

Worshiping God In

Spirit and Truth

A Magazine for Understanding God's Truth

Racism:

What God's Word Says
About Race Relations

Is it a problem with one race...or is it a
human condition?

January–March 2015

In This Issue

From the Pastor: This is a brief introduction to the theme of this issue: ***racism***. The thesis is that racism is a ***human condition*** among all races and is not significant in only one race. Once that is thoroughly understood, mankind will be better able to deal with the racial divides among them. Until then, we shall all suffer under the awful blight of racial tensions. Page 2

Racism: A Blight Upon the Land: A frank discussion of some of the recent events in which racial tensions have run high. What real solution does “playing the ‘race’ card” bring to the table? Who is really to blame for the spread of racism? We need to step back and examine this blight upon the land more carefully. Page 6

The Creation of the Different Nations and Races: Understanding from where all of the different nations and races came could be important to the discussion of racism. Is it merely a “family affair”? Did all of the various nations and races come from a common source...according to God’s word? How much difference should the answers make in solving the problems? Page 9

Race or Grace?: Does God’s declaration that He is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob amount to a declaration that He favors one race above all others? If so, why so? If not, why not? This will be the focus of this study about the Lord God’s covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Are we spiritually brave enough to search out ***God’s*** answers and let His truth fall where it may (John 4: 23, 24)? Page 13

How Do We Get Beyond the Racial Conflicts?: No matter how good and beneficial the solution is, it is no better than the ***people*** who are responsible for implementing it in their lives. The sad fact of the matter is this: The Lord God created a covenant with mankind “in the beginning” that was ignored and abandoned because the fault was within the ***people*** – not with God or with the contents of the covenant (Hebrews 8:8). If you truly want a solution to the racial divide that exists among us, you can have it ***on God’s terms***, not your own. There are some simple steps to take if you are serious about it. Page 19

The “Slavery” Mentality: Scripture has an underlying theme about the “slavery” mentality. Why are some people allowed to be made slaves of someone else? Is slavery an experience of only one particular race of people? What lessons should have been learned by those whose people, at one time or another, were made slaves? God has a compelling reason for allowing/causing such to happen among us, and...it is ***not*** always for the purpose of punishment. What great lessons does scripture teach us about the “slavery” mentality? Page 28

“White Privilege”: Some consider it to be a real, but ***invisible***, philosophy ***in the minds of Whites***, while others consider it to be a ***racist*** reaction against the Whites because of their successes in so many fields of endeavor. Is it possible that ***some*** Whites do entertain this philosophy as part of their lives and pursuits, but ***some*** non-Whites use it to deflect responsibility for their ***racial*** jealousy of the Whites’ successes? Page 33



from the desk of... **The Pastor**

This issue of *Spirit and Truth* is sensitive in content because it is about racial issues that have confronted mankind for ages. If you pay attention to the approach to the subjects involved, you should notice that I am not interested in blaming any *specific* racial group for the problems with which we are faced. In fact, you should notice that my approach involves the paradigm that says: “...**All have sinned** and come short of the glory of God” (read Romans 3:1-23; emphases added). In admitting that, a person admits two primary lessons about what I call the *human condition*: (1) We are *all* guilty of participating in it, and (2) what are perceived as *racial problems* are, in fact, problems that are part and parcel to the *human condition*. We need to understand this fundamental truth before we begin to read the following articles. I do not favor one racial group over another because of what I am about to reveal to you from God’s word in the preface remarks.

What is the **Human Condition**?

In Galatians 1:4, Paul refers to our human society as: “...This present *evil world*” (emphases added). What does Paul mean by this accusation? The Bauer-Arndt-Gingrich *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* [BAG] presents eight (8) different definitions for the Greek term for *world* (*kosmos*). It is definition #7 that applies to this expression. The definition shows the importance of paying attention to Paul’s comments in Romans 3:1-23. BAG says:

[T]he world, and everything that belongs to it, appears as that which is at enmity w. God, i.e., lost in sin, wholly at odds with anything divine, ruined and depraved...it stands in opposition to God 1J[ohn] 2:15f, and [is] excluded from Christ’s intercession J[ohn]17:9... (pp. 447, 448)

It is this definition of *world* that you should have in mind when you read John 16:33. This is Jesus Christ’s own statement: “In the *world* [apply the above definition] you shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the *world* [apply the above definition]” (emphases added). **Racism** is a product of that kind of world – and it makes no difference which race of people are engaging in it. Such an attitude is an enemy of God

and stands “...wholly at odds with anything divine...”

How Did Humans Get Into This Condition?

The Genesis 2:7 account of the creation of the human does *not* reveal that God put anything into the mind of man that made him *naturally* hostile to God. This statement runs counter to what was once taught in the *Ambassador College Correspondence Course* [ACCC], published for years by the now defunct Worldwide Church of God founded by the late Herbert W. Armstrong. Here’s the teaching as it was published in Lesson 21, p. 3:

God set in motion a law within the human mind which causes it to be *naturally hostile* and DISOBEDIENT to God. This law is a living, moving thing – just like the law of gravity. This law operates to *pull man down* into DISOBEDIENCE to God as surely as gravity pulls an object to this earth....It is the LAW of HUMAN NATURE! (emphases inserted by lesson’s author; copyright 1959, 1967)

My objection to this statement is simple: If *God* put that law into man’s mind, then there was no need for the serpent to tempt him because man could have done nothing other than sin against God because of His **LAW**. There

would be no need to blame Satan for importing sin into our world – it would have come *naturally* by virtue of such a law in man’s mind. God could have repealed such a law. This concept skews God’s truth. How so?

It is a plain scriptural principle that newborn children are not considered to be *evil* – even though some claim that David says that in Psalm 58:3. The commentator in the *ACCC* cited above would have you believe that this *law of human nature* was present while the fetus was still in the womb – that the *newborn* child came forth from the womb in that *evil* condition.

Read carefully the change in doctrine made by HWA in his book *The Incredible Human Potential* in 1978. He uses Genesis 1:31 and 2:19 as a basis for his conclusion:

If the first humans – as God created them – were VERY GOOD, could it include a hostile and evil nature that was very evil?...This incident [of naming the animals] reveals Adam’s attitude and nature *as he was created*, prior to his temptation by Satan....Notice carefully. Absolutely NOTHING in the account of this pre-temptation incident indicates in Adam the presence of an evil, hostile, rebellious attitude or nature. (New York: Everest House Publishers; p. 147)

He goes on to say that it also does *not* reveal: (a) a deceitful and desperately wicked nature, (b) a carnal mind that is at enmity with God, or (c) a nature filled with the Spirit of God. So, the earlier *ACCC* lesson was patently wrong in its assertion.

As a matter of historical fact, HWA later wrote in his book *Mystery of the Ages* (citing Ephesians 2:2) that *Satan* actually *injects* into the minds of humans the hostile attitudes they have against God and that the experience with the serpent in Genesis 3:1-7 was the point at which the mind of Satan entered Adam *instead of* the mind of God (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1985; p. 58). Up until that time, HWA asserts, this situation could have turned on Adam making a different choice in the fruit available to him in the Garden (*Ibid.*, p. 117). I can allow for a change of mind about biblical understanding over a 26-year period of time – I know mine has changed significantly. This statement about Satan, however, also seems to take the focus off the normal, carnal mind of man unaffected by the Holy Spirit.

What David intends to be understood in Psalm 58:3

is that, *once the child is separated from the womb*, it begins a process of being estranged from God. As soon as it is born, it becomes accustomed to an environment of *selfishness* by which humans try to get their own ways. For example: Perhaps the unrelenting crying of a baby is a false alarm sent up to fool the parents into paying more attention to it than it really requires. In the process, the newborn learns how to use the “triggers” to get its selfishness attended to. Entrance to this “...present evil world...” pretty much guarantees that everyone will be subject to its anti-God thoughts and ways.

Take a look at an example from Isaiah 7:1-16. The House of Israel and the Syrians had agreed to go to war against the House of Judah. Ahaz, the King of Judah, was given a *sign* by God about the outcome of this war. He posed the solution to the problem to Ahaz by telling him that a child would be born to a young maiden and named Immanuel (“God with us”). Then Ahaz was told that “...*before the child shall know how to refuse the evil and choose the good...*” (emphases added) both enemy kings would be dealt with. The solution to the war threat was settled within about a three-year period of time.

This suggests that the child does not possess *knowledge* of good and evil when it is in the womb or immediately upon its birth. If that is true, then there is no *natural hostility* toward God *in the womb*: it is *learned hostility*. You can read in Romans 9:9-11 that the same kind of test was used regarding Esau and Jacob *before they were born*. There is a period of time after birth when a human child might do evil things and not be held accountable for them. Historically, the “age of accountability” has been set at about 13 years of age – think of the Jewish *bar* and *bat mitzvahs* for the time at which Jewish children reach the age of religious accountability.

So, how did we get this “...present evil world...”? Genesis 2:17 is the account where the Lord God warned Adam about the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. He gave Adam a *commandment* to not eat of its fruit. If you have any rational reasoning at all, surely you can see from this account that man was not created with a *law of human nature* in his mind! This account makes it pretty clear that good and evil come from a source *outside* of the mind of man. How so? It is called the *knowledge* of good and evil. The source cited above infers that at least a portion of such *knowledge* was already in the mind of the fetus before it was born. No.

When you read the account in Genesis 3:1-7, you see that a third party presented a temptation to the mind of

newly created Eve. She expressed a *learned* moral reckoning about God's instruction about the forbidden tree. She listened to the serpent's reasoning and then trusted her own observational skills before she made her decision. Once she treated herself to this titillating morsel, a brand-new rush of *knowledge and understanding* came into her mind *from an outside source*.

Laced into the conversation is a debate about *knowledge*. The Hebrew term used to describe the nature of the fruit is *da'ath*. The definition covers everything from accidentally learning something to acquiring prophetic knowledge of future events. This knowledge has a moral quality of understanding *everything* in the vast spectrum of good and evil – including, but not limited to, the knowledge possessed by God Himself. It can be learned from *instruction*, as well as from *personal experience*. Because it also involves *creative skills*, it also allows for the *invention* of evil. The content of this conversation underscores the fact that *man did not already possess such knowledge of good and evil*. Let me admit here that *neither Adam nor Eve came from a womb*. (That's why there are people who engage in serious debates about whether or not they had *navels*. lol)

Romans 5:12 says that *sin* entered the world by one person (Eve); so, death was pronounced upon all of mankind because of *sin*. Why? This is where we begin to understand the mind of the human *without the influence of the Holy Spirit*. It is obvious in Genesis 2 and 3 that God did not give to Adam and Eve *Holy Spirit* to influence their minds. This action is described in 1 Corinthians 2:6-16. In v. 10, it is described as *God's revelation of His thoughts and ways to man* (see Isaiah 55:8, 9).

The most we see in Genesis 2 and 3 is God's commandment [law] to leave the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil alone. Adam and Eve did not do that. That was the original sin among humans – and...Paul says in Romans 5:13 that "...sin is not imputed where there is no law." In 1 John 3:4, we find the definition of *sin*: the transgression of God's *law* (in whatever form it is given). In Romans 6:23, we find that the wages of sin is *death*. So, what does this have to do with humans who were subsequently born to other humans? Are we *automatically sinners* just because a sperm fertilized an ovum and developed toward parturition? No, it is much more complicated than that.

The author of the above-cited *ACCC* quote later equates Romans 8:7 with "proof" that his assertion is supported by other scriptures. What Paul is actually

doing there is explaining the human mind *without the influence of the Holy Spirit*. This is a decidedly different concept from the *ACCC* author's concept. Without the influence of the Holy Spirit, there is no *true* knowledge of God's thoughts and ways. Men can be righteous by their own standards (*self-righteousness*) and still miss the mark of *God's* righteousness (see Matthew 7:21-23). In the bargain, something happens that goes against the intention and will of God. Romans 8:5-8 explains that very clearly: The carnal mind is not and cannot be subject to God's Law. Why? Such a mind is set upon physical, material things, not the things of God. That mind-set is *learned* as much as God's thoughts and ways have to be learned.

Romans 1:18-32

The lesson of Romans 1:18-32 is fundamental to understanding how humans got into the condition of living in the present evil world. Verse 18 asserts that man's wickedness (the carnal mind as governed by *self-righteousness*) *suppresses* God's truth. How much of the racial divide can we attribute to *human wickedness* and *human self-righteousness* (as I have defined it above)? Verses 21-23 show that humans refused to acknowledge God's authority to govern them, and...became vain and foolish because they thought they were so much wiser than God. The net result of this has been that "God" has become a *human concept* that revolves around some meaningless, ubiquitous "God" that has been the creation of the sinful human mind – instead of the revelation that God has given us about Himself. How has God acted to this?

Romans 1:24-28 gives us the "bird's eye" view by using the expression "...God gave them up/over to...". That expression means that God has allowed our carnal thoughts and ways to bring upon us the naturally occurring consequences involved in living the carnal way of life. Verses 24, 25 show that man's unclean lusts have affected his physical pursuits to the point that the only thing they were capable of was changing God's truth into a lie and worshipping their own thoughts, ways, and creations – serving the *creature* rather than the *Creator*.

Once they were "given up to" the consequences of that path, then God "...gave them up to..." *social* and *sexual perversions* (vv. 26, 27). It is difficult to say that the problems we have with perverted social and sexual situations can be reconciled to *God's* thoughts and ways.

Paul's examples of lesbian and gay activities by no means opens the door for God to welcome "Christian" lesbians and gays into the company of His true people (see 1 Corinthians 6:9, 10). I did not make that determination; God did.

Then, God increased the pressure on the carnal-minded. In vv. 28-32, we see a plethora of other social and sexual problems that erupt. At the top of the list is the fact that they did not like "...to retain **God** in their knowledge..." (v. 28; emphases added). Understand this clearly and thoroughly: Paul is not speaking of that ubiquitous "God" that is called upon so as not to offend all of the many ways in which man has created "God" in his own image. He is speaking of the God of the Bible – not even the numerous concepts of "God" held by the 32,000+ "Christian" denominations. He is speaking of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob who raised up Israel to be a light to the nations of the world about His thoughts and ways (see Deuteronomy 4:1-13).

Conclusion

If we had retained the truth of God in our knowledge, there would be no such racial divide among us. Because we have decided **not** to retain in our minds the

knowledge of the true God, we have been given over to the "fruit" of the reprobate mind (see also Galatians 5:14-21). Read Romans 1:29-32 to understand how that works. Is this *really* something for which you want to be remembered? Are you ready to die the death that God has imposed for such carnal pursuits? To ultimately be wiped out of the memory of God?

I hope that the following articles will help you to understand what a slippery slope we have before us if we continue to pursue our racial biases and prejudices – which are a small part of the overall sinfulness of man. In one of his speeches, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. cited an old "Negro spiritual" (his words) in which the words "Free at last! Free at last! Thank God Almighty, I'm free at last!" were strongly emphasized. Jesus Christ provided us with the secret to this kind of freedom when He taught us in John 8:31, 32: "...If you **adhere to My teaching**, you will be My disciples; you will know the **truth** and the **truth** will set you free" (*Modern Language*; emphases added). I cannot imagine that Dr. King meant anything other than that if he himself understood God's truth. How do **you** understand it? That will be revealed through the life you live. Do not live that life in vain pursuits like racism.

"There is another class of coloured people who make a business of keeping the troubles, the wrongs, and the hardships of the Negro race before the public. Having learned that they are able to make a living out of their troubles, they have grown into the settled habit of advertising their wrongs — partly because they want sympathy and partly because it pays. Some of these people do not want the Negro to lose his grievances, because they do not want to lose their jobs." (1911)

Booker T. Washington (1856-1915) African American political leader, educator and author

Racism: A Blight Upon the Land...

An Introduction

In 1995, I was finishing an Education Specialist degree in Education Administration and Supervision. One of my professors was a Black man. He and I developed a reasonably good relationship and conversed outside of class about a wide variety of topics. We did not have any semblance of an adversarial relationship. Ours was congenial, collegial, and professional. He respected me enough to give me a letter of recommendation for applications I was making for several administrative jobs. I respected his approach to the “greater good” of education. We shared mutual respect of viewpoints regarding the various topics of conversation in which we engaged.

One evening, he approached me with a document – a speech that he was going to deliver at a Race Relations Symposium at a historically Black university in the northern part of our State. His specific topic was about *racism*. He said that he valued my opinion, so he wanted me to read his speech and critique it...to be honest with him about how it affected me as an “audience.”

When I gave him my critique, I pointed out the numerous times he used expressions like “*typical White institution*.” I explained to him that such expressions are “racial triggers” that do more to accuse others of racism than they do to teach others how to avoid being racists. I reminded him that racism is a *human condition* that is not limited to the White race – Blacks, Asians, Hispanics, and a broad range of others are as much guilty of racism as are Whites. My honest opinion to him was that his speech did more to foster racism among his audience than it did to offer reasonable solutions for the problem. His reply was very sobering: “You’re probably right about that...but these things need to be said.” My reply was: “Why? What does it solve? You should not avoid identifying *racism* as a *human condition*.”

