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SALVATION

If you are not a believer in Jesus Christ, or aren't sure and would like to become one, then you need to believe that Jesus Christ was and is the Son of God, that he was God who became a man, that he lived a sinless and perfect life, keeping the Law of God perfect in every way, that he kept faith perfectly, and that he was crucified on that cruel cross for your sins, mine and the entire world - he died for our sins! His death on the cross paid the penalty fully, one time for all sins that we have ever committed and that we will ever commit. He died; he went down into the bowels of the earth, even into Hell, and was raised from the dead on the third day in a resurrected, eternal body. He ascended back into heaven, was seated at the right hand of God, and is now Lord over heaven and earth. He is coming again to judge the world, to raise the dead, where he will give an eternal, resurrected, glorified body to everyone that has believed on him as their Lord and Savior, and to establish his kingdom on earth.

You come become a Christian right now as you read this by personally placing your faith and trust in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior; believing that he is God's only begotten Son, that he died on the cross for you and that he was raised from the dead and is now seated in heaven at the right hand of God the Father. *"Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved.."* [Acts 16:31a](#) And when you do trust Christ, and Christ alone, as your Lord and Savior, then go to God the Father in heaven in prayer and tell him so. Tell him that you have believed on his Son, thank him for his Son, and thank him for forgiving your sins and saving you! *"That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord", and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved."* [Romans 10:9,10](#) *"For, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."* [Romans 10:13](#) *"Therefore, being justified by faith (declared righteous), we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."* [Romans 5:1](#)

Psalm One

A. Separation from the wrong kind of people. v.1

1. “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.” - Psalm 1:1 – אֲשֶׁר־יֵהְיֶה אִישׁ אֶשְׁרַי לֹא הָלַךְ, בְּעֵצַת רָשָׁע עִיִּהְבְּ דַרְכֵי תַטְּאִים, לֹא עָמַד בְּמוֹשְׁבַי לִצְיִים, לֹא יָשָׁב

“Blessed is the man”, or, “How blessed is the man” - *ashray haish*.

What we have here is concise instruction from God by which the believer in Christ can be prospered and made happy in their journey in life. It is not a complex plan, in fact, it is quite simple! But there are some things that the believer will have to do. **One**, is to totally associate himself with God and his ways. And **two**, to disassociate himself from unbelievers and their ways.

The word for **blessed** is *ashray* and it was a synonym for *baruch*. The difference being that *baruch* was the more solemn term used for the blessing formula, while *ashray* was the more general secular usage that was applied to man in general in his life here on earth. *Ashray* was not to be thought of as a feeling of happiness or bliss, but rather one of being in a state of being blessed by God. For being blessed is one of his gifts of grace to his people and one can be unhappy at any given moment in his journey in life, and can be under severe adverse conditions, and still be in a state of being blessed by God!

In a state of blessedness one can expect to find: success, prosperity, and for us today, enjoying the spiritual blessings to be found in living in the spiritual life dynamic. The first one, **success**, is never to be thought of in the light of world's definition of success with such things as: money, material possessions, career, prestige, position in the community, cars, boats, houses, etc.. And sad to say, many believers have gone lusting after them. The tragedy of this is that virtually everyone who has these things, or has gone running off after them, are not successful – but failures! “*But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*” 1 Timothy 6:9,10

The basic definition of success is to take a project that one has started and bring it to its desired conclusion. So, if one was desiring a garden, and after performing all that is involved in the matter, and he ends up with nice vegetables, then he has been successful at it. Or, if a man and his wife wove rugs for a living, or repaired radios, or had a small little retail shop, and if they were able to provide a roof over their head, food on the table and clothes on their backs, then they were successful! Whether their garden produced truckloads of food, or they got rich in their shops, is not the issue for success.

It's very hard for people living in America today to accept this concept concerning success because they have been programmed to think otherwise. You can be poor and still be successful. But it makes no difference if you have a humble little shop, live in a humble abode, wear ordinary clothes, have no jewelry, don't travel abroad and no big bank account, if you are able to take care of yourself and your family, and take other projects to their desired end, then you are successful! And if you raise your children to grow up and love the Lord, you are at the top of being successful. And, at the same time, you can be rich and be a total failure! And remember, it is God who will give us success.

The second concept found in being blessed by God is **prosperity**. But remember, prosperity is never to be thought of by the number of things, or money, one has, but in the areas of one's finances, physical health, soul and social life.

In the area of **finances** prosperity means, first of all, that you are out of debt! If you have debt, you not only are not prosperous, but you are a slave. Secondly, **prosperity** is the money you have left over after being on a cash basis. To put it simply, prosperity means that you have no debt, are able to meet your needs as they arise, food, water, electricity, etc., and you have some money in your pocket afterward. You have been prospered if you have your needs met and a little left over.

But the prosperity of God is not just limited to our pocketbooks, but our **bodies** as well. *“Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.”* 3 John 2 Yes there are times of suffering and sickness, but God does give health to our bodies, even if it's only from having an improved diet after learning to take care of our bodies.

Another area of prosperity is in our **social life**. Instead of having friends and relatives, who use us for their own personal gratification, God surrounds us with people who truly love us and care for us, people who love our souls and want the best for our souls. One of the greatest blessings of Bible doctrine is in the area of being around doctrinal believers who love the Word. Those who are not positive to the Word, and/or the unsaved, really don't care about our souls. If they say they do, they are lying for they do not have the capacity to truly love spiritually. We are wanted by them to supply some ego gratification, or lust gratification concept. In other words to be used by them. But God's prosperity surrounds us with believers who care for us.

Another area of God's prosperity is in our **souls**. When one believes on Christ as their Savior, or has turned back from reversionism, doing what God wants them to do, taking in the teaching of the Word of God and staying away from those who don't, then the Lord will start blessing their soul. Scar tissue of the soul will begin to be removed, the diseases of the soul will be healed, mental illnesses will begin to be resolved, fear complexes, anger complexes, guilt complexes will all be dealt with.

For the NT believer it means that they will be spending more time living in the spiritual life dynamic God has provided for us all in his grace. Love, joy and peace will begin to be the new reality for them, not misery and anger. And a joy that is not based upon external circumstances, or getting your way, but an internal peace brought about by the filling of the Holy Spirit. A joy and peace one can have, even while going through suffering and adversity.

When James wrote about counting the joy while suffering, he was thinking of and looking forward to, the spiritual blessings that would come about as the result of going through these things with faith in the Word. *“My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;”* James 1:2 Suffering and trials don't make us happy, that's ludicrous, but when one's faith is mixed with Bible doctrine the believer knows that they will result in maturity and joy.

The man who abides by Psalm One is already being blessed. He knows it, he sees it and enjoys it. (It is so much better than cursing and discipline). And if he is going through a time of adversity, while being blessed by God, he knows that God is using it to bless him more in the future, and even this too is a cause for joy. But to have this blessing, we must be careful to do what God instructs us to do in this passage. The beginning of wisdom is to do what God wants us to do and those things are carefully outlined in the passage.

*“That walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly” - asher lo halak ba'atsath reshaim. **The first thing we are to do is not take the advice of wicked people!** The word for **walk** is *halak* and is a metaphor for the path that one takes in life. It looks at the decisions we make, where we go, what we do, what we pursue after, what our activities are, what our goals are and where we want to end up.*

But like so many people in life, before we make our decisions, especially important ones like a job, career, education, a move, purchasing things, where to live, what to do, who to marry, what path we should take in life, or are thinking of taking, we ask other people to get all the information we can so we can make the “right” decision, or hope we are. Oftentimes in this what we are looking for is other people's approval, especially family and friends. (It always amazes me that we look to others in making our decisions, **when it's we that will have to live with the consequences!**)

And here's the problem for us, when we look to others for advice on what to do, instead of looking to the Lord in prayer and his Word, (Psalm One), when we look to other people, the overwhelming **majority of them are wicked in God's eyes!** This is the first thing we are to avoid. We are not to listen to the advice of the wicked; we shouldn't even be around them, let alone soliciting it!

The word for **counsel** is *ya'ats* and it referred to one's opinion, or advice, that they have on a matter. It's their viewpoint on things. It refers to that faculty of the mind where one is able to form plans, or to give advice, to someone concerning what he or she should do, what decisions they should make. Or, as we say to today, what their opinion is.

Simply put, it's to approach a friend, co-worker, family member, etc., and tell them what you're thinking about doing: buying a car, a house, going on a trip, going to school, making a move, getting a job in some area, etc.. But why are you telling them? Either to brag about it, which is wrong, or to seek their opinion or advice on it, which is wrong also!

Remember, that the words, or advice, that come out of a person's mouth, any person, including family and friends, is determined by the thinking and condition of their soul! If their souls are full of doctrinal wisdom, then usually their advice, or opinion, will be good. But if there is no doctrinal content in their souls, then their opinion will be human viewpoint and worthless. What kind of an opinion, or counsel, would you expect to get from someone who is negative to Bible Doctrine, anti-grace and anti-faith?? Now the Psalmist says that we will be blessed by God, if we do not listen to and follow the advice of the wicked. And that includes family, friends, relatives and coworkers, if they are in that category.

Now there are two categories of the wicked. **One**, all unbelievers, and **two**, believers who are not under the sound teaching of the Word of God. And we are not to listen to their advice, nor solicit their opinion. Why? Because they do not have the mind of the Lord.

To understand this concept more fully, one needs to go through my Online study on “The Wicked”. But suffice it to say in a short statement, the wicked believer is one who is negative to the teaching of the Word of God, Bible Doctrine, not submitting to the filling of the Holy Spirit, and the faith rest dynamic of metabolizing the promises and teaching of the Word of God by faith. The result is that the old sin nature caves in on the soul, thus destroying it. The soul's condition goes from bad to worse in an ever downward spiral to the place that the believer becomes incapable of doctrinal thinking and at times even rational thought. But the wicked knows no rest, so in their deteriorated condition of soul, they seek to bring others down to their level without them knowing what they're doing! Even deluding themselves into thinking they are helping others!

With a deteriorated soul the wicked not only seek to influence those around them, but also have an impact on society. And depending upon their OSN traits you will find them in: government, economics, religion, their own homes and circle of friends, etc.. Where they will work out the evil of their souls. These are the types that destroy other people's lives, their souls and society in general.

When a person rejects the truth of God's Word, then the only thing that he/she will have circulating in their conscious thought is human viewpoint, satanic viewpoint, the views of society and the reasoning ability of their minds. Their thinking becomes influenced by Satan, his demons and their own OSN's. So when they give out advice, or opinions, it will not be the mind of God, but their own opinion that is based upon the opinions of others, their own distorted thinking caused by the deteriorating condition of their souls, and/or the thinking of Satan!

If a Christian listens to their advice, he is doomed to failure. For they are not getting the mind of God on the matter, but the mind of a person who is mentally dysfunctional, and more than likely, the mind of Satan! You can be sure that **any advice that the wicked have to give is in direct opposition to what God's will is for that believer!**

The **wicked** are those, who have been exposed to the truth, and rejected it. Or, have been under the teaching of Bible doctrine and walked away from it. They are arrogant, reject truth, and reject spiritual authority. The term **wicked** looks not so much as their position before God, as to whether they are saved or unsaved, but at their attitude toward the Word of God, and two, the condition of their soul. Whatever advice, opinions, counsel, suggestion, or ideas that they might have are to be disregarded.

