

Collateral Damage and the Heart of God

Part Twenty-five

(Philosophical Collateral)

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Meditating on the Bible

Acts 26:13-29

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. 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.

And I said, Who art thou, Lord?

And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. 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; Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, 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.

Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: But showed 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. For these causes the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill me.

Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.

And as he thus spake for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad.

But he said, I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness. For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner.

King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest.

Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.

And Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day,

were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds.

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There are other kinds of joint ventures that we need to explore. These kinds of joint ventures involve the philosophical sharing of directions in life. The people of Israel were brought into this type of joint venture by a lifestyle modification known as, captivity. During this time, they were able to share their philosophical (theological) principles with other nations. Also, the people of Israel were able to share in the philosophical principles and practices of those other nations.

A significant part of the sharing of philosophical collateral is this: to show that, the way of the LORD can withstand any interaction that tries to disrupt it. Before we dive into that study, consider this event that boldly highlights the resilience of the way of the LORD.

And the Philistines took the ark of God, and brought it from Ebenezer unto Ashdod. When the Philistines took the ark of God, they brought it into the house of Dagon, and set it by Dagon. And when they of Ashdod arose early on the morrow, behold, Dagon was fallen upon his face to the earth before the ark of the LORD.

And they took Dagon, and set him in his place again.

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

But the hand of the LORD was heavy upon them of Ashdod, and he destroyed them, and smote them with emerods, even Ashdod and the coasts thereof. And when the men of Ashdod saw that it was so, they said, The ark of the God of Israel shall not abide with us: for his hand is sore upon us, and upon Dagon our god. They sent therefore and gathered all the lords of the Philistines unto them, and said, What shall we do with the ark of the God of Israel? And they answered, Let the ark of the God of Israel be carried about unto Gath.

And they carried the ark of the God of Israel about thither.

(1 Samuel 5:1-8)

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Philosophical Collateral: From the Outside

Scripture gives us a clear view of certain ones of Israel's joint ventures; though, not of

all of them. We have searched among those clear views, to find one that is heavily mental. At this time, the one that we want to explore is one in which the influences came from outside of Israel. The venture that we will review occurred during the time of Daniel's spanned ministration for Israel, as done before several of the kings of the other nations. This span of time is in the Old Testament period of Israel's captivity. We will begin here.

*In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it. And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God: which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the vessels into the treasure house of his god.*

(Daniel 1:1-2)

In that adverse impact on Israel's collateral, we see this pressure for revising Israel's thinking, as applied by Babylon, as against the people and their doctrinal philosophy.

*And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring certain of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes; Children in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans. And the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's meat, and of the wine which he drank: so nourishing them three years, that at the end thereof they might stand before the king.*

(Daniel 1:3-5)

Also, at this point, Scripture presents the philosophical custodians that were assigned to protect the doctrinal collateral of Israel, as is contained in the Law and the prophets.

*Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: Unto whom the prince of the eunuchs gave names: for he gave unto Daniel the name of Belteshazzar; and to Hananiah, of Shadrach; and to Mishael, of Meshach; and to Azariah, of Abednego.*

(Daniel 1:6-7)

Here is one of the significant living markers of the LORD'S philosophy, which would provide benefit to both Israel and Babylon.

*Then the king Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face, and worshipped Daniel, and commanded that they should offer an oblation and sweet odours unto him. The king answered unto Daniel, and said, Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldst reveal this secret.*

*Then the king made Daniel a great man, and gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon.*

*Then Daniel requested of the king, and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, over the affairs of the province of Babylon: but Daniel sat in the gate of the king.*

(Daniel 2:46-49)

In this sharing of its collateral of understanding, the LORD gave Israel the opportunity to manage an inverse joint relationship; one that had an overriding Attitude, as arrayed against two attitudes. Here is one of those attitudes.

*Wherefore at that time certain Chaldeans came near, and accused the Jews. They spake and said to the king Nebuchadnezzar, O king, live for ever. Thou, O king, hast made a decree, that every man that shall hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of music, shall fall down and worship the golden image: And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth, that he should be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.*

*There are certain Jews whom thou hast set over the affairs of the province of Babylon, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego; these men, O king, have not regarded thee: they serve not thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.*

(Daniel 3:8-12)

Here is the other attitude--primarily composed of perception of philosophical superiority.

*Then Nebuchadnezzar in his rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.*

*Then they brought these men before the king. Nebuchadnezzar spake and said unto them, Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up? Now if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of music, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made; well: but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?*

(Daniel 3:13-15)

The overriding Attitude is embedded in the following encounter.

*Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.*  
(Daniel 3:16-18)

So, this is a three-party joint venture: the LORD, the king of Babylon and his counselors, and a chosen portion of the remnant of the congregation of Israel, which formerly resided in Judah. That this included a portion of the grace of the LORD does not mean that there was no collateral damage that needed management. Indeed, there was management of philosophical collateral damage on both sides. For Israel, the doctrinal management that was done to avoid collateral damage is described in this Scripture.

*If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name, THE LORD THY GOD; Then the LORD will make thy plagues wonderful, and the plagues of thy seed, even great plagues, and of long continuance, and sore sicknesses, and of long continuance. Moreover he will bring upon thee all the diseases of Egypt, which thou wast afraid of; and they shall cleave unto thee. Also every sickness, and every plague, which is not written in the book of this law, them will the LORD bring upon thee, until thou be destroyed. And ye shall be left few in number, whereas ye were as the stars of heaven for multitude; because thou wouldest not obey the voice of the LORD thy God.*

*And it shall come to pass, that as the LORD rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you; so the LORD will rejoice over you to destroy you, and to bring you to nought; and ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it. And the LORD shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; and there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even wood and stone. And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the LORD shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind:*

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(Deuteronomy 28:58-65 . . .)

In the time of Daniel, Israel was securely encased in that judgment; but, Israel was still eligible for recovery, as ordained by the LORD. Though this was a significant lessening of the shadow of the prominence of Israel, as it fell over the world; still, it was not as aggressive as was the experience on the other side. The other side of the venture was subjected to total removal of its shadow of persuasion, as from falling on civilization. That total removal is like unto the outcome for several of the nations of the land of

Canaan, as occurred during the time of Joshua. This fate seems to be of the sort that awaits those who destroy life without a righteous reason.

*And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations. And I will bring upon that land all my words which I have pronounced against it, even all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the nations. For many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of them also: and I will recompense them according to their deeds, and according to the works of their own hands.*

*For thus saith the LORD God of Israel unto me; Take the wine cup of this fury at my hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send thee, to drink it. And they shall drink, and be moved, and be mad, because of the sword that I will send among them.*

(Jeremiah 25:12-16)

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Let us be diligent about performing our part of the perfection of proper philosophical collateral, as received from the LORD; regardless of the behavior of others. We will see this in another one of the significant joint ventures of, Israel as with the awakening world of the Old Testament time. As you prepare to evaluate that one, keep the following associated principle in mind.

Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.

(Hebrews 13:7)

As the interactions of Israel, with the world at large, expanded; they discovered that they had to negotiate among the pickings that come from a fuller plate. The following Scripture tells of a necessary attitude that one must have in such a situation.

Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil.

Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for

conscience sake.

For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour. Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

(Romans 13:1-8)



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(Fuller Plate)