The Faulty Assumptions in the “Race Card” Ideology

An *ideology* is a doctrine or paradigm upon which a particular political, religious, or social system is focused. The worst fault that any ideology can have is the assumption that *human conditions* apply only to one particular race. A *human condition* is like the following: “There is *none* that understands...*All* have sinned and come short of the glory of God” (see Romans 3:11-23; emphases added). In this, *sin* is not the problem involving only one racial group; it is a *human condition*.

Several years ago, I was told by a slovenly, unproductive White high school student that the Federal Government gives large tax breaks and either a convenience store or a motel to the people of India who come to the United States to live. That is a *faulty assumption* because that student did not have the complete picture of why each and every Indian-American is among us or in

what enterprise they are all engaged. I know that many of the ones with whom I am familiar have the last name *Patel*. Most of them own convenience stores or motels. That knowledge is a *correlate*, not a *proof*, to the student’s claim.

Two of the students in the school where I taught at the time were *Patels*. One family owned a motel, but the other had a medical practice. I also knew of another *Patel* who managed a nearby auto body shop. The two Indian-American students at my school were friends. In India, they would not have been in the same caste.

Later, when I asked the one whose family owned the motel what she thought about the White student’s statement (I did not reveal his racial identity or name), she was indignant and exploded: “*That’s a lie! We have worked very hard to get what we have!*” Therein lie the seeds of *racism*. The White student had been indoctrinated with a *faulty assumption* about a racial group. In a sense, he had played the “race card” to justify his own unproductive slovenliness about his education.

Given the White student's paradigm about Indian-Americans, the Indian-American student could have been indoctrinated with a *racial* attitude against the White student – if not the entire White race – if I had identified him as being White. Perhaps she had been confronted with the White student's complaint before. Suspicion and resentment would have been poised to create a *racial divide* that would not be easily solved. In this case, both Indian-American girls were honor students who had admirable dreams and plans for their lives as Americans. Indeed, they worked hard for what they wanted.

Dr. Thomas Sowell, an African American college professor at the Hoover Institute at Stanford University, offers his opinions in syndicated columns for newspapers. Quite often, he writes stinging insightful opinions about the racial divide in the United States and the underlying reasons for its existence. He presents himself as a fair-minded man with wisdom and excellent insight into the *human condition*.

In a November 6, 2014 piece in the *Albany* [Ga.] *Herald*, he takes up the topic of voter fraud and voter IDs – which are widely attacked as having underlying racial overtones. His thesis in this article is that our African-American U. S. Attorney General Eric Holder foisted off on U.S. citizens a *fraudulent* concept about voter fraud and photo identifications for voters (both of which supposedly suppress the Black vote).

He cites J. Christian Adams's book *Injustice* as one source that identifies AG Holder's knowledge of voter fraud schemes by Democratic operatives that he ignored – such as political operatives intercepting absentee ballots that were sent to people who never requested them. These operatives would either “assist” the recipients in filling out the ballots, or they would steal the ballots, fill them out, and forge the recipients' signatures.

Sowell suggests that Holder did nothing about it in order to protect the Democrats during the elections. Yet, Holder and other Democrats raised the hue and cry that *Republicans* are *racists* for wanting a photo ID used to identify the person reporting to the polling station to vote. They claim that poor Blacks would be disenfranchised if required to obtain voter IDs. Sowell opines: “...This is part of the cynical politics of promoting as much *racial polarization* and paranoia as possible, in hopes of getting more black [sic] voters to turn out to vote for the Democrats” (emphases added).

He cites Black Democrat Congressman Charlie Rangel as promoting racial hysteria by saying that the Re-

publicans *hate* [Blacks]...and act as if *they* won the Civil War –which, Sowell rightly confirms: the *Republicans* did win because Lincoln was a *Republican*. He also points out that a *Republican-controlled* Congress voted to legalize the 13th Amendment that abolished slavery.

Then Sowell turns his attention to the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s to address the claims by Democrats that the *Republicans* are *racists*. A higher percentage of *Republicans* supported the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 than did Democrats.

During the recent mid-term elections, there were several campaign ads released by Democrats in Southern States that used images of Blacks being lynched, the Trayvon Martin shooting, and the Ferguson, Mo. riots as warnings about what would happen if *Republicans* were elected. Louisiana U. S. Senate candidate Mary Landrieu suggested that *Southern racism* is the reason that President Obama's agenda is under fire – and *sexism* is another reason why she is having trouble being re-elected. She subsequently lost her run-off with the Republican Cassidy by a large margin.

Yet, mainstream media *ignored* the fact that two African American *Republicans* – a *male* and a *female* – made history when they won congressional seats...both of whom said that there are many more conservative Black *Republicans* in the U.S. population.

Again, Sowell points out that a *Democratic* majority in the South was responsible for “Jim Crow” laws, low representation of the *Republicans*, and turning police dogs and fire hoses on civil rights demonstrators. And... the biggest fraud of all was the *Democrats* telling “bogey man” stories about *Republicans* to make them appear to be *racists*...all to enable the *Democrats* to garner the Black vote. Historically, this hateful propaganda had its *racist* effect.

Sowell summarized his article with the charge that the Democrats have made effective use of the “race card” to excuse the low educational performance of many Black students, higher rates of disciplinary problems by Black boys in schools, and higher rates of criminal activities and incarcerations among Black males. He says: “It creates another *racial grievance* [remember this expression for later], allowing Democrats like Holder to pose as rescuers of blacks [sic] from racist dangers.”

Black *Republicans* elected to political office during the recent mid-term elections complained about being

taunted by fellow Blacks as being “too White” just because they speak intelligently and have gotten a very good education. They consider this to be an attempt by other Blacks to “put them in their place” and to “dumb them down.” Is this, too, a type of *racism*? Yet, the President is as much White as he is Black – and he is well-educated and speaks intelligently.

The high-salaried racial dividers go to any place in the U. S. where a White has killed a Black, and...do very little to no protesting about the greater problem of Black-on-Black assault and murder rate in places like Chicago...where it is very high. One recent example of this is a Black man who attempted to steal a young Black woman’s purse. When she resisted him, he summarily shot her to death. One might reasonably ask the question: If *Black* lives matter, why are about 97% of murdered Blacks the victims of other Blacks? Where is the outrage from the “Black Grievance” mongers? If *any* life matters, where was the outrage when a Black teenage boy in Brunswick, Ga. shot a White infant in the

face and killed it in front of its mother? The “grievance” cannot be meted out in only one direction.

The upshot of this discussion is simple: *Racism* is a human condition and should be addressed within that paradigm. If not loving one’s neighbor as one’s self breaks one of the two major laws of God (see Matthew 22:36-40), and if breaking God’s Law is a *sin* worthy of *death* (1 John 3:4 and Romans 6:23), then anyone who espouses a racist philosophy is in big trouble! You cannot hide it with a religious veneer (Hebrews 4:12-13)!

We should understand by this discussion that any human playing the “race card” has a mind and heart filled with faulty assumptions. As a national people, we have had a terrible track record with a very prevalent human condition. For the most part, it is fair to say that all of us are guilty to one degree or another for what is a withering, destructive blight upon our land. Let’s understand, from the following articles, what God’s will is in that regard.

“We have stricken the shackles from 4,000,000 human beings and brought all labourers to a common level, but not so much by the elevation of former slaves as by reducing the whole working population, white and black, to a condition of serfdom. While boasting of our noble deeds, we are careful to conceal the ugly fact that by our iniquitous money system we have manipulated a system of oppression which, though more refined, is no less cruel than the old system of chattel slavery.”

Horace Greeley (www.liberty-tree.ca/quotes_about/dependence)

The Creation of the Different Nations and Races

It is very difficult to pinpoint the specific origin of the different races of people. Why does mankind exist as different races of people? And...since numerous racial groups exist within the creation of God, does *He* favor one over all of the rest? God's plan and will for the existence of various racial stocks needs to be understood. We're going to look at the assertions of Acts 17:26, 27 and Genesis 1:26-28 as our guides for understanding these questions. Numerous Old Testament scriptures provide relevant information.

First, Acts 17:26 indicates that God willed that humans should have a common *blood*, even though we are divided into different *races*. That *common blood* came from the first two humans, Adam and Eve. Second, He decreed in Genesis 1:26-28 that *mankind* should inhabit and subdue the entire earth. Whatever variety of races that might have existed before the universal flood would have been drawn from Adam and Eve. That would mean that *all races* have a common parentage and a common goal in God's plan and will – in essence, we're all *kinfolks*.

God's Choice of a Single Lineage

If we trace the lineages given in Genesis 5, we see that one particular lineage is given special attention: the lineage of *Seth*, Adam and Eve's third son born 130 years after their creation (v. 3). There is no indication that there was any *racial differentiation* at this point in history that drives God's choice. For 800 years after Seth was born, Adam continued to beget sons and daughters...none of whom are mentioned by name.

Noah was in the lineage of Seth (v. 30). He begat three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth (v. 32; 6:10). Genesis 6 shows that the Lord God chose Noah, his wife, and his three sons and their wives to survive the universal flood that He was bringing in order to destroy all of sinful mankind (vv. 5-10, 18). So, whatever *racial stock* that might have existed *before* the universal flood was considerably narrowed to that which resided in Noah, his wife, and his three sons and their wives when the universal flood drowned out all others.

After the universal flood, we would be forced to draw a singular conclusion from the biblical record: The *common blood* and the *various racial stocks* emerged from *one specific family*. Even then, we do not know *exactly* how or when the various racial stocks began to emerge. Did the differentiation manifest itself in Noah or his wife? Or, did it manifest itself through the three

sons or through the wives of the three sons? Let's consider *possibilities* by looking through a few biblical "windows" of history.

The first is found in Genesis 10, which details the lineage of Noah – which would, of course, continue the lineage of *Seth*. Remember that this is knowledge revealed to Moses by the Lord God. This compilation is *historical*, not just a random tradition of a particular people. This account describes how the families of Noah's three sons were divided into *nations*. If you were able to trace this human family history, then you could get a reasonable idea about how they were also divided according to *races*.

The National and Racial Divides

Smith's Bible Dictionary (Philadelphia: A. J. Holman Company; not dated) gives the following information: (1) *Shem*: He and his five sons settled the country from the Mediterranean Sea to the Indian Ocean and from Lydia to the Red Sea, including Syria (Aram), Chaldea (Arphaxad), Assyria (Asshur), Persia (Elam), and Arabia (Joktan). This is described in vv. 21-30. Few understand that these would be the *Shemitic* (also rendered *Semitic*) peoples (p. 281). Take note of what a spread of peoples and nations would be included in an *anti-Semitic bias* that is generally considered to be a bias

against *Jews*; (2) **Japheth**: His name might be rooted as an allusion to the light complexion of the Japhetic *racés* (*Smith's* comment, not mine) in the Isles of Greece (which includes the shores and islands), the coasts of the Great Sea, and Asia Minor, Asia, and Europe (p. 143). These people can include Spaniards and Japanese, for two examples. This is described in vv. 2-5; and (3) **Ham**: He is the father of the Egyptians, and he settled in Africa. His name is derived from a root word meaning “hot, fervent, or sunburnt.” However, many branches of his family were located in Asia (the Canaanites, for example). His four sons were Cush, Mizraim, Phut, and Canaan. Among the grandsons are the Abyssinians, Arabians, Ethiopians, Shinaris, Libyans, Tyreans and Sidonians, Babylonians, and many others (p. 121). Their skin color goes from swarthy to black. This is described in vv. 6-20. Remember that the *nations* to which all of these people belong are all in the lineage of *Noah*...not the other children begotten by Adam (including Cain). How could such eventual *racial diversity* have occurred from this *one family of Noah*?

Genesis 11 narrows *Seth's* lineage down to *Shem*, Noah's first son. As you read down the list, you should be aware of two names: *Eber* (v. 16) and *Abram* (v. 27). Why? Because *Shem's* lineage is narrowed to *Eber*, the father of the *Hebrews*. In the *Hebrew* lineage, we find *Abram* – the man through whom we get the covenant with the Lord God and the *Israelites*. The Lord God's covenant relationship with *Abram* begins in Genesis 12.

In Genesis 19, *Abram's* nephew *Lot* is rescued from Sodom and Gomorrah, along with his wife and two daughters. The wife is punished for looking back (v. 26). Because the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah is so great, *Lot's daughters* think that their father is the only man alive by whom they can have children, so they get him drunk and have sexual intercourse with him. Each bears a son; one is identified as *Moab* (the father of the Moabites) and the other is *Ammon* (the father of the Ammonites). What conclusion would you draw about a modern country whose capital is *Ammon*, Jordan? If *Moab* and *Ammon* are related, from which family would native Jordanians have come? Would they be related to *Abram* and the *Israelites*? Are the *Shemitic Hebrew Ammonite Jordanians* considered to be a different *race* from the *Shemitic Hebrew Abrahamic Israelitish Jews*? Yes.

In Genesis 16, we have the story of how *Abram's* wife *Sarai* was so anxious to fulfill the Lord God's promise that *Abram* would father a son that she gave

Abram her handmaid *Hagar* (an *Egyptian*; v. 1) to be his wife. *Abram* and *Hagar* begat *Ishmael*. According to *Smith's*, historians consider the lineage of *Ishmael* to be one of two *Arab races*: pure Arabs through *Joktan*, *Shem's* great-great-grandson (Genesis 10:21-25) and *mixed-race* Arabs through *Ishmael*, *Abram's* son (p. 137; see also Genesis 25:12-18). If *Eber* begat *Joktan* (Genesis 10:25), and *Abram* is from *Eber's* lineage, are *Joktan* and *Ishmael* related? Yes. Yet, *Smith's* calls them two different *racés*...even though they are identified as *Arabs* and part of *Hebrew* stock. Are they, then, related to the *Shemitic Hebrew Israelitish Jews*? Yes.

One more example for good measure. Read Genesis 25:19-23. *Abram's* wife *Sarai* did, indeed, become pregnant by *Abram* when she was 89 years of age (*Abram* was 99; read Genesis 16:1-22 and 21:1-8). She gave birth to *Isaac* when she was 90 years old. *Isaac* later married *Rebekah* (*Isaac's* first cousin; see Genesis 24:15)...who was barren until the Lord God opened her womb. She was pregnant with *twins* who struggled against one another in the womb. She entreated the Lord God about this – and He revealed to her something that is applicable to our question about *racés* of people.

In v. 23, the Lord God told *Rebekah*: “*Two nations* are in your womb, and *two manner of people* shall be separated from your body...” (emphases added). What should you take away from this answer? *Rebekah* gave birth to *two different kinds of people* who would later become rival *nations* – *two completely different racés of people from one womb*. How often might this have otherwise happened among humans in order to get a *racial mix of nations*? We do not know. We do know that *Esau* went to *Ishmael's* people and married *Ishmael's* daughter (Genesis 28:9). So, *Esau*, *Ishmael's* half-nephew, married his half-first cousin.

Yet, nothing of consequence is said about *Abram's* six sons by *Keturah*, a woman he married after *Sarai* died (Genesis 25:1-4) – at least, not until Exodus 2:11-22 when *Moses*, a *Shemitic Hebrew Abrahamic Israelitish Levite* (vv. 1-10) fled Egypt and married the daughter of a *Shemitic Hebrew Abrahamic Midianite* priest (also known as a “prince”). His name was *Reuel* (v. 18) and *Jethro* (3:1). Exodus 18 explains how *Jethro* gave *Moses* advice about how to manage the daily judgments he had to deliver to the *Israelites* as they brought their complaints and problems to him (vv. 7-27). No doubt, *Midian* learned about the Lord God from *Abram* and had passed that faith along to his descendants. *Reuel/Jethro* was one of those descendants. Those six

sons by Keturah were half-brothers to *Isaac* and *Ishmael*. *Shemitic Hebrew Abrahamic Midianite* Jethro was, therefore, kin to *Shemitic Hebrew Abrahamic Israelitish Levite* Moses.

Smith's identifies the Midianites as having occupied the Sinai Peninsula and the country east of Edom (a name I will discuss below). The Bedouins are thought to be descendants of Midian. The modern Arabic city of Medyen is thought to be associated with the Midianites (p. 202). Consider the following from Merrill F. Unger's *Bible Dictionary*, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1966) pp. 729-730:

Midianites were a people dwelling south and east of Palestine, in the desert north of the Arabian Peninsula....According to the Arab account by El, Makreezee, Khitat, "Medyen are the offspring of Shu'yeb, and are the offspring of Medyan (Midian), the son of Abraham, and their mother Kantoora, the daughter of Yuktan (Joktan), the Canaanite." "Medyen is the city of the people of Shu'eyb," who is "generally supposed to be the same name as Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses," though some deny it...It is thought that from the beginning the Midianites and Ishmaelites intermarried, roaming the northern part of the Arabian Desert. With their final absorption they were generally known as Arabs.

Who was it that sang the old rock-n-roll song "It's a Family Affair"? That's certainly applicable in this case.

