

# Collateral Damage and the Heart of God

## Part Thirty-six

(Educated Sheep)

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### Meditating on the Bible

#### Matthew 10:16-20

Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues; And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles.

But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.

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The apostle Peter was ordained as the first engine of the push for salvation of the world (however, he is not the only engine, nor is he the energy of the push). As in unity with others of his day, Peter stood at the core of the Christian faith. In the following recap of an early event of the life of the church of Christ, we see the central role that Peter fulfilled.

*Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.*

*And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.*

*Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.*

*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, Praising God, and having favour with all the people.*

*And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.*

(Acts 2:38-47)

The task that was set before the apostles is this: to prepare more educated sheep as to the core of worship of the Father, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. The apostle Peter, as being one of the called apostles, needed to have a strong personal presence. In his place, as being, formerly, subjected to the practices of the temple; some of the direction of the newly acquired election to push Israel to the Gospel, would overrule things that he had been brought up to believe. Among the things that Peter had been taught is that; he needed to avoid potential violation of the law of Moses, as is described in this Scripture.

*And if a soul sin, and hear the voice of swearing, and is a witness, whether he hath seen or known of it; if he do not utter it, then he shall bear his iniquity. Or if a soul touch any unclean thing, whether it be a carcase of an unclean beast, or a carcase of unclean cattle, or the carcase of unclean creeping things, and if it be hidden from him; he also shall be unclean, and guilty. Or if he touch the uncleanness of man, whatsoever uncleanness it be that a man shall be defiled withal, and it be hid from him; when he knoweth of it, then he shall be guilty.*

(Leviticus 5:1-3)

The essence of the authority of that commandment is; to allow one to steer clear of unclean things, as they are indicated in the law of Moses, and, moreover, to steer clear of unclean things as they are indicated in the prophets. We refer to it as, an authority, because; it allowed one to reject certain things of the earth.

Also, as combined with that Scripture, above; in the categorization of things of the earth, the apostle Peter might have had this portion of Scripture in mind.

*The LORD hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God. Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the LORD. For ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight: for the LORD will go before you; and the God of Israel will be your rereward.*

(Isaiah 52:10-12)

However, that weight of those portions of Scripture was not meant to, in a blanket fashion, separate people from one another. Especially; that weight of Scripture was not meant to be applied to people as referring to them as being unclean. In the education of this sheep of the flock of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Spirit brought this lesson to Peter . . .

*On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour: And he*

*became very hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a trance, And saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth: Wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat.*

*But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean.*

*And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.*

*This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven.*

(Acts 10:9-16)

The full breadth of the lesson had to sink into Peter. In that progression, as going to a place of understanding, the LORD did not force Peter to yield, as Jesus did with the apostle Paul (when he was Saul) on the Damascus road. Instead of pushing Peter, the LORD allowed the catalytic message to slowly penetrate the cells of Peter's resistance to being a different kind of witness for the LORD.

*Now while Peter doubted in himself what this vision which he had seen should mean, behold, the men which were sent from Cornelius had made inquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate, And called, and asked whether Simon, which was surnamed Peter, were lodged there.*

*While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee. Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them.*

*Then Peter went down to the men which were sent unto him from Cornelius; and said, Behold, I am he whom ye seek: what is the cause wherefore ye are come?*

*And they said, Cornelius the centurion, a just man, and one that feareth God, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews, was warned from God by an holy angel to send for thee into his house, and to hear words of thee.*

*Then called he them in, and lodged them. And on the morrow Peter went away with them, and certain brethren from Joppa accompanied him.*

(Acts 10:17-23)

One of the ways that the LORD uses to move us to a new understanding of God's reach in the world is to give us an example of His presence in our specific mission to the world. In the matter of extending the reach of the ministry of the Gospel, the LORD sent worthy Gentiles to the disciples; to show the disciples that, there is great worth in the other human collateral that God placed in other areas of the world--besides Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria.

*And the morrow after they entered into Caesarea. And Cornelius waited for them, and had called together his kinsmen and near friends.*

*And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him.*

*But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man.*

*And as he talked with him, he went in, and found many that were come together. And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean. Therefore came I unto you without gainsaying, as soon as I was sent for: I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me?*

(Acts 10:24-29)

Cornelius is one of those precious portions of the collateral of God; along with, certain ones of his kinsmen and near friends.

*And Cornelius said, Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and, behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing, And said, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God. Send therefore to Joppa, and call hither Simon, whose surname is Peter; he is lodged in the house of one Simon a tanner by the sea side: who, when he cometh, shall speak unto thee.*

*Immediately therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.*

(Acts 10:30-33)

And, so, the catalyst has sunk in to the cells of Peter's understanding. It was, then, time for Peter to send out the portion of the LORD'S knowledge and understanding that would empower Cornelius and his kinsmen and near friends, as being among the LORD'S educated and blessed sheep. This is a pattern that would be utilized many times in the future; even, up to, and beyond, now.

*Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of*

*all:) That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.*

*And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: Him God raised up the third day, and showed him openly; Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.*

*And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead. To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.*

*While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.*

(Acts 10:34-44)

Wherefore; by sight of the eyes, it was unmistakable that, grace had come to the Gentile nations.

*And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God.*

*Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?*

*And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord.*

*Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.*

(Acts 10:45-48)

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Actually, the evidence of Gentile eligibility for a spot at the core of the impact of grace came at an earlier time. It is included in the following event, near the beginning of the action that drew the Gentiles toward the, then present, occupants of the center of the core of worship of the Father God.

