

THINKING GOD IS ALTOGETHER LIKE MAN
An Awful Fallacy
Psa.50:16-22 (V.21)
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I. INTRODUCTION

1. In Psa.50:21 there are two interesting facts stated, the first of which led to the second, which was an awful fallacy, with the second being that upon which we base our study of the topic “Thinking God Is Altogether Like Man.”
2. The first fact is stated in Psa.50:21a: “These things hast thou done, and I kept silence.”
3. The second fact is stated in Psa.50:21b: “Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself” – an awful fallacy.
4. To help set up the study and to even better appreciate the significance of our topic

II. DISCUSSION

A. WE FIRST STUDY VV.16-22 CONTAINING GOD’S CHALLENGE TO THESE WICKED RELIGIOUS HYPOCRITES, WHERE WE HAVE

1. God questioning or challenging these wicked religious hypocrites sincerity in proclaiming God’s law, V.16.
 - a. These wicked hypocrites assumed that they were true Israelites.
 - b. Thus they claimed right of enforcing God’s statutes and the terms of his covenant against others, while in their own persons they set them at naught, Vv.17-20.
 - c. It is a great evil when professors of religion are untrue to their profession. In them hypocrisy is an evil and pernicious thing.
 - d. But for hypocrites to declare and teach and enforce God’s laws to and upon others, and set it at naught themselves is an outrageous evil.
 - e. This challenge implies:
 - (1) The inconsistency of their conduct.
 - (2) The sinful enormity of their conduct. They were hypocritically profaning the most sacred religious rites; endangering the most precious interests of human souls and dishonoring God.

2. God charging these wicked hypocrites with despising his word, V.17.
 - a. They would be teacher of the word of God to others, yet contemptuously disregarding that word themselves. Cf. Rom.2:17-24.
 - b. There are still teachers of religious who themselves refuse to be taught of God; and who, by neglecting its study and rightly dividing it and or disobeying its precepts, despise the word of God.
 - c. Such persons occupy and profane the sacred position of religious teachers for the gratification of their personal ambition. Cf. 2Pet.2:1-3.
 - d. But whatever may be their motive, their sin is most heinous and mischievous.

3. God charging these wicked hypocrites with various violations of his law, Vv.18-20.
 - a. God accuses them of adultery, theft, and false witness.
 - b. They approved the practices of thieves and shared in their plunder.
 - c. In the enjoyment of social intercourse they employed themselves in backbiting and slandering.

4. God charging these wicked hypocrites with deceiving themselves as to the nature, character and conduct of God, V.21.
 - a. Where we note the first of two facts that led to the second: “These things hast thou done, and I kept silence,” V.21a.
 - (1) That is, the things of Vv.16-20.
 - (2) No swift judgment overthrew these sinners; rather, God’s longsuffering reigned.
 - (3) No thunder was heard in threatening, and no bolt of fire was hurled in execution of them.
 - b. Also, the second fact, which was an awful fallacy, an evil inference falsely drawn: “Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself,” V.21b.
 - (1) Because God did not immediately interpose openly to punish the sins committed, the transgressor dared to imagine him to be indifferent to sin, to be “such an one as himself” – no holier, no purer, no more averse to evil than we are.

- (2) The inference drawn from the Lord's longsuffering was infamous; the respited culprit thought his judge to be one of the same order as himself.
 - (3) They, while sinners, continued to offer sacrifice to God, and deemed it accepted; they continued to sin, and remained unpunished, as it were, and therefore infamously assumed, "why need we believe these prophets who claim to speak for God?" God cares not how we live so long as we pay our tithes and offer up our sacrifices. He is altogether such as we are."
 - (4) What an awful, hypocritical fallacy, an evil inference to draw, as a result of God keeping silence in spite of the sinful things these wicked hypocrites has done!
5. God declaring to these wicked hypocrites that the time has come when he will no longer keep silence, V.21c.
- a. The word "reprove" means to demonstrate against, reprove, rebuke, chastise.
 - b. He will thoroughly convince them of the charges he brings against them, by setting their sins in order before their eyes.
6. These wicked hypocrites, having been "reproved," are now being forewarned by God what will happen if they continue to forget him, V.22.
- a. It is the doom of the hypocrite to be "cut asunder," where "there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth," Mt.24:51.
 - b. Forgetfulness of God is at the bottom of all the wickedness of the wicked.
 - c. Those who forget God forget themselves and their duty to self, to others, and to God.
 - d. Those who will not consider the warnings of God's word will certainly be torn in pieces by the execution of his wrath.
 - d. When the Lord comes to tear sinners in pieces, there is no delivering them out of his hand.

B. BY WAY OF TRANSITION FROM GOD'S CHALLENGE IN THE ENTIRE TEXT OF PSA.50:16-22 TO THE AWFUL FALLACY OF THE WICKED IN V.21 CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING THOUGHTS.