Be aware that race is defined as being "the different varieties of human beings distinguished by *physical traits, blood types, etc.*" If that is true, then skin color is only one of several markers in *physical traits* that can identify a race of people. For example, I know that blood is divided into *types*, but the idea here is that the blood is a common element in our being *humans*... regardless of the various *types* into which it is divided and the various *races* in which those types are found. Would it even begin to make sense to think of "racism" along the lines of *blood types*? No. Could a *mixed-race* person be considered a separate *race* from his/her parents? By that definition, yes. Could *midgets* and *dwarfs* be considered different *races* according to that definition? Again, yes.

The last part of Acts 17:26 is equally significant: "...[God] decreed how long each nation should flourish and what the bounds of its territory should be." This

does not mean that God determined where each *race* should live in isolation from the other *races*. We can see examples of this in Genesis 15:13-21 and Daniel 10:12-21. God moves history along as He needs to do so. If He gives a country time to show itself to be holy, and it does not, then He will do something to move it out of the way. The Amorites and the Persians are two examples of this action by God. Read Leviticus 18 as another example of this.

J. H. Allen rightly concludes in his work *Judah's Sceptre and Joseph's Birthright* (Merrimac, MA: Destiny Publishers; 1902, p. 23) that any promise by God to create *nations of peoples*:

...Must provide sufficient territory or scope of country, which shall become the home of each nation, *for it is absolutely impossible that flourishing nations shall exist without national homes*" (emphasis added).

This, no doubt, was followed when the Lord God grew weary of the Babylonians at Babel (Genesis 10:1-9). He confounded mankind's language and scattered them all over the face of the earth. Their leader, *Nimrod*, was the great-grandson of Noah through *Ham* (Genesis 10:6-14).

What About Ethnicities?

The Greek term used in Acts 17:26 for *nation* is ethnos. This has to do with ethnic groups. What this means is that a nation can be an ethnic group because it is tied together by racial, linguistic, religious, and/or cultural similarities. Are all the people of modern *Egypt* from the original Hamitic Egyptian stock? No. Are they all part of a modern *Egyptian ethnicity*? Generally speaking, yes. Answer the same questions about Mexico, Italy, Germany, and other nations.

What you would probably find is this, for example: *Blacks* share many *physical* similarities and are connected by *race*; however, by national association they could represent different ethnicities within a nation – American Blacks being linguistically and culturally different from the African Blacks (who themselves in Africa are divided into different ethnicities by language, religion, and culture).

The citizens of modern *Israel* are ethnic Jews because they are not all descendants of the family of Judah and...they also might not all be from the same *race*.

Sammy Davis, Jr. (a Black man), for instance, was an *ethnic Jew* because of his conversion to Judaism. The Apostle Paul was from the *Israelite* tribe of *Benjamin*, so he was not a *Jew* by *family* – only by *ethnicity* (see Romans 11:1). He was an *ethnic Jew*. Benjamin's mother was Rachel; Judah's mother was Leah. Benjamin and Judah were half-brothers through Israel (Jacob); their mothers were sisters (Jacob's first cousins; Genesis 28:1, 2).

Consider the two boys born to Isaac and Rebekah: *Esau* and *Jacob* (Genesis 25:25-30). Esau, who is described as being “red all over like a hairy garment,” (v. 25) was also called *Edom* (v. 30). Jacob was later called *Israel* (Genesis 32:24-28; 35:9-12). *Smith's* says that Edom is also known as *Idumea* (Mark 3:8) – located in a ruddy-hued mountainous region around Mt. Seir about 100 miles long and 20 miles wide. The ancient capital was Bozrah, Petra was its stronghold, and Ezion-geber was its seaport.

If you look at a Bible Map, you will find the *Edomite* territory on the eastern side of the Jordan River and the Great Salt Sea – running from the south end of the

Great Salt Sea to the Gulf of Aqaba (Ezion-geber being the port city). If the modern *Shemitic Hebrew Abrahamic Isaachian Edomites* still occupy that territory, then you might wonder why they have such hatred for the *Shemitic Hebrew Abrahamic Isaachian Israelitish Jews*. Their ancestors *Esau* and *Jacob*, after all, were twin brothers!

What we have seen thus far is the lineage of the single individual *Seth*. Even though the separation of humankind along *national* and *racial* lines seems to be under the provident management of God, how they should relate to one another is also managed by God's ultimate plan and, therefore, according to His divine will. The problem that arises does so because His divine will is *ignored* by man in favor of personal bias and prejudice - a *human condition*.

Again, given God's two primary laws (loving God supremely and loving our neighbors as ourselves), it is more than apparent that *racism* is a selfish, withering, destructive blight upon our land. Next, let's consider whether or not God has shown any type of *racial* favoritism – and...if so, why He has done so.

A study by Michael Tanner, Stephen Moore, and David Hartman of the Cato Institute has revealed that in 40 states, it pays more for one to be on welfare than to accept a job at \$8.00 per hour; in 17 states, welfare pays more than work at \$10.00 per hour; and in six states plus the District of Columbia, welfare totals more than working for \$12.00 hourly. The study also showed that in 29 states, welfare benefits are worth more than the average secretary's pay; in nine states, such benefits are equal to more than the average starting salary for a teacher; and in six states, welfare pays more than an entry-level position for a computer programmer. When the entire package is computed, welfare amounts to the (pretax) equivalent of a \$30,500 wage in Massachusetts, \$32,200 in Alaska, and \$36,400 in Hawaii.

William P. Hoar (www.liberty-tree.ca/quotes_about/dependence)

Race or Grace?

Sometimes the Bible does not give us the answers that we *prefer* to have about certain subjects. As a consequence of this, man in general has been guilty of allowing the pressure of *social arguments* to shade his interpretation of what *God wills* – despite what scripture plainly reveals. In Romans 1:25, Paul calls this “...chang[ing] the truth of God into a lie.” In Galatians 1:7, he calls such actions *perversions* of the true gospel. We can see evidence of this with regard to the widespread social attitude about sexuality and morality. If, for examples, the arguments about same-sex marriage, unmarried couples living together, and adultery were allowed to include Leviticus 18 and 20, 1 Corinthians 6:9, 10, and Revelation 21:27; 22:15, then we could have an honest conversation about *God’s will*. Otherwise, *man’s* solutions and scriptural perversions hinge on who has the biggest, heaviest stick with which to force his social opinions to prevail.

If we get into a conversation about whether or not *God* would show favor toward one *racial group* above others, then we will have a long, hard, *vicious* conversation – even if we can show what God-inspired scripture reveals one way or the other (see 2 Timothy 3:16, 17). Does God’s declaration that He is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob amount to a declaration that He favors one race above all others? If so, why so? If not, why not? This will be the focus of this study about the Lord God’s covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Are we spiritually brave enough to search out *God’s* answers and let His truth fall where it may (John 4: 23, 24)? God will see.

Truth or Unending Argument?

Paradigms are tricky when entering any argument to present a case. A *paradigm* is a viewpoint upon which one bases his concept of the *truth* of a matter. If you argue from the paradigm that “God” is “White,” then you will probably *prejudice* others who think of Him as being “Red” or “Yellow” or “Black.” In point of fact, we know only from scripture what “God” is like. If the *Bible* represents *God’s truth*, then you have to go there in the hope of avoiding a *vicious, unending argument*.

Matthew 17:2 says that, when Jesus was transfigured, “...His face did shine as the sun, and His radiance was white as the light.” In Hebrews 1:3, we see Jesus described as “...being the brightness of [God the Father’s] glory, and the express image of His person.” Using that information together, we can understand to a certain degree what God looks like. If this is *God-inspired* scripture, as Paul asserts to Timothy in 2 Timothy 3:16, 17, then this is *God’s truth*. If we are to worship God in spirit and in *truth* (John 4:23, 24), then we have the answer upon which our paradigm about the matter should be based.

If we carry that description a bit farther, we can also get an idea about what each true Christian will look like once s/he is taken by Christ into the God family. Hebrews 2:10, for example, tells us that Jesus Christ is going to bring “...many sons to *glory*” (emphases added). Oddly enough, many people think that going to “glory” means to go to *heaven*. Wrong paradigm. That’s a *perversion* of the term. That changes God’s truth into something foreign to scriptural revelation. How so?

The Greek term is *doxa*, which is descriptive of the *brightness, radiance, and splendor* the true Christian will receive in the next life. The verb form of *doxa* is *doxazo*, which means two things: (1) to give honor and praise to; and (2) to clothe in splendor and glory. First Corinthians 15:43 and Colossians 3:4 confirm that we will have a *spirit body* like His! Appearing with Christ *in glory* does not mean *going to heaven*; it means appearing with Him in the same kind of spirit body He has. This is John’s conclusion in 1 John 3:3: “...When He shall appear, *we shall be like Him*; for we shall see Him as He is” (emphases added). In other words, we shall be *glorified* – clothed with God’s splendor (see also Hebrews 12:10 and 2 Peter 1:4).

So, I will pre-empt the *vicious, unending argument*

by telling you that it will make little difference to which race we presently belong because we are going to enter *an entirely different family* in the next life. We shall be members of the *God Family* (Genesis 1:26-28, Romans 8:14-23, and Ephesians 1:4-14). Therefore, it would make no difference if God should show partiality to a particular race of people for His *present* purposes – there are several from which to choose, and the Savior had to come from one of them in order to be the *human* sacrifice for our sins. I'll show you below in more detail from the *Bible* how this works. You will have to decide if you will accept the *biblical* paradigm I present to you.

The Single Lineage Paradigm

As we have already seen above, the lineage of *Seth* is the one that is singled out in scripture as being the one through whom various descendants were chosen for God's special plan and will. We saw how that lineage brought us to the man Noah in Genesis 5:30. We also saw that Noah fathered three sons (v. 32). In Genesis 6, the Lord God determined to destroy all of mankind but Noah, his wife, and their three sons and their wives (6:18). Why was Noah spared?

Peter calls Noah a preacher of righteousness (2 Peter 2:5). John the Baptist's father, Zacharias, said that God had "...spoken by the mouths of His prophets, which have existed since the world began" (Luke 1:70). It is likely that Abel was the first prophet or preacher of righteousness (see Hebrews 11:4). Both divine offices have something in common: Those who hold them reveal to others the righteousness of God and His will for mankind relative to that righteousness. Ezekiel 14:12-14 names *Noah* as one of three righteous men who could deliver only their own lives from the punishment He was going to bring upon the sinners in the land. Yes, the sin was that bad. There is something very special about that kind of righteousness – but it cannot be transferred to others or inherited. It can and must be taught.

As Paul puts it in Romans 14:17: "...The Kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit." Paul is stressing here that *religious ritualism* (that is, *meat* and *drink* as used in religious rituals – see Hebrews 9:1-10) is not the deciding factor of a person's *righteousness* in being able to enter the Kingdom of God (see also Matthew 7:21-23). It should be very plain from Genesis 6:5 that *righteousness* and *peace* and *joy* were not the rule of the hearts

and minds of the human population for almost 1600 years after Adam and Eve's sin (which was followed by Cain's killing of Abel). Even Cain's religious, ritualistic exercise in making sacrifices and offerings to God was not considered worthy of the term *righteousness* (Genesis 4:4, 5; Hebrews 11:4).

In Hebrews 11:1-10, Paul names Abel, Enoch, Noah, and Abraham – all but Abel being from Seth's lineage – as being men of faith. In v. 1, he defines *faith* as being "...confidence in the things hoped for, a proving of things yet unseen." You can read Romans 4:13-25 to get a fuller explanation of this definition. Paul punctuates this explanation of Abraham's faith with expressions like: "not weak in faith" (v. 19), "staggered not... through unbelief" (v. 20), and "fully persuaded" (v. 21). These righteous men had all of the proof they needed regarding God's purpose and will. From where was that faith derived?

Genesis 3:15-21 is the starting point in what Paul calls faith in Hebrews 11. Adam and Eve had sinned (vv. 1-14) and were being sentenced for their misdeed that had brought upon them and future mankind the death about which the Lord God had warned them (see Genesis 2:17). Unless there was a remedy for that death sentence, they would have simply returned to the dust of the earth and ceased to exist in any shape, form, or fashion (Genesis 3:19). From the day they died, they began a disintegration into the dust. They have long since been part of the landscape, so to speak. But...here in Genesis 3:15-21, the Lord God is giving them the ingredients for their *salvation*. What are those ingredients?

In v. 15, He prophesies the coming of a male "seed" who will deal with the adversarial serpent. While this male "seed" will suffer a temporary, harmful blow ("...bruise his heel"), the serpent will perish altogether ("...bruise your head..."). This *prophecy*, in part, deals with the ultimate, total, absolute destruction of the adversarial serpent. In v. 21, the Lord God does an interesting thing: He kills some innocent animals in order to clothe Adam and Eve so their "nakedness" can be hidden. This, too, is *prophetic* in nature. How so?

Remember that Paul says in Ephesians 1:4 that God chose us in "Christ" before the creation of the orderly universe. Because he uses the term "Christ," he signals that God understood that man might not choose to be *holy, blameless, and loving* according to His will. If not, He would not tolerate it and would destroy them (Romans 6:23). How futile would it be to create a being with an independent mind (some call it "free moral agency")

only to have to destroy each and every one that failed to live *holy, blameless, and loving* lives? The “Christ” would be His “failsafe” default measure to prevent that – that is, the “Christ” would be the means by which God could effectively save sinful mankind from destruction.

Hebrews 10:1-5 gives us a picture of what God had in mind: Certain *sacrificial* animals would be *symbols* and *types* of this *Christ* until He actually came. These *symbols* and *types* would provide the *foundation* for their faith that God’s remedy for sin is real and certain to be used to save them from destruction. In v. 5, it is stated that the sacrifices and offerings were not what He desired because He had prepared a body – a human body – for the manifestation of the *Christ*.

So, before the creation of the orderly universe, God and the Word (John 1:1-3) knew that the Word was going to become *flesh* and dwell among man in order to be the human sacrifice for man’s sins (read Philippians 2:5-11 and Hebrews 2:6-18). This is what John wrote in John 1:14. This *human* was the woman’s “seed” that was prophesied in Genesis 3:15 and symbolized in the sacrificial animals in Genesis 3:21.

Without much commentary to support the claim, Genesis 3:21 appears to be a session during which the Lord God (the One who later became Jesus Christ) taught Adam and Eve this lesson. It is curious that Genesis 4:3, 4 shows Abel performing the proper animal sacrifice for which the Lord God had respect. Apparently, Abel learned that lesson well from his parents; Cain did not. So, what does this have to do with the single lineage of Seth?

Look at Luke 3:23-38. This is *Mary’s* lineage (*Joseph’s* is shown in Matthew 1:1-16). *Mary’s* lineage goes backwards; so, when you get to v. 34, you begin to pick up *Jacob, Isaac, and Abraham*. In v. 35, you pick up *Heber*. It continues to v. 36, where you pick up *Shem* and *Noah*. Finally, in v. 38, you pick up *Seth* back to *Adam*.

It is peculiar in Genesis 4:25 that Eve describes *Seth’s* birth like this: “...She called his name *Seth* [which means “appointed”]: For God, she said, has appointed me another seed instead of *Abel*...” (emphases added). My question is whether or not God had chosen Abel to be the “seed” through whom the “Christ” would come – and because Cain had slain him, God chose Seth to take his place.

I also find it peculiar that Genesis 4:26b can be translated: “...Then men began to call themselves *Yahweh*.” This would indicate, even at that early date, that

some began to claim to be the “Christ.” Why? If they claimed to be *Yahweh*, then they would have claimed either to be the “I AM” of Exodus 3:13, 14 or “self-existent” beings – like immortal souls. At any rate, *Mary’s* lineage confirms the *single lineage paradigm* I am using to make my point about God choosing a particular family from *Seth* to *Jesus Christ* – born into the tribe of Judah, the fourth son of Jacob (Israel). Jesus was a Jew. This does not indicate that the Savior’s lineage would be plu-perfect and totally devoid of any sinful nature. The lineage would be human and flawed.

Race or Grace?

The question, then, arises as to whether or not God showed favoritism toward a particular *race* of people. Or, was His choice merely an act of *grace*? If we take Paul’s example of Esau and Jacob in Romans 9, we can get a pretty clear answer from God about His decision-making. Verses 7-16 show that God makes whatever choices He wants to make and does not answer to His creation about them. Verses 17-21 show that He chose Egypt’s Pharaoh for the exodus of His people – to show His power to deliver His people from such awful slavery (see Genesis 15:13, 14) – having mercy upon whomever He chose to have mercy. Verses 22-33 show that God intended to involve all nations and races in His grand plan for human-kind. His decisions and choices were not prejudices against all but His “chosen” people. If God had not provided a holy “seed” (which eventually produced the Christ), everyone – not just Israel – would have been destroyed like Sodom and Gomorrah were (v. 29).

The voices who claim that God’s choices were a matter of race attempt to validate their claim by equating the racial choice with the choice of a particular nation. They state that “calling and election” signal a racial choice, while “whosoever will” signals a calling by grace. Race is seen as being fate, destiny, kismet, while grace is an open invitation to all. As J. H. Allen puts it in his book *Judah’s Sceptre and Joseph’s Birthright*: “When it is race, it is, ‘I have called you by my name; thou art mine.’ In grace it is ‘Whosoever believeth,’ of whom the Lord says: ‘They are mine’” (Ibid.; p. 32). If we are called by the name of Christ, is it race or grace? Either way, God’s choices are matters of grace if the recipient cannot earn, deserve, or have the ability to repay God for making the choice. As Paul rightly points

out in 1 Corinthians 2:16: “Who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him?” Read the Spirit-inspired prophecy of Isaiah 40:1-18 to understand the context from which Paul took his reference.

