the Mediator between God and man, has assumed a nature which is common to them all: and this Mediator is said to be one, not so much in opposition to other mediators, angels or saints departed, though it is a truth, and stands full against them, but with respect to men; there is but one Mediator between God and all sorts of men, through whom both Jews and Gentiles have an access to God, and peace with him; and therefore prayer through this Mediator should be made for all. So the Jews say of the Messiah³, that he is , “a Mediator, God”, a middle person between God and men. And they call him , “the Pillar of mediation”⁴ or the middle Pillar; that is, the Mediator or Reconciler. And Philo⁵ the Jew speaks of the word, as a “middle” person, and standing in the middle between the dead and the living, and between God and men. The Ethiopic version here renders it, “there is one elect of God”; which is one of the characters of the Messiah, Isaiah 42:1.

1 Timothy 2:6

3 R. Albo, *Sepher Ikkarim*, orat 2. c. 28.

4 *Sepher Jetzira*, p. 126.

5 *Quis rerum divin. Hares*, p. 508, 509, 510.

Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.

Who gave himself a ransom for all,.... What the Mediator gave as a ransom for men is “himself”, his body and his soul, which were both made an offering for sin; and his life, which is the result of union between soul and body; his whole human nature as in union with his divine person, and so might be truly said to be himself: this he gave into the hands of men, of justice and of death; and that voluntarily, which shows his great love to his people; and also as a “ransom”, or a ransom price for them, in their room and stead; to ransom them from the slavery of sin, and damnation by it, from the captivity of Satan, and the bondage of the law, and from the grave, death, hell, ruin, and destruction: and this ransom was given for “all”; not for every individual of mankind, for then all would be delivered, freed, and saved, whereas they are not; or else the ransom price is paid in vain, or God is unjust to receive a sufficient ransom price from Christ, and yet not free the captive, but punish the person for whom he has received satisfaction; neither of which can be said. But the meaning is, either that he gave himself a ransom for many, as in Matthew 20:28 for the Hebrew word to which this answers, signifies sometimes many, a multitude, and sometimes only a part of a multitude, as Kimchi observes ⁶: or rather it intends that Christ gave himself a ransom for all sorts of men, for men of every rank and quality, of every state and condition, of every age and sex, and for all sorts of sinners, and for some out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation, for both Jews and Gentiles; which latter may more especially be designed by all, as they are sometimes by the world, and the whole world; and so contains another argument why all sorts of men are to be prayed for, since the same ransom price is given for them; as that for the children of Israel was the same, for the rich as for the poor. We⁷ read, that when the people of Israel comforted the high priest upon the death of his wife, or any relation, they used to say to him, , “we are thy atonement”, expiation, or ransom; that is, as the commentators (a) explain it, by us thou shalt be atoned, for we will be in thy room and stead, with respect to all things that shall come upon thee; but here the High priest and Mediator is the atonement and ransom for the people:

to be testified in due time;

or “a testimony in his own times”; that is, the sum and substance of what is before said is the Gospel, which is a testimony concerning the person, office, and grace of Christ, exhibited in the times of the Messiah, or

⁶ Sopher Shorash. rad.

⁷ Misna Sanhedrin, c. 2. sect. 1.

the Gospel dispensation. Some copies read, “the mystery”, which is another word often used for the Gospel; for that that is intended, appears by what follows.

1 Timothy 2:7

Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle,

He was ordained or appointed to be a preacher of the Gospel from all eternity, and was separated or set apart unto it in time, and was put into the ministry of it by Christ himself, and was not a common or ordinary preacher of the word, but an apostle, an extraordinary officer in the Gospel church.

Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle,....

He was ordained or appointed to be a preacher of the Gospel from all eternity, and was separated or set apart unto it in time, and was put into the ministry of it by Christ himself, and was not a common or ordinary preacher of the word, but an apostle, an extraordinary officer in the Gospel church.

I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not;

which are a sort of an oath, or an appeal to Christ the omniscient God, for the truth of what he said, concerning his ordination to the Gospel; see a like phrase in Romans 9:1. The phrase, “in Christ”, is left out in the Alexandrian copy, and in three of Beza’s ancient copies, and in some others, and in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions;

a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity;

the Gospel of the uncircumcision, or which was to be preached to the uncircumcised Gentiles, was committed to this apostle; and his work and ministry lay among them, and therefore he is called the apostle of the Gentiles: and so he was in faith and verity; which may regard the subject matter of his teachings and ministry; it was the faith and truth of the Gospel, even the whole of it, the faith which was once delivered to the saints, and the truth as it is in Jesus; or else the character of the apostle, as a teacher, that he was a true and faithful one, who with all integrity and veracity, fully and faithfully preached the Gospel; and since he was appointed a teacher of it to the Gentiles, this is another argument why they, as well as the Jews, should be prayed for.

1 Timothy 2:8

I will therefore that men pray everywhere,....

In this declaration of the apostle's will concerning prayer, he only takes notice of "men"; not but that it is both the duty and privilege of women, as well as men, to pray in their houses and closets; but because he is speaking of public prayer in the church, which only belongs to men, he speaks only of them; and his will is, that prayer should be performed by them everywhere, or in any place, in any part of the world where they lived. Now was the prophecy in Malachi 1:11 fulfilled, and now was the time come our Lord refers to, John 4:21. This seems to be said in opposition to a Jewish notion, that the temple at Jerusalem was the only place for prayer, and that prayer made elsewhere ought to be directed towards that. The Jews say ⁸, that

“there is no way for the prayer of the nations of the world to ascend, seeing the gates of heaven are only opened in the land of Israel.--And again, that the prayers without the land have no way to go up before the Lord, but the Israelites send them without the land opposite Jerusalem; and when they come to Jerusalem, from thence they remove and ascend above.--No prayer ascends above from that place in which it is made, till it come to the land of Israel, and from thence to Jerusalem, and from thence to the sanctuary, and then it ascends above.”

They have also many rules concerning places of private prayer, as that care should be taken that it be not in a place where there is any filth; or any bad scent ⁹.

Lifting up holy hands;

lifting up of hands was a prayer gesture among the Heathens ¹⁰, and so it was among the Jews¹¹. R. Simeon lift up his hands in prayer to the blessed God, and prayed his prayer. Yea, they ¹² say,

“it is forbidden a man to lift up his hands above, except in prayer, and in blessings to his Lord, and supplications, as it is said, Genesis 14:22 which is interpreted of lifting up of hands

8 Shaare Ors, fol. 24. 2, 3.

9 Maimon. Hilchot Tephilla, c. 4. sect. 8, 9.

10 Apuleius de Mundo, p. 276. (e) Zohar in Exod. fol 4. 2.

11 Zohar in Exod. fol 4. 2

12 lb. in Numb. fol. 79. 1.

in prayer.”

And this was an emblem of the elevation of the heart in prayer to God, without which the former would be of little avail. It is an observation of the Jews (g), we have found prayer without lifting up of hands, but we never found lifting up of hands without prayer. And these hands must be holy and pure; there must be purity of heart, and cleanness of hands, or a freedom from any governing sin, which renders prayer unacceptable unto God; see Isaiah 1:15. The apostle alludes to a custom of the Jews, who always used to wash their hands before prayer;

“Then Holofernes commanded his guard that they should not stay her: thus she abode in the camp three days, and went out in the night into the valley of Bethulia, and washed herself in a fountain of water by the camp. And when she came out, she besought the Lord God of Israel to direct her way to the raising up of the children of her people.” (Judith 12:7,8)

So it is said ¹³ of the Septuagint interpreters, that after the Jewish manner they washed their hands and prayed. The account Maimonides gives (i), is this:

“cleanness of hands, how is it done? a man must wash his hands up to the elbow, and after that pray; if a man is on a journey, and the time of prayer is come, and he has no water, if there is between him and water four miles, which are eight thousand cubits, he may go to the place of water, and wash, and after that pray. If there is between him more than that, he may rub his hands, and pray. But if the place of water is behind him, he is not obliged to go back but a mile; but if he has passed from the water more than that, he is not obliged to return, but he rubs his hands and prays; they do not make clean for prayer but the hands only, in the rest of prayers, except the morning prayer; but before the morning prayer a man washes his face, his hands and feet, and after that prays.”

But, alas! what does all this washing signify? Unless, as Philo the Jew ¹⁴, expresses it, a man lifts up pure, and, as one may say, virgin hands, to heaven, and so prays.

