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"GOD IS NOT"

--David Eldridge

Man has a number of ideas about who God is. Yet, the truth is that God is not what many think Him to be. Consider some things the Bible teaches that God is not. God is not...

A Respector Of Persons: Peter declared, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons" (Ac. 10:34 KJV). That God is not a respecter of persons means that He does not show partiality. Many other passages bear out this idea. Paul taught, "For there is no partiality with God" (Rom. 2:11). Because God shows no partiality, He offers salvation to all regardless of their skin color, education, social standing, financial state, geographical area, or the family into which they were born. Furthermore, He demands the same thing from all men no matter who they are. As Peter said, "In every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him" (Ac. 10:35). God is not a respecter of persons!

A Man: God is not human like you and me. Numbers 23:19 declares, "God is not a man..." Instead of being a man like you and me, "God is Spirit" (Jn. 4:24). Because God is not a man, he does not lie or go back on His word. "And also, the Strength of Israel will not lie nor relent. For He is not a man, that He should relent" (1 Sam. 15:29; cf. Num. 23:19). Additionally, God does not think like you and me – "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways," says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts" (Isa. 55:8-9). God is not a man!

Mocked: Rhetorically, Job asked, "Can you mock Him as one mocks a man?" (Job 13:9). To mock is to sneer at, deride, or turn up your nose at. You may mock man, but you will not mock God. Why? Because God has assured that before Him you will reap what you sow. Thus, "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked" (Gal. 6:7-9). God is not mocked!

Tempted With Evil: "Let no one say when he is tempted, 'I am tempted by God'; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone" (Jas. 1:13). Moses declared that God "is the Rock, His work is perfect; for all His ways are justice, a God of truth and without injustice; righteous and upright is He" (Deut. 32:4). God's nature is such that temptation does not affect Him – He is incapable of being tempted to do wrong. As such, He does no wrong, nor does He encourage wrongdoing in others. God is not tempted with evil!

One To Forget: Man may see or say something today and forget it tomorrow. But, "God is not unjust to forget..." (Heb. 6:10). When folks begin to think that perhaps God will forget, it causes them to do one of two things. They may think they can act against His will and God will forget their sin. He will not – "...all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account" (Heb. 4:13). Others may think God will forget the good they do in service to Him. He will not, not even down to the simple good deed of giving of "only a cup of cold water" (Matt. 10:42). "For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name..." (Heb. 6:10). God is not one to forget!

Ashamed To Be Called Our God: I can scarcely read Hebrews 11:16 without tears coming to my eyes. Speaking of the faithful of old, it is written, "But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them" (Heb. 11:16). It is an amazing thought that if we, like they, desire heaven and live in obedient faith, the great God of heaven and earth is also not ashamed to be called our God. Have you been living your life this way? If not, you need to begin today! God is not ashamed to be called our God!

Only Providence Sees the Script

Chuck Durham

Jonathan Horn's book, *Washington's End: The Final Years and Forgotten Struggle*, uses Washington's own words: "There was so much he could not control: the feuding 'interests' and 'jealousies' forcing the federal city 'to pass through a fiery trial'; the hundreds of newspapers, including those belonging to 'infamous scribblers' smearing pages with libels and lies intended to 'destroy all confidence' in the government; the political parties fueling 'ill-founded jealousies and false alarms' pitting 'one part' of the people 'against another'; the countries of Europe unleashing upon the world 'a more destructive sword' than ever recorded in modern times.' In all this, a man could see but 'mere chaos.' Only Providence could see the script to which the confusion conformed" (191).

One life stands out as in the Bible of Providence working behind the scenes: Joseph in Egypt. While never (in the recorded text) receiving any direct words from God, Joseph began to put "two-and-two together." At what point this dawned on him, we are not told. His adverse conditions were many and over-whelming – sold by his brothers into slavery; unjustly accused of attempted rape; being left in prison for two more years after the cupbearer forgot him – all looked like chaos ruled the day. But Joseph saw that the "confusion conformed to the script that only Providence could see"!

It took years for this to develop. At thirty, he is suddenly catapulted from lowly slave to being prime minister of Egypt! Nine more years transpired when, by seeming happenstance, his brothers appear before him to buy grain during the famine. Joseph puts his brothers through several tests to see if they had repented and transformed their character. When fully satisfied they were changed men, he made himself known to them in Genesis Ch. 45. He said to them, "You sold me here – God sent me to preserve life!" "It was not you who sent me here, but God." Joseph summed up the whole of his life with these words: "You meant evil against me, but God meant it for good" (Gen.50:20). The confusion conformed to the script that only Providence could see!

I wish I would remain unruffled amid the raging storm. I worry far too much. I look about me at the chaos that rules our present age, and I become despondent. Then I read the calm assurance of Joseph's carefully measured words, and the peace which surpasses all understanding rises in my heart again (Phil. 4:7). I finally remember that only Providence can see the script to which the confusion must conform!

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