Let’s look now at Deuteronomy 4 in order to get a broader sense of why the Lord God made the decisions He made regarding this single lineage. As I said above, I disagree with some who say that it was a matter of ***race***, not ***grace***. Even a choice by grace, if it involves any particular family among humans, their ***race*** is not the deciding factor. Verses 1-5 speak of the statutes and judgments that the Lord God gave to Israel – with the admonition not to add to them or diminish from them. Verses 6-8 show the Lord God’s reason for His choice of Israel: They were to be an ***obedient*** people – a people of increasing wisdom and understanding ***in the sight of all nations*** – to the point that ***all nations*** would recognize what a great, wise, and blessed people they were. Why? ***To attract the other nations to the Lord God for the salvation that the Lord God offered!***

The rest of Deuteronomy 4 contains exhortations to be true to what the Lord God had revealed – to resist worshiping false gods that were made in the image of *man*. Israel’s rebellion could bring about her total destruction. Then we come to vv. 32-34:

Ask now about the days before you came into existence as a people, since the day God created man upon the earth, and ask from one side of heaven to the other, whether there has been anything as great as this thing is, or if anyone has ever heard anything to compare to it. Did ever people of other nations hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as you have heard and have lived? Or has God ever ventured to go and take ***for Himself*** a nation from the midst of another nation [that is, like Israel’s exodus from Egypt], by trials, signs, wonders, and war, and by a mighty hand and outstretched arm, and by great terrors, according to all that the Lord did before your very eyes when He brought you out of Egypt? (emphases added; author’s paraphrase)

Verses 35-40 are Moses’ exhortations to Israel to seriously contemplate what a magnificent honor God had bestowed upon her – that she should have been chosen – even over ***greater*** nations – to be God’s special instrument for advancing His plan and will among the other

nations.

Any way you want to slice it, that is raw, unabashed, and uncompromising ***grace***. The only way it could have avoided having a ***racial*** aspect to it would have been if there was only ***one race*** of people on earth among mankind from which to choose. In this situation, playing the “race card” is a useless ploy that demeans the holy God who created human-kind.

We have seen in the above discussion that His concern is for ***all of mankind*** – even though He has chosen to work through one single lineage of people that gets narrower as it moves toward the birth of the Savior. After all, the Lord God’s promise to Abraham in Genesis 12:3 was simple: “...In you [Abraham’s continued lineage] shall ***all families*** on the earth ***be blessed***” (emphases added). You can also see His promise to Isaac in Genesis 26:4, 5 when He passed the promises in the covenant into Isaac’s possession. Israel (Jacob) inherited the same from his father Isaac (Genesis 35:9-12).

The Importance of the Abrahamic Covenant

Few modern Christians seem to understand the importance of this covenant between the Lord God and Abraham. When they sing “Standing on the Promises,” they have in mind that Jesus promised to take them to ***heaven*** as their eternal reward. To them, this is the great thought behind the New Covenant. They have little regard for a large expanse of land between the Nile and Euphrates Rivers that Israel has never occupied (see Genesis 15:18-21; Hebrews 6:13-20; 11:8-13, 39, 40). In order for God to make good on His *promises*, He will have to ***resurrect*** Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all of their descendants from the *dead* (see Mark 12:18-27, Romans 4:13-17, and Hebrews 11:17-19). None of the saints mentioned in Hebrews 11 ever conceived of *heaven* as being the place that the Lord God promised Abraham and his descendants. In order to get to the conclusion that ***heaven*** is the promise, one has to ***pervert*** the meaning of scripture.

Paul explains to the Galatians the importance of the Abrahamic Covenant. Remember that he began his letter to them by pointing out to them that there were some among them who had forsaken God’s truth by following a ***perverted gospel*** (1:6-9). The rest of the letter was Paul’s attempt to set the record straight. In the remainder of chapter 1 and all of chapter 2, he established his credentials as an Apostle of Jesus Christ who was ap-

pointed by God to take the true gospel to the Gentiles.

In Galatians 3:1, he chides them again for falling for a *perverted gospel*. In v. 6, he begins with the true gospel as shown to Abraham. We have to understand that the concept of the “seed” as prophesied in Genesis 3:15 is included in this *true gospel* that includes Abraham. In v. 7, Paul makes a very bold statement: “...They which are of *faith* [that which prophesies the *Savior* that is to come], *the same are the children of Abraham*” (emphases added). In this statement, Paul plainly moves away from any *racial* considerations into *grace* considerations. Why? How?

Paul cites the references in Genesis 12 and 26 that show the Lord God saying: “In you shall all nations be blessed” (v. 8). Notice here that Paul does not say “In *your seed* ...” as the Lord God had said to Isaac in Genesis 26:4. He says: “In *you* [that is, in *Abraham*] shall all nations be blessed”. Therefore, any who are of the *true faith* will be blessed with the “father” of the faithful (v. 9).

In Galatians 3:10-12, Paul’s point is simple. He is reiterating the same thing he told the Romans about the *promise* of God (Romans 4:13-16). *Law* did not (and still does not) *require* God to give the believer anything! What the true believer gets from God he gets by God’s *grace* as a *free gift*. That *free gift* is to be received by *faith*.

However, he uses the analogy of the “seed” in Galatians 3:13-16 by showing how Christ has prevented us from being executed for our sins (the *curse* of the Law) as God’s Law requires (Romans 6:23; Ezekiel 18:4, 20; John 3:16-21; 5:20-29). That *redemption* (see 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20) allows all true believers to be included in the promises and blessings pronounced upon Abraham by the Lord God (v. 14). Next, Paul speaks about the “seed” that was to come.

In v. 16, he makes it clear that the promises made were made to Abraham and a *singular* “seed” whom he identifies as being *Christ* (v. 16; see also Colossians 1:16). What this statement does is this: It substantiates and vindicates the prophecy about the woman’s “seed” in Genesis 3:15 and the *prophetic symbolism* of the sacrificial animals in Genesis 3:21. The sacrificial efficacy of this “seed” is the basis of both the *true faith* and the *true gospel*.

In Galatians 3:17-25, he explains the role of God’s Law that was given to Israel. The purpose of the Law was to identify *sin*. Paul discusses the *letter* of the Law in Romans 7. In v. 6, he points out that the true believer

is responsible for the *spirit of the Law*, not the *letter of the Law* (see Matthew 5:27-48 for examples of this). But, in v. 7, he says that he would not have known what sin was if the Law had not defined it for him – to be understood as being a *letter* of the Law definition. In vv. 12-14, he points out that the Law is *holy* and *just* and *good*. He says that its primary role for mankind is to make *sin appear to be exceedingly sinful*. He concludes this thought by saying that “...the Law is *spiritual*...” (emphases added).

In Romans 8:4, he points out that there is a *righteousness of the Law* that must be fulfilled in the Christian life through the influence of the Holy Spirit. You can read the rest of Romans 8 in order to understand his point. If you can grasp the *spirit* of the Law, then you can come closer to understanding the mind of God and His Christ (see 1 Corinthians 2:6-16). That is Paul’s point in Galatians 3:23-25: The Law serves as a schoolmaster to teach us the mind of God and lead us to true faith in Jesus Christ. Once that is accomplished, we no longer need the *letter* of the Law because we will have had its *righteousness* instilled in our hearts and minds. That is why Paul relates the *New Covenant* to Jeremiah 31:31-34 in Hebrews 8:10-13 and 10:16, 17.

Then Paul comes to Galatians 3:26-29. We become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ (see also Romans 8:14-17 and 1 John 3:1-3). Being baptized into Christ presupposes that you have every intention of doing whatever is necessary to *put on Christ*. How plain! If you do not intend to allow God’s rules of righteousness to assist you in developing the mind of Jesus Christ (see Philippians 2:5-11), then you are wasting your time trying to be *religious* toward God. In v. 28, Paul points out that God does not show any favor toward individual *genders, classes, or races* who are *in Christ*. Why? Because if you are in Jesus Christ, then you are included in the *multiple* “seeds” of Abraham and among those who will inherit God’s promises to him. Please read Hebrews 6:13-20 in order to understand how Paul relates God’s promises to Abraham to *New Testament Christians*. Going to *heaven* is not included.

Conclusion

What you should have learned in this article is that, while God chose a particular *race* of people – or, a particular *national group* – through whom to complete His plan and will, He ultimately shows no favoritism. As

Peter pointed out to the Gentiles to whom God sent him in Acts 10: "...God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation, he that fears God, and works righteousness, is accepted by Him" (Acts 10:34, 35; emphases added). This is why any action on the part of mankind

to be racists is a struggle against this great God who desires that we should all become His very own children. All of the *biases* and *prejudices* that we harbor in our hearts and minds are nothing more than a gross rebellion against the sovereign will of this mighty God.

The following quote demonstrates how we are all "slaves" of one kind or another – and...it eventually takes its toll on all of us:

“Young Marster Sam Still got killed in the Civil War. Old Marster live on. I went to see him in his last days, and I sat by him and kept the flies off while there. I see the lines of sorrow had plowed on that old face, and I remembered he’d been a captain on horseback in that war. It come to my remembrance the song of Moses: ‘The Lord had triumphed glorily and the horse and his rider have been throwed into the sea.’”

Savilla Burrell, former slave at age 83 years when interviewed by W. W. Dixon in Winnsboro, S. C. Cited from *Before Freedom: When I Just Can Remember* (p. 135)

How Do We Get Beyond the Racial Conflicts?

There are two scriptures that are pregnant with significance regarding **God's will** for the unity of the races. Genesis 3:20 shows Adam naming his wife "Eve": *The Mother of All Living*. The Hebrew word used in that name is *Chavah* – which, interestingly enough, was the name of one of Tevyah's daughters in *Fiddler on the Roof*. In this case, that name was indicative of **God's will**. What would issue from the offspring of Adam and Eve would become the **family of man**. When you realize that Genesis 1:26-28 expresses God's will that humans should ultimately become part and parcel to the **God-kind** (that is, the **God family**), then it should become apparent that **God's will** is that we should dwell together in peace and unity as the increasing Family of God.

The second scripture is found in Malachi 2:10. It, too, is spoken from the mouth of God and is pregnant with significance about **God's will**: "Have not all [of mankind] one father? Has not one God created us? Why, then, do we deal treacherously...every man against his brother...by profaning the covenant of [God with] our fathers?" These questions point to solutions for the racial divide in the family of man. Here's the sobering "catch" in the matter: No matter how good and beneficial the solution is, it is no better than the **people** who are responsible for implementing it in their lives. The sad fact of the matter is this: The Lord God created a covenant with mankind "in the beginning" that was ignored and abandoned because the fault was within the **people** – not with God or with the contents of the covenant (Hebrews 8:8). If you truly want a solution to the racial divide that exists among us, you can have it **on God's terms**, not your own. I'll give you some simple steps to take if you are serious about it.

God Will See If You Are Serious About Obeying Him

In various and sundry places across the United States, you might run upon a sign in someone's yard that references 2 Chronicles 7:14:

If my people, who are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear them from heaven, and forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

The simplicity of this statement by God can be made overly difficult by the **people** to whom it is addressed if they are not serious about its objective. There are four basic steps that God says we should follow: (1) personal humility, (2) serious, earnest prayer, (3) seriously, earnestly seek the presence of God, and (4) turn from our wicked ways.

The thing that few pay attention to in this piece of scripture is in v. 13:

If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people...

So, v. 14 is based upon v. 13, which signals that the problem with His **people** would have festered to such a point that God would have found it necessary to severely punish them with drought, ravages of nature, and pestilence (deadly epidemics of disease and plague; see Revelation 6:1-8). If, after they have been punished in such a fashion, they repent and obey God's will, then God will turn His heart to them and heal the problems caused by their disobedience. Read 2 Chronicles 6:1 through 7:11 to get the full context of this instruction. It is painfully evident that this statement in v. 14 is addressed to **God's people who are called by His name! Why?** They had a history of giving God **lip service** without any real

spiritual seriousness involved (see Isaiah 29:13 and Mark 7:6).

I continue to make the point that modern “Christianity” is divided into more than 32,000 denominations that generally do not agree doctrinally or theologically with one another – even though it is patently obvious in Ephesians 4:1-16 that ***God’s will*** is that the body of “Christ” should be in total spiritual *unity*. The denominations have the *outward* appearance of agreement, but not so much when you begin to take a closer look at what they teach. This nagging spiritual diversity has grown bigger and bigger since the day Jesus ascended to the right hand of the Father. ***People*** who are called by His name are a significant part of the problem. Does that include *you*?

James, one of the brothers of Jesus Christ, set out in James 4:1-12 some of the spiritual problems involved. The first has to do with one’s personal spiritual warfare: Balancing your personal *lusts* against the work of God’s Holy Spirit (vv. 1-5). In v. 5, James rightly points out that the human spirit lusts enviously and bears ill will against others because of their perceived advantages and/or possessions. *Lusts* have to do with your *human* appetites (see Romans 8:5-9) – what the Apostle John refers to as: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life (1 John 2:15-17). *Lusts* are overwhelming, intense desires to get for oneself all manner of carnal pleasures, all kinds of material possessions, and all manner of personal power and dominance over others.

James states matter-of-factly in v. 6: “God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.” To those who surrender to His will, He gives more strength and blessings that they do not deserve, cannot earn, and cannot repay. Those who want to receive the peace and unity offered by God have to *humble* themselves, draw near to God, and resist the ***adversarial*** spirit embodied in Satan the Devil (see 2 Corinthians 4:1-7 and Revelation 12:9). James has essentially the same message as Elijah: *Quit being double-minded about who God is and what He wants you to be and do* (v. 8; see also 1 Kings 18:21).

Finally, James speaks again of *humility* before God – but he includes *humility* with regard to your fellow man (vv. 10-12). You cannot legitimately claim to be one of God’s people if you have no love for your fellow man (see Matthew 22:35-40). All of your personal, prejudicial judgments and biases against your fellow man have no strength when compared to God’s judgment. God has the power to *save* and *destroy*. Man can kill another man, but only God has the power to deal with

one’s life and body beyond the grave (Matthew 10:28; John 5:21-29; 1 Corinthians 15:50-58).

The upshot of this instruction is this: One way or another, God will find out if you are serious about obeying Him. Exodus 16 offers us an interesting insight into this. When God proposed to rain down manna from heaven to feed the Israelites in the desert, His main purpose was not to merely feed them. They were approaching Mt. Sinai where He intended to make a “marriage” covenant with them and to set them aside as His holy people who would be called by His name. They had been griping and whining and complaining and murmuring since shortly after He freed them from Egypt. They seemed to ignore the great power with which He caused the greatest nation on earth at the time to fall so His people could make an exodus out of Egypt to the “Promised Land” – an event He had promised Abram over 400 years before (see Genesis 15:13-16 and Exodus 12:40). Notice His underlying, important reason for the distribution and collection of the manna.

In Exodus 16:4, 5, He said that He would require them to gather the manna in a certain manner: Gather a certain amount for their needs each day, but on the sixth day they would gather *double* the amount so they would not violate the sanctity of His seventh-day Sabbath (see also vv. 16-30). Why did He give such directions to them? Read the last part of v. 4: “***...In order to test them to see if they will walk in my laws***” (emphases added).

This was a case in which *lip service* was not good enough. Read v. 20. What was the problem? *They would not/did not listen to Moses*. Read vv. 27, 28. What was the problem? *They refused to keep God’s commandments and laws*. ***The problem was with the people, not God’s commandments and laws!*** By this simple test, God was able to understand their hearts and minds about even the simplest of commands that He could give them. James 4:5 was a reference to Genesis 6:5. Jeremiah 17:9, 10 was a reference to how God will come to understand whether or not you are serious about doing things His way.

In Luke 16:19-31, Jesus told the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus. Many focus on the details of the parable in order to draw conclusions about life after death – but...that is not the point of the parable. Some focus on the description of the divide between the place of torment into which the Rich Man was put and the bosom of Abraham into which the poor beggar Lazarus was put. From this, they draw conclusions about the proximity of

hell to heaven. Others see *Abraham* as orchestrating the affairs of Paradise...instead of *Peter* being at the Golden Gates of heaven...neither of which is true. Again, none of these details have very much to do with the real lesson involved in the parable. What, then, is the parable about?

Notice very carefully what goes on between v. 23 and v. 28. The Rich Man begs Abraham to send Lazarus for a drop or two of water to ease his torments. Abraham denies his request by pointing out that he had all of the advantages during his lifetime, and Lazarus had none. Now, it was Lazarus' time to enjoy the advantages. Abraham points out the great chasmic divide between where the Rich Man was and where Lazarus was. Then, the Rich Man asks Abraham to send Lazarus out of his place in Paradise to visit his five brothers to warn them of this place of torment and to show them how to avoid being sent to it. *Abraham denied his request. None of these details are the main point of the parable.*

In v. 29, Abraham gives this answer: "They have *Moses* and the *Prophets*; **let them hear them**" (emphases added). The Rich Man argues that one returning from the dead would be a solid, convincing witness to his brothers (v. 30). Hear very plainly Abraham's answer: "If they **will not listen** to *Moses* and the *Prophets*, then they certainly will not be convinced by someone returning from the dead" (emphases added). What is the point here?