13 Arist. Hist. 70. p. 98. (i) Hilch. Tephilla, c. 4. sect. 2, 3.

14 De Charitate, p. 698. Vid. ib. de Victim. Offerent. p. 848.

Without wrath and doubting; or reasoning, or disputation in a contentious way: the former of these, some think, has reference to “murmuring”, as the Ethiopic version renders it, impatience and complaint against God in prayer, and the other to doubt and diffidence about being heard, and having the petitions answered; for prayer ought to be with praise to God, and faith in him: or rather “wrath” may intend an angry and unforgiving temper towards men, with whom prayer is made, which is very unbecoming; see Matthew 5:23 and both that and doubting, or disputation, may have regard to those heats and contentions that were between the Jews and Gentiles, which the apostle would have laid aside, and they join together in prayer, and in other parts of public worship, in love and peace. Maimonides ¹⁵ says,

“men may not stand praying, either with laughter, or with levity, nor with confabulation, “nor with contention, nor with anger”, but with the words of the law.”

And it is a saving of R. Chanina,

“in a day of “wrath”, a man may not pray ¹⁶.”

1 Timothy 2:9

In like manner also,....

Let the women pray likewise; though they are not to lead in prayer, or be the mouth of the church, which would be indecent, yet they are to join with the church in public prayer; see Acts 1:14 and in like manner as the men, with purity of heart and hand, without murmuring and impatience towards God, and without wrath and anger towards others, and in faith, without doubting and distrust: and the apostle proceeds to point out what sort of dress he would have them appear in at the time of prayer, and at any part of public worship; and thus the Ethiopic version renders it, “so let the women be clothed in prayer”, namely, as follows;

that women adorn themselves in modest apparel:

the word rendered “apparel” signifies a long robe, which reaches down to the feet; and the word translated “modest” signifies that which is clean, neat, and decent, yea, beautiful and ornamental; and the sense of the

15 Hilch. Tephilla, c. 4. sect. 18.

16 T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 65. 1.

apostle is, that he would not have them to come to public worship in rags, and in dirty and filthy garments, but that their bodies should be covered with clean and decent raiment; so the Israelites washed their clothes that they might be ready to meet the Lord at Mount Sinai, Exodus 19:14. The Jews always appeared in their best clothes on the sabbath day; this is one of their rules: ¹⁷.

“for the honour of the sabbath, every man must be clothed, , “with clean or neat apparel” and clothing on the weekday must not be as clothing on the sabbath day; and if a man can make no change, he must let down his talith (or upper garment, his cloak); so that his clothing may not be as the clothing of the weekdays, when that was girt up about him.”

The apostle adds,

with shamefacedness and sobriety:

these are the two general rules by which dress is to be regulated; it is right and proper, when it is consistent with chastity, when it is not immodest and impudent, and more like the attire of an harlot than of a woman professing godliness; and when it is moderate as well as modest, and suitable to a person’s age and station, and is not beyond the circumstances of life in which they are. There is no religion or irreligion in dress, provided pride and luxury are guarded against, and modesty and moderation preserved.

Not with broided hair,

or plaited, as in 1 Peter 3:3; see Gill on 1 Peter 3:3. The Jews had women on purpose for this business; Mary Magdalene is thought to have her name from hence; See Gill on Matthew 27:56. Or gold, or pearls, or costly array: not that the apostle forbids all use or wear of such things by proper persons, whose circumstances would admit of it, and upon proper occasions, and at proper times: certain it is, that earrings and bracelets of gold, and jewels set in silver and gold, and raiment, costly raiment, were sent by Abraham, and given to Rebekah, and wore by her, who was a woman professing godliness so the church in Psalm 45:9 though in figurative expressions, yet in allusion to what is literal, and honourable, and commendable, is said to be in gold of Ophir, and her clothing to be of wrought gold, and to be brought to the king in raiment of needlework:

17 Maimon. Hilch. Subbat.

but however justifiable such a dress may be at other seasons, the apostle judged it very improper at the time of public prayer, or at the time of public worship; seeing it might swell the heart of the wearer with pride, so as to forget herself and the business she was come about, and draw the eyes of others upon her; and so cause a general inattention. It was a complaint of Chrysostom's many hundreds of years ago, that some who came to public worship, appeared in such a dress, as if they came rather to dance than to pray; such apparel should be avoided: it is said of Pythagoras¹⁸, that he taught the inhabitants of Crotona, the men literature, and the women chastity and modesty; and by his disputations so far prevailed upon the latter, as to lay aside their garments of gold and other ornaments of their dignity, as instruments of luxury; all which they brought into the temple of Juno, and dedicated them to that goddess; declaring, that shamefacedness or chastity, and not garments, are the true ornaments of matrons.

1 Timothy 2:10

But (which becometh women professing god likeness),....

By which is meant not any particular grace, was it, the fear of God might be designed, and so the Syriac version renders it; nor the whole of internal religion only; nor the form of godliness, or the whole scheme of Gospel truth, which is according to godliness; nor only outward holiness of life and conversation; but the whole of all this, all religion, internal and external, the whole of godliness, both in a doctrinal and in a practical way. All this, these women the apostle gives directions unto, had made a profession of, and had been baptized upon it, and received members of churches; and as yet held their profession: and such persons, it best became them not so much to adorn themselves with any outward adornings, as

with good works;

such as are mentioned in 1 Thessalonians 5:10 Good works are like good clothes, to which the apostle alludes; they do not make persons men and women, but they adorn them as such; so good works, they do not make men and women Christians, or believers, but they adorn them as such; they are ornaments to their persons, and to their profession, and to the Gospel they profess. See Titus 2:10.

1 Timothy 2:11

Let the woman learn in silence,....

The apostle goes on to give some other instructions to women, how

18 Justin. ex Trogo. l. 20. c. 4.

they should behave themselves in public worship, in the church of God; he would have them be learners and not teachers, sit and hear, and learn more of Christ, and of the truth of the Gospel, and to maintain good works; and he would have them learn in silence, and not offer to rise and speak, under a pretence of having a word from the Lord, or of being under an impulse of the Spirit of the Lord, as some frantic women have done; and if they should meet with anything, under the ministry of the word, they did not understand, or they had an objection to, they were not to speak in public, but ask their own husbands at home; see 1 Corinthians 14:34. And thus, they were to behave

with all subjection;

both to the ministers of the word, and to their own husbands; obeying from the heart the form of doctrine delivered to them; and submitting cheerfully to the ordinances of Christ; the whole of which is a professed subjection to the Gospel, and which becomes all professing godliness.

1 Timothy 2:12

But I suffer not a woman to teach,

They may teach in private, in their own houses and families; they are to be teachers of good things, Titus 2:3. They are to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; nor is the law or doctrine of a mother to be forsaken, any more than the instruction of a father; see Proverbs 1:8. Timothy, no doubt, received much advantage, from the private teachings and instructions of his mother Eunice, and grandmother Lois; but then women are not to teach in the church; for that is an act of power and authority, and supposes the persons that teach to be of a superior degree, and in a superior office, and to have superior abilities to those who are taught by them:

nor to usurp authority over the man;

as not in civil and political things, or in things relating to civil government; and in things domestic, or the affairs of the family; so not in things ecclesiastical, or what relate to the church and government of it; for one part of rule is to feed the church with knowledge and understanding; and for a woman to take upon her to do this, is to usurp an authority over the man: this therefore she ought not to do,

but to be in silence;

to sit and hear quietly and silently, and learn, and not teach, as in 1

Timothy 2:11.

1 Timothy 2:13

For Adam was first formed,....

Immediately by God, out of the dust of the earth; and the breath of life was breathed into him, and he became a living soul; thus wonderfully and fearfully was he made; after this he was put into the garden of Eden, to dress it, and all creatures were brought to him, to give them names; and still an help meet or a companion was not found for him. All this while Eve was not as yet formed, but after this,

then Eve.

She was formed out of him, was made out of one of his ribs; and was formed for him, for his use, service, help and comfort; and here lies the strength of the apostle's reason, why the woman should be in subjection to the man; not so much because he was made before her; for so were the beasts of the field before Adam; and yet this gave them no superiority to him; but because she was made out of him, and made for him, see 1 Corinthians 11:8. So that the woman's subjection to the man is according to the laws of nature and creation; and was antecedent to the fall; and would have been, if that had never been; though that brought her into a lower, and meaner, and more depressed estate; which the apostle next mentions. The words may be rendered, "the first Adam", or "Adam the first was formed, and then Eve". See 1 Corinthians 15:45.

1 Timothy 2:14

And Adam was not deceived,....

