

A Challenge – Part 2

Here now, we must seek the evidence which verifies that Jeremiah 17:10 as it is in Scripture, and the reworded verse which follows, are conformable:

I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, moreover to give each individual person of the race of man, in conformity with that person's ways, in conformity with the fruit of that person's doings.

We must now go to other passages of Scripture and see if they make a statement with an identical meaning. In pursuing this, one of the first passages we find is in II Chronicles, where Solomon prays unto the LORD God at the dedication of the Temple. Please note the wording of the request Solomon makes:

Then hear thou from heaven thy dwelling place, and forgive, and render unto every man according unto all his ways, whose heart thou knowest; (for thou only knowest the hearts of the children of men:) (II Chronicles 6:30)

And, as recorded in I Kings:

If there be in the land famine, if there be pestilence, blasting, mildew, locust, or if there be caterpillar; if their enemy besiege them in the land of their cities; whatsoever plague, whatsoever sickness there be; What prayer and supplication soever be made by any man, or by all thy people Israel, which shall know every man the plague of his own heart, and spread forth his hands toward this house: Then hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and forgive, and do, and give to every man according to his ways, whose heart thou knowest; (for thou, even thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men;) That they may fear thee all the days that they live in the land which thou gavest unto our fathers. (I Kings 8:37-40)

Here again we see the use of possessive pronouns. In this case, "thou" is the pronoun for the LORD God, and "his" is the pronoun for "every man." Hence, again we see that the LORD God grants to every man according to that person's ways. Moreover, Solomon is in perfect agreement with the statement the LORD God made through Jeremiah, that it is the LORD only that searches and knows the hearts of men. Let us then go back in time to King David and the 28th Psalm, which states:

Draw me not away with the wicked, and with the workers of iniquity, which speak peace to their neighbours, but mischief is in their hearts. Give them according to their deeds, and according to the wickedness of their endeavours: give them after the work of their hands; render to them their desert. Because they regard not the works of the LORD, nor the operation of his hands, he shall destroy them, and not build them up. (*Psalms 28:3-5*)

Here we see David's prayer to the LORD God, and his statement which is in conformity to the LORD's through Jeremiah, and Solomon's during the dedication of the temple. Here "the wicked" is the noun, and "their" and "them" are the pronouns that address, or identify with "the wicked." In this, David requests of the LORD to give the wicked in conformity with their own hearts and ways. Moreover, even in the New Testament this is confirmed, as Romans, Chapter 2 plainly states:

But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; Who will render to every man according to his deeds: To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: For there is no respect of

persons with God. (Romans 2:5-11)

In the above passage from Romans, even though it draws back to the external and does not address the heart, but addresses the deeds of the individual, it adds the statement "For there is no respect of persons with God." which is to say that the LORD God does not treat any one person, any different than any other person. Even in this passage, the relation of possessive pronouns to the nouns remains the same, for we see:

"revelation of the righteous judgment of God; Who will render to every man according to his deeds:"

Yet again, we see that the pronoun "who" applies to God, and God will render "every man according to his deeds:" which being consistent with the Scripture thus far, means that "his deeds" belongs to "every man." Though this passage could be taken differently, to do so, would be quite jarring as it would have to mean thus:

*"revelation of the righteous judgment of God; **Who (God)** will render to every man according to **his (God's)** deeds:"*

Which would mean nothing less than men were puppets on a string, to be manipulated whensoever, and howsoever God pleases, without regard to that person's own heart and mind. This would be in direct conflict with the Scriptures we have covered thus far, and would make the LORD God the author of confusion. Moreover, this would also be in direct conflict with the LORD's creation of man in His own image. Even as the LORD God is free within his own dominion to choose what He wants to do, even so, man was given by the LORD God the liberty to choose within his own dominion whatsoever he would do. The significant difference being that the LORD's dominion is everything that exists, and man's is only within his own heart and the physical creation he can reach. In addition to all that, since God cannot lie, and there cannot be contradiction in His word, we know this situation cannot be.

In continuing, let us now return to Jeremiah, and the Lamentations, where Jeremiah confirms the correct reading of Romans, Chapter 2:

Behold their sitting down, and their rising up; I am their musick. Render unto them a recompence, O LORD, according to the work of their hands. (*Lamentations 3:63-64*)

And again in Proverbs:

If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain; If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? and shall not he render to every man according to his works? (*Proverbs 24:11-12*)

Noting here the pronoun usage and ownership, we see again that the LORD is asked to render unto certain persons according to the way they are, not according to the way the LORD God is, or wants it to be. In this situation, as in all others that we have seen thus far, we should come to a certain realization: that is, the fruits of a man's life are wholly dependent upon that persons heart, and the way they are in their heart. Thus, the burden of our condition lies solely upon us, even as the responsibility for the Fall rests solely upon Adam. This situation was made clear to Solomon when the LORD appeared unto him:

And it came to pass, when Solomon had finished the building of the house of the LORD, and the king's house, and all Solomon's desire which he was pleased to do, That the LORD appeared to Solomon the second time, as he had appeared unto him at Gibeon. And the LORD said unto him, I have heard thy prayer and thy supplication, that thou hast made before me: I have hallowed this house, which thou hast built, to put my name there for ever; and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually. And if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy

father walked, in integrity of heart, and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee, and wilt keep my statutes and my judgments: Then I will establish the throne of thy kingdom upon Israel for ever, as I promised to David thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee a man upon the throne of Israel. (I Kings 9:1-5)

Examining the statements the LORD makes to Solomon, it is abundantly clear the LORD placed the burden upon Solomon for following Him, and adhering to all that was commanded. In this, the will of God is express: Obey my voice. It is also plain that the LORD desired to do good to Solomon and establish Solomon's throne forever. By this, it would be quite puzzling if we are to believe that, in eternity past, the LORD God predetermined that Solomon should transgress and depart, despite the LORD's clear command not to. It would seem quite plain that the LORD God is working at cross purposes to Himself if that is true. This also is confusion, especially since we are so clearly told the following:

Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD. (*Jeremiah 9:23-24*)

Before continuing, I think it essential that all understand what the LORD God stated through Jeremiah in the above passage, and it has everything to do with the words "understandeth" and "knoweth" which today we would simply state "understand" and "know." Here, the LORD God, not Jeremiah, but the LORD God states plainly and clearly that we, each and every one of us individually, can know Him, and understand Him. If then we know Him, and we understand Him, then it necessarily follows that we can understand His judgements, and why He does what He does – that they are not

mysteries to us.