Some of the **characteristics of the wicked**, other than rejecting the truth found in Bible Doctrine, are their souls are in a state of confusion, agitation and turmoil, and not being satisfied with that, they seek to cause agitation in others and society in general. They not only reject the Word of God, but they also reject spiritual authority over them. They are proud, arrogant and usually braggarts. They have much resentment and anger in their souls and seek to tear down the doctrinal believer, who is, or wants to go on, with the Lord and his Word. They are willful and stubborn, and very much into money and material possessions. They have no peace, nor stability in their souls, and the effect of their existence on other people's lives, in time, will bring about the same disturbed, unsettled, angry, agitated condition of soul that they have in their souls!

You will find them flocking into the malls, with the materialistic types; or in the “going after money” crowd; or the “party types” with their booze, drugs and riotous parties; they also make up the criminal elements; but you will also find them with the “social reformers”, or “crusaders”; and they make up the religious crowd with their legalism and self righteousness. You will often find them in government where they have the opportunity a broader spectrum of people down to their level of wickedness; in religion, the churches, in economics and always in the home.

But, if you want God to bless you, you must never listen to their advice or opinion; you must never even seek it from them. In fact, **what are they doing in your circle of acquaintances anyway?** Why haven't you disassociated yourself from them? Why do you hang around them? You say, 'they're my friends, my parents, my relatives.' So? What's your point? The wicked are always somebody's friends, relatives, or parents. Stay away from them. Don't you know that by simply being around them you open yourselves up for their advice or opinion? Which they're so quick to give and will negatively affect you. Not to mention the risk of them imparting any demonic influence they might have on to you! **Negative energy and/or demonic influences come from the wicked.**

“*Nor standeth in the way of sinners,*” - *ubederek chattaiym lo amad*. There are three things used in the passage, walking, standing and sitting, that are metaphors used to refer to the totality of the Christian's life. They should not be thought of an ascending idea, or intensity of concept, rather to reflect the whole of the believer's life. Other than laying down in bed to sleep, or to rest, the believer is either walking, standing, or sitting. Lying down in bed refers to the believer in a state of unconsciousness, while walking, standing, or sitting looks at the totality of the believer's life while conscious.

The first word we want to consider is **sinners**, *chattaiym*, the masculine plural of *chata*. The emphasis of this word is on the sinful activity of the individual, not on whether he or she is a believer or not. All of humanity has a flesh nature inherited from Adam and Eve. And in that flesh nature is the flesh's propensity to sin in one area or another. We call that sinful nature the Old Sin Nature, (OSN). The sinful nature of man can do nothing but sin! **It's all that it's able to do and it's all it wants to do!**

This does not mean that everyone is a murderer, or violent criminal of some sort, but that all sin in one area or another. Some are prone to a life of crime, others to drunkenness and dissipation, while others will be involved in self righteousness and legalism. Their sins may be in the areas of emotional sins, mental attitude sins, sins of the tongue, or overt activity, but all sin in one area or another. (That's why we need a Savior to save us from our sins – Jesus Christ!) Only believers in Christ, who are filled with the Holy Spirit and operating in their new natures, are able to live a life pleasing to a Holy God.

The use of the term **sinners** here is not a restricted reference to an unbeliever, nor to a believer out of fellowship, as we would say, but to those who are constantly under the control of their OSN's. It would include unbelievers, but also refer to believers in Christ, who have reverted from living in the spiritual life dynamic and are under constant control of their flesh's sinful nature.

The word for **stand** here is '*amad* used with the preposition *be* prefixed to the word for **path**, *bederek*. *Bederek* has the idea of to persist, or persevere, in something. A path was, and is, a trampling down, a making of a well worn trail in the landscape. All creatures that walk on earth leave tracks. And if enough of them go down the same exact route, their feet so trample the ground that it makes a path. That's what *derek* is about.

This is about those who have made **sinning a way of life**. It's not about the individual, nor the category of sin they are involved in, but about the individual constantly sinning in one area or another, where their sin is taking them, the direction they are going in, the places they go, the people they hang around with, and what the inevitable outcome of all this will be for them, where they will end up in life.

A path is a path because it connects point A to point B. And with the sinners it speaks of their lives as they go from one thing to another, from one concept of sin to another. It's the path they take because they have certain desires, (lusts), that they want to gratify. They go from the malls, to the bars, to the stores. They go after an education, to get a job, to get a career, so they can make money, so they can buy a house, a car, to get furniture, to get things, etc..

The unsaved, and believers who have rejected the spiritual life dynamic and gone back into the world system, are driven by the lusts of the OSN found in their flesh natures. (There are over 25 categories of lusts, which one can reference to on my Online site at www.pacificrimbible.com). For some it might be chemical - drugs and alcohol. While others it might be food, or for money, power, success, material possessions; the list goes on. So they go down the path of sinning following after one lust or another, going from point A, to point B, to point C, etc., seeking gratification.

But the Lord is telling us not to stand in the path that sinners are walking in. Don't even be found on it! We're not to be pursuing after the desires of the flesh. These people, who are under the constant control of their OSN's, have no other function in life than to gratify their lusts. It's what they live for. It's what they pursue after. And they have made a well worn path in going after them.

The Apostle Paul taught us about this in Ephesians 4:17-19, “*This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the **vanity** of their mind, Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the **blindness** of their heart: Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.*”.

Here the Apostle is telling believers that they are to stop living like the Gentiles do; living their lives to gratify the lusts of their flesh natures. These people live in the **vanity**, *mataiotes*, of their minds due to the **blindness**, *porosis*, of their hearts. Which causes them to indulge in every kind of impurity, (OSN activity), with a continual lust for more. The OSN, like poison oak, itches. You can scratch it, but it never stops itching. You can gratify, (temporary satisfaction), the lusts of the flesh, but you can never satisfy them. They just keep on itching for more!

Mataiotes is the illusions and delusions of the mind. It is a condition of the mind that causes a distorted perception of reality. A visual picture is of the man wandering in the desert searching for water. He sees a mirage that looks like water and wanders after it. Once he finds it, he realizes that it was nothing more than illusion, a mirage. But he looks off in the horizon and sees another body of water, which he thinks, again, is real, so he goes off after it. One might say, why doesn't he realize that it is a mirage? Because his thinking has been so distorted to the place he is convinced it's real!

For the Christian, who has rejected the spiritual life of faith, Bible Doctrine and the filling of the Holy Spirit, *porosis* builds up on the soul, much like barnacles on a ship's hull, or plaque on the teeth, causing a shutting down of the soul's ability to perceive reality correctly – *mataiotes*. The believer now goes off in pursuit of the things that he, incorrectly, thinks will bring him happiness and the satisfaction his soul needs and wants. But once he has acquired those things he has been desiring, (lusting after), and doesn't get the satisfaction his soul needs, he sees something else off in the horizon and thinks that must be it, so he goes off pursuing after it. So off the Christian goes chasing after money, only to find it doesn't satisfy their soul. Then they set their eyes on success, careers, changing careers, buying a house, upsizing, downsizing, moving to another town time after time, buying furniture to replace with other furniture later on, finding the opposite sex, only to replace them with somebody new, changing churches, the list goes on and on. From point A they go to point B, and from point B to point C, but never truly satisfied in their souls. **And as they spend their days going after these things, they find out that their life is gone.** They have spent it in worthless, pointless pursuits and that's why it is sometimes translated as **futility**! And that's *mataiotes*!

The **sinner** here is the believer, who has rejected the spiritual life dynamic and is now operating under the constant control of his body's OSN. He now is operating under the condition of *mataiotes* and is chasing after one lust after another, because he, being deluded in his thinking, is convinced these things will bring him what his soul wants and needs. So off he goes in pursuit after one lust after another and the result is he has spent his life in worthless, pointless pursuits and wasted his life! He not only has missed out on the perfect plan of God for his life, but he, or she, has **wasted their entire life!** So what God is telling us here in Psalms One, if we want to avoid a wasted life, and be blessed by him, **then we absolutely must not go down the same path in life that these types have taken!**

“*Nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.*” - *ubmoshab letsiyim lo yashab*. The third category of people that we are to distance ourselves from are the mocker, or scorers, if we want to have God's blessings in our lives. “*Blessed is the man who does not sit in the seat of mockers*”. This deals with a voluntary versus a involuntary concept. There often is no choice in being around mockers and scoffers, when we are out in the public, in stores, at the job, etc.. But in all the other areas, when we do have a choice, we are to make the choice of not associating with them.

The **seat** of the scornful is *mashab* and spoke of a place for sitting, not just the act of sitting, but the place where they are seated. It could be a bar, their home, your home,, any place these types congregate. It's not talking about passing them on the street, or at work, or in a crowded store, places where they, like all people in society, frequent. But going to a place where they live, or like to hang out, as we say. It refers to going to the places that the scornful like to frequent as their “hang out”, or associating with them.

So if the mockers or scoffers tend to gather at some place in town, a bar, a restaurant, a meeting-hall, lodges, social gatherings, even the places they tend to gather in, we are to avoid! **We're to avoid these types of people and we're to even avoid the places they gather at!**

The word **sit** here is *yashab* and it doesn't look at the act of merely sitting, although that is involved here, but it meant to gather, to congregate with, to associate with someone, to go where they like to go, to habitually be in their company. **It's to sit where mockers sit.**

But what is the **scornful**, the **mocker**, the **scoffer**? The word for **scornful** is *letsiyim*, from *luts*, and it's someone who derides, makes fun of, speaks contemptibly of, one who frivolously jests, denies, rejects, or ridicules the Lord and Bible Doctrine. It doesn't refer to an unbeliever, or believer, who does not know the truth, but wants to, but an unbeliever, or believer, **who has been exposed to the truth and rejected it!** But more than just rejecting it, **he's always arguing the point to see if he can trip you up in some way**, to make fun of you and the Word, so as to put you or the Word down. Arguing, scoffing, denying, rejecting, ridiculing and mocking are all a part of it.

It covers a wide range of manifestations, but it speaks of one who has had the truth communicated to them, (usually many times), either the gospel entailing man being a sinner and needing Jesus Christ to save them, or information about the reality of a God and his creation of heaven and earth, or doctrinal teaching, by you or someone else, and rejects it, denies it, scoffs at it, even makes fun of it. It can also refer to scoffers in general who are basically negative people. It refers to people who are anti-faith, anti-grace and anti-Bible Doctrine.

Whenever gospel information, or the communicating of sound doctrine, is given to an individual, and it always ends up in them arguing the point, or ridiculing it, then we have the situation mentioned here where we are not to associate with these types. We are not to go over to their houses and they certainly are not to be allowed in ours. If they like to congregate in some restaurant in town, we are to even avoid it because of their association with it. If they belong to some fraternal or community organization, we are to stay out of it altogether. What business does a doctrinal believer have associating himself with people who mock God's Word??

The Lord told us we are not to cast our pearls before swine. “*Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.*” Matthew 7:6

The Lord also instructed us not to give an heretic more than two admonitions at the most. This would be directed at those who claim to be Christians, but are not doctrinal in their beliefs or walks. *“A man that is an heretick **after the first and second admonition reject,**”* Titus 3:10 One of the biggest failures in today's churches is that believers do not practice a life of separation, nor do they obey the Lord in these areas.