Go back to Matthew 22:35-40. Jesus tells the inquisitive lawyer that God has two basic rules by which mankind should live: (1) Love God supremely – with your whole self, and (2) Love your neighbor as much as you love yourself. Then He says this: "***The whole Law and all of the Prophecies depend on these two commandments***" (author's paraphrase; emphases added). This is what Jesus meant when He referenced *Moses* and the *Prophets*. *Moses* gives us *God's will* about all of our personal relationships. You can read the expansion of this in Exodus 20:1-18. The *Prophets* reveal how God will deal with those who fail to take His will seriously – even showing how they will be brought to personal destruction while the righteous will enjoy greater advantages beyond this life in the flesh.

The gist of the statement in v. 40 is made simple by a quote attributed to Rabbi Hillel the Elder: "What is hateful to you do not do to your neighbor. That is the whole Law, and all else is commentary [about that principle]." Is it any wonder, then, that Jesus said in Matthew 5:17-19 that He did not come to do away with

Moses and the *Prophets*? Yet, many in mainstream "Christianity" claim that He nailed them to the cross and did away with them. If that is true, how do we understand Paul's comment in Romans 5:13 where he says: "...sin is not imputed where there is *no law*" (emphases added)? So, what follows as solutions to the racial divide will be predicated on those two basic commandments of God. God's requirement of *obedience* plays a major role in how all peoples on the earth can live in peace and harmony with one another.

1. *Humble* Yourself Before God

In Micah 6:6-8, we find a great question supported by a great answer: Am I supposed to come before God with all manner of extravagant offerings and sacrifices? Is that what God desires? No. God has shown us (through *Moses*) what is good and what He *requires* of us: (a) Be fair and just; (b) love mercy (and compassion); and (c) walk *humbly* with God. If you continue to read through v. 16, you will see God's reaction if you fail to comply with what He has shown you. We must ask ourselves how we are to walk *humbly* with God.

The Hebrew word from which we get *humbly* is *tsana*. If we are going to love God supremely, what does it mean to walk *humbly* with Him? *Humility* means to show a consciousness of your shortcomings, to rid yourself of personal pride, and to become modest. In scripture, there is a relationship that must be understood relative to your claims of loving God supremely. Note how the Apostle John frames this in 1 John 4:20, 21:

If a man says: "I love God" and hates his brother, then he is a liar because he that does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? This is the commandment that we have from God: "He who loves God **must also love his brother**" (author's paraphrase; emphases added).

This follows instruction from 1 John 2:4: "If a man says that he knows God but does not keep His commandments, then he is a liar and the truth is not in him." In the face of Isaiah 55:8, 9, man must have the *humility* to admit that God holds the upper hand...and he must submit to God's greater power.

Those who refuse to become *humble* in God's sight are considered by Him to be *fools*. Make note of a few

observations about the *fool* as described in the book of Proverbs:

★ Proverbs 10:8, 10, 23: The wise in heart will receive commandments: but the endlessly chattering fool will come to ruin....He that winks with the eye [regarding sin] causes sorrow: but the endlessly chattering fool will come to ruin. ...The fool finds pleasure in doing wickedly, but the man of understanding finds pleasure in wisdom.

★ Proverbs 12:15, 16: The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkens to counsel is wise....A fool's wrath is presently known: but a prudent man covers shame.

★ Proverbs 14:16: A wise man fears evil and departs from it: but the fool rages and is confident [in himself].

★ Proverbs 17:7: Fine speech is not becoming to a fool: even less becoming is false speech from a prince.

These are just a few examples of how the minds of fools operate because of a lack of *humility* with respect to God. The fool's *self-sufficiency* and *self-righteousness* cause many problems to himself and his fellow man.

Sadly, there are many *religious* fools – among them are some so-called *reverends* – whose main objective in life is to foment trouble and strife because of some self-appointed importance to which they lay claim. *Modesty* demands that one should not be vain or boastful – rather, decent and orderly and without any pretension.

2. Offer up Serious, Earnest Prayer

It is odd that Jesus Christ did not advocate *public prayer*. In His own example, He is seen retiring to a private place, maybe with a couple of His disciples, to thoughtfully and seriously address His concerns to God the Father. Matthew 6:1-18 addresses the value of being unpretentious with regard to your religious duties and expressions. Jesus advises us to practice the humility and unpretentious approach because what we do in secret will be openly rewarded by God. Let's consider the examples Jesus used to derive some ideas about what

our serious, earnest prayers should be like.

In vv. 1-4, Jesus stresses the value of *privacy* and *anonymity* when presenting your alms to the poor, needy, and disadvantaged – even your tithes and offerings to God. There are many religious people who go by the adage: “Blessed is he who toots his own horn because, if *he* does not toot it, it verily shall not be tooted.” Obviously, that is a faulty, self-serving approach to God.

Next, Jesus addresses how one should pray. Please note that He advises against the great public prayer that is seen in the places of worship and in the streets – maybe even in the public schools. It is true that He attaches the description: “...that they may be seen of men.” That does not *necessarily* mean that He disdained public prayer by those who want to demonstrate to others their own religious convictions. It can be taken to mean that He is warning about making a public show of your religion in the public square where people will ridicule and make light of God's holiness (see Matthew 7:6). You know, the religious fervor that drives men to make a “show” of their religion in the public square of “preaching Jesus.” In too many cases, I fear, the “show” is the major emphasis.

Jesus' instruction in v. 6 is for you to find a quiet, private place to pray to the Father. He is not saying that you have to be in that place all by yourself. He is saying that you should guard against making a public display of a very private matter between yourself and God. What is addressed to the Father in that private place will be manifested publicly in the answer God gives. It is counter-productive to appear before God like an endlessly chattering fool with loud voices and voluminous, meaningless repetitions of religious phrases and cliches.

Others will begin to recognize that there is something different about your life, and they will make inquiries about it. Deuteronomy 4:5-9 and Isaiah 2:1-5 are examples of this. If they are serious about understanding what makes that difference, then you will have an opportunity to explain it to them. As Peter says in 1 Peter 3:15: “In your hearts, reverence Jesus Christ as Lord. Always be ready to make a defense to those who inquire about the hope that is in you...but do it gently and reverently.” This is, of course, in distinction to the way that a self-absorbed *fool* would handle it.

Then we come to vv. 9-15 that give us the model prayer – what some call ‘the Lord's Prayer.’ In this, Jesus says that we must be concerned about the hallowed nature of *God's name*. It is a holy name that must be shown reverence and very deep respect. Why? The

third of the Ten Commandments warns us about taking His name for vain purposes. In Leviticus 19:2 and 20:7, 8, the Lord God declares that which is expected of those who are called by God's name: "You shall be holy because I am holy" and "I am the Lord who makes you holy [that is, who sets you aside for holy purposes]." He offers you no other alternative than to be like He is ***if you are going to claim to be His people.***

Next, you will know enough about what God wills and plans for all of humanity that you will want it to be put into effect on earth through the establishment of His kingdom. Many people vainly repeat these exact words and little realize for what they are praying. If a holy God is to put His holy kingdom upon the earth, then He must have holy people to populate it. You cannot have that if you act like the chattering, self-confident fool.

The next part of the model is one that will give us a great deal of trouble: ***Be forgiving of your fellow man.*** If you are not, then ***God will not forgive you.*** How much of the racial divide could be completely wiped out if all of the parties involved would simply forgive others of their wrong-headed actions? How much hate and suspicion could be overcome if the victims of racism ***refused*** to perpetually wallow in resentment of the wrongs perpetrated upon them or their ancestors? It is one thing for *anyone* to sing "We Shall Overcome" and yet another to wallow in the mire of being a perpetual victim to racism or some other plight.

Paul speaks to this issue when he says in Philippians 3:8-16:

...I count ***everything*** as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For His sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as refuse, in order that I might gain Christ and be found in Him, not having ***a righteousness of my own....***One thing I do, ***forgetting what lies behind me*** and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Let those of us who are [spiritually] mature be thus minded; and if in anything you are otherwise minded, God will reveal that also to you. ***Only let us hold true to what we have attained*** (RSV; emphases added).

Hold the ground that you have gained in Jesus Christ and let God know that you are intent on following *Him*, not *man*. Serious, earnest prayer is your line of com-

munication with the holy personage who can make a real difference in your life.

3. Seriously, Earnestly Seek God's Presence

It is important to understand 2 Chronicles 7:14 in the context in which it is written. In chapter 6, Solomon had completed the Temple that he built as a "House for God." He had blessed the people and offered up a prayer to God in order to consecrate the Temple to God's work and presence. It was a great exercise in pomp and circumstance before this holy God. In 7:1, God showed His great pleasure by sending fire from heaven to consume the burnt offering and the sacrifices. Then it says that "...the glory of the Lord filled the house." That great display of holy power and presence ***humbled*** the Israelites in God's presence (v. 3). After all of this great religious ceremony, God appeared privately to Solomon to deliver to him the message that we are studying. ***That*** is the context in which we must understand the idea of "...seek my face [that is, my presence]."

One of the great compliments given to Moses is that he spoke to the Lord God *face to face* (Exodus 33:11; Deuteronomy 34:10). Can you imagine what that experience must have been like? This is what Paul refers to in 1 Corinthians 13:12 when he says that "...we now see [the things of God] dimly through a mirror, but then [that is, when our *partial* knowledge and understanding of God becomes perfect] we will see [Him] face to face." Such an experience does not come from a casual, lackadaisical approach to God. It takes serious dedication to become more like God than like our fellow man.

So, how do we apply such a thing as this to the present circumstance of those who are supposedly called by the name of God? How do we, in the proper, modern manner, seek the presence of God? The model prayer of Matthew 6 is indicative of the answer: Seriously and earnestly pray for ***God's will*** to be done on earth ***beginning with your life.*** Surrender ***your life*** to His holy will and cause through Jesus Christ. Hold the holy ground that you have conquered through Jesus Christ and refuse to be sidetracked by all of the abuse and discomfort you have suffered in life at the hands of others who fight against ***God's will.***

If any lives matter, surely your life must! That accomplished, if you can be just as concerned for your fellow man as you are about yourself, then you will have begun the right and proper way of ***overcoming*** and

pressing toward that which lies ahead. But...what about seeking God's presence? Let him that has eyes to see and ears to hear understand **God's will** in this matter.

Part of the answer is found in 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20 and part of it is found in 1 Peter 2:1-10. Paul, in 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20, makes the point that the individual true Christian's **body** is a place in which the Holy Spirit of God resides. He actually began this conversation back in 2:6-16 by explaining how we are made privy to the mind of God through the Holy Spirit.

In 3:16, 17, he explains that it is vitally necessary that the true believer should not defile this habitation of God's Holy Spirit because God will destroy him for doing things that are counter-productive to the reason for which God made that Holy Spirit available. Such defilement is, apparently, blasphemy against the Holy Spirit – for which there is no forgiveness and the danger of eternal destruction (see Mark 3:22-30).

In 2 Corinthians 6:16, Paul asks what kind of agreement can be had between the temple of God and idols. He again asserts that the true believer is "...the temple of the living God..." in whom God dwells through the Holy Spirit. The context of vv. 14-18 has to do with avoiding being unequally yoked with things that tend to cancel out one's holy relationship with God.

Peter approaches this from a different point-of-view in that he makes the point that each individual true believer is a precious stone used by Jesus Christ to build a holy, spiritual house that will house a holy priesthood that can offer effective spiritual sacrifices that are acceptable to God and Jesus Christ (vv. 4-6). In v. 9, he says that we are chosen to be "...a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people..." for God.

Indeed, Revelation 5:10 and 20:4-6 demonstrate that we will rule and reign with Jesus Christ when He returns to conquer the nations of the world and set up God's Kingdom on earth (see Daniel 2:44, 45 and Revelation 11:15). Until then, it is vitally necessary for the individual true believer to understand why s/he was chosen by God through Jesus Christ to occupy such an honored position (see John 6:44, 65) and to conduct his/her life accordingly.

In the ways described above, we will be seeking God's presence in His "temple" just as surely as the ancient Israelites sought His presence on the Mercy Seat in the Holy of Holies of the Tabernacle and Temple. If we are sincere and obedient, then there should be no room in our lives for racism of any sort. That human condition can be rooted out from among us, and we can dwell

in peace and harmony – the kind of life that is more conducive to everyone's health and welfare – indeed, the kind of life in which we are truly **free at last**. Now, read Jeremiah 7:11-15. Can you take a hint?

4. Turn Away From Wickedness

Psalm 34:11-22 is an interesting piece of instruction about turning away from wickedness. David calls it a lesson in the "...fear of the Lord." In Proverbs 1:7, Solomon says that "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction." What is meant by the term fear? The Hebrew term from which it is translated (*yirah*) demonstrates that there should be a proper balance between reverence and respect and fright and dread. While we know that God is love (1 John 4:8), we should also know that "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God [for punishment]" (see Hebrews 10:26-31) and that He is "...a consuming fire" (see Hebrews 12:25-29).

The central thought in David's lesson is that the fear of the Lord is born out of a righteous life that is in tune with the thoughts and ways of God. In v. 18, we find the most important part of this fear of the Lord: "The Lord is near to those who have a **broken heart**, and He saves those who have a **contrite spirit**" (emphases added). What is the meaning of these two expressions?

First, we have to understand what the ordinary human "heart" is like. Jeremiah 17:9 describes it like this: "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (emphases added). It is obvious that something has to change in the human heart. Paul adds this in Romans 8:7: "The carnal mind is antagonistic toward God because it is not subject to His Law; indeed, it cannot be" (author's paraphrase). Paul's analysis makes it even plainer that something has to happen in the human heart in order for the human to be subject to God and His will. What has to happen?

In Romans 8:9, 17, 18, Paul shows that those who have received the Holy Spirit will be the children of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ...with this caveat: "...Provided that we also **suffer with Him**..." (emphases added). Isn't this implied in the symbolism of our baptism when Paul describes it as our old man being "...**cru-cified** with Him..." (Romans 6:6; emphases added)?

Jeremiah 17:10 quotes the Lord God as saying: "I search the heart. I test the reins [that is, put the inner self to the test] in order to reward every man according

to his thoughts and ways – according to the fruits of his doings.” This testing of the “reins” of the human heart is for the purpose of “breaking” (to “tame” in order to get rid of) the carnality embedded in the inner self.

In other words, there has to be a point at which the human will surrender the control of his life to God through Jesus Christ. When he does, then God gives to him the Holy Spirit as a guiding force. Read Jeremiah 31:31-34 and apply it to the New Covenant as Paul did in Hebrews 8:6-13 and 10:12-18. Also, read Romans 8:1-4 to understand that there is a righteousness of the Law of God that is spiritual (read Matthew 5:17 through 7:29). The carnal mind has to be broken to shivers in order that the mind of God can replace it through the action of the Holy Spirit (read 1 Corinthians 2:6-16).

When the proper contrition and broken heart – that is, the deep sorrow for having committed wrong (Romans 3:10-23) – come, then you will be more malleable under the tutelage of the Holy Spirit. As Jeremiah was inspired to write in Jeremiah 23:29: “‘Is not my word like a fire?’ says the Lord, ‘And like a hammer that breaks the rock into pieces?’” We should understand by this that the broken heart and the contrite spirit are two essential characteristics of true repentance. How could racist attitudes and actions survive such a spiritual change?

The “Black Grievance Industry” and “Righteous Indignation for Hire”

One of the saddest commentaries in scripture has to do with some of those who call themselves God’s ministers. Micah 3:11 addresses this issue very forthrightly. Be reminded that Paul includes governmental officials under the label “minister of God” in Romans 13:1-7. What is Micah’s inspired complaint? The judges, priests, and prophets sell themselves for money and bribes. The causes of these so-called ministers are made subject to filthy lucre, but “...they lean upon the Lord and say: ‘Is not the Lord among us? No evil can come upon us.’” Micah’s point is simple: This is nothing more than gross hypocrisy!

Notice also what Jeremiah adds to this matter. In Jeremiah 25:34-36, he prophesies to the House of Israel – that is, to the 10 tribes separated from the house of Judah – that the shepherds [the governmental leaders and the priests] will suffer greatly at the hands of God for leading the people astray. In Jeremiah 50:6, Jere-

miah’s prophecy directly blames the national leaders of the House of Israel for causing the people to stray from God’s thoughts and ways. Why? Because, as is shown in 1 Kings 12:26-33, when God separated the House of Israel from the House of Judah, Israel’s new king, Jeroboam, set about to change God’s truth into idolatry, to dismiss the Levitical priesthood, and to set up in their stead “...priests of the lowest people...” (v. 31; emphases added). These priests were self-indulgent, self-serving, and subject to great physical appetites, bribes, and political favor. Is there a problem with that today?