There is no need to say with interpreters, that he was not deceived first; and that he was not deceived immediately by the serpent, but by Eve; and that he is never said in Scripture to be deceived, as Melchizedek is never said to have a father or mother. The apostle's positive assertion is to be taken without any such limitations or qualifications; Adam never was deceived at all; neither by the serpent, with whom he never conversed; nor by his wife, he knew what he did, when he took the fruit of her, and ate; he ate it not under any deception, or vain imagination, that they should not die, but should be as gods, knowing good and evil. He took and ate out of love to his wife, from a fond affection to her, to bear her company, and that she might not die alone; he knew what he did, and he knew what would be the consequence of it, the death of them both; and inasmuch as he sinned wilfully, and against light and knowledge, without any deception, his sin

was the greater: and hereby death came in, and passed on all men, who sinned in him:

but the woman being deceived was in the transgression:

and the serpent really beguiled her; she owned it herself, Genesis 3:13. And this is elsewhere said of her, 2 Corinthians 11:3 which never is of Adam. She really thought the serpent spoke truth, that she and her husband should not die, if they ate of the fruit; but that it was good to make them wise; and that, upon eating it, they should be as gods, knowing good and evil; and under this deception she fell into the transgression, and was the cause and means, by her persuasions and example, of bringing her husband into the same sin; which involved him and all his posterity in ruin and destruction. And therefore she is called by the Jews¹⁹, “the mother of iniquity and sin”; to which they refer, Psalm 51:5. And they say,²⁰ she was the cause of death to Adam, and to all the world: See Gill on Romans 5:12. And they observe (r) the order of the punishment of the serpent, Eve, and Adam, as of their sin; the serpent was first accursed, then Eve, and last of all Adam. They say

“(s) Samael (the devil) could not subvert Adam, till the serpent came and turned the heart of Eve, and Eve turned his heart, and they both sinned; wherefore it is said, “the woman which thou gavest me”; Samael had no power to turn him, till Eve came, and she was the cause of his eating.”

Now inasmuch as the serpent did not attack Adam, he being the stronger and more knowing person, and less capable of being managed and seduced; but made his attempt on Eve, in which he succeeded; and since not Adam, but Eve, was deceived, it appears that the man is the more proper person to bear rule and authority, as in civil and domestic, so in ecclesiastic affairs; and it is right for the woman to learn, and the man to teach: and seeing that Eve was the cause of transgression to Adam, and of punishment to him and his posterity, the subjection of the woman to the man was confirmed afresh: and she was brought into a more depressed state of dependence on him, and subjection to him; see Genesis 3:16. The Ethiopic version renders the text, “Adam hath not deceived, the woman hath deceived and prevaricated”.

19 Tzeror Hammor, fol. 141. 3.

20 T. Hieros. Sabbat, fol. 5. 2. Zohar in Gen. fol. 27. 3. Caphtor, fol. 37. 2.

1 Timothy 2:15***Notwithstanding she shall be saved,....***

Not Eve, though no doubt she is saved; since she had a sense of her sin, and shame for it, a revelation of the Messiah to her, and faith in him; see Genesis 3:7. But rather any woman, particularly such as profess godliness, who shall be saved

in childbearing;

which is to be understood not of a temporal salvation, or being saved through childbearing, through the perilous time, and be delivered out of it; for though this is generally the case, yet not always, nor always the case of good women. Rachel died in childbed: the Jews say ²¹, for three transgressions women die in childbearing; because they do not take care of their menstrues, and of the cake of the firstfruits, and of lighting the lamp (when the sabbath approaches). But spiritual and eternal salvation is here meant; not that bearing children is the cause, condition, or means of salvation; for as this is not God's way of salvation, so it confines the salvation of women to childbearing ones; and which must give an uneasy reflection to maidens, and women that never bore any; but rather the meaning is, that good women shall be saved, notwithstanding their bearing and bringing forth children in pain and sorrow, according to the original curse, in Genesis 3:16. And so the words administer some comfort to women, in their present situation of subjection and sorrow; though they may be rendered impersonally thus, "notwithstanding there is salvation through the birth of a son": and the sense is, that notwithstanding the fall of man by the means of the woman, yet there is salvation for both men and women, through the birth of Immanuel, the child born, and Son given; at whose birth, the angels sung peace on earth, good will to men; through the true Messiah, the deed of the woman, through the incarnate Saviour, who was made of a woman, there is salvation for lost sinners: he was born of a woman, and came into the world in order to obtain salvation for them; and he has effected it, and it is in him, for all such who apply to him for it; and with it all true believers, men and women, shall be saved through him,

if they continue in faith and charity, and holiness, with sobriety. The Vulgate Latin version reads in the singular, "if she continues", &c. but the sense is the same; for the "she", or woman, is to be taken in a collective sense, as it is in the context, for many women; even for such as profess faith and godliness. The Syriac and Ethiopic versions render the words, "she

21 Misn. Sabbat, c. 2. sect. 6.

shall be saved by her children”, if they continue, &c. i.e. she shall be saved by bearing of children, and bringing of them up in a religious way; if they, the children, continue as they were brought up; which is a very strange rendering of the words, and is as strange an interpretation of them; and yet is what many have given into, but needs no confutation. The meaning of the words is, that there is salvation through the incarnate Messiah, for all sorts of persons; for all men and women who believe in him, with that faith which works by love, and shows itself in holiness and sobriety; provided that they continue herein. For there are some that profess these things, that have only a temporary faith, and feigned love, and not true holiness; and these fall away, and are not saved; but such who have these graces in truth, as they do, and shall continue in them, so they shall certainly be saved.

OF THE WILL OF GOD AND THE SOVEREIGNTY OF IT
 Taken From **A BODY OF DOCTRINAL DIVINITY**
 By **Dr JOHN GILL**

BOOK I Chapter 11

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David Clarke

Book 1, Chapter 11, Of The Will Of God, And The Sovereignty Of It, By Dr John Gill



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Having considered the attributes of God which belong to his understanding, as an intelligent Spirit, his knowledge and wisdom, I now proceed to consider his Will, and the sovereignty of it. And shall,

1. Prove that there is a Will in God; for in all intelligent beings there is a will, as well as an understanding; as in angels and men, so in God; as he has an understanding which is infinite and unsearchable; so he has a will, to

do what he knows is most fitting to be done. His understanding influences and guides his will, and his will determines all his actions; and his will being thus wisely directed, is called, "the counsel of his will" (Eph. 1:11). A will is frequently ascribed to God in Scripture; "The will of the Lord be done" (Acts 21:14). "Who has resisted his will" (Rom. 9:19). "Having made known unto us the mystery of his will", (Eph. 1:9) and in many other places; the will of God is no other than God himself willing; it is essential to him; it is his nature and essence; it is not to be separated, or to be considered as distinct from it, or as a part of it, of which it is composed; which would be contrary to the simplicity of God; or to his being a simple, uncompounded Spirit; which has been established. Will is ascribed to each of the divine persons; to the Father, (John 6:39, 40) to the Son, as a divine person, (John 5:21, 17:24) and who also, as man, has a will distinct from that, though subjected to it, (John 6:38; Luke 22:42) and to the Spirit, who is said to forbid, and not to suffer some things to be done; that is, to not allow them; and to not allow is an act of the will, as well as to will, (Acts 16:6, 7) and he is said to divide his gifts to each man, as he "will" (1 Cor. 12:11). And these three, as they are the one God, they agree in one, in one mind and will.

2. I shall next show what the will of God is: there is but one will in God; but for our better understanding it, it may be distinguished. I shall not trouble the reader with all the distinctions of it made by men; some are false, and others vain and useless; such as into absolute and conditional, antecedent and consequent, effectual and ineffectual, &c. the distinction of the "secret" and "revealed" will of God has generally obtained among sound divines; the former is properly the will of God, the latter only a manifestation of it. Whatever God has determined within himself, whether to do himself, or to do by others, or to suffer to be done, while it is in his own breast, and is not made known by any event in providence, or by prophecy, that is his secret will; such are the deep things of God, the thoughts of his heart, the counsels and determinations of his mind; which are impenetrable to others; but when these open, by events in providence, or by prophecy, then they become the revealed will of God. God's secret will becomes revealed by events in providence, whether it be considered general or special; the general providence of God, with respect to the world and church, is no other than the execution, and so the manifestation of his secret will, with respect to both: to the world, its production, the origin of nations, the settlement of them in the various parts of the world; the rise of states and kingdoms, and particularly the four monarchies, and the succession of them: to the church, in the line of Seth, from Adam, and in the line of Shem, from Noah, and in the people of Israel, from Abraham, to the coming of Christ: and the