This means that we are to **withdraw** ourselves from certain types of people. *“Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye **withdraw** yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.”* 2 Thessalonians 3:3 *“Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such **withdraw** thyself.”* 1 Timothy 6:5

We see them spoken of in the book of **Jude**. *“But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves.”* verse 10 *“And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints,”* verse 14 *“To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.”* verse 15

Not associating with scoffers doesn't apply solely to unbelievers, who have openly and publicly rejected and ridiculed the gospel of God's grace, but also to those who call themselves Christians, who have been exposed to sound doctrinal teaching, and have rejected it and scoff at it.

Mockers, or the **scornful**, is in the qal participle showing that they practice this as a way of life. When does a person become a mocker? Not the first time he hears it, but after hearing the truth on several, or many, occasions and rejecting it over a period of time. Somewhere along the line his arrogance causes him to start becoming vocal about it to the places where he mocks or scoffs it. And now, at his present state of mind, he associates with and congregates with others who are of the same mind.

That's why they tend to gather in the same places: bars, restaurants, lodges, social gatherings, hang-outs, meeting halls, community organizations, etc.. As the old saying goes, “birds of a feather flock together”. That's why God tells us to not only don't associate with them, but also to not frequent the places where they hang out!

There are two concepts involved in this matter of not walking in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standing in the way of sinners, nor sitting in the seat of the scornful. **One** deals with the problem of their negativity rubbing off on us, and it will by just being around them. For us to maintain our walk with the Lord and to maintain our spiritual life of living in the filling of the Holy Spirit and living by faith, we have to stay away from all negative types of people!

And the **second** one deals with the idea of, how can we expect God to bless us when we associate with those who are against him, his Word and his Son?? With those who mock him, his Word and his Son?? The Bible clearly teaches that there is blessing by association and cursing by association. It teaches that there is blessing for obedience, but cursing for disobedience!

Then there is the other matter of why would we want to be around those who make fun of our Lord? We recognize that all have the right to live their own lives and people can make their own choices. But why would we want to associate with those who openly scoff at our Lord and his Word?

B. Delighting in the Word. v.2.

“*But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.*” - Psalm 1:2

כִּי אִם בְּתוֹרַת יְהוָה, חָפְצוֹ; וּבְתוֹרָתוֹ יִהְיֶה, יוֹמָם וְלַיְלָה -

The passage starts with *kiy*, then **im**, which can be used demonstratively, “*But his delight **is** in the Law of the Lord*”, which is how several of the translations have it. But **im** can also be used interrogatively, **if**, which is used to ask a question, or to establish a condition. And would be translated as, “*But **if** his delight is in the Law of the Lord*”.

I believe **im** is used here to establish a condition for a couple of reasons. The first reason is that **if** verses one and two are established in the Christian's life, **then** verse three will come to be. He will be like a tree planted by the streams of water, etc.. And secondly, **delighting** and **meditating** are connected by the waw conversive connecting the two ideas together. “*But if his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.*”, **then** verse three will be his reality.

For the child of God to be living in the state of being blessed by God, whether living under the old Covenant in the time of Israel, or under the New Covenant in the Church Age today, there are certain conditions that must be fulfilled. And these conditions deal with: decisions, actions, associations, meditation, separation, and Bible Doctrine.

First, we must not listen to, nor take the advice, (nor solicit it either), of the wicked. Those individuals who have rejected the truth of God's Word. This deals with our **decisions** in life.

Second, we are not to pursue after the same life that those, who are controlled by their OSN's, do. Whether it's lasciviousness or legalism. This deals with our **actions** in life.

The **third** is that we are not to associate with, or hang around, those who deny, mock, put down, deride, or scoff at God's Word or the teaching of God's Word. This deals with our **associations** in life.

The **fourth** summarizes the other matters and is also taught in the NT and that is the matter of separation. This deals with living a **separated** life.

And the **fifth** thing, which is repeated over and over throughout the entire Bible, is the occupation with, learning, and metabolizing by faith, the teaching of God's Word.

The word for **delight** is *chaphets* and it means to be favorably inclined toward something, to lean toward it, to be inclined or bend toward it, to will toward it, to be pleased with it, to delight in it, to love something or someone, also to pursue after it. It spoke of the desire of the mind and will in wanting something to the place of going after it.

Chaphets was used to describe that concept involving the will, heart and desires encompassing all the concepts from an affirmative desire, to have pleasure in, to delight in and to choose for. It was used in conjunction with personal objects of affection, such as, having love for the opposite sex, to impersonal objects, such as, gold, houses, vineyards, etc.. Here, and in many other passages of the OT, it was used in conjunction with the Word of God. It entails both the will and the heart and pursuing after it. If one delights in something it and desires it, is it not reasonable to conclude that he would pursue after it?

Chaphets was **not** used to convey the idea of lower affections, things in life that we **like**, such as, I like tacos more than burritos. It was used to convey desire, love, things that are at the **highest** ends of our priorities and desires. The **woman** that a man delights in is the number one woman in his life. The **friend** you delight in is your best friend. This person, or thing, **holds your highest affections and desires**. Therefore, it is the thing in life that your life centers around and the thing that you will constantly choose for above all other things.

But here we see that the object of one's affection, desire and will is not silver or gold, career or success, material possessions, a personal friend, or even one that you love, but the Law of *Yahweh*! But the Law of *Yahweh*, *Torah Yahweh*, is not to be thought of restrictively to just the Ten commandments, for the word *torah* referred primarily to the idea of the instruction that comes from God. It would refer to, yes, the ten commandments, but also to all the other commandments, the first five books of the OT, and beyond that to all the teaching of the Word of God, or, as we say, **Bible Doctrine!**

Here we have an example of the difference between **religion** and **revelation**. **Religion** is man's attempt at finding his own way to God and his own way of pleasing God. While **revelation** is where God instructs us, through his Word, on how we are to come to him and how to please him. So under **revelation** God instructs man on how to live in a manner pleasing to him and what man needs to do to be blessed by him. The doctrinal, **godly** believer is one who lives in accordance to what God says in his Word, while the **wicked** depart from divine revelation, as found in Bible Doctrine.

Now it says that we are to **delight** ourselves in the Word. What this means is that we are to love the Word, that we are to be positive to it, that we are to desire it, that it is to be our priority in life, that it is to take precedence over all other things in life, and that we are to pursue after it.

In verse one we have three negative concepts that we are to avoid: **one**, following after, listening to, or being influenced by the advice, suggestions, ideas, or opinions of the wicked; **two**, getting involved in the OSN activity of the flesh; and **three**, associating with, or even being around a gathering of those who deny, reject, mock, or scoff at God's Word, or the teaching of his Word. But in verse two it takes a more positive note and that is to **delight** ourselves in the Law of the Lord, that is, the instruction that comes from the Word of God, or Bible doctrine. We are to desire it, want it, love it, seek it, and make it our highest priority in life.

Now this can be done because *chaphets* does not emphasize the emotions, or affections of the believer in Christ – but the will! All he has to do is choose it and keep on choosing it. And this is accomplished by confessing one's sins, (if necessary), having a change of mental attitude, (repentance), turning one's soul back to it away from the pull of the world system around us, (conversion), getting back to living in the new nature and the filling of the Holy Spirit, then making the right decisions accordingly so as to be under the teaching of Bible doctrine. When you find a believer who is doing that, then you can say that he or she delights themselves in the Law of the Lord.

And we can do this because it is the Holy Spirit, who is at work in us both to want to do God's will, but also enables us to do God's will. “*For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*” Philippians 2:13 One thing we need to keep in mind is that our flesh natures do not want that. The flesh does not want anything from the Lord, nor is it able to. So when we find ourselves getting caught up in the flesh and the things of the World and not being positive to Bible Doctrine, it tells us that we are operating under the control of the flesh nature and what we need to do is confess our sins and recover the filling of the Holy Spirit. “*Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.*” Romans 8:7

“And in his law doth he meditate day and night.” - ubethoratho yeheggeh yomam yalayelah.

The word meditation has gotten a bad reputation in the past few decades because of the influences of the East, but the word is found throughout the Bible. The word for **meditate** here is *hagah* and should not be thought of in the restrictive sense of one setting time aside during the day for his personal devotions, but of one who reflects on the Word of God all through the day.

It referred to one who was “lost in his religion”; he is consumed with it night and day; it fills his thoughts and governs his actions. Sometimes it was used to denote uttering inarticulate sounds, or to mutter or whisper, but those ideas came from one, who was so lost in what he was reading, that his lips would move, or he would be saying things, but not really paying attention to the fact that his lips were moving as he followed the passage, because he was so intent on its message.

Another word that was used for **meditation** was *siych*. It had the same inner contemplation, the idea of deeply thinking about the Word, but the focus was not on any audible expressions of that, nor any emotion that may arise out of it or accompany it, but on the deep inner thought.

Both words looked not so much at the mechanics of studying, learning, memorizing, reflecting upon, applying, or seeking to apply it to one's life, but at his **absorption** in it. It speaks of the believer in Christ, who is so focused on the doctrine he is hearing or the passage of the Word that he is reading, that everything else is blocked out from his stream of consciousness. So, in essence, **meditation is to think deeply on a particular doctrine** that you are interested in, or one that the Holy Spirit has led you to in living your own spiritual life.

There's another concept involved in looking at the dynamic of **mediation** and that is the **stream of consciousness**. The **stream of consciousness** is whatever is flowing in our conscious thought that our minds are totally focused on to the place where all other concepts are blocked out. And for the believer in Christ it is the Word of God, its principles, its teachings, its promises and the works of God.

Basically **mediation** is the idea of concentration, only when it comes to concentrating in the area of religion they give it the word meditation. It comes from the Latin *meditari*, *meditationem*, which simply meant to reflect, or to think over upon something. The word **concentrate** spoke of bringing an action to a center. The action could be bringing troops to a center, or the essence of food, or the idea of energy, or **the concentrating of one's thinking.**

Concentration is also another concept used in the exercise of faith in God's Word. It is where the mind is so focused on the Word of God and what it teaches, that it gets to the place where everything else is all blocked out. When we have arrived at that state we now have entered into the idea of meditation. It is in this place of total concentration on the Word of God that the soul is totally blessed. Another word that speaks of the same thing is to occupy, to engage, or to employ the mind.

When the Christian meditates on the Word of God day and night, he not only is filling his thoughts with the thinking of Jesus Christ, but he is also absorbing it into his frame of reference where he can recall it for further use down the road. But the greatest, immediate benefit for the Christian is what it does for his soul. It keeps the thinking of the **world system** out of his mind, which is beneficial to his soul. And it keeps the **negative thinking and emotions** of the emotional complex of the flesh nature out of his soul, thus protecting the soul from the tyranny of the sin nature.

C. The benefits of obedience. v.3.

“And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.” Psalm 1:3

“And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water,” - הָיָה -- כֶּעֵץ, שֶׁ תוֹלַע ל-פִּלְגִימָיִם

The Lord now uses an agricultural metaphor to illustrate the blessings that come from obedience. In Israel, as well as the rest of the world, instead of being just hunter gatherers, all worked the land to provide their sustenance. So everyone was very familiar with the principles of agricultural development. It was the basis of their economy and survival. He uses this idea to explain the absolute necessity of avoiding the wrong kind of people: the wicked, sinners and scoffers, and of staying with the word of God.