This is why the word of God, the Scripture is given to us, so that we may understand Who the LORD God is, and how He determines who receives what, and what the standards of His judgement are. Thus, in all that is stated to this point, the following passage from Ezekiel reinforces quite well, and further explains what the LORD meant when He stated He will “render to every man according to his ways.” Again, here as before, note the personal possessive pronouns and what they possess:

Therefore speak unto them, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Every man of the house of Israel that setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to the prophet; I the LORD will answer him that cometh according to the multitude of his idols; That I may take the house of Israel in their own heart, because they are all estranged from me through their idols. (Ezekiel 14:4-5)

It should have also been noted where the idols came from, and who it is the LORD is pointing out as being the one setting up those idols. The LORD shows that it is not He that gives the idols to those individuals. Rather, the individuals themselves choose their own idols and set them up, in plain opposition to the LORD God. Moreover, the LORD also gives us another insight to how He deals with each and every one of us.

In the above passage, the LORD God states that He will answer the individuals in the house of Israel according to the multitude of idols in each and every person’s heart. In so doing, the LORD is reflecting back to that individual who and what they are. In short, they will perceive the LORD to be something He is not if their heart is not right. The Lord clarified and confirmed that this is indeed how He works with man through King David, a prophet of God:

With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful, and with the upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright. With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself unsavoury. And the afflicted people thou wilt save: but thine eyes are upon the haughty, that thou mayest bring them down. (*II Samuel 22:26-28*)

And again (just so we won't miss it):

With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful; with an upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright; With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself froward. For thou wilt save the afflicted people; but wilt bring down high looks. (*Psalms 18:25-27*)

In dealing with man this way, it makes it impossible for man to figure out the LORD God if his heart is not right. If a man does not wish to truly understand the LORD God, the LORD God is going to allow him to continue on in his error, so long as that person's heart is unchanged by the truth the LORD continually puts in front of him. In fact, what this means, is that as long as someone is convinced in their own heart, in opposition to plain Scripture, all they will perceive of the LORD is that He is exactly what they think Him to be. Hence:

But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness! (*Matthew 6:23*)

Now, knowing all this, let's go back to the original challenge, where I stated:

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings. (Jeremiah 17:9-10)

You know, for Calvinism to be true, the pronoun "his" would have to be changed and the wording of the passage changed

significantly, would it not?

We should now see, for Calvinist/Reformed/Sovereign Grace/Primitive Baptist theology to be correct concerning their view of predestination and the sovereignty of God, the passage would have to be rewritten thus:

*The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? **I the LORD** search the heart, **I try** the reins, even to **give every man** according to **my ways**, and according to the fruit of **my doings**.*

Not only that, we would have to rewrite and change the possessive pronouns of a number of other passages of Scripture, and completely rewrite the passage of Ezekiel, Chapter 14, verses 4-5 so that it reads appropriate to what Calvinist theology purports the LORD God's ways and behavior to be.

What does Calvinist/Reformed/Sovereign Grace/Primitive Baptist theology have to say about God's ways and behavior (**emphasis mine**)?

*25) There is a difference between a paradox and a contradiction. We know that God is sovereign, yet man is free to follow the dictates of his own will. Where the two lines meet is not for us to say. **Calvinist ignorance** on the matter is to be excused on the basis of Deuteronomy 29:29*

26) Although Calvinists believe that even sinful acts are ordained by God (Ephesians 1:11 / Proverbs 16:4) yet such makes the event certain, but not necessary. This clears God from being the author of sin. This view best explains the Cross (Acts 2:23, 4:27-28 / Luke 22:22). (<http://www.oldtruth.com/calvinism/avoidingconfusion.html>)

No, I think the Scripture is quite plain. The LORD God has

shown us where the “lines meet” and who the burden falls upon, and how He deals with the free will He granted to man. Moreover, try as they might, attempting to explain that ordaining sin is not virtually the same as being the “author of sin” is a wash. The word “ordain” means:

or·dain (ôr-dn) ((<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/ordain>))
tr.v. *or·dained, or·dain·ing, or·dains*

- 1. a. To invest with ministerial or priestly authority; confer holy orders on.*
- b. To authorize as a rabbi.*
- 2. To order by virtue of superior authority; decree or enact.*
- 3. To prearrange unalterably; predestine: by fate ordained.*

See Synonyms at dictate.

[Middle English ordeinen, from Old French ordener, ordein-, from Latin rdinre, to organize, appoint to office, from rd, rdin-, order; see ar- in Indo-European roots.]

or·dainer n.

or·dainment n.

The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition copyright ©2000 by Houghton Mifflin Company. Updated in 2003. Published by Houghton Mifflin Company. All rights reserved.

Hence, to say that God “ordained sin” is to say that God is the author of sin, the author of the fall, and the author of all wickedness and iniquity – and it cannot be excused or explained away.

I’m sorry, that’s not the LORD God I know and love.