book of Revelation is a discovery of the secret will of God with respect to both, from the coming of Christ to the end of the world; the greatest part of which has been fulfilled, and the rest will be; as the destruction of antichrist, and the antichristian states; the conversion of the Jews, and the bringing in of the fulness of the Gentiles; and the spiritual and personal kingdom of Christ. These are now already revealed, though the time when they will take place is still in the secret will of God. The providence of God may be considered as special with respect to particular persons; there is a purpose or secret will of God, with respect to every man; and there is a time fixed for every purpose; a time to be born, and a time to die; and for everything that befalls men between their birth and death: all which open in time, in providence; and what was secret becomes revealed: so we know that we are born, who our parents, the time and circumstances of our birth, as related to us; we know what has befallen us, whether in an adverse or prosperous way; God has performed what is appointed for us, as Job says of himself; but then, as he observes, "many such things are with him", in his secret will. We know not what shall befall us; and though we know that we shall die, that is revealed; but when and where, in what manner and circumstance, we know not; that remains in the secret will of God. Some things which belong to the secret will of God become revealed by prophecy; so it was made known to Abraham, that his seed, according to the secret will or purpose of God, should be in a land, not theirs, four hundred years, and be afflicted, and come out with great substance: nor did God hide from Abraham what he secretly willed to do, in destroying Sodom and Gomorrah: and, indeed, it has been usual for the Lord to do nothing but what he reveals to his servants the prophets; particularly all things concerning Christ, his incarnation, offices, obedience, sufferings, and death, and the glory that should follow, were all signified beforehand, to the prophets, by the Spirit of Christ in them. The will of God, which he would have done by men, is revealed in the law, that is called "his will" (Rom. 2:18). This was made known to Adam, by inscribing it on his heart, whereby he knew his duty to God, to be performed by him; this, though sadly obliterated by sin, yet there are some remains of it in the Gentiles, who do by nature the things contained in it; which show the work of the law written in their hearts: a new edition of this law was delivered to the Israelites, written on tables of stone, by the finger of God; according to which they were to behave themselves, and hold the tenure of the land of Canaan, and enjoy the privileges of it: and in regeneration the law of God is put into the inward parts, and written on the hearts of God's people; who being transformed, by the renewing of their minds, come to know what is the good, perfect, and acceptable will of God (Rom. 12:2). This respects

man's duty both to God and men.

There is the revealed will of God in the Gospel; which respects the kind intentions, and gracious regards of God to men; and discovers what before was his secret will concerning them; as, that he has chosen some to everlasting life and happiness; that he has appointed these to salvation by Christ; and appointed him to be their Saviour; that Christ undertook to do this will of God, and came from heaven to earth to do it, and has finished it; and that it is the will of God that these should be regenerated and sanctified; and "that they should never perish, but have everlasting life" (Eph. 1:4, 5; John 6:38; 1 Thess. 4:3; John 6:39, 40; Matthew 18:14). But then, though all this is the revealed will of God, in the Gospel, yet as to particular persons interested herein, it is, in a great measure, a secret; election of God, and so the rest, may be known by the Gospel coming with power into the heart, and by a work of grace upon it; and the knowledge of it should be sought after; yet it is not attained to but by such who are favoured with a full assurance of faith; and as to others, though it may, in a judgment of charity, because of their declared experiences, their savoury discourses, and holy conversation, be concluded of them, that they are the elect of God, &c. yet it cannot be certainly known, but by divine revelation, as it might be by the apostle, that Clement, and other fellow labourers of his, had their names written in the book of life (Phil. 4:3). It is the revealed will of God, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust; and that all must appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that after death there will be a judgment; and though it is revealed, that a day is fixed, as well as a person appointed to judge the world in righteousness; yet "of that day and hour knows no man"; no, not the angels; but God only. So that, on the whole, though there is some foundation for this distinction of the secret and revealed will of God, yet it is not quite clear; there is a mixture, part of the will of God is, as yet, secret, and part of it revealed, with respect to the same subject, as what has been observed plainly shows.

The most accurate distinction of the will of God, is into that of precept and purpose; or the commanding and decreeing will of God.

God's will of precept, or his commanding will, is that which is often spoken of in Scripture; as what should be done by men, and which is desirable they might have knowledge of, and be complete in (Matthew 7:21, 12:50; Col. 1:9, 4:12). This is the rule of mens' duty; which consists of the fear of God, and keeping his commands; this is done but by a few, and by none perfectly; every sin is a transgression of it; when it is done aright it is done in faith, from love, and to the glory of God: every good man desires to do it in the best manner, and, if it could be, perfectly; even as it is done by angels in

heaven. God, by the declaration of this his will, shows what he approves of, and what is acceptable to him, when done aright; and is made to render men inexcusable that do it not, and to make it appear right in justice to inflict punishment on such persons.

The decreeing will of God is only, properly speaking, his Will; the other is his Word: this is the rule of his own actions; he does all things in heaven and earth after his will, the counsel of it; and this will is always done, cannot be resisted, frustrated, and made void; he does whatever he wills; “his counsel stands, and the thoughts of his heart are to all generations”; and this is sometimes fulfilled by those who have no regard to his will of precept, and have no knowledge of this, even while they are doing it; as Herod and Pontius Pilate, the Jews and Gentiles, in doing what they did against Christ, (Acts 4:27, 28) and the ten kings, into whose hearts God put it to fulfil his will, in giving their kingdoms to the beast, (Rev. 17:17) and this will of God should be bore in mind in everything we intend to do or go about; saying, if the Lord will, we will do this, and that, and the other, (1 Cor. 4:19; James 4:13-15) and this should be owned and acknowledged, and submitted to in every state and condition of life, whether of prosperity or adversity, or in whatsoever befalls us in our own persons, or in our friends and relations, (Acts 21:14) and this, properly speaking, is the one and only will of God. I shall next inquire,

III. What are the objects of it.

First, God himself, not his Being, perfections, and modes of subsisting; as the paternity of the Father; the generation of the Son; and the breathing of the Spirit. These naturally and necessarily exist, and do not depend upon the will of God: but it is his own glory; “The Lord hath made all things for himself”; that is, for his own glory (Prov. 16:4). He wills his own glory in all he does; as “all things are of him”, as the efficient Cause; and “through him”, as the wise Disposer of them; so they are “to him”, to his glory, as the final Cause, and last end of all; and this he wills necessarily; he cannot but will his own glory; as “he will not give his glory to another”; he cannot will it to another; that would be to deny himself.

Secondly, All things without himself, whether good or evil, are the objects of his will, or what his will is some way or other concerned in: there is a difference, indeed, between the objects of God’s knowledge and power and the objects of his will; for though he knows all things knowable, in his understanding, and his power reaches to all that is possible, though not made; yet he wills not all things willable, if the word may be allowed, or that might be willed; wherefore, as Amesius observes, though God is said to be omniscient and omnipotent, yet not omnivulent or all willing.

1st, All good things.

1. All things in nature; all things are made by him, and all were originally good that were made by him, even “very good”; and all were made according to his will; “Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure”; or by thy will, “they are and were created”, (Rev. 4:11) even the heavens, earth, and sea, and all that in them are.

2. All things in providence. God’s kingdom of providence rules over all, and extends to all creatures, angels and men, and every other, and to all events that befall them; not a sparrow falls to the ground without the will of God; “He doth according to his will in the army of heaven”; in the heavenly host of angels; “and among the inhabitants of the earth”, (Dan. 4:35) there is nothing comes to pass but what God has willed, ordered, and appointed; “Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?” (Lam. 3:37).

3. All things in grace are according to the will of God, all spiritual blessings in Christ, all grace given to the elect Christ, before the world was; the choice of them in Christ; predestination to adoption by him; redemption through his blood; regeneration, sanctification, and the eternal inheritance; all are according to the good pleasure of his will (2 Tim. 1:9; Eph. 1:3-5, 7, 9, 11; James 1:18; 1 Thess. 4:3).

Secondly, All evil things are the objects of God’s will; which are of two sorts.

1. “Malum poenae”, the evil of afflictions; whether in a way of chastisement, or of punishment: if in a way of chastisement, as they are to the people of God, they are according to the will of God; they do not spring out of the dust, nor come by chance; but are by the will, order, and appointment of God; as to quality, quantity, duration, ends, and uses, (Job 23:14; Mic. 6:9; 1 Thess. 3:3) and which are consistent with the justice, holiness, wisdom, love, and goodness of God. If they are in a way of punishment, as they are to wicked and ungodly men; there is no reason to complain of them, since they are less than their sins deserve; and not at all unworthy of a righteous God to will to inflict on them, (Lam. 3:39) all judgments, calamities, and distresses, which come upon kingdoms, nations, cities, towns, and particular persons, are all of God, and according to his will (Amos 3:6). Not that God wills these things for the sake of them; or as taking delight in the afflictions and miseries of his creatures, (Lam. 3:33; Ezek. 18:32) but for the sake of some good: the afflictions of his people are for their spiritual good, as well as for his own glory: and the punishment of the wicked is for the glorifying of his justice.