One of the problems mentioned above by Dr. Sowell was the “Black Grievance Industry.” I saw a well-known, highly respected Black man on the news recently (between November 23 and 29) who decried the “Black Grievance Industry” – which he described as those whose objective is to constantly stir up anger among the Blacks about past grievances that no longer exist in order to perpetually get money poured into their “business” coffers and instill guilt in the Whites. Those are not my accusations, but... they fit part of the description given by Micah and Jeremiah: Using the mantle of “minister” for self-serving purposes.

It must be noted that the “Black Grievance Industry” is not the only “righteous-indignation-for-hire” that exists among us. Such craven use of agitation and incitement to anger and uproar is also prominent among public officials of other races in political campaigns and party politics. Most shameful are some so-called “Christian” ministers who are among them stirring up the strife rather than focusing on solving the cause of the problems and working under the guidance of the Holy Spirit to find a Godly solution to the problems.

There should be a plethora of social programs in the Black neighborhoods to promote education, marriage and the family, proper social relations, anti-gang programs, and true, undefiled religion (see James 1 – especially vv. 20-27). I do not leave out all other racial groups from this imperative because, as the saying goes, “It takes two to tango.” Because “...all have sinned...”, then all need to be better trained in God’s thoughts and ways. Instead of “grieving” over social and racial disadvantages, take a proactive approach to make yourself and those within your social/racial group more valuable to others – make your life matter in ways that improve and add to the general welfare of others.

I remember being part of the “Governor’s School Leadership Program” with other educational administrators and hearing many stories about how they came from

“nothing” to their positions of leadership. One of the most significant expressions I heard during the two years that our group was together was very telling: “I lived down that dirt road, too.” In other words, many of these participants, including myself, literally came from “nothing” to occupy positions of leadership in education that contributed to the betterment of others’ lives.

One of the presenters from the *Creative Leadership Institute* was a Black man who was very poised and articulate. He told us stories about his process of achievement by telling us about his own “dirt road.” It was poignant: “My Daddy could not afford a mule, so he would hitch my older brothers to the plow....” This man came from such humble beginnings to become a Doctor of Education. ***That*** is the point I am making.

Such “grievance” is also prevalent among other non-Christian religions, racial groups, and governments when they train their youth to hate the *Jews* – saying that the Jews are the offspring of pigs and apes. There is very little difference between that and Adolph Hitler’s use of similar propaganda. And... what about his own passion to create the “master race” of blonde-haired, blue-eyed people? He was not blonde-haired, but he had blue eyes – and he was of the lineage of *Shem* (which made him a *Semite* like the Jews).

There is an unproven theory that Hitler’s grandmother worked for some Jews and was impregnated by one of the males of the household. The *Jewish Virtual Library* website concludes that Hitler was not Jewish because, they say, many different tests have been done to verify the claim but have failed to do so. So, his hatred of the Jews was a racial problem, not a psychological problem about his ancestry.

In actual fact, some of that kind of propaganda was also used by some early Church “fathers” to divorce the Gentile-dominated Church from any semblance of *Jewishness*. You should remember that *Christianity* began as a *sect of Judaism* (see Acts 24:1-9; 28:17-31). As the Jews fomented more and more trouble with the Roman Empire and were targeted for punishment, the Gentiles outside of Israel wanted to escape the persecution that ensued. While they would admit to being *Christian*, they did not want to be associated with *Judaism*. So, there was a slow, steady, progressive movement aimed at that dissociation.

Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch (A. D. 98-117) warned those under his authority about practicing Christianity according to the *Jewish* pattern. He taught them to do so by excluding all of the *Jewish* sacraments, rituals, and

traditions. In Alexandria, Egypt (a hotbed of tension between Jews and Christians at the time), *The Epistle of Barnabas* appeared between A. D. 130-138. This book repudiated the historic validity of Jewish beliefs by claiming that they were really *allegorical*. For example, God did not intend that the *literal* observance of the seventh-day Sabbath should presently be practiced: The True Sabbath will be instituted when Christ returns – man is too impure and unholy to observe God’s intended Sabbath at present. It declared that God ***hates*** the *Jewish* new moons and Sabbaths (Amos 5:21-26). So, the *eighth day concept* was introduced to promote worshiping on *Sunday* instead of the seventh-day Sabbath.

Barnabas forgot to mention that Amos was sent to the *House of Israel* (not to the *House of Judah*) to pronounce God’s judgment on them for mixing pagan concepts and rituals with His revealed truth (read Haggai 2:11-14 and Exodus 20:3-7 to see how that practice made their religious practices unclean before God). *Barnabas* also forgot to mention that the Lord God (the one who became Jesus Christ) was the one who gave the Law to Moses (a *Levite*, not a *Jew*) for ***all of Israel*** (read Leviticus 23 in full).

Then came Justin Martyr – raised and educated under the influence of the Greek culture to become a philosopher. He lived and wrote in Rome (A. D. 138-161) and admitted in his writings that there were strong *anti-Judaic* feelings there. As a result, Justin called for “Christians” to avoid any semblance of being *Jewish* by social and/or religious beliefs and practices. How did he pursue his approach to this instruction?

Justin claimed that God knew ahead of time how the Jews would be reprobates and crucify the Christ. Because of this foreknowledge, God gave the Jews the Ten Commandments and other religious laws – even circumcision – to mark them and segregate them from other nations. Therefore, the seventh-day Sabbath, holy days, circumcision, Ten Commandments, and other social and religious practices were imposed upon them because of their sins and hardness of heart. *All of the “Mosaic” legislation was, therefore, temporary, unimportant, and added to scripture merely because of the special wickedness of the Jews*. The only solution, according to Justin, was a complete divorce from Judaism and any hint of pursuing the Christian faith according to *Jewish* rituals and practices. Do away with them. Many more such racial practices followed through the ensuing centuries.

It is a travesty to ignore the racial divide among us, as well as to be pushed and prodded to loot and burn be-

cause someone disagrees with a legal decision made at one level of our court system. I understand that the system has been “rigged” in our past, and...continues to be so in some instances today. But the anarchists who loot and burn make numerous people of all races the innocent victims of unnecessary, angry, and hateful conduct. If the truth were known, those who goad and prod others to act in such a fashion are just as racially motivated to do so as those whom they oppose are considered to be. Why not be proactive, like Dr. King, and work toward improving the system instead of trying to destroy it further?

Some of the problems involve White police officers killing Blacks for suspected unlawful activities or for resisting orders from the police to comply with lawful instructions. Yet, those who get a very high salary (over \$200,000 a year) for ginning up protests among Blacks are seldom on the scene to “...cry aloud and spare not...” (Isaiah 58:1) to show the transgressors among the Blacks the manner of sin they commit against one another. If 97% of the Blacks who are killed are killed by other Blacks – and 3% are killed by non-Blacks – then it would make sense to be even more righteously indignant over the actions of Blacks against other Blacks.

This is like an experience I had while teaching English in a majority Black high school. During our discussion of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, we were discussing an argument that broke out among members of a Black church in which one Black woman called another Black

woman the “N” word. The author of the book was a White woman, so the Black students took umbrage at her for using the “N” word in Black dialogue. I asked why it is acceptable among Blacks for them to call one another the “N” word...but not acceptable for non-Blacks to do so. It was treated by the students as a “family affair.”

When I pressed the issue by pointing out that, if such a name is so horribly wrong for one, then it should be horribly wrong for everyone, the Black students explained that, when they use the term, they use it because they think the other Black is a sorry, good-for-nothing person. I asked: “What if I, as a White, also think that he is a sorry, good-for-nothing person? May I then call him the ‘N’ word?” Emphatically: “No!” “Why?” “Because you are White.” This is one more example to me that racism is a human condition, not just a White condition. As I have shown above, we are all family by God’s will.

If God’s word in Micah 3:12 is that His chosen people and His chosen city would become like a plowed field and heaps of refuse for disdain His holy instruction, how could others so inclined be able to escape such a judgment (see also 2 Peter 2)? All of us must turn away from such wickedness lest we come face-to-face with this Holy God and His ultimate anger! There is a way. If we truly want to be “free at last,” we must find it. We must admit that *in Christ* there is no longer any such racial divide. We are God’s people, not our own.

How the “Emancipation Proclamation” was Enforced by Some

“The Yankees destroyed most everything we had. They come in the house and told the missus to give them her money and jewels. She started crying and told them she ain’t got no money or jewels, ‘cepting the ring she had on her finger. They got awfully mad and started destroying everything. They took the cows and horses, burned the gin, the barn, and all of the houses ‘cept one Marster and Missus was living in. They didn’t leave us a thing ‘cept some big hominy and two banks of sweet potatoes.”

Fannie Griffin, age 94 when interviewed by Everett R. Price in Columbia, S. C. (*Before Freedom*; p. 85)

“After the war, a man came along on a red horse; he was dressed in a blue uniform and told us we was free. The Yankees that I remembers was not gentlefolks. They stole everything they could take. The meanest thing I ever see was shoats [young, weaned pigs] they half killed, cut off the hams, and left the other parts quivering on the ground....I was much happier them days than now. Maybe it won’t be so bad when I gets my old age pension.”

Adeline Jackson, age 88 when interviewed by W. W. Dixon in Winnsboro, S. C. (*Ibid.*; p. 38)

The “Slavery” Mentality

What Does Scripture Teach Us About It?

There are voices among American Blacks that cry out for reparations to be made for the enslavement of Blacks from the early Colonial Period until the Emancipation Proclamation after the Civil War – a period of about 250 years. Approximately four million slaves were declared free effective with the Emancipation Proclamation (January 1, 1863). This has been a *racial* undercurrent in the affairs of the United States for many years: *Someone is owed something for their ancestors having been enslaved*. The refusal of the government of the United States to consider such a demand has been a “hotbed” issue in the division of the races. Apparently, it will continue to be one as long as some push the issue. One Black voice claims on his social media site that *no Black* today (in the U.S.A.) has been a slave or even knows anyone living who has either been a slave or knows anyone who knows anyone who has been a slave. His social media site has had over 1.5 million hits. How true is this claim? In a newspaper editorial recently, a White female claimed that the Bible promotes slavery – so, she has a disdain for the Bible. How well-informed is she? In the WJJD world, is there an answer that is based on God’s truth?

Oddly enough, scripture does have an *underlying theme* about the “slavery” mentality to which all people who claim to have faith in this word should pay attention. Why are some people allowed to be made slaves of someone else? Is slavery an experience of only one particular race of people? What lessons should have been learned by those whose people, at one time or another, were made slaves? God has a compelling reason for allowing/causing such to happen among us, and...it is not always for the purpose of punishment. What great lessons does scripture teach us about the “slavery” mentality? We must be willing to learn these lessons.

An Introduction to the Problem

My wife and I went on a guided tour of Virginia, Washington, D. C., Valley Forge, Philadelphia, and Gettysburg a couple of years ago. What a great snapshot of early American history! We visited Jamestown, Mt. Vernon, Monticello, Colonial Philadelphia, and many, many other historic places. We gained valuable insight into what life was like during those first 250+ years – and the political and religious concepts that went into creating one of the greatest nations on the earth. Understandably, we also learned some of the weaknesses in character of some of our great leaders.

In Gettysburg, for example, we were entertained by a man who did an impersonation of Abraham Lincoln. He stayed “in character” the entire time – even during the question and answer session after his presentation. One question about the Emancipation Proclamation brought to light an explanation that is not much discussed when people laud Lincoln for “freeing the slaves.” One would think that this meant *all slaves in*

the entire, intended Union. This proclamation was an executive order by Lincoln first presented September 22, 1862 and put into action at the deadline January 1, 1863 (www.answers.com).

This impersonator’s *history-based* answer surprised me – especially because I am a Southerner and have had a lifelong interest in the debate about whether or not the Civil War was fought *primarily* to free the slaves. Most Southerners who have studied the Southern point-of-view have been convinced that *political issues* between the industrial North and the agricultural South were the primary issues, and...slavery was a “late comer” to the issues. Why? The South was not the only geographical location in the Union where African slaves were held. They were also held in the North.

Here’s the idea given by the Lincoln impersonator that holds sway in the argument: The Emancipation Proclamation applied *only to the slaves held by Southern Confederate States...who were below the Mason–Dixon Line*. As he explained it, the release of *Southern* slaves was like a “spoils of war” situation in which the con-

querors could make demands of the conquered. Ridding the agricultural South of its slave labor would cripple it *economically* to the point that it would more readily submit to rejoining the Union and the benefits that reunion could offer.

Here's the catch: States above the Mason–Dixon Line did not have to release their slaves! Slave-holding Union States were: Missouri, Kentucky, West Virginia, Maryland, and Delaware...and a small portion of south-eastern Louisiana that did not secede from the Union. If that is true – and this man spoke as Lincoln himself would have answered the question – then it would be no wonder that many Southerners would be skeptical of the “truth” of the history that is largely presented about the situation. That skepticism is not necessarily indicative of a racial bias; it is indicative of a reaction to a political shell game in which the “pea” was spirited away by sleight-of-hand and the players were made to believe that it was there all the time. How much of the “slavery” mentality is similarly the product of some type of racial or political “shell game”?

Does this information diminish the problems presented when people are enslaved? No. Any kind of slavery is a very special problem. Physical slavery is only one of many kinds of slavery among us. I have posted quotes throughout this issue that address more than one type of “slavery.” “Slavery” is a scriptural subject to which all humans should pay attention. We need to take a long look at this subject and learn what God reveals to us about it.

The Basic Principle of “Slavery in Scripture

Paul addresses the basic principle of “slavery” in Romans 6: “Do you not know that if you yield yourselves to any one as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey...?”. This can be obedience to any kind of “Lord” over your life – whether it is a habit, an appetite, a lust, an idol, or a person. The person who becomes a dope addict is a “slave” of the addiction, as much as he is to the product’s producers and mongers.

One could reasonably argue the point that physical “slavery” imposed to harvest agricultural products is not really very different from the “slavery” of chronic indebtedness or welfare or smoking “weed.” You might consider indebtedness, welfare, and marijuana part of your “life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness,” but...are you really free? *If you can say “yes” to that question,*

then I can point you to people who are physical slaves who say that they are happy, well-cared for, and content to remain in their present condition. Where is the great uproar over the pimp who deals in human trafficking by prostituting harems of girls under threat of physical harm and death? Why can't a righteous society rise up in righteous indignation and stomp out the practice? It's physical slavery! **The same is true for drug trafficking even if it is allowed by State law!**

As Paul continues in Romans 6:16, he points to a “slavery” that is “sin unto death” and one that is “obedience unto righteousness.” In the overall scheme of life, he says that you are going to be required to make your decision about being a “slave” under “sin” or “righteousness.” In Paul’s mind, this is a “slavery” about which you have a choice.

Before Moses died and the Children of Israel entered the Promised Land, Moses made this last plea to them about this decision:

I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore, choose life, that both you and your descendants may live: that you may love the Lord your God, and that you may obey His voice, and that you may cleave to Him: for He is your life, and the length of your days.... (Deuteronomy 30:19, 20; emphases added)

Ultimately, you will be the “slave” of “sin unto death” or “obedience unto righteousness and life” – depending on the choice you make.

Whether you translate Romans 6:16 to read “servant” or “slave,” the Greek term is *doulos*, which means “slave” but is largely rendered “servant” in many translations of the Bible. The point Paul is making distinguishes the difference between a “master” and those under his authority. Paul is making the comment about becoming dependent upon something and/or somebody – voluntarily or otherwise. When you accept Jesus Christ as “Lord and Master” of your life, then you are voluntarily accepting His rule over your life and your dependence upon Him for your life’s needs, physical and spiritual (read the book of “Philemon” for an interesting Pauline concept).

Time and chance can reduce you to “slavery” just as easily as a human being can. That is Solomon’s conclusion in Ecclesiastes 9:11. Physical abilities, personal

strength, knowledge/wisdom/understanding, wealth, and personal friends of influence cannot safeguard you from time and chance. In other words, sometimes you can become a slave for no other reason than *time* and *chance* – being in the wrong place at the wrong time. Let me give you a scriptural example of this.

Genesis 15 is the account of how the Lord God made His promise and oath (see Hebrews 6:13-20) to Abraham about the “Promised Land.” Read carefully vv. 13-16. What does this tell you? It tells me that Abraham’s descendants – who had not even been born yet – were going to be slaves for 400 years in a powerful nation. Had those descendants done anything evil against the Lord God at the time of this prophecy? No.

But...Abraham was going to die without inheriting the land he was promised – which is described in vv. 18-21. You can read Genesis 37 through Exodus 15 to understand how Israel came to be slaves in Egypt for 400+ years. You will find that one of Jacob’s sons, Joseph, was, seemingly, in the wrong place at the wrong time. However, if God had already planned for Israel to be in slavery to this great nation, Joseph (or someone like him) had to be in the wrong place at the wrong time in order for God to complete His prophecy to Abraham. *What lesson did the Lord God intend for Israel to learn from this experience?*

In Exodus 20:1, 2, as He introduces the 10 Commandments to Israel (the Jews were only one tribe among 12 tribes of Israel – read Exodus 1:1-7), He explains some of it. Notice the caveat in v. 2: “I am the Lord your God who has brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.” If you are thoughtful about this preface, you should notice that these 10 Commandments are laws by which all of mankind can be free of slavery to idols/false gods and to one another. If all of mankind would obey every one of these 10 Commandments, there would be no such thing as slavery in the whole, wide world.

