

Collateral Damage and the Heart of God

Part Three

(Reasoned Avoidance)

=====

Meditating on the Bible

1 Thessalonians 5:15-24

See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men.

Rejoice evermore.

Pray without ceasing.

In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

Quench not the Spirit.

Despise not prophesyings.

Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

Abstain from all appearance of evil.

And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.

+==+

Our study of the allowances that have been established as shields, for our protection from our ignorance of the potential damage that is in our actions, takes us directly to this consideration: What happens to the one who clearly causes the premature death of another soul? The answer to that depends on their heart as toward their part in the thing that caused the death. Here, we present this consideration . . .

And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath. But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken; The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.

And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.

But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be

beaten with few stripes.

For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.

(Luke 12:42-48)

In the application of stripes; the LORD provided a means for preservation of the life of the one who caused death, while also sending a message to all who observed the recompense that was laid upon that one. This is an ancient principle of; tailored service to the LORD. At the Beginning, this event set up a requirement for such tailoring.

And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.

And the LORD said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother?

And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?

And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand; When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.

(Genesis 4:8-12)

... And, tailoring of service was delivered, here.

And Cain said unto the LORD, My punishment is greater than I can bear. Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me.

And the LORD said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold.

And the LORD set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him. And Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden.

(Genesis 4:13-16)

Please; do not either, regulate, or, discount, the process of, the LORD'S mitigation. Do not try to regulate it so as to prescribe the number of stripes that any person (or group) should receive. Especially, do not try to count out stripes to a non-believer. Our posture

toward unbelievers is, substantially, hands off.

Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

(2 Corinthians 6:14-18)

Also; as for the believers, we must not discount God's presence in this process; as might be done in our housing of this thought: Surely, those who profess Christianity must be among the group that receives the many stripes. No, we cannot apply that prescription; because, the matter of stripes is an amorphous thing. The matter of stripes is a thing such that; we have no way of defining what a person's strips are, and, too, we cannot definitely say when stripes are being issued. The book of Job provides a strong lesson in this limitation. In the beginning of this book, it seems that stripes were applied to an exemplary servant of God.

Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the LORD. And the LORD said unto Satan, From whence comest thou?

And Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause.

And Satan answered the LORD, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face.

And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life.

So went Satan forth from the presence of the LORD, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown.

(Job 2:1-7)

In Job's situation, the pressure was a form of quickening; not, punishment by stripes. As we apply Job, as a guideline for generalized living, we are left with a quandary about the differentiation between stripes and quickening. Question: How might we discern the difference? Well, considering the human lifespan, this might not be possible. As much as is possible; we need to understand the nature of God's interaction with man, in the portion that leads up to such a categorization, and, in that portion of understanding, we have to accept our limitation. We need to know that, God is outside of our restricted span of time. Here, the apostle Peter helps us do that.

But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

(2 Peter 3:8-9)

Our place of service to God is where we rest our expectations, in the belief in the Faithfulness of the Father. As we abide there, we will become comfortable with the LORD'S Eventuality. Job experienced that Eventuality, as he came to this point, here.

And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before.

Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his house: and they bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the evil that the LORD had brought upon him: every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an earring of gold.

So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses. He had also seven sons and three daughters. And he called the name of the first, Jemima; and the name of the second, Kezia; and the name of the third, Kerenhappuch. And in all the land were no women found so fair as the daughters of Job: and their father gave them inheritance among their brethren.

After this lived Job an hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, even four generations.

(Job 42:10-16)

The place of Eventuality is not a secret retreat; though, it is of Heaven. Moreover, the citizens of Heaven have announced its presence, to the world of man, thusly.

After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

(Revelation 7:9-12)

In general, the place of Eventuality is open to each one of us, thusly.

And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?

And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest.

And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

(Revelation 7:13-17)

God shall wipe away all tears: as you meditate on that; please, consider it to be a definite thing--not, a maybe. As we do that, let us also be logical: this means that; prior to that time, there will be some tears in the life. And, among the tears may be some that are of a kind that comes when we feel anguish about leaving things undone. One of the things that fit into that category is the desire to eliminate all collateral damage. In general, that is a positive desire; but, still, in that area of life, we will leave things undone (as we perceive, undone).