1. There are certain features in which even the wicked hypocrite is and continues to be like God.
 - a. “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness ... So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them,” Gen.1:26a,27.
2. Therefore, there are certain features of that likeness which sin does not destroy.
 - a. Our powers of reason remain.
 - b. Our moral sense, though injured or affected, is not destroyed.
3. If we were not, even in sin, still in some respects like God, we could receive no revelation of God.
4. But it is a sinful fallacy, an evil inference, to suppose that God is altogether like us.

C. NOW WE EXHIBIT AND ILLUSTRATE THE FALLACIOUSNESS AND EVIL OF THINKING GOD IS ALTOGETHER LIKE MAN.

1. Men are able to hide their sins from men or from each other, so the wicked hypocrites act as though they can hide them from God.
 - a. The religious professors addressed in this Psalm foolishly imagined that their ritualistic observances would hide from God the enormity of their moral conduct.
 - b. Adam and Eve, after they had sinned, thought they could “hide themselves from the presence of God amongst the trees of the garden,” Gen.3:8.
 - c. All such thinking and action is foolishly, sinfully impossible, Job 31:4; 34:21; Psa.90:8; 139:7-12; Prov.5:21; 15:3; Jer.16:17; 32:19; Heb.4:13.
 - d. No, God is not like man! We can hide from man; but we cannot hide from God!
2. Men can deceive other men, so the wicked man thinks he can deceive God.
 - a. These wicked hypocrites of this Psalm foolishly thought they could because of their awful fallacy that God was like man.

- b. Another case in point in the N.T. is that of Ananias and Sapphira in Ac.5:1-10 who lied unto God, but to their eternal sorrow were discovered, exposed and punished. Cf. Prov.10:18; 12:22.
 - c. In Gal.6:7,8 the Apostle Paul warns us of the impossibility of mocking, cheating or making a fool of God. Cf. Heb.4:12,13.
 - d. Though we may be able to deceive men, we cannot deceive God for he is not altogether like man.
3. Man may become slack in his word, so he is tempted to think that God may also be like him.
- a. However 2Pet.3:9 forever refutes such thinking.
 - b. So do many other passages, 1Cor.1:9; 10:13; 1Th.5:24; 2Th.3:3; Heb.10:23; 1Jno.1:5,9; Rev.19:11.
 - c. God never makes a promise or issues a threat lightly or one which he will fail to keep; he is true to his word.
4. Wicked men regard sin with great leniency, thinking that sin is not so bad, and thinking God is altogether like men, so they often think God may feel or treat sin in the same way.
- a. Society in general doesn't take sin seriously and doesn't seem to think that God does either.
 - b. Philosophers speak of sin as "misdirection," or as a result of deficient education, or unfavorable circumstances and surroundings, or an alternate life-style, or merely freedom of choice.
 - c. These tolerant and false views of sin men are prone to transfer to God.
 - d. Prov.14:9 says: "Fools make a mock at sin..."
 - e. Isa.59:1,2 tells us that sin separates the sinner from God and hides God's face from him so that he will not hear and save.
 - f. Rom.6:23 declares that "The wages of sin is death."
 - g. 1Jno.3:4-10 reveal that "sin is the transgression of the law" and the one who practices sin is of the devil, a child of the devil. Cf. Jno.8:34.
 - h. When you once consider all the things stated in the Bible that are an abomination in the sight of God, then you can see that sin, any sin, all sin, is an abomination unto God, that he hates sin, all sin!
 - i. His sending his Son, Jesus Christ, to die for our sins should help us see just how much he hates sin!

5. Men often become unmindful of an offence in course of time, and the wicked think that God is altogether as they are.
 - a. But, unlike man, God never forgets or becomes indifferent to any sin or offence committed by man.
 - b. Time will not erase sin of any kind, either against man or God.
 - c. We may grow indifferent to a wrong we have committed against another, but God never does. With God it is either pardon on condition of punishment.
 - d. Consider Mt.5:23,24; 18:6-9; Lk.17:1,2; Rom.16:17,18 Mt.13:41; 1Cor.8:9,11-13.
 - e. Once again, God is not altogether like man. Don't be guilty of this awful fallacy!

6. Deceived men think that one religious faith or one religion or one church is a good as another, so they think God feels the same way, which is simply another example of men thinking God is altogether like men, whether or not they admit it or even realize it!
 - a. Jesus doesn't think so, Mt.7:13,14; 15:7-9,13; Jno.10:16; Mt.16:13-18.
 - b. His apostles he sent forth as his ambassadors guided by the Holy Spirit to bind and to loose on earth what shall be bound or loosed in heaven (Mt.16:19; 18:18; 2Cor.5:17-20) did not so teach (Eph. 4:4-6; Gal.1:6-10,23; Eph.5:23-27; 1:22,23).

III. CONCLUSION

1. Let us not think or act like we think that God is altogether like unto us, but endeavor, through Jesus Christ as our perfect example, to become altogether like unto God.