2. There is “malum culpae”, or the evil of fault and blame, that is sin: about this there is some difficulty how the will of God should be concerned

in it, consistent with his purity and holiness: that the will of God is some way or other concerned with it is most certain; for he either wills it or not wills it: the latter cannot be said, because nothing comes to pass, God not willing it, (Lam. 3:37) or he neither wills it, nor not wills it; that is, he has no care about it, nor concern at all with it; and so it is outside the area of jurisdiction, and not within the reach of his providence; which cannot be admitted, and which none will say, but those who are atheistically inclined (see Ezek. 9:9; Zep. 1:12). Besides, as Beza, and other divines argue, unless God had voluntarily permitted sin to be, there could be no display, neither of his punitive justice, nor of his mercy: to which may be added, that God's foreknowledge of sin most fully proves his will in it; that God foreknew sin would be, is certain; as the fall of Adam; since he made a provision, in Christ, for the saving of men out of it, before it was; and so other sins (see 2 Sam. 12:11, 16:22). Now certain and immutable foreknowledge, such as the foreknowledge of God, is founded upon some certain and immutable cause; which can be no other than the divine will; God foreknows, certainly, that such and such things will be; because he has determined in his will they shall be. To set this affair in the best light, it will be proper to consider, what is in sin, and relative to it: there is the act of sin, and there is the guilt of sin, which is an obligation to punishment, and the punishment itself. Concerning the two last there can be no difficulty; that God should will that men that sin should become guilty; be reckoned, accounted, and treated as such; or lie under obligation to punishment; nor that he should will the punishment of them, and appoint and foreordain them to it for it (Prov. 16:4; Jude 1:4). The only difficulty is, about the act of sin; and this may be considered either as natural or moral; or the act, and the ataxy, disorder, irregularity, and vitiosity of it: as an action, barely considered, it is of God, and according to his will; without which, and the concurrence of his providence, none can be performed; he is the fountain and source of all action and motion; in him all live, move, and have their being, (Acts 17:28) but then the vitiosity and irregularity of it, as it is an aberration from the law of God, and a transgression of it, is of men only; and God cannot be said to will this; he forbids it, he abhors and detests it; he takes no pleasure in it; he is of purer eyes than even to behold it with approbation and delight. God cannot will it as sin, or for the sake of itself; but for the sake of some good to be brought about through it; as the fall of Adam, for the glorifying of his justice and mercy, in punishing some of his posterity, and saving others: the sin of Joseph's brethren selling him into Egypt, for the good of Joseph and his father's family, and others; and the sin of the Jews, in crucifying Christ, for the redemption and salvation of men. And besides, God may will one sin as a punishment for another;

as it is most certain he has in the case of the Israelites, (Hosea 4:9, 10, 13) of the heathen philosophers, (Rom. 1:28) and of the papists (2 Thess. 2:9-12). Once more, though God may be said, in such senses, to will sin, yet he wills it in a different way than he wills that which is good; he does not will to do it himself, nor to do it by others; but permits it to be done; and which is not a bare permission, but a voluntary permission; and is expressed by God's "giving" up men to their own hearts' lusts, and by "suffering" them to walk in their own sinful ways, (Ps. 81:12; Acts 14:16) he wills it not by his effective will, but by his permissive will; and therefore cannot be chargeable with being the author of sin; since there is a wide difference between doing it himself, and doing it by others, or ordering it to be done, which only can make him the author of sin; and voluntarily permitting or suffering it to be done by others. I proceed to consider,

IV. The nature and properties of the will of God. And,

First, It is natural and "essential" to him; it is his very nature and essence; his will is himself willing; and therefore there can be but one will in God; for there is but one God, whose nature and essence is one; for though there are three persons in the Godhead, there is but one undivided nature common to them all, and so but one will: they are one, and they agree in one; God is "in one mind", or will; though there may be distinctions of his will, and different objects of it, and divers ways in which he wills, yet it is by one single eternal act of will he wills all things. Hence also his will is incommunicable to a creature; the will of God cannot otherwise be a creature's, but as that they approve of it, acquiesce in it, and submit unto it; even it was incommunicable to the human nature of Christ, though taken into union with the person of the Son of God; yet his divine will, and his human will, are distinct from each other, though the one is subject to the other (John 6:38; Luke 22:42).

Secondly, The will of God is "eternal", as may be concluded from the attribute of "eternity"; for if God is eternal, as he certainly is, even from everlasting to everlasting God, then his will must be eternal, since it is his nature and essence: and from his "immutability"; who changes not, and with whom there is no shadow of turning; but if any new will arises in God in time, which was not in eternity, there would be a change in him; he would not be the same in time he was in eternity; nor the same in eternity he is in time; whereas, he is the same yesterday, today, and for ever: and from the "foreknowledge" of God, which is eternal; "Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world", or from eternity, (Acts 15:18) and now as God's foreknowledge arises from his will, God foreknows what will be, as has been observed, because he has determined, in his will, what shall be; so if his knowledge is eternal, his will must be eternal. Likewise, this

may be illustrated by the decree of “election”; that was, certainly, before men had done either good or evil; was from the beginning, or from everlasting; even before the foundation of the world, (Eph. 1:4) and as the decree and determination of the will of God was so early, the same may be concluded of all others: add to all which, the will of God is concerned with “all things” that have been “from the beginning” of the world, now are, or shall be to the end of it; and therefore must be prior to the existence of the world, and things in it; and if prior to them, then prior to time; and if prior to time, must be eternal; for we know of nothing before time but what is eternal.

Thirdly, The will of God is “immutable”: immutability is expressly ascribed to the counsel of God; that is, to the will and purpose of God, (Heb. 6:17) and may be established from the attribute of “immutability”; for if God is unchangeably the same, as he is, then his will must be the same, since it is his nature and essence: a change is made in the will of a creature, either by beginning to will what it did not before, or by ceasing to will what it has willed: now the cause of beginning a new will, or willing what it did not, supposes previous ignorance of the thing now begun to be willed; not knowing the fitness and propriety of it, being ignorant of its nature, excellence, and utility; for of an unknown thing there can be no desire and will: but such a change of will can never take place in God, on such a footing; since it is not only contrary to his eternity and immutability, but to his knowledge, whose understanding is infinite: or a creature changes its will, when it ceases to will what it has willed; which is either of choice, or of obligation to it; of choice, when something unforeseen occurs, which causes it to change its will, and take another course: but nothing of this kind can befall God, before whom all things are at once and together, naked and open; even from all eternity: or else of force, being obliged unto it, because it cannot accomplish its will, and therefore drops it, and takes another course: “But who hath resisted his will”, the will of God, so as to cause him to cease from it, and drop it? If God changes his will, it must be either for the better or the worse; and either way it would betray imperfection in him, and want of wisdom;

God may change his outward dispensations of things, but he never changes his will: repentance attributed to him is no proof of it; “He is in one mind, and who can turn him?” his will is not to be turned nor altered, nor by the prayers of his people. But of these things see more under the attribute of “immutability”, before treated of.

Fourthly, The will of God is always efficacious; there are no wishes, would-bes, or feeble degrees of volition in God; his will is always effected, never made null and void; he does whatever he pleases, or wills; his counsel always stands, and he ever does his pleasure; otherwise he would not be

almighty, as he is: it must be for want of power, if his will is not fulfilled, which cannot be said; as he is omnipotent, so is his will; yea, Austin calls it, his most omnipotent will: if this was not the case, there would be somewhat, or some one “superior” to him; whereas he is God over all, the most High, higher than the highest; and can never be contradicted by any: and was his will ineffectual, he would be “frustrated” and disappointed of his end: but as nothing comes to pass which man says, and the Lord commands it not; so everything the Lord says, wills, and orders, most certainly comes to pass; “For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it?” yea, he hath sworn, saying, “Surely, as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, it shall stand” (Isa. 14:24, 27). Besides if his will was not efficacious, or it failed of accomplishment, he would not be happy: when a man’s will is ineffectual, and he cannot accomplish it, it gives him uneasiness, it makes him unhappy; but this can never be said of God, who is the blessed, the blessed God, blessed forevermore.

Fifthly, The will of God has “no cause” out of himself; for then there would be something prior to him, and greater and more excellent than he; as every cause is before its effect, and more excellent than that; and his will would be dependent on another, and so he not be the independent Being he is: nor can there be any impulsive or moving cause of his will; because there is in him no passive power to work upon; he is purely act, “actus simplicissimus”, a pure, active Spirit: if he consisted of act and power, he would not be the simple and uncompounded Spirit he is; wherefore, to be impelled or moved by any cause, would be contrary to his simplicity, before established: he may indeed be said to will one thing for another; but then that which he wills for another, is no moving cause of his will; these may have the nature of cause and effect between themselves; but neither of them the cause of the will of God; nor is there any final cause of what he wills and does but his own glory; and it would be madness to seek for a cause of his willing that: and from this property of the will of God, it may be clearly discerned, that foreseen faith, holiness, and good works, cannot be the cause of God’s will in the election of any to eternal life; and so the contrary, no cause of his will in the rejection of others.

Sixthly, The will of God, for this same reason, is not conditional; for then it would be dependent on the condition to be performed; and not the will of God, but the performance of the condition, would be the first and chief in the attainment of the end thereby. And, to say no more, if, for instance, God willed to save all men conditionally; that is, on condition of faith and repentance; and to damn them if these conditions are wanting; who does not see that this conditional will, to save and to destroy, is equally the same?

destruction is equally willed as salvation; and where is the general love of God to men, so much talked of? there is none at all to any.