A **tree**, *'ets*, is used to show the **prosperity** of the doctrinal believer, who is in obedience to God. It conveys the ideas of longevity, survivability in hard times and his productivity. What is in view here is any type of tree that produces edible fruit, whether a fruit tree, nut tree, olive tree, date palm tree, etc.. Now there were three kinds of tree that produced edible fruit, or I should say, three areas where you would find these types of trees.

One, trees that grew exclusively in the wild, usually around rivers, streams, or wadis, that were sometimes harvested in the wild. But these trees could be transplanted, or shoots taken off them, or harvesting their seeds and brought back to one's farm and grown domestically. Two that come to mind are the olive tree and date tree.

Two, trees that are grown in the fields. These were trees that were grown in small to large scale agricultural development, for one's personal use, and/or for a commercial enterprise. Here you would find all sorts of fruit trees, nut trees, olive and palm trees. But because they were not near of source of water, such as, a stream or wadi, they were dependent upon rainfall.

Three, trees that were planted in an area developed for horticulture. This was done on a small scale as well for one's personal use, even inside the courtyard of one's home, or on a larger scale as a commercial enterprise. But the difference was they had a year round water source and **irrigation canals that were used as a means of distributing the water to each plant and tree**.

It is **this third kind of tree** that the Lord is referring to in this passage. The believer is like the tree that has been **purposely planted by streams of irrigation water**! In the original it's “*streams of waters*”, both words, stream and water, are in the plural, palgey mayim. *Mayim* is **waters**, but *palgey*, from *peleg* – to divide, means **divided waters**.

This was an agricultural term for the little gullies, or channels, that the water coursed through. We see this principle used in our little home gardens, where we have these little furrows for the water to go down when raising our row crops, such as, corn, tomatoes, lettuce, cabbage, etc.. here the channels would be smaller and closer together than what would be done when cultivating larger crops, such as, fruit or nut trees. This principle for the distribution of water was employed on large commercial farms, down to smaller mom and pop farms, all the way down to one's private garden where food was grown for one's own personal use.

In arid and semi-arid areas water was in short supply and what they had had to be used **wisely!** There were only about four ways they could get water. **One**, from a well, but this was normally reserved for livestock and household use. **Two**, from rainfall, which was usually enough for most crops, such as, barley, wheat, corn, trees in the field, wild trees, some vegetables, vineyards, etc.; if there was enough rainfall each year and it came on time. They were very dependent on rainfall in those days, while today many areas in America have irrigation. **Three**, was the annual flooding of rivers, such as the Nile, which not only watered, but deposited rich, new soil each year.

Four, is what we have here and that is the diversion of existing streams, rivers, etc.. In this practice water would be diverted to the land of different farmers, who in turn would divert it all around to different areas they had under cultivation. Much like the ACID, (Anderson Cottonwood Irrigation District), irrigation canal we have in our area. Only instead of flooding a field with water, (which is wasteful), they would divert it to a field by a little canal, and when the water reached the field, it would go down little channels, or gullies, so that each plant and each tree would get its share of water. These little channels, or gullies, were called *palgey mayim*.

But even in town there was the same practice, where a person would have a home enclosed inside a wall, and on the inside he would have his garden. And not just row crops, but herbs, spices, fruit trees, nut trees, etc.. The water would come in at one end of the property and be diverted all throughout his garden by these little channels, *palgey mayim*, so that every plant would have its drink of water.

By the use of the term *palgey mayim*, *streams of water*, in the passage, we know that what is being referred to here is a controlled environment situation. It tells us that the believer is not just growing out there “in the wild” somewhere, which would be more like a struggle for survival, nor is he but one of many trees out in the field. But that he has the special attention of a farmer, who has placed him into the controlled and secure environment of his own garden. And that **from his own stock of seeds!**

When dealing with seeds, there are those seeds that come from their parent plant, which will reproduce in kind the plant they came from like the original plant. Then there are those crossbred with other plants, say of the same species, which will produce different seeds, which in turn will produce a different offshoot of the original plant. Then there are seeds, which we have going on today, that are genetically modified bringing in all sorts of DNA from other plants, even fish and animals, to produce an altogether new type of plant never existing before on earth. Now the farmer in view here is the Lord himself. And what he did is take a new type of seed, his own seed, and planted it in his garden.

The controlled environment situation speaks of being in the **right geographical location**, where all his needs will be supplied to him, the care of the gardener, adequate water, etc., so that he will grow, be productive, and survive the hard times that do come in life, the drought, pestilence, etc.. And we want to not that the hard times will strike all around in the environment outside the garden, but the garden will continue on.

So the believer is not only placed in his right geographical location, but is also under the protective, nurturing care of the gardener, the PT, who works under the master gardener, the Lord, who is cultivating him for his own purpose to bring forth the fruit that the master gardener desires. We should not be too concerned about the wild trees outside the garden in the wilderness environment. It is the gardener who decides what he wants to do with his garden, not the tree. And remember, this is looking at believers growing in grace and in the Word of God in the setting of a local church and being taught by a Pastor-Teacher.

Another thing we notice about this tree, (the believer under the Word in obedience to God), is that it is **firmly planted**. The word is the gal passive participle of *shathal*, which tells us that it not only has been planted, but firmly planted! When the **storms** of life come with their great winds, many a tree will be blown down. But not this tree because it has been firmly planted by the gardener. And not only that, they usually planted other trees around the garden, as we see with the tall eucalyptus trees here in the valley, to serve as windbreaks to protect the field.

The word is also in the passive voice, which tells us that the tree did not plant itself, but was planted by someone – the gardener. And in the case of the Christian, their gardener is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ himself. The garden of the Lord is the right church in the right geographical location, with each one being tended by a Pastor-Teacher, who is that believer's right Pastor-Teacher. And he has them all over the world.

The tree he planted may have been living in another part of the world, but when he regenerated it, (thus making it a new tree), he then took it and placed it in a garden he has prepared for it. It may have been out in the wild, or in a nursery somewhere, a garden specializing in new trees and young trees, but not in its “right” location. So he takes it and places it there, where, having an ample supply of water, (the doctrinal teaching of the Word of God), and the protective, nurturing care of a Pastor-Teacher (PT), it can grow, survive the hard times: psychical, emotional, financial and spiritual trials of life, and be productive bearing the fruit that he has ordained for it.

This passage definitely teaches that there is a right geographical location for every believer in Christ! Even the farmer had different areas of his farm for growing different things. This is not to say that one area of the country is better than another, but God has certain areas that he wants certain believers to live in! There they will receive the doctrinal information their souls need, (constant supply of the water of the Word of God), and the physical, social, financial, and other assorted things they need. And it will be there that they grow in the Lord and bring about the spiritual production that he wants them to have. And at the top of the list is growing in conformity to the image of Christ.

Another thing about this is, if it was a large scale operation, there would be a chief-gardener, with gardeners under him each one being in charge and responsible for their own areas. This would be analogous to Christ, the Chief-Shepherd, and Pastor-Teachers under him as shepherds, with each PT of a local church, in their own areas being responsible to teach Bible Doctrine, watch over and care for those sheep assigned to him.

If we look back, we will see that there is a pattern. God prepared a place on earth for the man and the woman, (right geographical area), and he put them there in the **garden of Eden**. God planted Israel in its garden, a place that God prepared for it, the **land of Canaan**. We notice that wherever God is working in his plan for his people, he has a place for them where their needs will be met, doctrinal information their souls need, whether himself personally in the garden, or through the prophets and priests in Israel, where his people can survive, grow, thrive and be productive.

The same pattern exists for the Church Age today. God has provided the **right church** and **right PT** for every believer in Christ, and the **right geographical area** for them to live in, which may not be in the same area as their PT lives in due to certain reasons. There they will be able to have the needs of their souls met through the consistent teaching of BD, and there they will be able to have their physical and other needs provided for, although their needs may be met by God at times from outside their right geographical area. There they will be able to **survive, thrive** and be **productive**.

“*That bringeth forth his fruit in his season;*” - אֲשֶׁר פִּרְיוֹ, יְתִין בְּעֵתוֹ -

The word for **fruit** here, *periy*, refers to the production of the tree, whether walnuts, olives, dates, pears, plums, all are the fruit of its own tree. And, as all trees produce their own fruit, and one cannot say that one fruit is better than the other, so also believers in Christ are to produce their own fruit, as they were designed by God to do, to be productive and bring God the glory.

But we want to note that each tree bears its own fruit in its season! There was a time in the year when a tree produced its fruit, not before, not after. It wasn't a machine that cranked out fruit day after day, month after month, but produced fruit in its own season. **Yielding its fruit in season** tells us that the tree can be counted on to have continual production. Each year, when it came time for the harvest, there will be fruit there. Sometimes it would be a bumper crop, other times a smaller one, but there will always be a harvest from a fruitful tree.

But we have to ask ourselves, “**Why** does this tree produce fruit in its season year after year?” And the answer goes back to the idea that it had been planted in the farmer's garden, where it would have a continual, dependable supply of water and the nurturing care of the gardener. And another concept that must be considered is that the tree must **grow** before it begins bearing fruit. And its fruit will be small in the beginning in comparison to a mature tree.

Another concept concerning cultivated trees and their productivity is their **annual pruning!** Proper pruning in the hands of a master-gardener insures a more bountiful production of fruit each year at harvest time. Proper pruning **cuts away dead wood**, thus preventing disease from getting to the tree. **Dead wood** are the old things in our lives that we have died to. And it also **cuts away non-productive suckers**, which produce no fruit and divert the life giving energy to themselves taking it away from that part of the tree which produces. These are **the non-productive people and things in our lives**, which hamper our growth and production as believers. God simply cuts them away from us. We usually refer to this process as going through a trial.

But we're not talking about trees here, but Christians and their walk with God and being blessed by God. It's talking about the ideas of prosperity, success, survivability in the world system and going through trials, and it's talking about their spiritual production in this life. When we talk about being planted in the garden by the farmer, where the streams of water are, the *palgey mayim*, we have the picture of the believer being placed in the right geographical location chosen for him by Christ.

Living in one's right geographical location, where he will be under the care and cultivation of the Lord, who has entrusted him to the ministry of a Pastor-Teacher, also entails that he or she will be **living the faith-rest life.** “*Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.*” Psalm 37:3 “*Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.*” Psalm 37:7

The tree in the garden will not only have the **care** of the gardener, he will have his **protection** from those who would seek to come in break its limbs and steal its fruit! That is, he will have the gardener's protection, as long as he remains in the garden of his own volition. The difference is with Christians we have **walking trees!** They can uproot themselves and walk out of the garden God had prepared for them. And in the process, as they uproot themselves, they often do damage to younger trees growing around them. But never mind to them they just want to take off and do their own thing.

“His leaf also shall not wither;” - אֵלֶּיךָ לֵהֲיוֹת לְאֵיבֹול The word for **leaf** is 'alah and refers to the leaves found on trees and vines. And the word for **wither** is *nabal* and it meant to fade, shrivel, or wither. There were a few things that would cause leaves to wither. **One**, from some form of disease. **Two**, from insects boring into the tree. **Three**, as the result of lack of water. And usually lack of water would make the tree susceptible to insects and disease.

