

# The Principle of Agency

Like so many other principles, this too is poorly understood today. Were it better understood, there might be some comprehension as to what is wrong with how Christians frequently treat their brethren. In fact, as the following passages demonstrate, they are not really maltreating their brethren, but someone else entirely.

**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 26:15-18)

Now we know, as the Scripture is clear, that Saul had nothing to do with persecuting anyone, and particularly not the Lord Jesus Christ, until the stoning of Stephen. After that, Saul went after the disciples with a vengeance. However, at no time did he even encounter Jesus Christ to persecute Him. Rather, at that time the Lord Jesus was already ascended and in heaven. Even a cursory study of the time line of Saul (who is called Paul) and a time line of Christ's ministry clearly shows there to be no intersection of the two. Whether Saul was in Jerusalem at the time of Christ's crucifixion or not is not clear. However, since no interaction occurred between the two, it is manifestly impossible for Saul to have persecuted Jesus Christ. Hence, the Lord speaks of Saul's persecution of Him through the persecution of his agents.

This view is further confirmed by other Scripture.

When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth *his* sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed *thee*? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed *thee*? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done *it* unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done *it* unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did *it* not to one of the least of these, ye did *it* not to me. (*Matthew 25:31-45*)

He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me. He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward. And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold

water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward. (*Matthew 10:40-42*)

By all evidence, in the heart and mind of the LORD God, attacking one of His servants is attacking Him. Moreover, the LORD is displeased whenever any of His children decide to disparage or attack another of His children, as it is tantamount to attacking and disparaging the LORD Himself. Hence, instead of doing harm to their fellow man, the reality is that the LORD God takes any attack upon one of His as an attack upon Him. Thus raising the question:

*Just who does belong to the LORD God?*

### **Who Man Belongs to**

This should not be a contentious issue. However, there are those who will argue with the plain language of the Scripture as they will argue with anything that does not fit their idea of how things ought to be. In this case, it really does not matter what we believe, what we like or don't like, the following is how it is:

**Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine:** the soul that sinneth, it shall die. (*Ezekiel 18:4*)

No, the above is not a "one of a kind" or isolated statement. Rather, the LORD God insures that we understand this one well:

Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the LORD hath wrought this? **In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind.** (*Job 12:9-10*)

And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this; But hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee, and thou, and thy lords, thy wives, and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them; and thou hast

praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know: **and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified:** Then was the part of the hand sent from him; and this writing was written. And this *is* the writing that was written, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN. This *is* the interpretation of the thing: MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it. TEKEL; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. PERES; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians. (*Daniel 5:22-28*)

The life and breath of all mankind, and indeed, the entirety of every individual, belongs to the LORD God and Him only. Moreover, the LORD Himself chooses how he will deal with man, and does so without any permission from anyone:

If now *thou hast* understanding, hear this: hearken to the voice of my words. Shall even he that hateth right govern? and wilt thou condemn him that is most just? *Is it fit* to say to a king, *Thou art wicked?* and to princes, *Ye are ungodly?* **How much less to him that accepteth not the persons of princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor? for they all are the work of his hands.** In a moment shall they die, and the people shall be troubled at midnight, and pass away: and the mighty shall be taken away without hand. For his eyes *are* upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings. *There is* no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves. **For he will not lay upon man more than right; that he should enter into judgment with God. He shall break in pieces mighty men without number, and set others in their stead.** Therefore he knoweth their works, and he overturneth *them* in the night, so that they are destroyed. (*Job 34:16-25*)

No matter what we think, whosoever we may be, we do not have the right or power to supplant or usurp the LORD's authority over another. Rather, if we attempt to do so, all we ultimately do is condemn ourselves:

For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. **For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.** For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living. But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. **For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.** (Romans 14:7-12)

The passages are clear, and the following statement is absolute:

*Man, that is, the race of man and thus all men, all individuals belong to the LORD God and Him only. This includes adults, children and babies, born and unborn. There are no exceptions. The LORD God owns us, and He has chosen how He will deal with us – regardless of what anyone thinks about it. There is certainly nothing anyone can do about it.*

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