Sometimes, we will encounter the LORD'S principle of; establishing allowances in God's ordinance for collateral damage. Yes, this, too, is a portion of the Design of God. As being a living example of that feature of the Design; Job was an ordained portion of collateral damage, as occurs in the war against our presumption of continuous earthly stability. Moses described this aspect of our existence, thusly . . .

A Prayer of Moses the man of God.

LORD, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.

Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men. For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night.

(Psalm 90:1-4)

At a later time, king Solomon, the Preacher, also described this aspect of our existence--our war against our presumption of continuous earthly stability.

Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools. Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this. Wisdom is good with an inheritance: and by it there is profit to them that see the sun. For wisdom is a defence, and money is a defence: but the excellency of knowledge is, that wisdom giveth life to them that have it.

Consider the work of God: for who can make that straight, which he hath made crooked? In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: God also hath set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him. All things have I seen in the days of my vanity: there is a just man that perisheth in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man that prolongeth his life in his wickedness.

(Ecclesiastes 7:9-15)

Blessedly, the events of Scripture, such as the witness of the life of Job, introduce, for all time afterward, a, sometimes unsettling, fact about recompense for causing collateral damage; which is, this possibility: the LORD can take His time about relieving the guilt suffering of those who have committed malicious acts; especially, among those who do so thinking that they will receive an escape hatch because they have professed a belief in their place in the LORD. Prior piety does not detach associated consequences that accompany our variance from the way of the LORD. In that though, remember that; repentance is a connected component of prior acts. Therefore, repentance can be viewed as a precedent to the flow into consequence, in the LORD. Consider these examples of that connection, as seen from the standpoint of the individual, proceeding to the larger entity.

- The unwitting individual:

And if any one of the common people sin through ignorance, while he doeth somewhat against any of the commandments of the LORD concerning things which ought not to be done, and be guilty; Or if his sin,

which he hath sinned, come to his knowledge: then he shall bring his offering, a kid of the goats, a female without blemish, for his sin which he hath sinned. And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin offering, and slay the sin offering in the place of the burnt offering.

And the priest shall take of the blood thereof with his finger, and put it upon the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and shall pour out all the blood thereof at the bottom of the altar. And he shall take away all the fat thereof, as the fat is taken away from off the sacrifice of peace offerings; and the priest shall burn it upon the altar for a sweet savour unto the LORD; and the priest shall make an atonement for him, and it shall be forgiven him.

(Leviticus 4:27-31)

- The rulers (including, reasoned avoidance of damage to the house of the kingdom):

When a ruler hath sinned, and done somewhat through ignorance against any of the commandments of the LORD his God concerning things which should not be done, and is guilty; Or if his sin, wherein he hath sinned, come to his knowledge; he shall bring his offering, a kid of the goats, a male without blemish: And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the goat, and kill it in the place where they kill the burnt offering before the LORD: it is a sin offering.

And the priest shall take of the blood of the sin offering with his finger, and put it upon the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and shall pour out his blood at the bottom of the altar of burnt offering. And he shall burn all his fat upon the altar, as the fat of the sacrifice of peace offerings: and the priest shall make an atonement for him as concerning his sin, and it shall be forgiven him.

(Leviticus 4:22-26)

- The collective:

And if the whole congregation of Israel sin through ignorance, and the thing be hid from the eyes of the assembly, and they have done somewhat against any of the commandments of the LORD concerning things which should not be done, and are guilty; When the sin, which they have sinned against it, is known, then the congregation shall offer a young bullock for the sin, and bring him before the tabernacle of the congregation. And the elders of the congregation shall lay their hands upon the head of the bullock before the LORD: and the bullock shall be killed before the LORD.

And the priest that is anointed shall bring of the bullock's blood to the tabernacle of the congregation: And the priest shall dip his finger in some of the blood, and sprinkle it seven times before the LORD, even before the veil. And he shall put some of the blood upon the horns of the altar which is before the LORD, that is in the tabernacle of the congregation, and shall pour out all the blood at the bottom of the altar of the burnt offering, which is at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And he shall take all his fat from him, and burn it upon the altar. And he shall do with the bullock as he did with the bullock for a sin offering, so shall he do with this:

and the priest shall make an atonement for them, and it shall be forgiven them.

