

CHAPTER H2

GOD'S SPECIAL PEOPLE

THE HUMAN RACE DIVIDED

God's people once again managed to disappoint Him, and He again decided to cut them off and start over with a third patriarch. But this time He didn't kill everyone as he had in Noah's day. This time He did something no less dramatic, but without the spectacle of something like a flood. The modern church has forgotten this event in spite of its uniqueness in human history and in spite of its doctrinal significance. Just as God divided His kingdom in order to cast out and separate the carnal angels from the good angels, so He did with Abraham by *dividing the human race* in order to cast out and separate the carnal humans from the good humans. Never again would all humans be God's people. An unregenerate form of human now existed that God called *dogs* and *Gentiles*. By making only descendants of Abraham (who were called Hebrews) His people (**Ge 17:7,8; Ex 3:7,10; Am 3:2**), God made those who were not descendants of Abraham – everybody else on the planet – not His people (**1 Pe 2:10**), unregenerate, without spirit life. There had never been unsaved people on earth before. God's people had never been a minority before. The era of the "Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man" was over. For the first time in history God's people were *special* (**Dt 7:6**) and *peculiar* (**Dt 14:2; 1 Pe 2:9**) among humans on earth. Special means distinct, different from the ordinary, extraordinary. And peculiar means distinguished from others, belonging exclusively to a person, uncommon.

God was starting over with Abraham and gave him only a partial *Old Commission* to be fruitful and multiply. I say *partial* because God never told His third patriarch or his sons to "replenish the earth" (**Ge 17:2; 26:4; 35:11**) because – unlike with the first two patriarchs – the earth had not been depopulated. The Bible is always exact and always consistent.

Life would continue normally for Abraham and his offspring: Just as all people born under Adam and Noah were made children of God without evangelization, so would all of Abraham's children be Christians. But when all the other people on the planet gave birth their children would be unsaved, they would be unregenerate, they would not be God's people. Yes, all of Abraham's contemporaries continued to have everlasting life because once they were born of God they were immortal. In other words, the people who were cast out were not dogs; they were all God's Christian children – just like Lucifer and his cast-out brothers. And while *most* of these contemporaries of Abraham's were carnal Christian descendants of Noah who were disowned by God and went to hell when they died, not *all* of these Gentiles were bad Christians. For example, Lot was a Gentile, not a Hebrew, because he was only Abraham's *nephew* (**Ge 14:12**), but he was a "righteous" and "godly" Christian (**2 Pe 2:8,9**) – unlike the rest of Noah's Christian descendants living in Sodom. But because Lot and the people of Sodom and the people of the rest of the world were now Gentiles, when they birthed children God did not give those children the new birth; God now did that only to children of Abraham. Therefore when the first generation of Gentiles died off completely, their offspring – future generations of Gentiles – were all unsaved.

In **Ph 3:2** Paul tells us to beware of *dogs* (the unsaved, covered in chapters D7 and D8), *evil workers* (could be anyone, dog or saint, whose walk is unscriptural), and the *concision*. Our English dictionaries say concision means to cut something off or to mutilate, and Paul here uses it as a derisive reference to circumcised Christians and Jews who still believe in keeping the law, as evidenced by **vv. 4-9,18,19**. (Laws and works of the law are covered in chapters D19 and D20.)

If we use Sodom and Gomorrah as types of the *majority* (!) of Noah's descendants who rebelled against God (**Is 1:2,4**) and were cast out, then the "very small remnant" (**Is 1:9**) God mercifully kept, and the small group of Jews – called the "holy seed" – that would return to Jerusalem from Babylon (**Is 6:1-13; Ezr 9:1,2**) can represent Abraham's descendants. The Bible also uses Sodom, Gomorrah, potter's vessels, and pruned fruit trees (**Ro 9:6-8,21-29; 11:1-5,15-20**) to warn us that we, too, can be cast away by God if we don't remain faithful (**Ro 11:21,22; 1 Co 9:27; 1 Ch 28:9; Lk 9:23-25; 2 Ki 17:20; He 6:4-8; 2 Pe 2:4-7**). Yes, the branches our Husbandman Heavenly Father prunes and "taketh away" and "casts them into the fire" are *in Christ the True Vine* ("in me") according to **Jn 15:1,2,6**.

Without God's guidance, *and without even the capability of spiritual discernment* (**1 Co 2:10,13,14**), the Christian contemporaries of Abraham and all of their unsaved children quickly broke up into different doctrinal camps or denominations, which eventually became **the different religions of the world**. None of them believed Abraham's egotistical, elitist tale about God casting them off, dividing the human race, and being only "**the God of Abraham**" (page D8-1), so they all continued to worship God in their own languages to the best of their carnal abilities. They all knew basic truths about God and history so they all knew about the coming Son of God Who would be a human/lamb/animal blood sacrifice for sins, they knew about the Flood, they knew about heaven, the spirit realm, hell, etc. But over the centuries they all made little changes to the truth as they added embellishments and subtracted details according to that which was right in their own eyes. All of that was perfectly fine with God because they were exactly where they'd always wanted to be – *on their own!* When He divided the human race and left them to their own devices He was just doing what their works always showed they wanted.

When the Egyptians started worshipping the sun god, going to church on Sun day, and practicing homosexuality, it didn't bother God one bit because they weren't His people, they weren't under His authority, and they could do whatever they wanted. When pagans adopted the egg, the fish, and other things to symbolize fertility/the *Old Commission*, and began worshipping the goddess of fertility, Freya, by eating fish on Fry day; and when the Philistines – whose word for fish was *dag* – began worshipping Dagon the fish god; and when Ishtar and her Ishtar egg were worshipped on Ishtar Sun day; and when Shingmoo, Diana, Isis and Horus, etc., were worshipped; and even when nations that bordered Israel practiced human sacrifice, ate pork, committed adultery, picked up sticks on Saturday, created gods of graven images and bowed down themselves to them and served them, God did not care, did not tell His people to care, did not tell His people to go into other nations to stop them from their pagan ways, and never scolded His people for failing to straighten out pagan religions. But God absolutely prohibited any of those pagan practices within His nation of Israel.