A tree with **withered leaves** was a tree without water. It was also a tree that was sick, or dying, and a tree that was non-productive. It speaks of the believer who doesn't have the Bible Doctrine his soul needs. “For ye shall be as an oak whose leaf fadeth, and as a garden that hath no water.” Isaiah 1:30 But a tree with healthy, **green leaves** was an healthy tree and was productive. “He that trusteth in his riches shall fall: **but the righteous shall flourish as a branch.**” Proverbs 11:28

As the **green leaf** speaks of the health of the tree, so does it speak of the spiritual health of the believer. The tree that is planted by the irrigation canals of water is able to put its roots down and drink up the water that is there, which the farmer provided. And that life-giving water is manifested all the way out to the furthest, tenderest part of the tree in its leaves. The healthy, green leaf shows that the water has coursed all the way through the tree to its leaves and its leaves show that the tree is healthy.

But not so the tree out in the wild. Because it does not have a reliable source of water, there is nothing to course through the tree to produce healthy leaves and healthy fruit. It is sick, barely able to survive, and because it is in a survival mode, it is unable to produce any fruit. Its withered leaves reveal its sick condition. Whatever energy the tree gets from its sporadic water supply is used for survival – not to produce fruit. And the same goes for believers living out in the wild away from a doctrinal church.

But there is one difference between a **tree** and a **believer**. The tree, by nature, naturally sucks up the precious water in the soil that gives it strength, growth, health and production – but not so with the believer. He must make a conscious choice to do so and he must exercise faith! The believer can be planted in his right geographical location chosen for him by God, and that water of the Word of God can be coursing right by him, but he is unable to absorb the water by osmosis like a tree. He must make a conscious choice to metabolize the Word by faith. The **water**, (*palgey mayim*), is Bible doctrine. It is found in its right geographical location in a local church, with a Pastor-Teacher, (gardener), chosen for him by Christ, (the master gardener). The teaching of the Pastor-Teacher provides the doctrinal information that his soul needs for spiritual growth and productivity. But he has to avail himself of it and metabolize it by faith! For it is in the decision to metabolize the Word by faith that changes it from doctrinal information into spiritual phenomena. **This spiritual energy courses all throughout the believer's soul giving it strength, health, healing, renewing, growth and production.**

A **withered leaf** tells us that the believer's soul does not have the spiritual energy that it needs. And that could be due to having no doctrinal teaching in the area one lives in, or because there is a doctrinal church in that area and they don't attend it, or they are in a church that doesn't teach the Word, or due to the fact that they attend a church, but they don't pay attention, or under the control of their flesh natures, or because of one or more emotional reactor factors going on in their souls. It's important to note that Psalms One speaks of not only being in the right local church taking in Bible Doctrine, but also living the faith-rest life! “Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river; and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.” Jeremiah 17:7,8

“*And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.*” - וְכֹל אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשֶׂה יִצְלֵחַ -

And all, or everything, that he does prospers. The word for **does** is the qal future of 'asah. There were four verbs used for the idea of making something. '**Asah** – to make something out of existing materials. **Bara** – to make something out of nothing. **Yatsar** – the creation of the male body with Adam. **Banah** – the creation of the female body with Eve.

'Asah meant to make something out of existing materials, but usually the idea behind it was to make something by one's labor. It's just that it was usually employed with the idea that one labored with existing materials, because, unlike God the Creator, who can make something out of nothing, man has to make something by using something else.

When God **created** the universe, the word used for that was *bara*. *Bara* tells us that he created it out of nothing! He spoke the word for the universe to come into existence and it came into existence! The word had energy and the energy became matter consisting of space, time and matter.

When God **formed** the man, the word *yatsar* is used, telling us that he used the existing materials from this planet, which were the smallest chemical compounds consisting of minerals, amino acids, and everything else found in the human body. “*And the LORD God **formed** man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.*” Genesis 2:7

But *yatsar*, which is only used with the **forming** of Adam's body and nothing else on earth, denotes a process is used in the forming, which process is determined by the raw materials one has to work with, which in this case, is from the chemical compounds of the earth! This leads us in the direction of Adam being “grown”, if you will, possibly in some celestial, or otherwise, lab somewhere. See my Online study on The Creation of Adam and Eve, www.pacificrimbible.com”.

When God **created** the woman, the word *banah* was used, which has the emphasis on embellishments and artistic beauty. And we want to also note that when God formed the **man**, he used the basic, chemical compounds from the earth. But when he made the **woman**, God took the DNA from the man's rib and “grew” her, (for a lack of better term), as he did the man. “*And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, **made** he a woman, and brought her unto the man.*” Genesis 2:22

An interesting question on the subject, “Was there a creation verb used for the **soul**?” If one says, **yes!** Then what was it? But if the answer is **no!** Then where did the soul come from? Some taking Genesis 2:7, “*And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.*”, say that God breathed it into the body through the nostrils of Adam. And then there are others who think that the soul pre-existed!

But back to our passage of, *And all, or everything, that he does prospers*, using the word 'asah, tells us that God will prosper, or bless, the labors of the believer, regardless of their honest pursuits in life, that is, bless those believers who obey him.

The word for **all** is *kol* and it takes in everything, which gives the believer tremendous **freedom** and **flexibility** in life! It tells us that the believer isn't locked into doing one thing in life, or having to work at some factory. He can try different things, follow different lines of interest, why it tells us that he can work at what he really enjoys doing because God said that he will bless him!

In our modern industrial age, where people are trained to be specialized in one little area, they begin to think that's all they can do in life! They need money, they need security, they need the job, and so they become locked-in, by their own thinking. They become **trapped** and now they are **slaves** to the system! They are locked-in to working for the “company store of Babylon in their own community”, by their own thinking and **lack of faith**, and locked-in by their own actions of going into **debt**.

Instead of being content with Bible Doctrine and the filling of the Holy Spirit, they followed after their lust patterns like the rest of the unsaved, and went into debt to buy things! Now they need money and they can't quit their job, so they think. They became locked-in because they didn't know the doctrines, or because they didn't exercise the faith that God would provide for them.

They think this is the only job they can do, because it is the only thing they know how to do. So they stay working at a job in an area they can't stand. Defeated in their mental attitudes they now go from there into passive submission, resignation, even despair and hopelessness, because they don't see any way out of it. They now have become slaves of Babylon's system, along with all the other slaves in the system. What they need to see is that God will bless them, regardless of what field they choose to work in and what area he opens up for them to live in! All they need is **faith**! One main exception to this rule is if God has called them to be one of his many ministers of his Word.

The way out of this trap, the way out of slavery, is the plan and blessing of God for their lives. They don't have to be bound by the thinking of, 'I have to do this because it's the only thing I know how to do'. They can change their thinking over to, “*I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me.*” 'I can do many things, because God will prosper my labor'.

The key to success in this area is by avoiding the three negative things and by employing the two positive things. It first begins with believing this passage that God will bless their labors, whatever they are. Second, it entails that the believer must now take that principle of faith securely tucked under his arms and go out in life with the leading of the Holy Spirit to other endeavors. Third, and assuming that he is now in the area of God's will for his life, he will have to live his life by faith in the Word daily.

God has a perfect plan for every believer's life. But this plan is discovered as the believer walks in faith, is sitting under Bible Doctrine, and is willing to do the Father's will for their lives! But many, or most, believers are not following the Lord's will for their lives. They want the success, the money, the security, the possessions, the power and glory found in Satan's economic system.

And they want the **security**! Instead of getting that sense of security through faith in the promises of God, *batach*, they look to their jobs, to the government, to the corporate world, to their bank accounts and insurance policies, and to their retirement funds. And when one looks to **anything**, anything other than God for their security in life, **then they have made themselves a slave to that thing!**

“*And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.*”. The prosperity of the believer that is in view in this passage is the prosperity that God has prospered him with, as the result of the application of doctrinal principles to his life. It is not the prosperity that they have wrought by their own works.

Many believers work at factories, or in the retail area, and live in cities they can't stand, simply because of the paychecks they receive and the promise of some sort of retirement. They trade their lives for dollars enabling those at the top to get rich! For this to change the believer must get under the teaching of the Word and start living their lives by faith in the filling of the Holy Spirit.

D. The contrast of the wicked. v.4

לֹאֵזְרָהָרָשָׁעַיִם: כִּי “The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.”
אִם-כִּמּוֹ עֵצִי שֶׁחַף דָּפְנוּ רוּחַ

“The ungodly are not so:” - *lo-ken hareshaiym*. We have the masculine plural of *rasha* with the definite article ha, the, prefixed to it giving us the wicked or ungodly. The **wicked** are mentioned first in verse one, where we are told not to listen to, nor follow, any advice they have for us. Why should we? They are on the wrong path destroying their lives and souls, therefore, **any advice they would have for other people is bad advice and would create the same thing in our lives and souls!**

The ungodly are not so in what respect? Here we have a stark contrast between the wicked, *rasha*, and those who walk with the Lord applying Bible Doctrine to their lives and living in the spiritual life dynamic. So what constitutes one individual being wicked compared to a doctrinal believer walking with the Lord in their life?

The **wicked** are those, who have been exposed to the truth, and rejected it. Or, have been under the teaching of Bible doctrine and walked away from it. They are arrogant, reject truth, and reject spiritual authority. The term **wicked** looks not so much as their position before God, as to whether they are saved or unsaved, but at their attitude toward the Word of God, and two, the condition of their soul. Whatever advice, opinions, counsel, suggestion, or ideas that they might have are to be disregarded.

Some of the **characteristics of the wicked**, other than rejecting the truth found in Bible Doctrine, are their souls are in a state of confusion, agitation and turmoil, and not being satisfied with that, they seek to cause agitation in others and society in general. They not only reject the Word of God, but they also reject spiritual authority over them. They are proud, arrogant and usually braggarts. They have much resentment and anger in their souls and seek to tear down the doctrinal believer, who is, or wants to go on, with the Lord and his Word. They are willful and stubborn, and very much into money and material possessions. They have no peace, nor stability in their souls, and the effect of their existence on other people's lives, in time, will bring about the same disturbed, unsettled, angry, agitated condition of soul that they have in their souls!

You will find them flocking into the malls, with the materialistic types; or in the “going after money” crowd; or the “party types” with their booze, drugs and riotous parties; they also make up the criminal elements; but you will also find them with the “social reformers”, or “crusaders”; and they make up the religious crowd with their legalism and self righteousness. You will often find them in government where they have the opportunity a broader spectrum of people down to their level of wickedness; in religion, the churches, in economics and always in the home.

But the thing that really defines them is that they are negative to the spiritual authority of the Word of God over them, negative to the teaching of the Word of God, their souls are in a state of confusion, agitation and turmoil, and not being satisfied with that, they seek to cause agitation in others and society in general. They are proud, arrogant and usually braggarts. They have much resentment and anger in their souls and seek to tear down the doctrinal believer, who is, or wants to go on, with the Lord and his Word. They are willful and stubborn, they have no peace, nor stability in their souls, and the effect of their existence on other people's lives, in time, will bring about the same disturbed, unsettled, angry, agitated condition of soul that they have in their souls!

“But are like the chaff which h the wind driveth away.” - kiy im-kammots asher-tiddephennu ruach. The word **chaff**, *mots*, sometimes referred to the stubble left behind in the field after the harvest, sometimes to a larger concept, such as, the husk around an ear of corn, but usually to the light shell, or husk, that was around the grain.