Now notice some of the instruction He gave in Exodus 22:21 about “strangers.” Verse 21 forbade Israel to “vex” the stranger that came among them. Why? Because *Israel* had been strangers in Egypt. Exodus 23:9 forbade them to oppress the stranger for the same reason. Leviticus 19:34 and Deuteronomy 10:19 require the Israelites to love the stranger like themselves. The expression “stranger in Egypt” has some of the same deep implications as slavery. The main implication is sobering: How can you be freed from any kind of slavery into which you continually sell yourself? The Lord

God’s instruction to Israel was simple: If you make it your business to enslave others, then you will also be made a slave. Did Frederick Douglass understand this when he famously said: “No man can put a chain about the ankle of his fellow man without at last finding the other end fastened about his own neck”?

Because they forgot, the House of Israel eventually went back into captivity at the hands of the Assyrians a few centuries after being released by God from Egyptian slavery. It will be the same with those who forget the “slavery” from which they have been delivered and then put others into a slavery to themselves. Note the following quote that I found on www.answers.com:

Just finished the book, *The Lost German Slave Girl: The Extraordinary True Story of Sally Miller and Her Fight for Freedom in Old New Orleans* by John Bailey. I was astonished to find that the majority of free blacks were slave owners too. It's unfortunate that there is so much ignorance amongst the intelligentsia in this country that they were either unaware of this fact or choose not to reveal it. (emphases added)

This person would be justified for making such a claim if you based your information merely on the Jamie Foxx movie *D`Jango Unchained*. It clearly showed that some free Blacks owned slaves. Although the movie was basically fictional, it represented facts about the time period in which it was set.

Here is another supporting historical fact. As I understand from some of the history about slavery, among some of the Blacks there has been a selective application of the term “Cracker” to the Whites. During the 1930s, the Federal Writers’ Project commissioned out-of-work writers to go into several Southern States to locate former slaves and record their stories. They interviewed over 2,000 former slaves for this project – all with varying attitudes about their experiences with their slave holders. So, what I am about to quote is a first-person experience by a former slave named Ben Horry, interviewed by Genevieve W. Chandler in Murrels Inlet, S.C. in August of 1937.

Ben Horry said the following:

The worst thing I remembers was the colored overseer. He was the one straight from Africa. He was the boss over all the mens and womens, and if womans don’t do all he say, he lay task on

'em they ain't able to do....My mother is take to the barn and strapped down....Hands spread like this and strapped to the floor and all two both she feet been tied....And she been give twenty-five to fifty lashes till the blood flow. And my father and me stand right there and look and ain't able to lift a hand. Blood on floor in that rice barn when barn tear down....What I tell you happen before Freedom, when I just can remember. (*Before Freedom, When I Just Can Remember*, Belinda Hurmence, Editor; Winston-Salem: John F. Blair, Publisher, 1989; p. 24)

Ben went on to say that the slave owners were told about this Black overseer's actions. He did not say what was done to him, but Ben's father subsequently became the overseer and changed things for the better.

The editor of these 27 oral histories of former South Carolina slaves admits that their stories were colored by their "slavery" mentality as affected by the Great Depression (like comparing their work, lodging, food provisions, and personal safety in slavery to the dearth and uncertainty of the Great Depression), but she cannot take away the basic content of those interviews. As I remember the contents of many of the interviews, the actions of this particular African overseer were not an isolated event or condition.

The point is that Whites were not the only "crackers" (ones who "cracked" the whip against others; also, a term used to disparage poor White people) during this period of history and should not be treated as though they were. To do so is to leave out a vital part of the *lessons* that *we* should be learning about the "slavery" mentality. Shifting blame to one race by those who raise the accusation (who either do not know or will not admit the truth of the rest of the story) is a sleight-of-hand shell game. In order to make a significant difference in race relations, we *all* have to admit that one vital principle: ***We are all sinners in this matter, and we all need to repent of our sin.*** All of us have been "slaves" of one type or another; so, we all should work toward re-unification rather than further separation.

A Question About Time and Chance

Let me admit a bit of speculation that relates to the "slavery" mentality. I know that White Europeans and American Southerners are not the sole culprits in the en-

slavement of Africans. Indeed, history reveals that Africans are as guilty as anyone for the problem. It should be commonly known that African tribes declared war on one another for one reason or another. When they found that it could be profitable to sell their prisoners of war instead of killing them, they did so. The Europeans benefitted; the Americans benefitted; the African clan chiefs benefitted. This was the perpetuation of the age-old business of *human trafficking*, not the beginning of the practice.

If you read the history of the enslavement of Israel in Egypt, you can get the idea that *God* put them there for safe-keeping until He could carry out some disciplinary actions toward the Amorites who occupied the land to which He was to send Israel (see Genesis 15:16). If you read Leviticus 18:24-30 and understand it correctly, the Amorites, as a national entity, carried on religious, social, and sexual practices that were abhorrent to the Lord God. Verses 24, 25 say that their nation (and, therefore, their people) became *defiled* in His sight. His solution was to *vomit them out of the land*. In that way, He made room for Israel to come into the land – with the understanding that Israel could likewise be vomited out of the land for pursuing the same religious, social, and sexual practices. The overriding idea is that He provided Israel with laws that enabled them to rise above the abhorrent religious, social, and sexual practices of the Amorites.

Is it possible, then, that the same thing happened to members of the African tribes when they fell prey to the same kinds of religious, social, and sexual sins that were abhorrent to God? In Amos 9:7, He asks the House of Israel some questions that would indicate that He had done the same thing to other nations/races:

“Are you not like the children of the *Ethiopians* unto me, O children of Israel?” says the Lord. “Have not I brought up Israel out of the land of Egypt and the *Philistines* from Caphtor and the *Syrians* from Kir?” (emphases added)

This is indicative that the House of Israel is not the only nation taken into and out of slavery by the Lord God. In this case, He was about to lead Israel back into slavery – and many among them *were not* the guilty parties relative to the abhorrent religious, social, and sexual sins.

Consider this possibility: Of those Africans who were sold into slavery – like Joseph's bothers did to him

– the survivors of the trans-Atlantic journey were the fortunate ones to whom a new life would eventually be made available. They would be “planted” into a so-called “Christian” nation that would eventually allow them a home in which they could be free to seek a far better way of life than the one their ancestors had in Africa. They could be introduced to the God of Israel and the Savior – to His truth and hope and salvation. Could it be that they were in the *wrong* place at the *wrong* time but were brought to the *right* place for the *right* time? Could it be that they were subject to *time* and *chance* in a way that would eventually *benefit* them? I do not pretend to know the mind of God in this matter, but I can at least admit the *possibility* of His guiding hand in it – like it was with Israel, the Ethiopians, the Philistines, and the Syrians (and ...who knows how many others; for an example, read Isaiah 44 through 47 regarding *Cyrus* and the book of Esther).

Now this: What if the descendants of those Africans who were originally sold into slavery began to commit the same religious, social, and sexual sins that had originally resulted in their being vomited out of their land – with many innocents among them? Could they again be made “slaves” of some sort by God? Can you at least see how they would have fallen prey to the same “slavery” mentality by selling themselves to the same “sin unto death”? Could the same thing still affect the descendants of the *Israelites* among us today (and...I am not referring solely to the *Jews*)?

Let’s at least consider the “slavery” implied in the following quote:

It is becoming increasingly apparent that many—arguably most—of the problems that plague our nation have been aggravated rather than alleviated by *federal intervention*. In one area after another, massive infusions of tax dollars have been squandered on false solutions which, when they fail to achieve their stated objectives, are cited to justify even more spending on other futile schemes *that result in bigger government*. Examples include programs and laws supposedly intended to reduce racial animosity *which have instead heightened race-related tensions*; welfare schemes that, rather than reducing poverty, have enticed *millions of Americans to become dependent on Washington for their daily bread*; federal funding (and control) of education, which has spawned a monumental educa-

tion crisis; a “war” on drugs which has done little to curb drug traffic, but which has *eroded many personal liberties*; a health-care finance system that *has deteriorated as government meddling and regulation have increased*; and a masochistic immigration policy larded with false “solutions” that, while failing to stop the inflow of illegal aliens, have paved the way for *further government intrusion* into the lives of nearly all Americans. (Robert W. Lee; www.liberty-tree.ca/quotes_about/dependence; emphases added)

Arguably, Mr. Lee sees a type of “slavery” that few are willing to admit exists.

From the same source, P. J. O’Rourke says this:

Freedom is not empowerment. Empowerment is what the Serbs have in Bosnia. Anybody can grab a gun and be empowered. It's not entitlement. An entitlement is what people on welfare get, and *how free are they?* It's not an endlessly expanding list of rights – the “right” to education, the “right” to health care, the “right” to food and housing. *That's not freedom, that's dependency. Those aren't rights, those are rations of slavery – hay and a barn for human cattle.* There's only one basic human right, the right to do as you damn well please. And with it comes the only basic human duty, the duty to take the consequences. (emphases added)

Mr. O’Rourke might subscribe to the thought that *equality* carries with it the *equal opportunity* to fail and to be responsible for getting up, brushing yourself off, and going at it again for different results. As long as you *depend* on someone else (especially the government), then you are (technically, at least) a “slave.”

“Slavery” comes in many different shapes and sizes. We are all subject to it in our lives because we are subject to time and chance as much as we are to our own choices. God shows us through His word that we have a way out of all types of “slavery” through Jesus Christ. But, we must *never* adopt a way of life that subjects ourselves and/or our fellow man to any type of slavery. If we will make ourselves subject to God’s will instead of our own, then we shall truly be “Free at last! Free at last! Thank God Almighty [we will be] free at last!” If *your* life matters, then work on your *choices*.

White “Privilege”

Accusation or Fact?

Several years ago, I was in a conversation with a fellow educator – a Black female – who inserted “White Privilege” into our conversation by saying: “If I were a White woman, I’d be rich.” Her remark was based on her ideas about her professional education and work experience. She was not discriminated against in the education world in our State because her fellow White females and males with similar professional education and experience were paid no more than she was because of their color. I reacted to her comment by inserting “Black Privilege” into my reply because of the “market” for well-trained, well-educated Black males: “Well...I could say that, if I were a Black male, I, too, would be rich.” She laughed. I laughed. End of conversation.

In this article, we are going to look at definitions of “White privilege” in order to set up a basis for our discussion. Some consider it to be a real, but *invisible*, philosophy *in the minds of Whites*, while others consider it to be a *racist* reaction against the Whites because of their successes in so many fields of endeavor. Is it possible that each position has a point to be considered – that is, *some* Whites do entertain this “invisible” philosophy as part of their lives and pursuits, but *some* non-Whites use it to deflect responsibility for their *racial* jealousy of the Whites’ successes? Is this concept of White “privilege” *accusation* or *fact*? At the end of the discussion, we will come to understand *God’s* mind about how “privilege” comes to any particular person or racial group.

Defining “White Privilege”

I want you to read the following definitions of “White Privilege” as given by Kendall Clark on his website at Whiteprivilege.com:

1. a. A right, advantage, or immunity granted to or enjoyed by white persons beyond the common advantage of all others; an exemption in many particular cases from certain burdens or liabilities.

b. A special advantage or benefit of white persons; with reference to divine dispensations, natural advantages, gifts of fortune, genetic endowments, social relations, etc.

2. A privileged position; the possession of an advantage white persons enjoy over non-white persons.

3. a. The special right or immunity attaching to white persons as a social relation; prerogative.

b. display of white privilege, a social expression of a white person or persons demanding to be treated as a member or members of the socially privileged class.

4. a. To invest white persons with a privilege or privileges; to grant to white persons a particular right or immunity; to benefit or favor specially white persons; to invest white persons with special honorable distinctions.

b. To avail oneself of a privilege owing to one as a white person.

5. To authorize or license of white person or persons what is forbidden or wrong for non-whites; to justify, excuse.

6. To give to white persons special freedom or immunity from some liability or burden to which non-white persons are subject; to exempt.

My first question is whether or not this “privilege” extends to every White person in existence – all Anglo-Saxons, Russians, Italians, French, *et cetera* that are “white” by skin color. Was it extended to the *Irish* when American “white” business owners put up signs that said “No Irish Need Apply”? Or, are the above-stated definitions applicable to only a few among the Whites that might receive such privilege because of their social or economic status? Is a person who is called “white trash” as likely to receive the same “privilege”? Be honest...and remember the difference between a correlate (something in a mutual relationship with something else) and a proof (evidence that establishes absolute fact).

What was Clark’s motivation for defining such a perceived “privilege”? The following is his answer:

I started WhitePrivilege.com in order to make the structures of white privilege – its causes and effects – less socially invisible, primarily by pointing out instances in U.S. society where it is or seems to be at work. I needed, therefore, a good working definition of the social phenomenon I was looking for.

Do you see the “gaps” of logic in his answer? He claims that it is socially invisible and that it is or seems to be at work in U.S. society. In research, such an approach can lead to “grasping at straws,” instead of searching for truth. Is his approach really objective?

Clark admits that he took the Oxford English Dictionary definition of privilege in order to flesh out his definition of “White privilege”. Is that an appropriate approach? Let’s see how he describes his rationale:

...One good way to define racialized social privilege is by reference to social privilege generally. In other words, you can figure out what white privilege is in part by figuring out what any social privilege is. So I walked over to my copy of the Oxford English Dictionary, looked up the word “privilege”, and after reading it through a few times, I realized that if I rewrote the definition of privilege to refer to white people, rather than people in general, I would have

the basis of a working definition. And so that’s what I did, with a few modifications and changes as seemed appropriate. (emphases added)

Does his approach to this definition also mean that a Black person could reach a certain social standing and enjoy the same kind of “privilege” – by this definition?

Let’s use an example where such an idea could seem to be applicable: Al Sharpton and Congressman Charlie Rangel being allowed to get a “pass” by the Internal Revenue Service for overdue back taxes in the millions of dollars. How does Al Sharpton get such frequent access to the White House as a presidential advisor when he supposedly owes the government over \$4,000,000.00 in back taxes? Is it a social or political privilege – or is it a tit-for-tat racial reaction to the ubiquitous “White privilege”? Using Clark’s method, could you insert “Black,” instead of “White,” into the Oxford English Dictionary definition of privilege and answer those questions for something that “seems to be at work” in “Black Privilege”?

The point I am making is that social phenomena are not necessarily racial phenomena. Socially speaking, a person who is White and lives in a ramshackle mobile home with pit bulls unleashed in the yard and wrecked cars in various stages of disrepair under the trees is not likely to agree that he gets “White privilege” when the police come to investigate a complaint about suspicious activity and something that smells “dead.”

In fact, he might fall under greater suspicion when the pit bulls get up bare-teethed and growling at the police as the man comes out of the mobile home with a beer in hand and his pants hanging loosely slightly under his buttocks – and...with his hair uncombed and no shirt on. I am afraid that his social status would offer him no “privilege” at all. Neither would his race.

Would I have to rewrite the Oxford English Dictionary definition in order to make it refer to Black people instead of people in general and make a few modifications and changes as seemed appropriate...just so I could make it fit a paradigm of “Black privilege”? Clark gave me too much information.

Here’s how Clark summarizes his quest for a proper definition of “White Privilege”:

To sum up, (1) white privilege should be defined carefully because it is contested; (2) that contestation is itself racialized, (3) which is what we should expect, since (4) socially invisible struc-

tures of oppression are more effective and enduring than socially *visible* ones....We define it *in order to make it a **problem** for white people*, to show that it is an unjust, historical creation. (emphases added)

He believes that Whites are *racists* because they *deny* the existence of “White privilege.” He says that we should expect that such a denial should exist in order to make it invisible because that invisibility makes it easier to effectively oppress other races over a longer period of time. Such a definition is necessary in order to make *problems* for the Whites. Do I understand his point correctly? He’s White, but does he have a *racist* motive?

The Flip Side of the Argument

Well, let’s see what others use for definitions. For this, I will use information taken from the website www.urbandictionary.com. The first quote is called “Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack of white privilege”:

An invisible package of unearned assets that whites can count on cashing in each day, but about which they are 'meant' to remain oblivious. White privilege is like an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, maps, passports, codebooks [sic], visas, clothes, tools, and blank checks. [For examples:]

-I can if I wish arrange to be in the company of people of my race most of the time.

-I can turn on the television or open to the front page of the paper and see people of my race widely represented.

-When I am told about our national heritage or about "civilization," I am shown that people of my color made it what it is.

-I am never asked to speak for all the people of my racial group.

-I can remain oblivious of the language and customs of persons of color who constitute the world's majority without feeling in my culture any penalty for such oblivion.

-I can easily find academic courses and institutions which give attention only to people of my race.

-I can choose blemish cover or bandages in "flesh" color and have them more or less match my skin.

All of these “markers” are supposed to be the criteria by which “White Privilege” is determined. Are they *correlates* or *proofs*? Are they *reasonable*?