Why doesn't God require pagan nations to have Scriptural governments, and why doesn't He require pagans to live by the Bible? What does He know that modern Christianity doesn't? He knows what carnality is. Before we are born of God all we have is the "first, natural, corrupt, weak, flesh and blood, earthy, mortal" body (**1 Co 15:42-55**), also called the "old man" that we get at our first birth from our human parents (**Jn 3:3-6**). The "new man" that we get from our second birth, our

regeneration, is a “spiritual body”, an “incorrupt, immortal, heavenly, second” body (1 Co 15:42-55). The spiritual new man is a *prerequisite* to “receiving” or “discerning” the things of God (1 Co 2:10-14), which is why God says those who have not been born again, and therefore do not have the spiritual new man, are “*not subject*” to His law (Ro 8:7). *Subject* means “under the authority, dominion, or rule of some governing power.” In fact, that verse ends by saying the carnal mind doesn’t *choose* not to be subject to God, it “*neither indeed can be*” because the carnal mind *by its very nature* is “enmity against God.” The unregenerate do not even have the *capability* to please God no matter what they do (Ro 8:8) because not being under His authority, not *belonging to Him* as His purchased *property* (Ro 8:9b; 1 Co 6:19b,20), they have no chain of command that leads to Him (1 Co 11:1,3-5). And when we put Ro 8:8 together with He 11:6 we find the unregenerate cannot even produce Biblical faith until *after* they’ve been born again. That’s why God doesn’t require pagans to glorify Him – *they can’t*. (That’s why the words “only” and “therefore” are in Am 3:2: only God’s children are punished for disobedience.) All of these verses devastate many evangelical traditions so they are despised and ignored by modern apostates.

Christians, on the other hand, have been born twice and have two bodies. The war rages between these two bodies (Ro 7:14-25). Unlike the unsaved, we have a choice. We can choose to walk after the flesh or we can choose to walk after the Spirit (Ro 8:1). The Bible tells us Christians to make the choice (Josh 24:15), and that the choice is indicated by our service (Ro 6:16). Only Christians, not the unsaved, have this choice to make. In fact, Ro 8:4,12,13 tells “us” “brethren” that “if” we walk after the carnal flesh we’ll die, but “if” we deny our old man by following the Spirit of God we’ll live.

Some Christians incorrectly think only New Testament saints are born again – that Old Testament saints weren’t. I frequently refer to Old Testament saints as Christians because I know the Scriptures. But I am sometimes interrupted by the condescending laughter of Christians who think the Old Testament saints could not have been followers of the Christ Who hadn’t been born yet – even though they profess to believe Christ is the one true God of the Old and New Testaments. And they think Christ was wrong to rebuke Old Testament saints for not understanding the new birth (Jn 3:10). So I take the time to cover some basic Scriptures (covered on pages D8-2,3). After reviewing the Scriptures here is how they do *not* react: “Wow, the Scriptures couldn’t be much plainer than that! I simply missed it. Thank you for correcting me and for teaching me something in the Bible. I scoffed at you because I thought you were making an honest mistake, but you were right and I was wrong. And I was being rude and offensive when confronted with God’s truth. Please forgive me and please continue.” No, that is not the way they react because that requires maturity – the kind of maturity that would usually have already caused them to know more Bible than they do. Usually they go into a stony silence or into a rapid, mindless, shallow, wandering babble in which they try to save face by pretending they already knew that but were looking at it from some different angle, thereby revealing themselves to be proud, stubborn, immature, ill mannered, uncharitable, and *unfit to rule* because they are carnal; self is still the dominant influence and interest in their lives rather than the Scriptures.

If I get a mature reaction I’ll go on to point out that if they had been correct about the new birth it would mean OT saints like Abraham, Moses, and David did not have the “incorrupt, immortal, heavenly, second, spiritual body” that made them children of God. It would mean they were not subject to the law of God and indeed could not be. It would mean they could not “receive” or “discern” the things of God, and it would mean they could neither have Biblical faith nor please and glorify God – no matter what they did. But that kind of Scriptural reasoning is difficult for many modern Christians to follow because it requires understanding in so many areas including authority, carnality, and why the new birth is absolutely necessary.

God made a couple of **promises** to Abraham. In Ge 17:7 He said He would always (“everlasting”) be his God. And then Abraham died. Therefore we know – when we compare this with Mt 22:32 – there is a spirit realm where Abraham lives now, and there is a resurrection. God also promised Abraham and his seed real estate “for an everlasting possession” (Ge 17:8). But Abraham died before he got any real estate, and the land of Canaan is not going to last forever because it is going to be destroyed along with the rest of the earth. Therefore the “Holy Land” on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea never has been anything but a type of real estate on the new earth in 2 Pe 3:13 and Re 21:1. This earth is not our home; it is just a temporary abode.