When the time came for the **harvesting** of the field, the **sheaves** were transported from the field by men, donkeys, camels, oxen, etc., to a centrally located place called the **threshing floor**. This was a place usually located close to the home or village, where a site was prepared by **leveling the ground**, picking out all the stones to remove anything that did not pertain to the issue of threshing, then wetting the ground, followed by tamping or rolling the ground to make it hard, then sweeping it, and finally placing stones all around forming a boundary, so as to encapsulate the area to keep the grain in.

Then a **threshing sledge** was brought in, which was a wooden platform with sharp teeth on its bottom, that was hooked up to a team of animals, while the driver, or even his entire family sometimes, would stand on it to give it added weight.

Then, with a continuous supply of **unthreshed grain** in the middle, which was occasionally pulled down for the oxen to eat, the **threshing sledge** would go around in circles, until the sharp teeth of the sledge broke the **stalks** into short pieces and the **chaff**, (husks), that were **attached to the grain** were **separated** from the grain. All during this action the partly threshed grain was turned over with a fork.

Next came the **winnowing** process where the grain and chaff, which are still together in the sense of proximity, although now the attachment that the the chaff had to the grain has been broken, or severed, are **both thrown up into the air!** When going through a trial in our lives, have we ever thought that *“our lives are up in the air”*?

But before going on in the process we need to see the spiritual lesson that is being taught by this analogy. The **harvesting** speaks of God's judgment on the personal lives of Christians, especially in view doctrinal Christians, our relationships with other people, our church, our town, and our nation. The **steps in harvesting** look at the phases of his judgment. The **leveling of the ground** brings in the idea of a level playing field where all are going to be judged righteously. The **clearing of the stones** refers to the removing of all things that do not pertain to the sole issue of Bible Doctrine. All the concepts involved in the preparing of the field, with it being **surrounded by stones**, refers to a place of judgment being prepared from which none of the parties involved can escape.

Now we get back to the **winnowing** process. And what basically have in view here is the attachment that a **doctrinal believer** in Christ has with someone, who is an **unbeliever**, or with someone who is a **believer, but not doctrinal**. And this falls into two categories. One, the non doctrinal believer could have been non doctrinal during the entire relationship with the doctrinal believer. Or two, the non doctrinal believer could have been doctrinal at one time, then went negative. And the **relationship** that existed between the two parties could have been friendship, business, being related, or even marriage.

In the **winnowing process**, **both** the separated grain and chaff are thrown up into the air, that is, the relationship that exists between the doctrinal believer and the unsaved, or the doctrinal believer and the non doctrinal believer, is now “up in the air”. But because the **grain** has weight and substance, due to the doctrinal content of its soul, falls right back to the ground where it came from. But because the **chaff** has no weight or substance due to lack of doctrine, it is **blown away by the wind of judgment!**

It is the **threshing sledge**, with its weight and sharp teeth, which breaks away, rather tears away the chaff from the grain. It is the Lord, his judgments, the trials he puts us through, the weight and pressure of the situation that is put upon us and our relationship to the chaff, that separates us from the chaff, that is, the chaff from us!

And we want to note that even though the grain may feel the pressure and be disturbed by the sharp teeth of the threshing sledge, the process is not designed to hurt the grain, nor to cut the grain to pieces, but to remove the chaff from the grain, to remove the attachment that exists between the grain and the chaff. That is, to break the attachment that the doctrinal believer has with someone who is not doctrinal.

When unbelievers have attached themselves to us, or when we've attached ourselves to them, we will find that the Lord, in his own appropriate time, will begin a threshing sledge process designed to separate us from the chaff. The concept of **stirring** things up is also a part of the process where the grain and the chaff are constantly being thrown back under the threshing sledge, until there is a total separation of the chaff from the grain.

Another thing we note about this whole matter of harvesting, threshing and winnowing is that it came about at **a certain time of year!** After the crops had grown, matured, dried and were harvested, then it was harvested, then the separation took place. What this tells us is that when our lives had gotten to the place where there are alliances, or relationships, where unbelievers and/or non doctrinal believers have attached themselves to us, or us to them, through marriage, friendship, business, social life, etc., we will find that the Lord has a time set aside, when he will deal with all that with his threshing sledge of trials, pressure, suffering, demotion, loss of health, loss of social position and many other things. All a part of the process of discipline, which is designed to correct a situation, not to hurt us, (which it does at times), or punish us, but to separate the chaff from us!

One of the times when you will certainly see the **harvesting, threshing and winnowing** proceeds being used by God in separating us from the chaff in life is when the nation we live in is being judged by God! God's dealings in history with his people, as they lived among the various nations and people of earth, show that God judges his people, as well as the people of earth, and he always works to separate us from the wicked and the wicked from us! He separated Cain from Adam and Eve, Noah from the ancient world, Lot from Sodom, Israel from the others, etc..

The **winnowing process**, which comes next after the chaff has been detached from the grain, is where **both** are thrown up into the air. The job, the relationship, the friendship, whatever it is that defined the attachment that the grain had with the chaff, is now up in the air. But it doesn't stay up in the air, for God is going to bring in the wind of judgment to blow the non doctrinal individual away from the doctrinal believer!

If there was no wind, then the chaff would fall back down right where the grain was! But, because the **wind of judgment** is brought in, the chaff is blown away from from the grain, that is, removed from our lives! The hard part is the threshing sledge process, because it is often painful to our lives, our souls, even sometimes to our pocketbooks. But the following winnowing process is often a relief!

First there is the painful process whereby the **attachment** that the chaff and grain have to each other is **severed**, then there is the process of further **separation**, followed by the complete **removal** of the chaff from the doctrinal believer's life. This would entail things such as: a divorce, breakup of a friendship, dissolving of a business relationship, leaving the local church, etc..

“Which the wind driveth away.” - asher-tiddephennu ruach. As we have seen in the winnowing process, both the grain and the chaff are thrown up into the air, but it is the wind that blows the chaff away from the grain, thus removing the non doctrinal person from the doctrinal believer. And when we speak of being **doctrinal**, we are talking about a born again believer in Jesus Christ, who is sitting under the teaching of the Word of God, who lives by faith in the filling of the Holy Spirit. The word for **wind** in the OT is *ruach* and was used for both the wind and the spirit, because the spirit was thought to be like the wind, and was used in several ways.

The idea of **wind** or **driving away** is used in **God's judgment** on his enemies. *“To the chief Musician, A Psalm or Song of David. Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered: let them also that hate him flee before him. As smoke is driven away, so drive them away: as wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God.” Psalms 68:1,2*

As **chaff**, or stubble, being driven away by **the wind** in **military conquest**. *“Who raised up the righteous man from the east, called him to his foot, gave the nations before him, and made him rule over kings? he gave them as the dust to his sword, and as **driven stubble** to his bow.” Isaiah 41:2*

The idea is used of God's judgment on the **wicked**. They may have gotten themselves to a place of wealth, position, or security, but are carried off by the east wind in his judgment on them. *“The east wind carrieth him away, and he departeth: and as a storm hurleth him out of his place.” Job 27:21*

It is the Lord Jesus Christ who drives the wicked away from the righteous in his judgment on them. *“Let them be as **chaff** before the **wind**: and let the angel of the LORD chase them.” Psalm 35:5 (Malak-Yahweh is a reference to Jesus Christ). Being drive away in judgment is the destiny of God's enemies“O my God, make them like a wheel; as the stubble before **the wind**.” Psalms 83:13*

Of OT Israel as God's agent of judgment. *“Behold, I will make thee a new sharp **threshing** instrument having teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as **chaff**. Thou shalt fan them, and **the wind shall carry them away**, and the **whirlwind** shall scatter them: and thou shalt rejoice in the LORD, and shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel.” Isaiah 41:15,16*

Of being driven away from the source of Bible Doctrine and us living life in the spiritual life dynamic **by our sins and living in the flesh nature**, instead of in the new nature. *“But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, **like the wind, have taken us away**.” Isaiah 64:6*

Allowing **false doctrine** to come into our lives will sweep us away from our mooring of Bible Doctrine and living in the spiritual life dynamic. *“That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with **every wind of doctrine**, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;” Ephesians 4:14*

Not living the faith rest life will blow us away from living in the spiritual life dynamic into emotional instability. We have to stand in our faith in the Word to maintain our spiritual stability and to be able to withstand the attacks of Satan in the angelic conflict. *“But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the **wind** and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.” James 1:6,8*
*“The head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is only Remaliah's son. **'If you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all.**” Isaiah 7:9 NIV*

Once God begins the **separating** process, which is usually painful, thereby breaking the attachment that exists with doctrinal and non doctrinal types, then they are blown away by the wind thus removing them from the doctrinal believer's life.

If there is an attachment existing between a **doctrinal believer** and an **unbeliever**, and we are now at the stage of the **winnowing process**, where God blows the chaff away from the grain, and if the issue is OSN activity, (sins of the flesh activity), the unbeliever, because all they want to do is gratify the lusts of the flesh, will continue to follow after a life of sin, thus taking them away from the believer.

But if there is an attachment between a **doctrinal believer** and a **carnal or worldly believer**, we have then an individual, because he or she is a believer, even though living in the flesh nature, who has the ability and spiritual equipment to live the spirit filled life required of them by God – but they don't! The carnal believer doesn't want to take in the Word; they don't want to live in the new nature; they don't want to be filled with the Holy Spirit; all they want to do is gratify the lusts of the flesh and go after all the things that Babylon's world system has to offer them! So God lets them go after them, and as the result they are removed from the doctrinal believer's life!

It is their sins, their desire to gratify the lusts of their flesh nature, and their desire to go after the things of the world, that drive them away from the doctrinal center of the local church, away from doctrinal relationships with other believers, and away from living their lives in the spiritual life dynamic! God broke the attachment that existed between the two, (which is always some emotional attachment); things were up in the air for awhile, while they were making their decision; they chose to go negative to the Word, live in the flesh and go after the things of the world; God further separated them from the doctrinal believer and then finally removed them.

So, in this case, it was not some kind of circumstance, such as, war, judgment, bad economy, etc., that drove them away from the doctrinal believer, but their own desire go after the things of the world and to live in the flesh nature and not the filling of the Holy Spirit. While the doctrinal believer continued on in the Word, faith living and the filling of the Holy Spirit.

Another area in which we see this dynamic at work is where we have a doctrinal believer having an attachment with an unbeliever, or a non doctrinal believer, who is not positive to the Word. And this relationship might have existed for a long period of time. Maybe the relationship was with a friend or family member and it was in place before one got saved and continued on into your post salvation life, or maybe you picked up this relationship along the way after you were saved.

But remember, there is a time, like the harvest, when God is going to turn his attention to it and deal with it! He hasn't overlooked it, and he hasn't forgotten about it. It's just that he has set an appointed time when he is going to deal with it, if we don't handle it ourselves! He is going to blow away, like the wind, the chaff from us, so we can live the spiritual life dynamic without being distracted by them.

Now even though business and social relationships have strong attachments with them, even more so are family, marriage and friendships, because the emotion that attaches the doctrinal believer with the non doctrinal individual is **love**! Love between friends, love between siblings, parents and children, and love between husband and wife. And love is a strong attachment, strong until God's threshing sledge of judgment comes into play in the matter! And when it's finally through with its process, the love feelings that existed between the two will subside in time. The strong attachment they had for each other and its control over the doctrinal believer's life, because of the feeling of love, will finally be severed.