(Leviticus 4:13-20)

In Scripture, another notable thing about the power of repentance is that; it also took account of the capability of the repentant one. In this respect, it is somewhat like the allocation of stripes of Jesus' teaching in Luke 12:42-48; in that, those who had more were called upon to give more, while, those who had less were allowed to give according to their limitation. For the individual, and example of the Law's statement of that type of allowance is in this Scripture.

And if he be poor, and cannot get so much; then he shall take one lamb for a trespass offering to be waved, to make an atonement for him, and one tenth deal of fine flour mingled with oil for a meat offering, and a log of oil; And two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, such as he is able to get; and the one shall be a sin offering, and the other a burnt offering. And he shall bring them on the eighth day for his cleansing unto the priest, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, before the LORD.

(Leviticus 14:21-23)

At the larger level, as for a house, the allowance is illustrated here.

And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt saying, This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you. Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house: And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb.

(Exodus 12:1-4)

In these allowances for insufficiencies--ignorance, low asset base, reduced capability,

and etcetera--the LORD gave us reasoned avoidance of damage. (Reasoned avoidance can be contrasted with, formulaic compliance.) As applied by the LORD; for all of those groups, God's omniscience contained the record of their repentance, yet to be. Consequence, as producing collateral damage, can be forestalled by mitigation from the LORD. In this delay, a blessed part of the action is; God's foreknowledge (omniscience). The omniscience of the LORD takes account of the repentance, even before the repentance enters our view of time. Here is an example of that.

If thy people go out to battle against their enemy, whithersoever thou shalt send them, and shall pray unto the LORD toward the city which thou hast chosen, and toward the house that I have built for thy name: Then hear thou in heaven their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause.

If they sin against thee, (for there is no man that sinneth not,) and thou be angry with them, and deliver them to the enemy, so that they carry them away captives unto the land of the enemy, far or near; Yet if they shall bethink themselves in the land whither they were carried captives, and repent, and make supplication unto thee in the land of them that carried them captives, saying, We have sinned, and have done perversely, we have committed wickedness; And so return unto thee with all their heart, and with all their soul, in the land of their enemies, which led them away captive, and pray unto thee toward their land, which thou gavest unto their fathers, the city which thou hast chosen, and the house which I have built for thy name: Then hear thou their prayer and their supplication in heaven thy dwelling place, and maintain their cause, And forgive thy people that have sinned against thee, and all their transgressions wherein they have transgressed against thee, and give them compassion before them who carried them captive, that they may have compassion on them: For they be thy people, and thine inheritance, which thou broughtest forth out of Egypt, from the midst of the furnace of iron: That thine eyes may be open unto the supplication of thy servant, and unto the supplication of thy people Israel, to hearken unto them in all that they call for unto thee.

For thou didst separate them from among all the people of the earth, to be thine inheritance, as thou spakest by the hand of Moses thy servant, when thou broughtest our fathers out of Egypt, O Lord GOD.

(1 Kings 8:44-53)

Repentance does not rely on prior piety. Actually, it shows us that, present action is superior to prior piety. The outcome for Job's friends addresses the limitation of relying on prior piety, as a shield for present error. This is contrasted with the LORD'S acceptance of Job's, then present, piety, in this time . . .

And it was so, that after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job, the

LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath. Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept: lest I deal with you after your folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right, like my servant Job.

So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite went, and did according as the LORD commanded them:

the LORD also accepted Job.

(Job 42:7-9)

In the New Age, the preeminence of present righteous action, over prior piety, is also applicable to the followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. Also, it serves as a way of adjusting our earned collateral damage, as applied to ones area of responsibility.

Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them.

But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)

But what saith it?

The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

(Romans 10:1-11)

~~~~~  
**Next In  
Collateral Damage and  
The Heart of God**

(Preparing for a Jump)

+++++