Therefore, when the Bible mentions “the promise” it is referring to “the promised land.” But because the promised land is going to be an *everlasting* possession, “the promise” includes associated and necessary promises such as everlasting life, resurrection, an everlasting relationship with God, the true seed – Christ, etc. That is why “the promise” in the Bible is sometimes called “the promises.” For a quick Bible study showing “the promise” God made to His people is an inheritance of everlasting real estate, review **THE PROMISE: He 11:8-10,13-16,39; Ge 12:1,2,7; 13:14-17; 15:18; 17:7-13; 28:13-15; Nu 14:7-16,24,29,30,34,40,42; Dt 30:20; Ac 1:3-8; 26:6,7; Ro 4:11-16; Ep 6:1-3; 2 Ti 1:1,9; Ti 1:2; He 9:15; Ja 2:5; 2 Pe 3:8-14; 1 Jn 2:25.**

LESSONS ON AUTHORITY

The Bible says God’s people in the wilderness continually provoked Him by being stiffnecked and rebellious (Dt 9:6,7). The Lord recorded their rebellion in His Book to benefit us, so let’s look at some examples of authority and rebellion. And when you read these examples in the Bible I want you to seriously consider what they reveal about the type of ruler God is. By today’s standards He is too demanding, too unforgiving, too irritable, too tyrannical, and too violent. If you don’t get to know and accept the real Him now, you will likely reject Him at the Second Coming just like most of His people did at the First Coming.

TABERAH: At Taberah (Nu 11:1-3) God’s people complained. That’s right, their sin was *complaining*. Because the Lord is our Master Who guides and provides for us in ways that are both good for us and good for His victory in the war, complaining about our lot in life is a product of ignorance, selfishness, disrespect for God, and a complete disregard for the Book of Job. In fact, it is rebellion against God’s will and Generalship. Therefore, because the principles behind complaining showed God that His people did not have the kind of Christian character He demands of His servants, God killed all the whiners. Dt 8:2,3 shows that God tests (or “proves”) His people in order to separate the dedicated keepers from the carnal culls. The keepers keep the word of God no matter what. The culls complain because *they want* something different from what God has ordained and provided.

Nu 11:33,34 and Ps 106:14,15 show that God has a way of dealing with the selfish, ignorant requests in our prayers: He satisfies our carnal lusts and then either kills us or sends leanness unto our souls. What was the great sin of God’s saints this time (Nu 11:5) – wanting a varied diet? No, God couldn’t care less what we eat. But He is extremely interested in

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submissive obedience to authority. He punished them because they made themselves equal to their Authority by judging His leadership, providence, and will, and by wanting *Him to submit* to their will, to do what *they* wanted. They talked the talk, but in practice they demonstrated that the concepts of meekness, humility, submission, and obedience were not everyday parts of who they were. They were rebelling against His authority and revealing themselves to be arrogant, insolent, impertinent, impudent, imprudent, and presumptuous. And they were so focused on themselves rather than on God they didn't even realize the horrible effrontery of their actions. And, because God teaches us that rebellion is witchcraft (**1 Sa 15:23**), they were, in fact, being Satanic. (Parents today, ignorant about Biblical topics like authority, covetousness, and clamoring, allow their children at meals to commit "Numbers 11 sins" by complaining and refusing certain foods because they "don't like it".)

A factor that contributed to the above list of sins was these saints didn't have enough fear of God. I'm talking about the quake in your boots/piss in your pants kind of fear (**Ac 5:1-11**). God applied the harsh rod of correction in order to teach the church to fear His wrath if we ever let ourselves forget to be properly respectful of Him. These wilderness saints should have been looking for ways to glorify Him, to make it look like they were thankful, loyal, strong followers of His no matter what. When they used the brains God gave them to form their own opinions without referring and submitting to the will of God they were being carnal. And while the above explanation of the saints' actions is helpful in demonstrating what carnality is, it still falls far short of showing why the Bible says the carnal mind is enmity/violent hatred against the authority of God. No, I said that wrong in my zeal to keep submissive obedience to authority in the picture: The carnal mind is not enmity against the *authority* of God; it's more personal than that: it's enmity against God Himself. Let me make the distinction clear. Authority is a big deal because **the issue in the Bible is authority**. The issue in the Bible is not *God*, and the issue in the Bible is not the *existence of God*. Those are not issues; those are merely facts that are known by all of God's children (**Ja 2:19**). The issue is authority because God is no longer the only king. There is another king, Satan, whose objective is to overthrow the type of orderly, dictatorial, hierarchical authority God established in His household. Therefore authority – how you view authority and react to it – will demonstrate which king and which kingdom you prefer. True love is choosing God's way. Violent enmity against God is choosing equality. When the war is over and King Satan is gone, the issue will no longer be authority because there will be but one King again.

WHEN AUTHORITY SPEAKS: In **Ex 4:16** God made Aaron the spokesman for Moses and He made Moses Aaron's authority "instead of God." That means when Aaron said, "Thus saith Moses..." God's people were supposed to treat it as if he had said, "Thus saith the Lord..." And that is the way God has established all authority: Wives are to submit themselves to their own husbands as if they are God (**Ep 5:22-24**); children are to obey their parents as authorities ordained by God (**Ep 6:1**); servants are to obey their masters with an honest, wholehearted effort to please them, not because they through flattery hope for favor, but out of love for God because it is God's will that they do so (**Ep 6:5-7**). We are to submit ourselves to earthly laws, kings, and governors for two reasons: First, for God's sake (for the benefit of His cause), and second, simply because it is God's will (**1 Pe 2:13-15**).