The love attachment and connection that the two had for each other, (whatever category of love it is), is finally severed; the love energy from the other person that flowed through the doctrinal believer's soul is now disconnected, so the doctrinal believer is freed to follow after the things of the Lord, instead of being controlled by the emotions involved with the other person.

But they may be still together in close proximity to each other. They see each other, maybe still live together, still in business with each other, do things together, even though the feelings are gone. So what does God do? He starts throwing everything up into the air, over and over again, until they are finally blown away from the doctrinal believer's life. Now the doctrinal believer is able to look at them and relate to them having neither good feelings for them, nor bad feelings, **only agape love!**

If it's between two believers, who are friends with each other, or who are married to each other, and are under the Word, and one of them goes negative, the thing that blows the negative one away from the believer, who is still positive, is false teaching. They went negative to Bible Doctrine and went off after the tongues, Pentecostalism, Charismatic movement, legalism, Catholicism, the cults, Mormonism, Jehovah's false witnesses, New Age movement, or whatever.

It's interesting to note the phases of all this. There was a time when the two people were together in the **field**, assumedly both were **growing** together in the Word, but certainly both were exposed to the grace teaching of Bible Doctrine. And we don't know how long this period of time was: one month, two months, one year, two, or more. But there came a period of time when the growing phase was over. Or one could look at this from the standpoint of **probation**, where, after being exposed to Bible Doctrine, the individual is going to be tested to see what they're going to do, what they're going to choose.

Then God turns his attention to the two – **time's up!** The **harvest** is now underway and the **threshing sledge** of trials, pressure and whatever else is brought to bear on them. Not to punish the wheat, but to separate the chaff from it. Once the attachment, (whatever it is), is broken between the two, (they still may be in close proximity to each other), then the **winnowing** of God throws them up in the air.

In the world with believers, this being up in the air becomes another event when a decision has to be made. The **doctrinal believer**, the grain type in the analogy, must decide, “Do I want to be blown away from the Word with the other person?” “Or do I decide to stay with the Word along with the other positive believers and let the other person go away?” The **non doctrinal person** has to decide, “Do I want to stay with Bible Doctrine for my life?” “Or, do I want to go out in life, have fun, do the things I want to do, go after money, success, things, or try some other *religion*?”

The non doctrinal type makes their decision to go for the world, not the Word, and so off they go. They are now driven away to: one, follow after their sinful desires, two, to go after money and success, three, to go out into the world to experience all it has to offer, four, to get involved in the false teaching of the many cults out there. They have made their choice, just the same as the positive believer has made his choice. And because they have free will, they will have to live with the **consequences** of their decision. All decisions have consequences that we will have to live with. Good decisions, good consequences. Bad decisions bring bad consequences.

We have the final separation of the wheat from the chaff, when the non doctrinal type goes away from the doctrinal believer. Now the doctrinal believer can live their own spiritual life before the Lord in freedom and peace and quiet. Now they go on in the Word, faith and grace without having to deal with the OSN influence and hindrance of the chaff.

War is one way that God drives the chaff, the unbeliever, or reversionistic believer, away from the doctrinal believer into judgment. War comes and many die. And the chaff that doesn't die are swept away into captivity as slaves. While God separates the doctrinal believer from them to protect them from the judgment of war. The doctrinal believer may suffer to some degree, but the war concept of judgment is not pointed at them.

Another way that God drove the chaff away was **economic hardship**. When the north wind came, it drove away the rain thus drying up the fields. No water, no food, no jobs, no prospects, so the chaff is forced away from the grain out of economic hardship. The whole matter of blessing centered around being on the land, being able to stay on the land and being blessed on the land. Being forced from the land was a sign of being cursed by God. *“For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth.” Psalms 37:9*

In some cases God uses events to blow away the chaff, (they became chaff because of their own negative decisions), such as, wars, judgments, economics, etc.. In other cases God uses their own negativity to drive them away, their sinful lusting, and their rejection of the truth and their love of lies and false teachings. And in some cases Jesus Christ drives them away personally.

It's interesting to note the phases in all this. There was a time when the two people were out there in the field together; assumedly they were growing together. And we don't know how long a period of time this was, a month, a year, but a period of time. But there came a time when the growing was over. This would be the **probation** time to see what was happening, what they would do, what they would choose. The God turns his attention to deal with them. **Time's up!** Now they're harvested and brought into the threshing floor where the threshing sledge with its sharp teeth, (trials, pressure, difficulties, etc.), is brought to bear upon them, upon both of them. Not to punish the wheat, but to separate the chaff from it. Once the attachment is severed between the two, although they still may be together in proximity, then God throws both of them, their relationship, up into the air. There a decision has to be made – a doctrinal decision.

For the **doctrinal believer** it's, “Do I want to be blown away with this person? Or stay with Bible Doctrine?” For the **non doctrinal person** it's, “Do I want to go for bible Doctrine, or go out in life and do what I want to do?”. The decision is made and the non doctrinal person is blown away to follow after their own sinful desires, after money, success, legalism, formalism, emotionalism, programism, entertainmentism, or whatever it is that they want. As it says in Deuteronomy 8:2, *“Remember how the LORD your God led you all the way in the wilderness these forty years, to humble and **test you in order to know what was in your heart**, whether or not you would keep his commands.”*

When all this happens, then the separation is complete. The non doctrinal influence has been removed from the doctrinal believer's life and **they are now free** to pursue after peace, after serving the Lord, after doing the will of God in their lives, after living their lives in the sphere of the spiritual life dynamic that God created for them!

We must remember that there is an important principle at work in the life of every believer in Christ and that is **what will they choose!** Satan's argument in the angelic conflict is that God isn't fair in casting him into the lake of fire because God knew the end from the beginning. But God is proving to him over and over, by the introduction of trials where the individual is given the opportunity to choose, that men, like angels, have also been given **free will** and they can choose for one thing and not the other, and **with their choices they are responsible for the consequences of their decisions!**

E. The removal of the wicked. v.5

“Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.” Psalms 1:5 - לֹא-יִכּוֹן, לְאֶקְמוּ רֵשׁ עִים-בַּמִּשְׁפָּט וְטֹבִים, בְּעֵדֶת צְדִיקִים

“Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment,” - *al-kan lo-yaqumu reshaim- -bamishepat*. The word for **stand** is *qum* and it meant to be able to stand, to be able to resist or hold your position, to be able to persist or continue on in the thing you are doing, to be able to withstand the judgments of God, to be able to prevent them from having any effect or impact on your life, to be able to maintain one's self, or one's position in life.

The chaff can resist the threshing sledge's sharp teeth of judgment, but eventually its attachment to the grain will be separated. It can resist being thrown up into the air, but nevertheless it will be thrown up into the air! It can resist the wind, but the wind is too powerful for it and the wind will blow it away! The chaff cannot resist the judgment of God!

Al-kan, **therefore**, marks the conclusion of the passage. The **wicked**, (whether an unbeliever or a reversionistic believer), may think they have a future, as they continue along in their wickedness pursuing after their lusts, or going after the things of the world system, or going into the cults of false teaching, etc.; they think that their lives are going to continue along as they have been, but they ignore the fact of God's judgment! They do not look at their lives from the standpoint of God's perspective. And from his perspective the life they are planning for themselves is not going to happen. It may for awhile, but not in the long run.

There are two ways of looking at the judgment of God. One is on the individual level of God's dealing with his people. “*But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.*” 1 Corinthians 11:32 God performs this harvesting, gathering, separating, winnowing, removing process of his judgment, so that the believer will avoid the judgment he has for the unbeliever, or non doctrinal type. This process is always on-going on earth.

But there is also something else going on in this matter and that is we have a collective, broader, more over-all concept of judging. In the one we have individuals here and there that are being singled out in their lives for the purpose of separating the wheat from the chaff, so that the wheat can go on in the things of the Lord.

But what happens when you see it happening to, not just individuals here and there, but to a wide area as in whole districts, towns, or a nation, where God is judging all the individuals in an area? What this brings in is something much bigger that will effect not just the lives of certain individuals, but will effect an entire nation of people!

If we see God working with individuals here and there, as he does constantly, that's one thing. But if we see God working with individual after individual, family after family, church after church, town after town, then that tells us God is judging that society or nation as a whole! God is gathering those believers, who are positive to the Word, and separating them from those, who are negative to the Word, (the chaff). He does this so he can deal with the chaff. “*For the time is come that **judgment must begin at the house of God**: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?*” 1 Peter 4:17

The judgment of God is in the present on individuals, families, churches, towns, and even on entire nations! And the judgment of God will be there in the future in the day of the Lord. *“And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.”* Hebrews 9:27 Whether in this life, or the day to come, the wicked will not be able to stand up under the judgment of God. *“And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.”* Revelation 20:11

The wicked in this life will not be able to withstand the judgment of God on them in the loss of their **health**, regardless of how much insurance they have! They will not be able to withstand his judgments that affect their **finances**, regardless of how much money they have accumulated! They will not be able to maintain the **lifestyles** they have created for themselves, whether average or opulent, regardless of how they have planned everything out! (Look at the lifestyles of those before the Great Depression!) And they will not be able to prevent their **death**, when God decides that life for them is over! *“And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, **Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?**”* Luke 12:19,20

How are they going to pay for that house, which was their temple refuge, when they have no money? How are they going to pay for that new car, when the coffers dry up? Or their new furniture? Or their new clothes? What are they going to do when their job, which was their idol security, is transported to a foreign country? They worshipped Babylon's corporation, but their “god” laid them off!

How are they going to maintain their social life, when their friends desert them? Or when their spouse divorces them? How are they going to withstand the judgments of sickness, disease, injury and death? They can't! Their jobs, money, banks, insurance, government, strength, health, family were their idols, but their idols abandoned them!

The people of America, Christians included, have become so arrogant. They think that their bank accounts, their family, friends, or their own abilities will save them. They think that their jobs, or the companies they work for with their fringe benefits of insurance, et al, will save them. And if all that fails, then they think that the government will save them! But there is no government, no company, no amount of money, no amount of insurance, no person on earth that can save anyone, or withstand the judgment of God.

They forget, or ignore, what God has to say about defiant man in the face of a holy God. *“It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”* Hebrews 10:31 *“For our God is a consuming fire.”* Hebrews 12:29 *“And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?”* Revelation 6:16,17 Man thinks he can withstand God and his judgments, but *lo, not*, connected with *qum* tells us that **he is not able to stand against God!**

No one is exempt from his judgment; no one can avoid it; no one can flee from it; no one can withstand it; not even kings. Nebuchadnezzar was the king of Babylon and was the richest most powerful man on earth. In fact, he was what they thought of as a deified man, a god-king, a man who became a god through the mystery religion, an anti-christ. And he lived at home in his palace secure and content with all his wealth, and might. *“I Nebuchadnezzar was at rest in mine house, and flourishing in my palace.”* Daniel 4:4 How many in America today are living at home in their palaces content and prosperous? That is, until God brings judgment on them!