Seventhly, The will of God is most free and sovereign; as appears,

1. From the making of the world, and all things in it. That the world is eternal, few have asserted; that it was made, and the scriptures assert, (Rev. 4:11) and the making of it, as to time and order, and things contained in it, is owing to the sovereign will of God; to what else but to his sovereignty can it be ascribed, that he has not made more worlds than he has, who could, if he would, have made ten thousand worlds? or that he should make this world when he did, and not sooner, when he could have made it millions of ages before, if he would? or that he should be six days making that, and all things in it, when he could have made them all in a moment, if he pleased? or that he made this world no larger than it is, and made no more kinds and species of creatures than he has, and those he has made no more numerous than they be? no reason can be assigned, but his sovereign will and pleasure.

2. The sovereignty of the will of God appears in providence, and in the various events of it; as in the births and deaths of men, which are neither of them of the will of men, but of the will of God; and there is a time for both fixed by his will; and in which his sovereignty may be seen; for to what else can it be ascribed, that such and such men should be born, and brought into the world, in such an age, and not before? and that they should go out of the world at the time, in the manner and circumstances they do? and that there should be such difference in men, in their states, conditions, and circumstances in life; that some should be rich, and others poor? riches and poverty are both at the disposal of God, as Agur's prayer shows; and God is the maker both of the rich and poor, not only as men, but as rich and poor men: and to what can this difference be attributed, but to the sovereign will of God? some are raised to great honour and dignity; and others live in a very low, mean, and abject state; but promotion comes neither from the East, nor from the West, nor from the South; but God puts down one, and sets up another, as he pleases; and these differences and changes may be observed in the same persons, as in Job, who was for many years the greatest man in all the East, and, on a sudden, was stripped of all his riches, honour, and glory, and upon a dunghill; and then, after a while, restored to twice the wealth and riches he had before. So Nebuchadnezzar, the greatest monarch then on earth, and when in the most flourishing circumstances, and in the height of his grandeur, was degraded from his dignity, as a man and monarch, and driven to dwell among beasts, and to become and live like one of them; and, after all, was restored to his reason, and to his throne, and former greatness; which extorted from him such an acknowledgment of the

sovereign will of God as perhaps is no where more strongly expressed; “He doth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, what dost thou?” (Dan. 4:35). Some are free from sickness and diseases of body all their days; their strength is firm, and no weaknesses in their death, but die in their full strength: while others drag on a life attended with a variety of infirmities and disorders, to their graves; and this is the case of the best of men: to what can it be imputed, but to the sovereign will of God? and how otherwise can be accounted for the many abortions, miscarriages, untimely births, infants that never saw light; and others, as soon as their eyes are opened in this world, are shut again; when others not only go through the stages of infancy, childhood, and manhood, but arrive to a full age, and come to their graves like a shock of corn fully ripe? And a multitude of other things might be observed, in providence; which, though God has wise reasons for them, are unaccountable to us, but are obliged to refer them to his sovereign will and pleasure; who gives no account of his matters to the children of men.

3. The will of God appears to be sovereign in things sacred, spiritual, and religious, both with respect to angels and men: as that some of the angels should be elect, and confirmed by the grace of Christ, in the estate in which they were created, and be preserved from apostasy, while a large number of them were suffered to rebel against God, and leave their first state; for which they were cast down from heaven to hell, and reserved in chains of darkness, to the judgment of the great day, and no mercy shown to any of them; as has been to many of the apostate race of Adam. What other reason can be given for all this, but the sovereign will of God?

Among men, some God loves, and some he hates; and that before good or evil are done by them; some he chooses to everlasting happiness, and others he passes by and rejects; he has mercy on some, and hardens others; just as he, in his sovereignty, wills and pleases: some are redeemed from among men, by Christ, even out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation, whom he wills, and resolves to save; when others are left to perish in their sins: for which no other cause can be assigned than the sovereign will and pleasure of God. According to which also he dispenses his gifts to men, and these of different sorts; some fitting for public service, as to ministers of the gospel; and such he makes whensoever he pleases, and gives them gifts differing from one another; to some greater to others less, to some one talent and to others five, dividing to every man individually as he wills, according to his sovereign pleasure: the means of grace, the ministry of the word and ordinances, in all ages, have been disposed of, just as seemed good in his sight; for many hundreds of years, God gave his word to Jacob,

and his statutes unto Israel, and other nations knew them not; and these have been since distributed among the Gentiles, sometimes in one place, and sometimes in another; and how apparent is the sovereignty of God in favouring our British Isles, these Isles afar off, with the gospel, and gospel ordinances, when so great a part of the world is denied them, and is covered with Pagan, Papal, and Mahometan darkness? and still more it is manifest in that these outward means are, to some, “the savour of life unto life, and to others the savour of death unto death.” The special gifts of the grace of God, are bestowed upon men according to the sovereign will of God; of his own will he regenerates some, and not others; calls by his grace, whom he pleases, when and by what means, according to his purpose; reveals the gospel, and the great things of it, to whom he would make them known; and hides them from the wise and prudent; “even so Father”, says Christ, “for so it seemed good in thy sight”; nor does he give any other reason for such a conduct. The graces of the Spirit of God are given to some, and not to others; as for instance, repentance, which is a grant from God, a gift of Christ, was bestowed on Peter, who denied his Lord; and withheld from Judas, that betrayed him. Faith, which is the gift of God, all men have it not; to some it is only given, when others have a spirit of slumber, eyes that they see not, and ears that they hear not. In short, eternal life, which is the free gift of God, through Christ, is given only by him, to as many as the Father has given him, and to these alike; the penny, which seems to mean eternal happiness, in the parable, is given to those who were called to labour in the vineyard in the eleventh hour, as to those who bore the heat and burden of the day: some do much service for Christ, and others very little, and yet all share the same glory. To what can all this be resolved, but into the sovereign will of God? who says, “Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with my own?” (Matthew 20:15). But though the will of God is sovereign, it always acts wisely: some sovereign princes will things rashly and foolishly; but God wills nothing contrary to his perfections of wisdom, justice, holiness, &c. and his will is therefore called “counsel”, and “the counsel of his will” (Isa. 25:1, 46:10; Eph. 1:11).

THE MODERN ATHEIST CONCLUSIONS



Video Link <https://youtu.be/id-GJeGmBaw>

A Modern Atheist is one who believes that God exists, but denies His sovereignty in respect to creation, providence and the preservation of the Scriptures. These scriptures declare the divine purposes and attributes of God, such as:

- 1 OF THE BEING OF GOD
- 2 OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES
- 3 OF THE NAMES OF GOD
- 4 OF THE NATURE OF GOD
- 5 OF THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD IN GENERAL, AND OF HIS IMMUTABILITY IN PARTICULAR.
- 5 OF THE INFINITY OF GOD,
- 6 OF THE LIFE OF GOD.
- 7 OF THE OMNIPOTENCE OF GOD.
- 8 OF THE OMNISCIENCE OF GOD
- 9 OF THE WISDOM OF GOD
- 10 OF THE WILL OF GOD AND THE SOVEREIGNTY OF IT
- 11 OF THE LOVE OF GOD
- 12 OF THE GRACE OF GOD

- 13 OF THE MERCY OF GOD
- 14 OF THE LONG SUFFERING OF GOD.
- 15 OF THE GOODNESS OF GOD.
- 16 OF THE ANGER AND WRATH OF GOD.
- 17 OF THE HATRED OF GOD.
- 18 OF THE JOY OF GOD.
- 19 OF THE HOLINESS OF GOD.
- 20 OF THE JUSTICE OR RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD
- 21 OF THE VERACITY OF GOD
- 22 OF THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD
- 23 OF THE SUFFICIENCY AND PERFECTION OF GOD
- 24 OF THE BLESSEDNESS OF GOD.
- 25 OF THE UNITY OF GOD
- 26 OF A PLURALITY IN THE GODHEAD OR, A TRINITY OF
PERSONS IN THE UNITY OF THE DIVINE ESSENCE
- 27 OF THE PERSONAL RELATIONS; OR, RELATIVE
PROPERTIES WHICH DISTINGUISH THE THREE DIVINE
PERSONS IN THE DEITY.
- 28 OF THE DISTINCT PERSONALITY, AND DEITY OF
THE FATHER.
- 29 OF THE DISTINCT PERSONALITY, AND DEITY OF THE SON.
- 30 OF THE DISTINCT PERSONALITY, AND DEITY OF THE
HOLY SPIRIT.

An Assignment For My Son Isaac

I have put forward that God sent COVID for a reason as God is sovereign and nothing in this world happens by chance. I have sought to educate you in this matter but what I say is rejected when speaking of the COVID pandemic, and other things such as the sovereignty of God in all of these affairs.