The reason I defined "for God's sake" is too many Christians don't know what it really means and how much is at stake. For example, if you were a Christian soldier told to go to Bethlehem and slaughter every child two years old and under, you should put aside any thoughts you might have as to the rightness of the butchery and concentrate on the fact that there is only one right thing for you to do – obey God and carry out the will of God by obeying Christian King Herod. In fact, you should do such a good and thorough job butchering babies that God would see your complete, wholehearted dedication to duty and be pleased. And if the job you did was thorough enough that our all-knowing Lord knew you'd not pulled any punches or tried to hide some babies, it would be no surprise that you'd be the kind of loyal, dedicated, trustworthy, and resourceful servant who'd catch the appreciative eye of your earthly boss. That's how Joseph in Egypt and Daniel in Babylon served their pagan masters; but, of course, *they* were first/already that kind of servant to the Lord and therefore knew the Bible and understood authority. Today most Christians haven't even *read* the Bible because their carnal minds have caused them to rise up to a position of equality with (or superiority to) God so that they think their ignorant opinion about something is the same as God's opinion (or at least should be)! The Bible teaches us to have faith in the all-knowing foresight of God: No matter how bad we think it might be to go to Bethlehem and kill the Messiah along with a bunch of other babies, we are doing something God knew about, planned for, and prophesied far in advance (**Mt 2:17,18**). In other words, we *help God* by resisting the Natural temptation to sin by letting our carnal minds convince us not to slaughter the babies. Any Christian who'd march in front of King Herod's office with picket signs saying, "Save the babies!" and "Killing innocent babies is murder!" would be carnally violating every Biblical principle we've discussed so far. To verify that, look up **clamor** in your English dictionary and in **Ep 4:31**. The issue is not right and wrong; the issue is authority. If you are the authority with the prerogative to issue orders, don't tell anyone to murder babies. But if you're a Christian captain under Herod the only right thing you can do is obey him fully. If you call in sick that day you are sinning. And if you see one of your Christian corporals in Bethlehem trying to shirk his duty, you grab him by the front of his uniform blouse and tell him you'll have him executed for dereliction of duty if he doesn't wholeheartedly get with the program. All of this is why God orders us to obey, honor, and serve our authorities who are "froward" as well as those who are "good" (**1 Pe 2:18**). The dictionary says froward means perverse, determined to do what is wrong, turned away from what is right, stubbornly wicked. That is supported by **Pv 2:12-15** which defines froward as evil, not upright, the ways of darkness, wicked, crooked. For those of you who do not know why I am going to English dictionaries to define English words whose meanings may not be fully understood by readers, and who wonder why I use synonyms from the Bible to clarify word meanings rather than waste your time rummaging through Hebrew and Greek dictionaries, or if you are having a hard time following along with my verse references because your Bible version is often worded differently, it would probably be a good idea for you to skip ahead and read chapter D22, *The King James Bible* before going any further. We'll wait for you here. (If it helps, a free download of the KJV is available at TheSwordbearer.org.)

PAGAN RULERS: We are commanded to be subject to earthly authorities and are told there is no authority that wasn't ordained by God (**Ro 13:1**). We've already seen that wicked King Herod was used by God to fulfill Bible prophecy about the babies in Bethlehem. And we've covered the fact that God has definite reasons for allowing King Satan to rule over the physical Kingdom of Heaven. But both Herod and Satan are children of God with the (rejected) spiritual ability to *discern*, so let's look at proof that God also gave authority to pagan rulers.

Pagan King Nebuchadnezzar in **Da 2:37** is a type of the Devil. **Da 2:21; 5:18,21** show that even pagan kings serve at the pleasure of God. In fact, the Bible says pagan Nebuchadnezzar was God's servant (**Je 43:10; 25:9; 27:6**). God also used Persia's King Cyrus (**Ezr 1:1,2**). And God wanted Pharaoh to be king of Egypt so He could use him (**Ro 9:17**). These

examples help us understand why David was so intent on not harming evil King Saul, and why Michael the archangel was so careful not to despise King Satan's dominion by bad-mouthing his authority (**Jude 8,9**). They understood that *all* authorities are of God, and resisting authority would not only be resisting the will of God but would also bring damnation upon themselves (**Ro 13:2**) because rebellion against any authority – parental, governmental, institutional, etc. – is Satanic witchcraft. It is the religious doctrine of devils, and they will win the war if they can get Christians to think it is good.

AARON AND MIRIAM: In **Nu 12:1,2** Aaron and Miriam, who had never resisted Moses before, decided they had a moral reason to challenge his authority and leadership. Moses' testimony was being tarnished, they decided, by his sudden interest in interracial sex with a very young black woman from a pagan background. They decided it would be better for the church if they assumed a larger leadership role. God asked Aaron and Miriam why they were not *afraid* to question Moses' authority (**v.8**), became angry (**v.9**), and gave Miriam the disease of leprosy, which interestingly enough made her the "whitest" woman around by far (**v.10**). Aaron quickly became very respectful of Moses' authority (**v.11**) and asked that the curse be lifted. God responded (**v.14**) by saying, "If her human father had but spit in her face to demonstrate his displeasure with her, everybody – out of respect for *his* authority – would ostracize her for seven days. I will be granted the same respect." From this, Aaron and Miriam learned not to question authority – whether they thought the authority was glorifying God or not.

THE GRAPES OF WRATH: In spite of the dramatic and seemingly harsh lessons God's people had witnessed, the equality from the forbidden fruit that Adam ate and we all inherited is hard to overcome – especially when it makes us *know* we are right. So when God's people in **Nu 13** thought they had an impossible military operation to perform they decided. That's right – *they* decided! Had they learned yet that the authority is the one and only head on the body and it alone does the thinking and deciding? No, so they decided. And that's all we need to know; we don't have to go any further because we understand their sin was committed right when they democratically decided: They rose up and rebelled, and became equal to and independent of the authority they honestly and sincerely believed was unwisely leading them to their deaths. (Of course, whether or not they were being unwisely led to their deaths is irrelevant; they were to obey for better or for worse – even unto death.) Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life (**Jb 2:4,5**), even if it means becoming a witch by rebelling against authority.

Satan agreed to fight God because he understands how powerful equality is and he knows most people will do anything to save their physical lives. Satan believes he will win the war. I believe the Bible will prove to be correct: Even though *the majority* of Christians will accept the democratic leaven of the forbidden fruit, a small minority of God's people will die to self daily by abstaining from human Reason and by sticking with the mind of Christ/discernment, and will endure to the end and gain the victory.