My questions are simple at this point: (a) To which racial group do a majority of Blacks, Indians, *et cetera* gravitate? (b) What racial group is generally covered in the news in a town where the majority racial group is Black, Indian, *et cetera*? (c) How does the idea of a “melting pot” figure into U.S. national history and heritage? (d) Who, in reality, can speak for their *entire* racial group – realizing the difference between, say, Lt. Colonel Allen West and Jessie Jackson? (e) What is the reason behind the emergence of a group of people labeled as *Whiggers* – that is, Whites who adopt the language, dress, and mannerisms of Blacks? And...why are many Whites more conversant about rap, hip hop, and Motown than many Blacks are about Country/Western music? (f) If I choose, I can find many college courses about African Studies, as well as other Black studies, like the struggle for Civil Rights, *et cetera* – we do not live in a vacuum. (g) Has anyone visited the cosmetics departments in local malls lately to see the very competitive cosmetics offerings for many different racial colors?

The point is simple: a “knapsack” could be rolled out and unpacked for any racial group. The “invisible knapsack of White privilege” is not novel or unique. It is a construction of someone who wants to make a *racial point* that is really lacking in substance. One could be constructed for any racial group. Clark and the Urban Dictionary deal with *correlates* in their so-called “proofs.”

Now, let’s take a look at the other side of the issue. This also comes from www.urbandictionary.com. I offer it as follows:

[“White Privilege” is] The *racist* idea that simply being white benefits people in some unexplainable way, and that *discriminating against white people is not only okay, but enlightened and necessary*. *The excuse some extremists use*

to justify pretty much any level of racism, as long as it is coming from **people of color**. A young American woman died because in college she was brainwashed into believing that her white privilege would protect her from being run over by a bulldozer....If "white privilege" were only a reality, then I'd be a millionaire by now. (emphases added)

Why would a White person deny the existence of such a privilege? Could it be because s/he has never experienced such a "privilege"? Could such an accusation by some people of color be indicative of racism instead of truth? There appears to be more than one side to this problem – each side believing it is right.

Okay, one more for good measure and equal time:

[“White Privilege” is] A term used as a blanket condemnation of any success a white person may have. Regardless of any advantages a minority member might receive [sic] such as free tuition, easy loans or tax breaks (read native Americans), white privilege is assumed whenever a white person succeeds. [The claim is that] White people succeed because of white privilege [sic] only. Every other successful person succeeds purely in spite of it. (emphases added)

So, the Black man who owns the largest cruise ship company in the world does not enjoy any measure of “Black Privilege” because he is very rich and very well socially situated? Are these people saying that a White man in a similar situation would have gotten that rich only through using his “White Privilege” card? The overuse of generalities in that concept is stunning and unrealistic – really lacking in sensible logic.

Is there no room for a White person to come from nothing and, through hard work and persistence, become a wealthy person? Can a poor White person win a nine-figure Lotto without “White Privilege” and use it to become a wealthy business owner? The Lotto is, after all, a game of great chance (over 14 million plus-to-one odds). If so, where is the “White Privilege” in that? I know a man from a poor rural family in a nearby county who quit school in the 10th grade during the 1960s and became a multi-millionaire by sheer grit, determination, and smart business practices. His brothers will be the

first to tell you that he got no special “White” favors on his way up.

I think that it is fair to say that the concept of “White Privilege” fits into the genre of “urban legends” because there are so many exceptions to the perceived rule. If it is a concept used to excuse one’s own lack of success, then more is the pity. I do know of White people who blame rich White people for their failures. Many use the expressions that “It takes money to make money” and “The rich get richer and the poor get poorer.” While that might be true in some cases, ask yourself if any rich White people have ever had a reverse of fortune and been reduced to “middle class” or below? I’m sure that you can find some.

What Advice Does God Give?

Let’s inject a bit of God’s revelation (see 2 Timothy 3:16, 17 and John 17:17). Read the following proverbs and use them as an “unpacked knapsack” for “righteous privilege”:

- ▶ Proverbs 10:4, 22: One who works with an idle or lazy hand will always be poor....God’s blessing makes one rich, and He does not add sorrow to His blessing [for the one so blessed or any recipient of the blessed man’s fortunes].
- ▶ Proverbs 13:7: There are some who claim to be rich, but who are very poor; there are some who claim to be poor, but who are very rich.
- ▶ Proverbs 23:4-8: Do not work to become rich; quit relying on your own wisdom. When your eyes set upon becoming rich, it disappears like a bird taking wing in flight. Do not eat the evil man’s bread and do not desire his delicacies. Their generosity is a trick to enslave you as their pawn. He is one who invites you to eat and drink, but he has no real regard for you – you will waste your words of praise on him and the morsels you have eaten will make you so sick that you will vomit them out.
- ▶ Proverbs 30:5-9: Every word of God proves true; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him. Do not add to His words, lest He reprove you and show you to be a liar. Before I die, I ask

not to be denied two things that I ask of you [God]: First, help me to never resort to lying and falsehoods; second, give me neither poverty nor riches – only that which is necessary for my personal needs [see Matthew 6:11] – so that I do not get full and deny you...saying: “Who is the Lord?” or lest I become poor, and steal, and profane the name of my God.

▶ Matthew 26:11: You will always have poor people among you, but you will not always have Me among you. [Christ’s time *in the flesh* with His disciples was not permanent.]

Ask yourself if there are *racial overtones* in this wisdom. To whom does any perceived “privilege” apply in these proverbs? Is it *possible* that so much political and social *diatribe* as “White Privilege” among us is merely *humans* leaning too heavily upon *human* wisdom and understanding – even though they might attempt to mix in “righteous indignation”?

What great clarification might appear if we were led by *God’s* wisdom and understanding instead? Read 2 Corinthians 4:4 and Revelation 12:9 for such clarification. Read Romans 8:5-9 to understand the real *cause* of some the problems that exist among us.

It eventually appears that the late cartoonist, Walt Kelly, was right. For many years, he drew a little swamp opossum named Pogo who had numerous adventures in the great Okeefeenokee Swamp in southeast Georgia. From time to time, Pogo would gather his swamp friends upon a raft to pole through the Swamp to find and destroy “the enemy.” It was not until Kelly decided to retire that Pogo and his friends actually found “the enemy.” When they did, Pogo – brandishing his wooden sword – exclaimed: “We have found the enemy, and it is *us!*” How poignantly observant of Walt Kelly!

The White Man’s “Burden”

"The White Man's Burden: The United States and The Philippine Islands," originally published in the popular *McClure's* magazine in 1899, is a poem by the English poet Rudyard Kipling. The poem was originally written for Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, but Kipling exchanged it for "Recessional" and changed the text of "Burden" to reflect the subject of the American colon-

ization of the Philippines, recently won from Spain in the Spanish-American War. At face value, it appears to be an emphatic charge to the white race to colonize and rule other nations *for the benefit of those people*. Both the action and the recipients of the action are meant to be understood as the White man’s “burden” – not in the sense of an *oppressive* load, but in the sense of a welcomed opportunity to carry out a *humane duty* and/or *divine responsibility*.

Because of the selfish pursuits of some of the White race to pillage the “unsettled and undeveloped” regions of the world, the effort has become a symbol of Eurocentric *racism* and Western aspirations to dominate the developing world. The poem still rouses strong emotions on various sides of the racial “divide” and is interpreted from a variety of viewpoints.

In the mix, one has to consider the surge of Christian missionary efforts to bring Bibles and Christian teachings to these people in relationship to the merchants of the world seizing an opportunity to expand business and prosperity to others.

Let’s look at Kipling’s poem in order to understand the “divide” among the opinions:

The White Man's Burden:

The United States and The Philippine Islands

1. Take up the White Man's burden,
Send forth the best ye breed
Go bind your sons to exile,
to serve your captives' need;
To wait in heavy harness,
On fluttered folk and wild –
Your new-caught, sullen peoples,
Half-devil and half-child.
2. Take up the White Man's burden,
In patience to abide,
To veil the threat of terror
And check the show of pride;
By open speech and simple,
An hundred times made plain
To seek another's profit,
And work another's gain.
3. Take up the White Man's burden,
The savage wars of peace –
Fill full the mouth of Famine
And bid the sickness cease;

And when your goal is nearest
The end for others sought,
Watch sloth and heathen Folly
Bring all your hopes to nought.

4. Take up the White Man's burden,
No tawdry rule of kings,
But toil of serf and sweeper,
The tale of common things.
The ports ye shall not enter,
The roads ye shall not tread,
Go mark them with your living,
And mark them with your dead.

5. Take up the White Man's burden
And reap his old reward:
The blame of those ye better,
The hate of those ye guard –
The cry of hosts ye humour
(Ah, slowly!) toward the light: –
"Why brought he us from bondage,
Our loved Egyptian night?"

6. Take up the White Man's burden,
Ye dare not stoop to less –
Nor call too loud on Freedom
To cloke [sic] your weariness;
By all ye cry or whisper,
By all ye leave or do,
The silent, sullen peoples
Shall weigh your gods and you.

7. Take up the White Man's burden,
Have done with childish days –
The lightly proffered laurel,
The easy, ungrudged praise.
Comes now, to search your manhood,
through all the thankless years
Cold, edged with dear-bought wisdom,
The judgment of your peers!

It is admitted and recognized among many commentators that Kipling was in favor of the Americans taking control of the Philippine Islands as part of war reparations in the Spanish-American War. I was told by a Filipino acquaintance recently that the Filipino people were thankful to the United States for freeing them from Spanish rule. Interestingly enough, Spain was recognized as a “colonial power,” and they are generally

White people.

One view of the poem proposes that wealthy nations have an implied obligation to assist with and encourage the cultural and economic development of undeveloped nations in order to help them assume their “places” in the world’s economy and society.

A second view insists that any effort to do such a thing is born out of *racism*, greed, and a condescending attitude toward the less powerful – a type of “survival of the fittest.”

A third opinion is that the *rich Whites* have a moral duty and obligation to help the “poor” (a euphemism for “people of color”) to better themselves...whether they want outside help or not.

A fourth opinion is that the Whites of Great Britain, France, Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, Denmark, Germany, Sweden, Russia, Italy, Belgium, and the United States (and any other White-dominated nation in the world) has a duty to bring civilization to the pagan, barbaric, uncivilized parts of the world so as to make the world a safer place to live.

Another opinion is that Kipling was indulging in *satire* – a use of ridicule, contempt, and sarcasm to make fun of vices, follies, *et cetera*. His general body of work, however, suggests that he genuinely believed in introducing Western ideas and wealth into undeveloped nations in order to lift them out of poverty (“A rising tide floats all boats”).

Finally, some see that Kipling shows that the liberating powers can be as much enslaved as the liberated people as a result of wasting blood and treasure that is “thrown into a bottomless pit of need.”

What would you conclude about the purpose of the poem if you considered the following quote from Kipling in September 1898 to Theodore Roosevelt? Kipling exhorts:

Now go in and put all the weight of your influence into hanging on permanently to the whole Philippines. America has gone and stuck a pickaxe into the foundations of a rotten house and she is morally bound to build the house over again from the foundations or have it fall about her ears.

Can you detect in that letter any visible or invisible claim to “White Privilege”? In reality, what is implied in the word *America* – only “Whites”? Or does *America* imply the whole of that euphemistic “melting pot”?

Would any “privileged” Black have any interest in helping Africa? Would any “privileged” Japanese or Chinese or other Far Easterners have any interest in helping the countries from which they had immigrated? Did they, in fact, do such a thing – or, did the Whites prohibit their involvement? Is such an interest any different from modern Mexicans and Cubans sending money back to their relatives in Mexico and Cuba so they can have an improved standard of living?

The *first stanza* of the poem exhorts the Whites of the United States to send the best of their young to take up a heavy burden in a foreign land to relieve the needs of the unfortunate. The *second stanza* counsels these “best seed” to patiently submit to and stick with the intended goal so as not to give the undeveloped nations any reason to fear them or to think of them as being proud and haughty about their venture.

The *third stanza* is a warning. When you have brought them to peace from their wars, an end to their famines and diseases, and stand ready to leave them to try to perpetuate *on their own* what you have brought to them, be prepared for the possibility that they will turn again to their former ways and undo all that you have achieved (think *Iraq*). The *fourth stanza* is also a warning that such a venture is not the cheap and gaudy trappings of a *rulership* over these people. It is a *servant’s* chore that will exact their own blood and litter their dead across a foreign landscape (see Matthew 20:25-28).

The *fifth stanza* is an image borrowed from Israel’s exodus out of Egypt. It signals the blaming and griping and murmuring and resistance and rebellion of those whom you seek to bring to freedom and a better way of life (see 1 Corinthians 10:1-12). If you take up the White man’s burden, they will indict you for having brought them “out of Egyptian slavery” merely to kill them in the desert (see Exodus 16:3 and 17:3). These charges were laid against Moses and the Lord God Himself! They came to this point because of selfishness and thanklessness.

The *sixth stanza* is a clarion call to embrace the noble cause and, by all you say, think, and do, not to allow *hypocrisy* to bring shame upon your motives or the God whom you say sent you to help them. The *seventh stanza* follows suit by admonishing the “privileged” White to put away his childish ways of dealing with others in exchange for superficial wealth and glory. Be *adults* who are reasonable and wise because of the thankless chores you have endured and the wisdom you have purchased with your own blood, sweat, and tears! I dare

say that anyone who can understand Kipling’s poem any other way must be looking for a “fight.”

The “Privileged” Whites and Their “Burden”

One of the little-considered factors in Kipling’s message has to do with a national phenomenon in Great Britain at the time. It’s called *British-Israelism* –the concept that the Anglo-Saxon and British-descended peoples of the earth are none other than the 10 tribes of Israel whom the Lord God had shunned and sent into Assyrian captivity...never to return to the land they possessed alongside their Israelite brothers, the *Jews*.

All of them are part of the “Whites” to whom Kipling refers. Why, then, would Kipling rise up in the robe of a prophet like Elijah to remind them of their great “burden” to the other nations of the earth? Read Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28. These are considered to be the “blessings” that the Lord God bestowed upon the House of Israel to be used both as a beacon to the other nations and as a “privilege” that set them apart from those other nations. Could God have blessed all nations equally? Yes...but He did not. No more than He has done so to this very day. This was to be an evangelization tool to be wisely used, not unwisely wasted.

Read Deuteronomy 4:1-13. Take notice of the “burden” (see Matthew 11:30) that the Lord God placed upon the entire nation of Israel when He concluded a “marriage” covenant with them. They were to be a “light upon a hill” (Matthew 5:13–16) that would attract the attention of other nations so they could be brought into His truth and receive the salvation that is involved in it.

Notice also Exodus 12:48, 49. Any foreigner who wanted to become part of Israel had to be circumcised as part of the citizenship ritual. Once that was done, he was considered to be an *Israelite* with all the rights and privileges of a native-born Israelite. Romans 11:11-27 is a New Testament explanation of the same thing relative to the True Church: Gentiles who are grafted into the “holy root” of Israel (the True Church) are thereby made partakers of the promises and blessings the Lord God made to Israel and the True Church. Read Paul’s warning to these Gentiles in vv. 16-24. Also, read Galatians 3:26-29 where Paul explains how all *racial, social, and gender* “privileges” are erased in Jesus Christ (see also Romans 8:9-18).

This, I also daresay, means that any race of individuals *in Jesus Christ* has a much higher “burden” than any

regular, unconverted White. If we claim to be “in Christ,” then there is no room for charges and counter charges against one another – especially if we are truly living as God would have us live. Whatever is carried on outside of the “burden” we have in Christ is kin to the world and has a life and destiny of its own (see Daniel 2:34-45 and John 18:36).

Do some unconverted Whites misuse and waste this “privilege”? Yes. But unconverted people of other races also waste whatever “privilege” they have. All have sinned in that regard.

Conclusion

It is true that there are those among all of the races of the world who claim “privileges” for themselves – “privileges” that give them advantage over others. What I have attempted to show in this issue is simple: Such tactics at gaining “superiority” over others are born out of a human condition that favors one race or class above another. If historical truth were really known, you would find that most of the different races of people

have had their opportunities to dominate others. You will find that class warfare has had the same opportunity. The same is true in religion. Each, in its own time and in its own way, has made “slaves” of others. We are no farther along in solving the “divide” than we have ever been. There have been countless “Moses” and “Christ” figures who have come along to try to do it only to find resistance and rebellion and superficiality blocking the way. Even the false ones have failed to get the job done. There is only one true Christ to whom we should look for redemption.

What should we have learned from this history? We should have learned that God’s thoughts and ways are higher than the humans’ (Isaiah 55:8, 9). We should have learned that obedience to God’s laws will garner for us a unity and success the likes of which we have never known. We should have learned that the human mind, without the influence of the Holy Spirit, is going to resist and fight against God’s will and lead us down a path to our eternal destruction. Unless and until we reach that point of understanding, we will never have peace and plenty for all – or true motivation to seek it.

“No One Wins by Using Race Card”

Let those who have laid a guilt trip on people in our times, for evils done by other people in past centuries, at least face their own responsibility for the evil consequences of their own notions and policies. If they won’t do it, then the rest of us need to stop listening gullibly to what they are saying....The race card is nothing to play with. It can ruin us all.

Dr. Thomas Sowell, Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institution,
Stanford University, Stanford, CA 94305
as quoted in *The Albany [GA] Herald*, p. 9A, December 25, 2014