I am saying that God sent Covid, for a reason, and may be on reason to remind men that their lives are in the hand of God and if they are concerned for their lives and that of others they might turn to God in repentance and seek God's aid. I don't know the reason but my views are rejected, saying God could not possibly be involved. However this response is based upon an imperfect view of God.

I am grateful for such objections because it will enable me to address all these matters and to challenge those faulty theological views, and advance the biblical ground for my views.

It is written that the Church²² is the ground and pillar of the truth. Which I take to mean that the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ must be able to address all aspects of theological truth, such as we are discussing.

I maintain that God sent COVID, for reason. I have given briefly my reasons for saying that but my views are denied. And no doubt it is due to unbiblical views in respect to what the bible teaches about the sovereignty of God and predestination, for all things are under the providential care of God. God has an eternal purpose in creation, making man, His works, providence, redemption and all the works of God.,

It is my observation that most Christians are deficient in knowledge, and are unable to deal with these issues, for various reasons.

Also they are warned in the parables of Jesus not to be like the unwise virgins, unjust stewards or wicked servants, but be about the masters business. Laziness is not a virtue, and not rewarded, so I am encouraging you to study to show yourself approved as a good workman.

So, to do this I am asking you and write an essay, informing me of what those scriptures are saying in those verses that I have brought to your attention.

Rev 18: 8,

Rev 19:15.

Lam 3:37-39

Heb10:31

Act 4:27.

Send a copy to Rebekah as I have just been informed today, she too has COVID, and now in quarantine.

COVID effects us all and an understanding of God and His purposes are really relevant for us today. This is not theoretical Christianity.

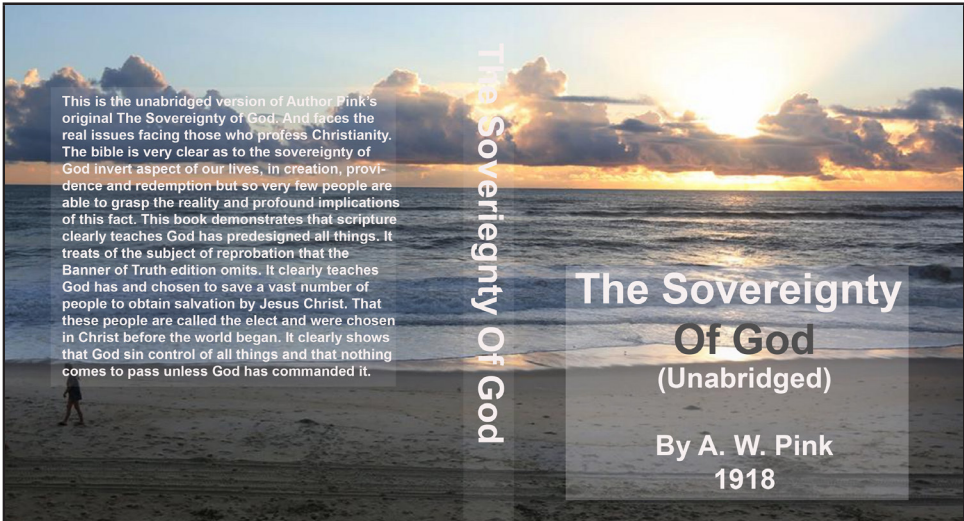
Like Noah, and the world wide flood, God is speaking to the world. What happened to those antediluvian people who ignored the preaching of Noah.

COVID is World wide.

²² Timothy 3:15 But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD INTRODUCTION

By A.w. Pink



PDF TEXT <https://www.biertonparticularbaptists.co.uk/resources/The%20Sovereignty%20of%20God%20AW%20Pink%20Unabridged%20pls.pdf>

YOUTUBE VIDEO LINK <https://youtu.be/-cnOxOAwWjE>

Who is regulating affairs on this earth today-God, or the Devil? That God reigns supreme in Heaven is generally conceded; that He does so over this world, is almost universally denied-if not directly, then indirectly. More and more are men in their philosophizing and theorizing relegating God to the background. Take the material realm. Not only is it denied that God created everything by personal and direct action, but few believe that He has any immediate concern in regulating the works of His own hands. Everything is supposed to be ordered according to the (impersonal and abstract) "laws of Nature." Thus is the Creator banished from His own creation. Therefore we need not be surprised that men, in their degrading conceptions, exclude Him from the realm of human affairs. Throughout Christendom, with an almost negligible exception, the theory is held that man is "a free agent," and therefore, lord of his fortunes and the determiner of his destiny. That Satan is to be blamed for much of the evil which is in the world is freely affirmed by those who, though having so much to say about "the responsibility of man," often deny their own responsibility, by attributing to the Devil what, in fact, proceeds from their own evil hearts (Mark 7:21-23).

But who is regulating affairs on this earth today-God, or the Devil?

Attempt to take a serious and comprehensive view of the world. What a scene of confusion and chaos confronts us on every side! Sin is rampant; lawlessness abounds; evil men and seducers are waxing “worse and worse” (2 Tim. 3:13). Today, everything appears to be out of joint. Thrones are creaking and tottering, ancient dynasties are being overturned, democracies are revolting, civilization is a demonstrated failure; half of Christendom was but recently locked-together in a death grapple; and now that the titanic conflict is over, instead of the world having been made “safe for democracy,” we have discovered that democracy is very unsafe for the world. Unrest, discontent, and lawlessness are rife everywhere, and none can say how soon another great war will be set in motion. Statesmen are perplexed and staggered. Men’s hearts are “failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth” (Luke 21:26). Do these things look as though God had full control?

But let us confine our attention to the religious realm. After nineteen centuries of Gospel preaching, Christ is still “despised and rejected of men.” Worse still, He (the Christ of Scripture) is proclaimed and magnified by very few. In the majority of modern pulpits He is dishonoured and disowned. Despite frantic efforts to attract the crowds, the majority of the churches are being emptied rather than filled. And what of the great masses of non-church goers? In the light of Scripture we are compelled to believe that the “many” are on the Broad Road that leadeth to destruction, and that only “few” are on the Narrow Way that leadeth unto life. Many are declaring that Christianity is a failure, and despair is settling on many faces. Not a few of the Lord’s own people are bewildered, and their faith is being severely tried. And what of God? Does He see and hear? Is He impotent or indifferent? A number of those who are regarded as leaders of Christian-thought told us that God could not help the coming of the late awful War, and that He was unable to bring about its termination. It was said, and said openly, that conditions were beyond God’s control. Do these things look as though God were ruling the world?

Who is regulating affairs on this earth today-God, or the Devil? What impression is made upon the minds of those men of the world who, occasionally, attend a Gospel service? What are the conceptions formed by those who hear even those preachers who are counted as “orthodox?” Is it not that a disappointed God is the One whom Christians believe in? From what is heard from the average evangelist today, is not any serious hearer obliged to conclude that he professes to represent a God who is filled with benevolent intentions, yet unable to carry them out; that He is earnestly desirous of blessing men, but that they will not let Him? Then, must not the

average hearer draw the inference that the Devil has gained the upper hand, and that God is to be pitied rather than blamed?

But does not everything seem to show that the Devil has far more to do with the affairs of earth than God has? Ah, it all depends upon whether we are walking by faith, or walking by sight. Are your thoughts, my reader, concerning this world and God's relation to it, based upon what you see? Face this question seriously and honestly. And if you are a Christian you will, most probably, have cause to bow your head with shame and sorrow, and to acknowledge that it is so. Alas, in reality, we walk very little "by faith." But what does "walking by faith" signify? It means that our thoughts are formed, our actions regulated, our lives molded by the Holy Scriptures, for, "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" (Rom. 10:17). It is from the Word of Truth, and that alone, that we can learn what is God's relation to this world.

Who is regulating affairs on this earth today-God or the Devil? What saith the Scriptures? Ere we consider the direct reply to this query, let it be said that the Scriptures predicted just what we now see and hear. The prophecy of Jude is in course of fulfillment. It would lead us too far astray from our present inquiry to fully amplify this assertion, but what we have particularly in mind is a sentence in verse 8-"Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion and speak evil of dignities." Yes, they "speak evil" of the Supreme Dignity, the "Only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords." Ours is peculiarly an age of irreverence, and as the consequence, the spirit of lawlessness, which brooks no restraint and which is desirous of casting off everything which interferes with the free course of self-will, is rapidly engulfing the earth like some giant tidal wave. The members of the rising generation are the most flagrant offenders, and in the decay and disappearing of parental authority we have the certain precursor of the abolition of civic authority. Therefore, in view of the growing disrespect for human law and the refusal to "render honour to whom honour is due," we need not be surprised that the recognition of the majesty, the authority, the Sovereignty of the Almighty law-giver should recede more and more into the background, and the masses have less and less patience with those who insist upon them. And conditions will not improve; instead, the more sure Word of Prophecy makes known to us that they will grow worse and worse. Nor do we expect to be able to stem the tide-it has already risen much too high for that. All we can now hope to do is warn our fellow-saints against the spirit of the age, and thus seek to counteract its baneful influence upon them.