As an aside: There is a dumb but popular pagan song that says, "...when the angels got together and *decided* to create a dream come true." The democratic usurpation of two prerogatives of God's shows us the song is about *devils*. That type of evil equality should produce a universal feeling of revulsion in the church. The sad reality, however, is most Christians blindly walk through life completely unaware of the principles behind the things that go on around them. That large group of carnal Christians will – like the devils – be thrown into the lake of fire.

Anyway, when God's people in the wilderness turned their yellow backs to the grapes of Eshcol, the Promised Land, and their duty to God to submit to Moses' leadership, they then took the next logical step according to the carnal mind: They came up with a form of government more to their liking – one that would do what *they* thought was right. This form of government gave the power to the people and therefore made the "head" of the government a servant of the people. Obviously I'm talking about the form of government that centuries later would be called democracy. This government was formed from the majority consensus of God's people (**Nu 14:1,2**) and was the Natural product of the carnal mind doing what it thought was best. They knew in the course of human events this form of government was right because its goodness was so readily apparent, so *self-evident* to all Reasonable men. Therefore these well-intentioned Christians whose motivation was the safety of the women and children (**v.3**) decided to choose a new leader whose mandate would be to carry out the will of the people (**v.4**). The Biblical Christians were such a small minority all they could do was rend their clothes, fall on their faces before the majority, and beg them to view the situation from God's perspective (**vv.5-9**). The majority of Christians listened to these Bible arguments, realized these fanatics were so narrow-minded they'd never come out into the "real world" and listen to Reason, and reluctantly and prayerfully concluded that – for the good of the church – Moses, Aaron, Joshua, and Caleb should be executed on the spot (**v.10**) in order to save all their lives. At that point the entire congregation saw the glory of God appear in the tabernacle (**v.10**). Suddenly everybody fearfully remembered **Nu 12:8** and had to go to the bathroom, but Moses got to his feet and went over to see what the Lord wanted.

This was a big moment. Would the Lord tell Moses democracy was a Godly form of government and to submit to the will of the majority of Christians? No, He wouldn't (to the ideological disgust of the modern church). One of the doctrinal failings of New Testament Christianity is to miss the critical importance of this episode and therefore to not learn from it. I'm not just referring to the obvious and undeniable attempt by Christians to institute a democratic form of government; I'm also referring to how God responded to this attempt to have a Christian democracy. (And because modern Christians have missed the significance of this dramatic ideological showdown between dictatorship and democracy, they also don't see it repeated throughout the Old and New Testaments.)

God was extremely angry that His people, in spite of all His earlier lessons, were again practicing witchcraft/rebellion (**Ne 9:17**) by doing what they honestly and sincerely believed was the right thing to do. In the past, though, His people had been guilty of individual acts of democratic rebellion when they challenged authority. But this time they were trying to turn the structure of government itself upside down. They wanted to take "Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory" and give the power to the people! They were trying to institute a demon-cratic form of government that would not only be the ideological opposite of and make a mockery of Godly forms of authoritarian government, but would also actually cause people to believe authoritarian governments were evil, and would, over successive generations, poison fundamental values, outlooks, ways of thinking, and the way the Bible is read. God decided to do something He'd only done twice before – and would only do once more: He decided to get rid of the old patriarch and start with a new one.

He had replaced Adam with Noah, He had replaced Noah with Abraham, and now He wanted to replace Abraham and start all over with a third patriarch, Moses, by *disinheriting* His lousy Christians (**Nu 14:11,12**). That would mean only the offspring of Moses would be God's people, and he would be called "Father Moses." And it would mean all of these lousy children of Abraham – who were Christians – would become Gentiles and go to hell when they died. And when they had children those

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children would not be given the spirit birth by God; they would just be religious Gentiles whose Christian heritage and traditions would be corrupted over the centuries by well-intentioned doctrinal interpretations the carnal mind thought best in order to meet societal changes and problems, and by dealing with the resulting moral and ethical dilemmas.

But Moses pleased God by standing in the gap for the lousy church and showing the Lord how much he'd obediently learned from God about Christianity: "Lord, as You know, Sir, forgiveness and mercy are a necessary part of Christianity if the war is to be won. Therefore forgive their trespasses as I have forgiven them" (Nu 14:17-19).

Then Moses went back to the fearfully waiting congregation and told them what happened. He told them God would kill the yellow Christians who reconned the Promised Land and came back with an evil report (vv.36,37). In addition, God would breach His promise for forty years (v.34) until all the adults died in the wilderness. And because they had said God's plan would kill their children, the Lord would prove them wrong by allowing their children to enjoy the very Promised Land their stupid parents despised (v.31).

The congregation then decided. That's right. They decided they didn't want to die in the wilderness and would atone for their sin by conducting a military assault on the Promised Land (v.40). Moses and the handful of good Christians and the Lord stayed in the camp while the pagans kicked carnal Christian ass (vv.44,45).

KORAH AND AARON'S ROD: God's special people resigned themselves to living in the wilderness the next forty years. They had been humbled by God and had good intentions about spending more time in the Bible, learning to discern, and accepting the will of God. That's what we'd all do under similar circumstances. But the carnal Christian, once set in his ways, has a hard time being able to filter all the daily events of life through the Bible in order to see what God wants him to do. And even if he has it pointed out to him – chapter and verse – by a good Christian, he cannot believe the "little Sunday-school lesson" in the Bible should actually govern his actions in this particular situation because mortal life and its events seem more real, more pressing, and more important to his leavened brain than the stuff in the Bible.

