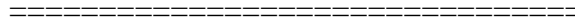


Collateral Damage and the Heart of God

Part Twenty (Point of Joining)



Meditating on the Bible

John 6:61-70

When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you? What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. But there are some of you that believe not.

For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.

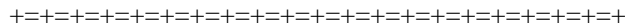
And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.

From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.

Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?

Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.

Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?



Spanned degradation is how the children of Israel moved away from the principles of the LORD--as spanned across stretched out time. Spanned degradation is not a revolutionary happening; rather, it is evolutionary. Over time, there is less and less desire to counteract the increasing damage to civility in the society. We, who serve the LORD, need to take notice of the progression of degradation; from its beginning, even, to now, and onward in time.

Consider this: when the full weight of the spanned degradation that we have experienced comes to us, it will not matter if the wait is for several millennia, or if it is only for a fraction of a second; the damage that it will cause to the soul is still incomprehensible, and absolutely real. Also, as we linger in our dilemma, it becomes more and more difficult to see the way to recovery. Moreover; even when we see the way, it is even more difficult to submit our self to the remedy. The remedy is this: joining with others that have recovered from a similar degradation.

In the case where; the one to which we join, in our attempt to place a bridle on degradation, is also an entity that has previously assisted in recovery for others; this is not a servant-master relationship. Both parties in the relationship are servants of the LORD. Wherefore both sides of the connection receive its blessing from the LORD>Here is a hint of how that proceeded in the call to the other nations, as for them to accept assistance from the God of Israel, as connected to the victory that has been achieved by Israel, as in the LORD'S redemption of the mixed multitude. This is a portion of king Solomon's petition to God, at the dedication of the House of God, in Israel.

Moreover concerning a stranger, that is not of thy people Israel, but cometh out of a far country for thy name's sake; (For they shall hear of thy great name, and of thy strong hand, and of thy stretched out arm;) when he shall come and pray toward this house; Hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to thee for: that all people of the earth may know thy name, to fear thee, as do thy people Israel; and that they may know that this house, which I have builded, is called by thy name.

(1 Kings 8:41-43)

We need to prepare our soul for the joining with--as Solomon presented to the LORD--*a stranger*. Here is a paradox for those who resist submission: to the portion of service to God: there is a part of the soul of separation that must be destroyed, to prepare a site for the joining. Scripture tells of the beginning of the death of that certain part of your soul, which you might have thought, you would have forever. It is a necessary death; for, the LORD cannot abide sin in His presence. As the apostle Paul wrote:

For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building. According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

(1 Corinthians 3:9-15)

The lesson of Israel's progressive degradation is that; the part that was removed was formerly, itself, a graft. The grafting was done to the heart of the congregation, by joining

the law of Moses to it. The method that was used to accomplish the reversal of that graft was destructive to the soul, by removal of the LORD'S implant. Let us review the process.

First, we see that, the LORD'S implant is described here.

BETH.

Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word. With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments. Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee. Blessed art thou, O LORD: teach me thy statutes.

With my lips have I declared all the judgments of thy mouth. I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies, as much as in all riches. I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways. I will delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word.

(Psalm 119:9-16)

The beginning of removal of that implant is accomplished by way of substitution of competing principles, as is done by extending ones community, to include untested principles of the neighbors. Among Israel's first such extension is this one.

And Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab. And they called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods: and the people did eat, and bowed down to their gods. And Israel joined himself unto Baalpeor: and the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel.

And the LORD said unto Moses, Take all the heads of the people, and hang them up before the LORD against the sun, that the fierce anger of the LORD may be turned away from Israel.

And Moses said unto the judges of Israel, Slay ye every one his men that were joined unto Baalpeor.

And, behold, one of the children of Israel came and brought unto his brethren a Midianitish woman in the sight of Moses, and in the sight of all the congregation of the children of Israel, who were weeping before the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And when Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he rose up from among the congregation, and took a javelin in his hand; And he went after the man of Israel into the tent, and thrust both of them through, the man of Israel, and the woman through her belly.

So the plague was stayed from the children of Israel. And those that died in the plague were twenty and four thousand.

(Numbers 25:1-9)

In the Old Testament time of Israel, at the time before the nation was formed, the LORD openly excised such plugs from the congregation. The general method that was used is this one.

He that sacrificeth unto any god, save unto the LORD only, he shall be utterly destroyed.

(Exodus 22:20)

Below is some specific information from Scripture about the behavior that was required of Israel. As you read it, please take a broader view of the audience for the message, as being more than just Israel. In general, think of this as being applicable to any possession of a formerly decayed moral landscape--as represented by the cleansing of the land that was given to the seed of Abraham, as through Isaac, in Jacob.

When the LORD thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than thou; And when the LORD thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor show mercy unto them: Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son. For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly.

(Deuteronomy 7:1-4)

Please; do not fix your mind on the listed, and physical, nations of that Scripture, above. Please know that; there are, too, philosophical entities that are decayed moral landscapes. These, too, must be disconnected from our forward motion to settlement in the LORD. In the Old Testament time of Israel, the purging of such aberrant grafts was done by an obvious flow of the LORD'S power. As time progressed, the LORD started to introduce the human capability factor. Initially, this was done by associating the power of God, with an authorization of an elected servant of the LORD. The following event of the life of Moses was such a merger.

- The power of God

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the congregation, saying, Get you up from about the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and

Abiram.

And Moses rose up and went unto Dathan and Abiram; and the elders of Israel followed him. And he spake unto the congregation, saying, Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be consumed in all their sins.