*And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.*

*And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.*

*And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?*

*Parthians, and  
Medes, and  
Elamites, and  
the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and  
in Judaea,  
and Cappadocia,  
in Pontus, and  
Asia,  
Phrygia, and  
Pamphylia,  
in Egypt, and  
in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and  
strangers of Rome,  
Jews and proselytes,  
Cretes and  
Arabians,  
we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.  
And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to  
another, What meaneth this?*

(Acts 2:1-12)

But, that event could have been logically set aside; because, the ones that were in that event were mostly believers: *Jews and proselytes*. They were only citizens of other countries because of this beneficial, collateral damaging action of the LORD . . .

*And if ye will not for all this hearken unto me, but walk contrary unto me; Then I will walk contrary unto you also in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins. And ye shall eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters shall ye eat. And I will destroy your high places, and cut down your images, and cast your carcasses upon the carcasses of your idols, and my soul shall abhor you. And I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries unto desolation, and I will not smell the savour of your sweet odours. And I will bring the land into desolation: and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it.*

*And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste.*

(Leviticus 26:27-33)

The Jewish believers that revered the priest of the temple of the time of Christ (specifically, in the seat of Moses), as well as the believers in the doctrine of Christ (soon to be called, Christians), needed to have their worldview edited, as by the LORD. This collection of the followers of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob needed a broader view of the scope of the wider audience of ordained worshippers of God. To give them this perspective, the LORD poured an additional ingredient into the mix. It is a human ingredient, which was somewhat tangential to the main body of worshippers. Next, we look at that ingredient: the man, Saul; soon to be named, Paul.

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Now, we will study how an external ingredient was added to the world of Christians, as coming from outside of the sphere of Peter's ministration. The portion that was to be served was in the wider, Gentile portion of the world. As with Peter's enlightenment about his perception of uncleanness, as was pressed on him for the sake of the Gentiles that were in his sphere of ministration; in a similar spirit, the LORD sent a practice-changing jolt to the servant of God that was Saul of Tarsus--now; the apostle Paul.

*I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities.*

*Whereupon as I went to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests, 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.*

(Acts 26:9-13)

After the jolt, the LORD delivered understanding. This understanding \pertain to the breadth of the ministration that would be required for the Gentile development of educated sheep of the Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ.

*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*

(Acts 26:14-18)

The new ingredient, the apostle Paul, was a true span between the Jews and the Gentiles. The apostle Paul's span is highlighted here, in this controversy with some of the officials of his time . . .

*And they gave him audience unto this word, and then lifted up their voices, and said, Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live.*

*And as they cried out, and cast off their clothes, and threw dust into the air, The chief captain commanded him to be brought into the castle, and bade that he should be examined by scourging; that he might know wherefore they cried so against him.*

*And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said unto the centurion that stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned?*

*When the centurion heard that, he went and told the chief captain, saying, Take heed what thou doest: for this man is a Roman.*

*Then the chief captain came, and said unto him, Tell me, art thou a Roman?*

*He said, Yea.*

*And the chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this freedom.*

*And Paul said, But I was free born.*

*Then straightway they departed from him which should have examined him: and the chief captain also was afraid, after he knew that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him.*

*On the morrow, because he would have known the certainty wherefore he was accused of the Jews, he loosed him from his bands, and commanded the chief priests and all their council to appear, and brought Paul down, and set him before them.*

(Acts 22:22-30)



The apostle Paul vigorously stirred the mixture that would be used to feed the spiritual sheep-in-waiting, among the Gentiles.

*Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.*

*Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.*

*For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.*

(Galatians 5:1-6)

The result of that stirring was this: to produce a mixture that had the uniform consistency that is described here.

*Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision?*

*Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision.*

*And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also: And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised.*

*For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.*

(Romans 4:9-13)

At that time, Paul was calling the Jews, too, to be a part of the spread of the witness to the grace of God, as brought to them in the Gospel of, the Kingdom of God with man. This is a mission that was in the mind of king Solomon, as he included this in his prayer .

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*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)

As early as the time of Moses, the LORD sent the commandment that was ordained for the proper conduct in the blending of the cultures.

*And if a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not vex him. But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.*

(Leviticus 19:33-34)

In an exhortation to the people of Israel, the apostle Paul told Israel that that group of people had been ordained, by God, to fulfill this destiny: to unify the world, in the glory of God. This is the beginning of Paul's statement; wherein, he declares the ordinance.

*What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day.*

*And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompense unto them: Let their eyes be darkened that they may not see, and bow down their back alway.*

(Romans 11:7-10)

By applying, what we refer to now as, reverse logic, the LORD had retained Israel in a suspended state of near-fulfillment. This was a position in life that caused Israel to yearn for completion; but, meanwhile, the nation also served as a spiritual magnet for other cultures. Yes, some of the people received the clear message; but, not enough of the Jews of that day received the message, for it to be possible to preserve the Jew as the sole core messenger to the world. Of course, the Jews were faithful in speaking to their own; but, this was not enough. There was an expanded requirement; such as is identified, here.

*Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.*

*For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?*

*Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.*

(Matthew 5:43-48)

As moving toward broader fulfillment of that commandment of Christ; here is the ending of the statement wherein, Paul describes the fulfillment of Israel's destiny.

*I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?*

*For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office: If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them. For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?*

*For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches. And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee.*

(Romans 11:11-18)

Wherefore Israel had to be set over into a corner of the core of grace. Thereby, there was open space for additional types of servants of the LORD. Surely, the core was destined to be filled: and, too, the core was destined to be of one, uniform consistency--of one blood. The process started, here . . .

*And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next sabbath. Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God.*

*And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God. But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming.*

*Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to*