The Bible doesn't give us a hint as to what Moses and Aaron were up to this time but you and I already know it doesn't matter. The Christians in the wilderness, though, were living the event and it seemed like such a big and important matter to them. Many Christians were indignant and outraged at what Moses and Aaron were doing, so some of the prominent, well-respected men known for their Bible knowledge, pious Christian walks, and fine Christian families, held discussions and prayer meetings. Korah was accepted as the leader of this democratic Christian reform movement, and he and two hundred and fifty dedicated Christian leaders agreed to approach Moses and Aaron to represent the fervent wishes of the people that some changes be made (Nu 16:1,2). In v.3 we see what the foundation of this rebellion was – equality. These carnal Christians were infected with equality; they were at least as good and qualified as Moses and Aaron. And there may very well have been men among them who knew more Bible, had more intelligence and education, had better leadership qualities, and lived less sinful lives than Moses and Aaron. (Just like many Christians were not as sinful as King David.) And those irrelevant facts caused God's people to ignore the biggest doctrinal issue in the Bible – authority. Moses and Aaron were the authorities, and God says authorities are *not* to be reluctantly, sullenly, half-heartedly, marginally, and insincerely obeyed. God also says we are not just to please our authorities with our obedient service; we are to please God with the 100% dedicated, enthusiastic, obedient service with which we please our earthly masters. *God* is the Master we are trying to please whenever we obediently submit to earthly rule.

Moses was horrified at this latest rebellion because he thought God had done a good job teaching how He wants us to live. But he was faced with over two hundred and fifty of the most respected Christians in the whole world and they were filled with righteous indignation, so he fell on his face again and said, "We'll see what the Lord says about this." That is not what carnal Christians want to hear; they inwardly groan when a Christian answers them by opening the Bible and saying, "Let's see what the Lord says about this." What they want is a debate guided by carnal Reason; they want to proffer and defend their opinions against someone else's opinions. They want to rise up and be equal.

It is important to stress that these men honestly had no idea they were sinning. The carnal mind does not make you wake up one day and say, "I want to do evil." That is not what happened to Lucifer and that is not the way Satan is today. The carnal mind is not evil because of *what* it thinks. The fruit of the carnal mind is not bad or evil when viewed on its own. It is only bad and evil when it is viewed from the broad perspective of ideology, concepts, and principles. Only then can we understand that ***carnality is made bad by the issue of authority***. But not just *any* authority; carnality is only bad when viewed from the perspective of *God's* authority. It isn't *what* the carnal mind thinks; it's the fact that it is thinking independently from God. It is a usurpation of God's authority as the one and only God, the one and only Head. For that reason I am not writing a Christian novel whose success depends on your *liking* it. I am writing a *Bible study* so when you come across something you don't like or something that differs from modern traditional Christian doctrine you'll have the opportunity to handle the situation like Moses: "Let's see what the Lord says about this." If that is your reaction you are demonstrating two qualities necessary for the development of discernment – *humility* before the authority of God and His word, and *discipline*, which is needed to overcome the Natural inclinations of the old man. For example, I don't despise democracy (and the principles upon which it is based) because *I* think it is evil and abhorrent; I despise it only because I have chosen sides in this war. My values, beliefs, doctrines, and life are not based on what I think, want, or like; and I do not concern myself with whether something is right or wrong; I simply find out what the Lord says and accept it as what "my side" believes in and fights for. There are two opposing kings, two opposing kingdoms, two opposing armies, and two opposing ideologies in this war. I have chosen the Lord's side. That means I have chosen the side of the Dictator Who wants to do the thinking and Who wants to decide what to do and Who wants to decree what is right and what is wrong. The side I've chosen requires me to suppress myself daily. If I don't like that I can always go over to the other side where Satan's religion encourages me to develop my Reason rather than stifle it, to express myself daily. The Lord's side requires me to lose my identity; the Devil's side allows me to keep my identity.

The shame is that many Christians would like to be on the Lord's side but modern "Christian" doctrine is misleading them into serving Satan even while they think they are serving Christ.

It was just this sort of blindness that afflicted Korah when he moved up from being a member of the body to being another head. Nu 16:2 says he "rose up" against authority and made a nice little egalitarian speech in Nu 16:3. (Notice the rising and the equality in **Is 14:13,14; Ezek 28:2,5**.) These men certainly did not think they were opposing God Himself by resisting Moses, therefore when Moses told them they were not only taking too much upon themselves (Nu 16:7), but were actually going against God (v.11), they thought he was wrong. Imagine their surprise when God had the earth swallow Korah,

Dathan, and Abiram – and their families (vv.30-33). The Christians who had prayed with and supported Korah turned and ran (v.34). And then fire from God caught and consumed the fleeing, screaming two hundred and fifty respected Christians who represented the congregation (v.35). The next day the congregation, having thought about the “rightness” of their cause overnight, “murmured” against their authorities (v.41) and were not happy when the Lord showed up again (v.42) because He was turning out to be a big disappointment Who always sided with the bosses – whether the bosses were right or not. They simply couldn’t understand it because, like most Christians in every era, they were carnal. God decided to shut their opinionated mouths with a deadly plague that killed 14,700 of His special people (v.49). And then God made Aaron’s rod blossom and told Moses to keep it as a reminder (Nu 17:10) of Ro 13:1,2. Christianity today has failed to understand that Ro 13:1,2 is better and more helpful than Aaron’s rod because the rod was but a silent token whose meaning – as we shall see – was quickly forgotten.

WHEN GOOD IDEAS ARE BAD: I’ve been making such a big deal about how bad democracy is and how good monarchy is that some people may miss the point about *why* democracy is bad and *why* monarchy is good. Thankfully, the Lord has given us a good example in His Book.

Our text is **1 Sa 8**. The Christians went to their leader and high priest, Samuel, and pointed out that his sons were not living by the Bible. They said they wanted Samuel – a godly saint – to end his sons’ authority by instituting a monarchy and installing a king whose focus would be the Bible (vv.1-5). Samuel was not pleased (v.6), and the Lord told him His saints wanted a king because they were rejecting Him personally and were rejecting His authority over them (v.7). We have two questions that need to be answered: First, why was it wrong to want a monarchy, and second, why did God tell Samuel to go ahead and do what was bad, to hearken to the people?