So they gat up from the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, on every side: and Dathan and Abiram came out, and stood in the door of their tents, and their wives, and their sons, and their little children.

(Numbers 16:23-27)

- Association, consisting of: Power entrusted to an elected servant of the LORD

And Moses said, Hereby ye shall know that the LORD hath sent me to do all these works; for I have not done them of mine own mind. If these men die the common death of all men, or if they be visited after the visitation of all men; then the LORD hath not sent me. But if the LORD make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up, with all that appertain unto them, and they go down quick into the pit; then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the LORD.

(Numbers 16:28-30)

- Validation of the association

And it came to pass, as he had made an end of speaking all these words, that the ground clave asunder that was under them: And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods. They, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation.

And all Israel that were round about them fled at the cry of them: for they said, Lest the earth swallow us up also. And there came out a fire from the LORD, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense.

(Numbers 16:31-35)

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Joshua, too, was authorized to be the catalyst for powerful intervention of God, flowing in the kingdom of man. Here is one of the more potent jointly engineered outflows.

- The power of God

*So Joshua ascended from Gilgal, he, and all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valour. And the LORD said unto Joshua, Fear them not: for I have delivered them into thine hand; there shall not a man of them stand before thee.*

*Joshua therefore came unto them suddenly, and went up from Gilgal all night. And the LORD discomfited them before Israel, and slew them with a great slaughter at Gibeon, and chased them along the way that goeth up to Bethhoron, and smote them to Azekah, and unto Makkedah. And it came to pass, as they fled from before Israel, and were in the going down to Bethhoron, that the LORD cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died: they were more which died with hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword.*

(Joshua 10:7-11)

- Association, consisting of: Power entrusted to an elected servant of the LORD

*Then spake Joshua to the LORD in the day when the LORD delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon.*

*And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day.*

(Joshua 10:12-13)

- Validation of the association

*And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the LORD hearkened unto the voice of a man: for the LORD fought for Israel.*

(Joshua 10:14)

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And, we must not neglect to mention the authorization of the life of the prophet Elijah. In a certain event of the ministrations of Elijah for Israel's sake, the authorization of Elijah was precisely focused to remove a kind of graft that had been made to the mind of the leaders of the community.

- The power of God

Then the king sent unto him a captain of fifty with his fifty. And he went up to him: and, behold, he sat on the top of an hill. And he spake unto him, Thou man of God, the king hath said, Come down.

(2 Kings 1:9)

- Association, consisting of: Power entrusted to an elected servant of the LORD

And Elijah answered and said to the captain of fifty, If I be a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty.

And there came down fire from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty.

Again also he sent unto him another captain of fifty with his fifty. And he answered and said unto him, O man of God, thus hath the king said, Come down quickly.

And Elijah answered and said unto them, If I be a man of God, let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty.

And the fire of God came down from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty.

(2 Kings 1:10-12)

- Validation of the association

And he sent again a captain of the third fifty with his fifty. And the third captain of fifty went up, and came and fell on his knees before Elijah, and besought him, and said unto him, O man of God, I pray thee, let my life, and the life of these fifty thy servants, be precious in thy sight. Behold, there came fire down from heaven, and burnt up the two captains of the former fifties with their fifties: therefore let my life now be precious in thy sight.

And the angel of the LORD said unto Elijah, Go down with him: be not afraid of him.

And he arose, and went down with him unto the king.

(2 Kings 1:13-15)

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In another event of the life of Elijah, we see a transplantation that is for the sake of the entire community, as bypassing a firmly secured graft that had been made to the king, as done by human effort. The graft that had been made to the king connected other

prophetic authority, besides the authorization that comes from the LORD, as an iniquitous link to the community leaders. Rather than disrupting that graft of iniquity, as established in the king's joining to error; the prophet Elijah performed this direct graft to the mind and soul of the king's subjects, in the congregation.

- The power of God

*And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me.*

*And all the people came near unto him.*

*And he repaired the altar of the LORD that was broken down.*

*And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the LORD came, saying, Israel shall be thy name: And with the stones he built an altar in the name of the LORD: and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed.*

(1 Kings 18:30-32)

- Association, consisting of: Power entrusted to an elected servant of the LORD

*And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid him on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood.*

*And he said, Do it the second time.*

*And they did it the second time.*

*And he said, Do it the third time.*

*And they did it the third time. And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water.*

*And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the LORD God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again.*

(1 Kings 18:33-37)

- Validation of the association

*Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.*



*And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God.*

(1 Kings 18:38-39)

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We must be cautious about the points of joining that we allow among things in our own communities; but, we must also be cautious about the things to which we join that are in the wider world. Indeed, it is the wider world that has the greater potential to cause damage for us and our ministry. We say that because; in the community setting, there is a greater tendency toward seeking resolution of grievances. Next, we will look at the difficulty of navigating points of joining that are outside of the controlled setting of our local governing bodies. In this Scripture, there is a hint of that difficulty.

Take heed to thyself, lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land whither thou goest, lest it be for a snare in the midst of thee: But ye shall destroy their altars, break their images, and cut down their groves: For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God: Lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they go a whoring after their gods, and do sacrifice unto their gods, and one call thee, and thou eat of his sacrifice; And thou take of their daughters unto thy sons, and their daughters go a whoring after their gods, and make thy sons go a whoring after their gods.

(Exodus 34:12- 16)

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**Next In  
Collateral Damage and  
The Heart of God  
(Distant Confederation)**

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