Who is regulating affairs on this earth today-God, or the Devil? What

saith the Scriptures? If we believe their plain and positive declarations, no room is left for uncertainty. They affirm, again and again, that God is on the throne of the universe; that the sceptre is in His hands; that He is directing all things “after the counsel of His own will.” They affirm, not only that God created all things, but also that God is ruling and reigning over all the works of His hands. They affirm that God is the “Almighty,” that His will is irreversible, that He is absolute Sovereign in every realm of all His vast dominions. And surely it must be so. Only two alternatives are possible: God must either rule, or be ruled; sway, or be swayed; accomplish His own will, or be thwarted by His creatures. Accepting the fact that He is the “Most High,” the only Potentate and King of kings, vested with perfect wisdom and illimitable power, and the conclusion is irresistible that He must be God in fact as well as in name.

It is in view of what we have briefly referred to above that we say, Present-day conditions call loudly for a new examination and new presentation of God’s omnipotency, God’s sufficiency, God’s Sovereignty. From every pulpit in the land it needs to be thundered forth that God still lives, that God still observes, that God still reigns. Faith is now in the crucible, it is being tested by fire, and there is no fixed and sufficient resting-place for the heart and mind but in the Throne of God. What is needed now, as never before, is a full, positive, constructive setting forth of the Godhood of God. Drastic diseases call for drastic remedies. People are weary of platitudes and mere generalizations-the call is for something definite and specific. Soothing-syrup may serve for peevish children, but an iron tonic is better suited for adults, and we know of nothing which is more calculated to infuse spiritual vigour into our frames than a scriptural apprehension of the full character of God. It is written, “The people that do know their God shall be strong and do exploits” (Dan. 11:32).

Without a doubt a world-crisis is at hand, and everywhere men are alarmed. But God is not! He is never taken by surprise. It is no unexpected emergency which now confronts Him, for He is the One who “worketh all things after the counsel of His own will” (Eph. 1:11). Hence, though the world is panic-stricken, the word to the believer is, “Fear not!” “All things” are subject to His immediate control: “all things” are moving in accord with His eternal purpose, and therefore “all things” are “working together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.” It must be so, for “of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things” (Rom. 11:36). Yet how little is this realized today even by the people of God! Many suppose that He is little more than a far-distant Spectator, taking no immediate hand in the affairs of earth. It is true that man is endowed

with power, but God is all-powerful. It is true that, speaking generally, the material world is regulated by law, but behind that law is the law-Giver and law-Administrator. Man is but the creature. God is the Creator, and endless ages before man first saw the light “the mighty God” (Isa. 9:6) existed, and ere the world was founded, made His plans; and being infinite in power and man only finite, His purpose and plan cannot be withstood or thwarted by the creatures of His own hands.

We readily acknowledge that life is a profound problem, and that we are surrounded by mystery on every side; but we are not like the beasts of the field-ignorant of their origin, and unconscious of what is before them. No: “We have also a more sure Word of Prophecy,” of which it is said ye do well that ye “take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts” (2 Peter 1:19). And it is to this Word of Prophecy we indeed do well to “take heed,” to that Word which had not its origin in the mind of man but in the Mind of God, for, “the prophecy came not at any time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake moved by the Holy Spirit.” We say again, it is to this “Word” we do well to take heed. As we turn to this Word and are instructed thereout, we discover a fundamental principle which must be applied to every problem: Instead of beginning with man and his world and working back to God, we must begin with God and work down to man-”In the beginning God!” Apply this principle to the present situation. Begin with the world as it is today and try and work back to God, and everything will seem to show that God has no connection with the world at all. But begin with God and work down to the world, and light, much light, is cast on the problem. Because God is holy His anger burns against sin; because God is righteous His judgments fall upon those who rebel against Him; because God is faithful the solemn threatenings of His Word are fulfilled; because God is omnipotent none can successfully resist Him, still less overthrow His counsel; and because God is omniscient no problem can master Him and no difficulty baffle His wisdom. It is just because God is who He is and what He is that we are now beholding on earth what we do-the beginning of His outpoured judgments: in view of His inflexible justice and immaculate holiness we could not expect anything other than what is now spread before our eyes.

But let it be said very emphatically that the heart can only rest upon and enjoy the blessed truth of the absolute Sovereignty of God as faith is in exercise. Faith is ever occupied with God. That is the character of it; that is what differentiates it from intellectual theology. Faith endures “as seeing Him who is invisible” (Heb. 11:27): endures the disappointments, the hardships, and the heartaches of life by recognizing that all comes from the hand of

Him who is too wise to err and too loving to be unkind. But so long as we are occupied with any other object than God Himself there will be neither rest for the heart nor peace for the mind. But when we receive all that enters our lives as from His hand, then, no matter what may be our circumstances or surroundings-whether in a hovel, a prison-dungeon, or a martyr's stake-we shall be enabled to say, "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places" (Psa. 16:6). But that is the language of faith, not of sight or of sense.

But if instead of bowing to the testimony of Holy Writ, if instead of walking by faith, we follow the evidence of our eyes, and reason therefrom, we shall fall into a quagmire of virtual atheism. Or, if we are regulated by the opinions and views of others, peace will be at an end. Granted that there is much in this world of sin and suffering which appalls and saddens us; granted that there is much in the providential dealings of God which startle and stagger us; that is no reason why we should unite with the unbelieving worldling who says, "If I were God, I would not allow this or tolerate that," etc. Better far, in the presence of bewildering mystery, to say with one of old, "I was dumb, I opened not my mouth: because Thou didst it" (Psa. 39:9). Scripture tells us that God's judgments are "unsearchable," and His ways "past finding out" (Rom. 11:33). It must be so if faith is to be tested, confidence in His wisdom and righteousness strengthened, and submission to His holy will fostered.

Here is the fundamental difference between the man of faith and the man of unbelief. The unbeliever is "of the world," judges everything by worldly standards, views life from the standpoint of time and sense, and weighs everything in the balances of his own carnal making. But the man of faith brings in God, looks at everything from His standpoint, estimates values by spiritual standards, and views life in the light of eternity. Doing this, he receives whatever comes as from the hand of God. Doing this, his heart is calm in the midst of the storm. Doing this, he "rejoices in hope of the glory of God."

In these opening paragraphs we have indicated the lines of thought followed out in this book. Our first postulate is, that because God is God He does as He pleases, only as He pleases, always as He pleases; that His great concern is the accomplishment of His own pleasure and the promotion of His own glory; that He is the Supreme Being, and therefore Sovereign of the universe. Starting with this postulate we have contemplated the exercise of God's Sovereignty, first in Creation, second in Governmental Administration over the works of His hands, third in the Salvation of His own elect, fourth in the Reprobation of the wicked, and fifth in Operation upon and within men. Next we have viewed the Sovereignty of God as it relates to the human

Will in particular and human Responsibility in general, and have sought to show what is the only becoming attitude for the creature to take in view of the majesty of the Creator. A separate chapter has been set apart for a consideration of some of the difficulties which are involved, and to answering the questions which are likely to be raised in the minds of our readers; while one chapter has been devoted to a more careful yet brief examination of God's Sovereignty in relation to prayer. Finally, we have sought to show that the Sovereignty of God is a truth revealed to us in Scripture for the comfort of our hearts, the strengthening of our souls, and the blessing of our lives. A due apprehension of God's Sovereignty promotes the spirit of worship, provides an incentive to practical godliness, and inspires zeal in service. It is deeply humbling to the human heart, but in proportion to the degree that it brings man into the dust before his Maker, to that extent is God glorified.

We are well aware that what we have written is in open opposition to much of the teaching that is current both in religious literature and in the representative pulpits of the land. We freely grant that the postulate of God's Sovereignty with all its corollaries is at direct variance with the opinions and thoughts of the natural man, but the truth is, we are quite unable to think upon these matters: we are incompetent for forming a proper estimate of God's character and ways, and it is because of this that God has given us a revelation of His mind, and in that revelation He plainly declares, "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts" (Isa. 55:8, 9). In view of this Scripture, it is only to be expected that much of the contents of the Bible conflicts with the sentiments of the carnal mind, which is enmity against God. Our appeal then is not to the popular beliefs of the day, nor to the creeds of the churches, but to the Law and Testimony of Jehovah. All that we ask for is an impartial and attentive examination of what we have written, and that made prayerfully in the light of the Lamp of Truth. May the reader heed the Divine admonition to "prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (1 Thess. 5:21).¹⁸