But before I get to those, let’s review the traditional teaching about this incident. Modernists zero in on “like all the nations” in v.5 to teach that these wicked saints were knowingly and deliberately trying to get away from a Bible-oriented ruler like Samuel by having a secular ruler like all the pagan countries and like the United States government today. Many Christians who are actively trying to make the U.S. government Biblical instead of secular use this as an example of how we, too, are rejecting God if we are not actively opposing ungodly government. They are incorrect. And there are no instances in the Bible of any of God’s wicked people (such as Lucifer, Judas, Saul, and Korah) waking up and saying, “I’m sick of not sinning so I’m going to start being evil by forming an ungodly government.”

Earlier I said carnal ideas themselves are not necessarily wrong, but that all carnal ideas – no matter what they are – are already wrong *by definition* because they did not originate in the mind of God, were not issued as instructions, and therefore could not be *submitively obeyed* and carried out by His saints. In this example the saints were getting ahead of God. They were saying, “God’s idea to rule through high priests like Samuel was good until his sons came along. Therefore *we* need to come up with a solution to the probability that we’re going to have ungodly rulers when Samuel dies. We are saints and we discern that God likes monarchy. So let’s have a godly monarch.” They were carnal not because their idea was bad, but because *they* came up with it. *They decided!* They usurped God’s prerogative. That’s not discernment, it’s rebellion – it is rejecting the person and authority of God.

The reasons God told Samuel to give them what they wanted are several. Among them is His wanting a king as a type of Him. He did not say, as modernist rebels suggest, “Hey, Samuel, they want an ungodly or secular government like all the pagan nations. Go ahead and let them have it.” God also made sure they understood the prerogatives of the king (**1 Sa 8:9-17**) included some of the very things their Christian forefathers were angry with Moses for doing in the wilderness (**Nu 16:15**). And God wanted all Christians to know taxation without representation by a king is Biblical (1 Sa 8:15,17). It should be noted when God had the king levy a ten percent tax on everything they had – not just ten percent of their money – it was in addition to the ten percent they already gave to the priesthood. Another reason God told Samuel to do what they wanted was they didn’t want a *democratic* form of government like their ancestors in the wilderness wanted.

JETHRO: The incident we’ve just looked at and the one we’ll now examine seem to indicate God will put up with many things as long as governmental structure remains authoritarian. Our text is **Ex 18**. Moses’ father-in-law, Jethro, was a pagan priest (v.1). Moses and the other Christians can be forgiven for participating in a pagan ceremony to God (v.12) because the Law had not yet been delivered on Sinai. But it was God who made Moses judge over Israel (vv.13-16), therefore our jealous loyalty to the Lord makes us wonder who Jethro thought he was to question the way God obviously allowed things to be (vv.17,18). Jethro then says, “Let me tell you how things should be done...” (v.22). He concludes by saying something good, “Only do this stuff if God tells you to” (v.23). Well, our jealousy for God, and the earlier lessons we learned about how even good ideas are bad/carnal if they don’t come from God, make us carefully watch Moses to ensure he goes to the Lord in prayer with something like: “Lord, thank you for the way you do things and how you’ve led and helped us. I’ve been thinking about the changes Jethro proposed to the way I govern. His proposal is carnal, Lord, because it came from an unregenerate person. If I implement his changes without consulting you I’d also be acting sinfully/carnally. However, if you approve of the changes and give me the go ahead, I’ll be glorifying you as my Authority by implementing them. Therefore, I’ll wait, Sir, to see if I hear from you.” I hope that’s what happened, but v.24 makes me fear that Moses carnally latched onto a good idea without consulting the Lord. The fact that God later told Moses the same thing (**Dt 1:6,9-18; Nu 11:10-17**) is not germane to my point. You and I are supposed to learn from these examples that we should never do, think, or say anything without consulting the Lord via His written word. Discernment must become part of who we are if we ever hope to be faithful and pleasing servants of God.

SAUL BECOMES DEMOCRATIC – AND IS REJECTED BY GOD: The Bible teaches us something about how God uses government. For example, whenever God’s people are good and faithful He blesses/rewards them with good rulers (**1 Sa 12:14**). But if they are lousy Christians God punishes them with lousy governors (**1 Sa 12:15; Dt 28; Is 3:1-12**) and with other bad things that we are supposed to recognize and accept as signs from God that He is not happy with us. And if we admit we are lousy Christians, confess our sins and the sins of our forefathers, and repent, God will forgive us and heal our land. Christians today who run around blaming everything on drunkards, homos, and other unsaved people have forgotten this important Biblical lesson from God. The Lord doesn’t care what the queers are doing; He cares about the conduct of His special people.

As the authority over the people the king was answerable only to God. King Saul was reminded that he was expected to obey the voice of God (**1 Sa 15:1**). Then God ordered Saul to kill all the non-special life forms in the land of Amalek including babies, women, men, oxen, sheep, camels, and asses (v.3). Saul was ordered to show no mercy by sparing any of them. However

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stupid it may seem to us students of the Bible, Saul succumbed to the carnal mind's Natural affinity for democracy, so instead of fearing God and obeying His voice he feared and obeyed the voice of the people (**v.24**)! According to our seventh-grade civics classes that is the classic definition of democracy – whether it is formalized or not.

Saul blatantly rejected two of God's commandments: First, he spared the best of the animals. Second, he used those animals to create the world's first Thanksgiving holiday in order to honor and thank God for the great victory over the Amalekites (**v.15**). Sparing the animals was an obvious sin. And by now you should see that creating religious ceremonies, golden calves, and feasts such as Thanksgiving are carnal no matter how many Christians agree they are good ideas – God must be *followed*. The carnal mind will tempt Christians to get ahead of God by doing things without His authorization because they expect Him to say, "Hmm! That's a good idea you came up with! I wish I'd thought of it."

If you compare Saul's sins with those committed by King David, Saul was a Boy Scout. Saul didn't intend to do evil, and when cornered by Samuel he confessed his sin (**v.24**), asked for forgiveness, and wanted to turn again in repentance to worship the Lord (**v.25**). Shockingly, Samuel told this Boy Scout it was too late because, in spite of Saul's relatively clean record up to this point, God had already rejected him for this transgression (**vv.26,28**)! (Most of the bad things Saul did happened *after* God rejected him.) God said the kingdom would go to David, who was called "better" (**v.28**) than Saul even though the Lord knew how sinful David would be. If David were President of the U.S., Christians would anger God by impeaching him for his serious transgressions.

When we compare the transgressions of Adam and of Saul we can't help but notice the principle of democracy in each, and we can't help but notice the similarity in the way they are worded so we wouldn't miss it (**Ge 3:17**; **1 Sa 15:24**). The war will be lost unless at least a remnant of the church rejects the carnal principles of democracy by remaining obediently submissive through humble discernment.

KING DAVID'S CARNAL TEMPLE: We are now going to exercise our maturity just like we did when we looked at Moses' implementing Jethro's advice. We're going to examine something King David did and see why it was bad/carnal even though the Bible doesn't come right out and say it was bad. I want you to see that God didn't have to come right out and condemn this "good idea" of David's because He has already taught us enough Bible for us to be able to discern David's sin. In that way the Lord both avoids making the Bible unnecessarily long and He gives us a chance to exercise our faith by discerning and maturing into the kind of princes who can rule and reign under Him forever.

King David was the apple of God's eye. He loved the Lord and was greatly blessed by Him. All of this was obvious to those around him. Nathan the prophet was with David one day when both of them erred by yielding to their carnal minds/opinions: The temple at that time was a tent, and David lived in a nice house (**2 Sa 7:2**). So David thought (that's right, David thought!) it would be a good idea (independent ideas – good or bad – are carnal) to overrule God's detailed instructions concerning the design and material of the tent and to build a "better" temple. This temple would come from the carnal minds of well-meaning Christians like David who would then expect God to submit Himself to their will by first, meekly allowing them to disapprove of His tent design as unsuitable for city life, and second, make Himself accept, like, and live in the new temple they designed. This was just like – and just as bad as – Saul's inventing the first Thanksgiving holiday: God was expected to submit to and be pleased with these idiotic humans – who were supposed to *wait for* Him to make His will known and then *wait on* Him by obediently doing His will. Now thoughtfully compare **1 Ch 23:5** with **Am 6:5**.

When David voiced his carnal idea to Nathan, the prophet should have asked, "Has the Lord expressed displeasure with the tent He designed?" But he assumed David knew what he was doing because David was a good Christian, so he said, "Yeah, go ahead and do that which is right in your own eyes as long as you're sincere" (**2 Sa 7:3**). God appreciated David's sincerity, but that didn't change the fact that he was out of God's will (**vv.4-7**). That night God let Nathan know the prophet's advice to David was carnal advice because God did not want David to build a temple. Nathan was instructed to put David in his place by reminding him God had selected a humble shepherd (**v.8**) and He expected him to remain a humble shepherd over His people. God said He'd have David's son build Him a house. (And we know Solomon and Solomon's Temple are merely types of the Son of David and His temple built without hands because it says "*for ever*" in **vv.13,16**.)

RESPECT FOR GOVERNMENT: Even though it was known God had rejected Saul and chosen David as king, God's people did not take matters into their own hands by ousting Saul. According to modern Christianity, the people had every right to rise up and get rid of Saul when he rebelled against God by refusing to step down. But even adulterers and murderers like David knew better than to mess with seated authority. Therefore, even when urged to avail himself of a good opportunity to kill Saul, and even when told it was the "Christian" thing to do (**1 Sa 24:4**), David refused to touch the authority that God, in His infinite wisdom, allowed to rebelliously remain on the throne (**1 Sa 24:6,7**). Notice David's respect for froward authority is very similar to Michael the archangel's behavior toward King Satan (**Jude 9**). Michael was on a mission from God and was being interfered with by the Devil, and Michael *still* wouldn't dare to be presumptuous by bad-mouthing evil dignities because they are the Lord's anointed (**2 Pe 2:10-12**). David's refusal to fight his evil king is such an important lesson that God gave us a second incident to support the first so we'd be sure to incorporate the principle into our lives: **1 Sa 26:7-11**.

God decided to make it absolutely clear to us just how far this respect for authority stuff goes: When Saul was wounded in battle he asked his armourbearer to kill him, but because the armourbearer was afraid to touch the Lord's anointed, Saul committed suicide (**1 Sa 31:3-6**). Later a young man, hoping to gain favor with the new king, David, invented a story about how he killed Saul (**2 Sa 1:5-10**). Imagine his surprise when David and his comrades reacted by fasting, ripping their clothes, mourning, and weeping. And then his shock when David coldly asked him why he wasn't afraid to touch the Lord's authority (**2 Sa 1:14**). And then his horror when David ordered one of his soldiers to execute him (**v.15**). Since the young man was a liar it is likely he was also weak and cowardly. Therefore he immediately admitted he'd invented the story, confessed that he had merely witnessed from a distance Saul's demise (**1 Sa 31**), and thought he might impress David if he claimed to be the one who killed Saul. But **David knew regicide is so evil a concept that people who merely advocate or support it are worthy of death**. Therefore, it didn't matter if the young man actually killed Saul or if he lied about it because the evil *ideology* that says killing a king is permissible still resided within the man's breast. So David answered the young man's hasty confession by saying, "You've caused your own death, son, because when you lied about killing the king, your own words revealed that you believe in regicide" (**2 Sa 1:16**).