Nebuchadnezzar lost his mind; he became mentally ill for a period of time of seven years, **until** he acknowledged that heaven ruled the earth – not him. “*And **at the end of the days** I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and **mine understanding returned unto me**, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation: And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and **he doeth according to his will** in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? **At the same time my reason returned unto me**; and for the glory of my kingdom, mine honour and brightness returned unto me; and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me. Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and **those that walk in pride he is able to abase.**”
Daniel 4:34-37*

Believers of all types have been following after the things of the world in the mad rush for the pursuit of happiness and to gratify their lusts. And many have actually grabbed the brass ring for themselves. They've got the money, the fancy clothes, the cars, the expense accounts, the furniture, the social life, the fame, the glory, the power...But what are they going to do when God decides to judge them?? Will they be able to stop him? No! Will they be able to withstand his judgment? No! If the most powerful, the most wealthiest man on earth could not stop God's judgment against him, then how can anyone today think they can do it?

They will be **blown away** in judgment by war, by their sins, by false doctrine, by emotional instability, by their unbelief, by economic adversity, economic collapse and by Christ himself. And they will be **blown to** dislocation to other areas, dislocation into slavery, to continual control of the flesh nature, to the cults and to mental illness and insanity.

This passage deals with the presumptuous arrogance that the negative have toward God, toward his Word, toward God's authority over them, toward God's grace, toward what their place is before God, toward life, their lifestyles, their attitude about what they want out of life and what they incorrectly think they deserve in life. They think that they have all sorts of rights; that they can do what they want to do. They think that God only exists for the purpose of giving them what they want. They think they can continue on like they have been going. They think that they are in control of their destiny! But all that will change when God judges them.

It is their pride, their rejection of the truth, their assumptive thinking, their emotional thinking, their lack of objective truth in their stream of consciousness, their elevated thinking concerning themselves, who they are, what they deserve, etc., that has set them on a course of action that takes them farther and farther away from the truth and away from sanity!

They think that they deserve this and that, and so it is God's place to give them what they want! They do not know that God doesn't owe them anything! And that the only thing they deserve from God is the lake of fire! They are not cognizant of, nor appreciate, what God has done for them in his grace! He forgave their sins, he gave them eternal life, he has done and will do so many things for us, but it's all based upon his grace! We don't deserve it; we can't earn it; and we don't merit it! And anything he does do for us is because of who and what he is, not because of who and what we are! Even the peace of God we can have in our souls, not to mention mental stability, is a gift of his grace! And it comes to us through faith in his Word. But, if we reject his Word and the spiritual life he has given us, then we are left to our own devices, which can only take us downhill.

“Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.” - *wechattiyim ba'adath tsaddiygiym*. The wind of God's judgment has blown them to their judgment, but it has also blown them away from the doctrinal believer and/or away from the assembly of the righteous. It removes the chaff from the doctrinal believer, who is still walking in the things of the Lord, or is trying to, so as to remove the chaff's negative influence on them. But it also removes the chaff from the assembly of the righteous, who gather to study God's Word so they can apply it to their life, so as to prevent them from negatively affecting the positive believers there!

Individuals who we associate with, and who are involved in the world system, or following after the lusts of their flesh natures, can, do and will influence us in our lives! They do this, even without our being aware of it. Their influence on us is never toward Bible Doctrine and the true spiritual life dynamic, but always toward things of the world, flesh, or devil.

The word for **sinner**s is *chattiyim*, the plural of *chata*, and it refers to personal sin, which is generated by the old sin nature of these bodies of flesh. Our flesh bodies we inherited from Adam and they have a DNA element in them, which is prone to human bad, which is referred to as sin, and to human good as well. But even our human good is as filthy rags in the eyes of a holy God.

Now God has given all Church age believers a spiritual provision whereby we can avoid being under the control of personal sin. It is found in living in the new nature, living by faith, living under the control of the filling of the Holy Spirit, and confessing our sins to God for forgiveness and cleansing, when we do sin.

The reference to **sinner**s here is not to be taken restrictively as one's legal standing before God, but of the nature and quality of one's life. That is, these individuals have given themselves over to sinning in one category or another. For them it's operation old sin nature control all the time. Now all of us have problems with sin in our lives, but we seek to keep it under control by living in the spiritual life dynamic provided for us by God. But these types reject all that and follow after the lusts of their flesh natures. And if one is interested in the various lusts, I have categorized over 25 of them and the list of them are available on line under the Categories of Lusts at www.pacificrimbible.com.

The word for **in the congregation** is *ba'adath* and it referred to an appointed meeting, a place where the people of Yahweh gathered to hear his Word. In the Old Testament the assembly of the righteous was where the Israelites gathered together for instruction from God's Word, worship and fellowship. In the New Testament the assembly of the righteous would be where the people of Jesus Christ, (*Yahweh*), gather together for instruction from God's Word, worship and fellowship in a local church.

Both the OT people of God and the NT people of God had the same thing in common. They were to live their lives in righteousness, obedient to God, learning his Word and applying it to their daily lives and decisions, live by faith, stay away from sin, separate from the world system and the lifestyles of the pagans. God and his Word were to be the number one priority in life. The main difference is that the indwelling and filling of the Holy Spirit is available to all NT believers helping us to live at a much higher spiritual level than them and to have communion with God.

But there were those then and now, who do not want to live according to the spiritual life God provides. They turned from his Word; they got into the things of the world; they went into idolatry and into one area of sin or another. He gave them time to straighten their acts out with him, they didn't, so he steps in with judgment and deals with them. And he still does today.

F. God's justice in action. v.6

“For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.” Psalm 1:6 -

כִּי-יֹדַעַ יְהוָה דֶּרֶךְ צַדִּיק יִסְתַּרְךָ רֵשַׁע עִים תֵּאבֵד.

“For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous:” - *kiy-yoda'a yewah derek tsaddiyqiym*. The word for **knoweth** is the qal participle of *yada*, which meant to know, to care for, to watch over, to protect. Other translations have it as to watch over meaning *Yahweh* is watching over the righteous.

What we have here is an objective separation of two groups of people based upon principles, not personalities. But to understand this we need to see that *yada* was used in a treaty relationship, and as such, is an expression of *Yahweh's* covenant commitment to Israel. God had entered into covenant with Israel thereby binding them to him, and him to them.

But this covenant relationship was not some emotional matter where it's, “I love you and you love me”, but a covenant relationship based upon conditions laid out solely by God, which were the basis by which would determine whether he would bless them or curse them.

The conditions, (his laws), he laid out in his covenant reflected the righteous nature of *Yahweh*. *Yahweh* was a holy God and his people were to be holy as they lived their lives. If an individual conformed his/her life to the righteous laws of the covenant, then they were viewed as living in righteousness. But if they didn't, then they were wicked in God's eyes. And if they lived in righteousness, then he would bless them. But if they didn't, then they would be cursed.

We have here in the passage an example of a believer living in Israel being blessed by God. This believer, although not perfect in how they lived their lives, could still fulfill God's requirements for being blessed. He stayed occupied with the Word of God as his first priority in life; he loved it and meditated on it morning and evening. He didn't listen to the advice of the wicked. He didn't follow a life of sin. He lived a separated life avoiding the wrong kind of people. Because of that, *Yahweh* watched over him, that is, he gave special attention to that believer to be sure to bless him. Why? Because his covenant with Israel demanded it.

So this believer was insured that he would make it in this world, that he would survive the hard times, that he would grow into a healthy believer, that he would have a healthy soul and body, that he would mature spiritually, that he would have success in life, that he would be prospered by God, (which didn't mean that he would be filthy rich, or high up in politics), because *Yahweh* was watching over him to make sure that this would be the way his life turned out!

Elihu talked about how God watched over them for the purpose of blessing them. And if they displeased him, he would speak to them about it, so they could correct the error of their ways and he could continue to bless them! “Behold, God (El) is mighty, and despiseth not any: he is mighty in strength and wisdom. He preserveth not the life of the wicked: but giveth right to the poor. He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous: but with kings are they on the throne; yea, he doth establish them for ever, and they are exalted. And if they be bound in fetters, and be holden in cords of affliction; Then he sheweth them their work, and their transgressions that they have exceeded. He openeth also their ear to discipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity. **If they obey and serve him, they shall spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasures.**” Job 35:5-11

“But the way of the ungodly shall perish” - wederek reshaiym toabad. The word for **way** is *derek* and it refers to the path that one is taking in life. A **path** goes from one place to another. And one's **travel** on the path is called a journey. The path metaphor is used throughout the Bible. In the Greek the word is *hodos*. The **mechanics** of traveling on the path is walking. What enables us to **see** the path is faith. The **Word of God** is the lamp that lights the way.

The **path** we are to take in life is the will and plan of God for our life. It takes us **from the place** of our salvation to the various places he wants us to go, live and function in life, and ends up in heaven in his presence. **It begins for us at the Way – Jesus Christ!** *“Jesus saith unto him, I am **the way**, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”* John 14:6 It is our **journey** in this life as pilgrims in this world as we are about the Father's business. It is a **path** that we have to walk step by step. We **walk** it by faith. *“(For we walk by faith, not by sight:)”* 2 Corinthians 5:7 And it is the **Word of God** and its doctrines that light the way. *“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”* Psalms 119:105

When the believer lives their life by faith in the Word, they are guaranteed that their life will turn out fine. The Hebrew word *galal* for **faith** shows that, because it shows the connection that exists between our faith decisions and their consequences. Such as found in Psalms 37:5, *“Commit our way to Yahweh; trust in him and he will do this.”*, and many other passages.

Now *galal* came from the idea of rolling something, like a stone, and came to be used figuratively for the idea of faith or trust. Like rolling your burden on the Lord. It could very well have been used because of the covenant idea associated with it. **But the significance of it is the consequences of one's decisions and actions!** It was important for all to realize the direct relationship that exists between one's decisions, one's acts, and the consequences that come from them. A concept that is almost totally ignored in our society today.

The idea is as follows, **as one was pushing the rock from point A to point B, he would notice that a furrow or track was left in the ground, showing an unbroken line**. This led to the idea that **there was a direct connection between one's acts and their consequences**. One could see how the one thing led to the other; there was a direct line between the two. So many people today are oblivious of this concept though. They blindly go through life committing all kinds of acts, without any regard, or concern, of the consequences. They act bewildered, angry, when their lives are destroyed, because they have made wrong choices. They have never understood that actions have consequences, some good, some bad. But when the believe lives their life by faith in the Word day after day of their lives, then that will have good consequences of accomplishing the Father's will.

The way of the righteous will be blessed. But the way of the wicked will perish! Why? Because the righteous live their lives by faith in the Word each day! But the wicked reject the Word of God. One makes decisions to follow the Word, the other made their decisions to follow after the way of the world and their flesh natures! Both the righteous and the wicked have chosen to follow a path in their lives and both paths will end up at different places.

The **wicked** can say at the end of their path, “How did I get here”? And all one has to do is point out the furrow in the ground that goes back to their continued bad decisions! The **righteous** can also say the same thing. “How did I get to this wonderful place”? And once again all one has to do is point out the furrow in the ground that goes back to their continued good decisions to live their lives by faith in the Word! The one led to blessings, the other away from them.

The word for **perish** is the piel stem of *abad* and it meant to be destroyed, ruined, annihilated, to be lost, to run away. It always speaks of something bad happening to the individual and could cover anything from ruination to death. Loss of health, loss of job, loss of home, finances, prosperity, to disease, sickness, wasting diseases, one's death, loss of mind, various mental illnesses, etc.. *Abad* is bad enough by itself, but the piel stem intensifies all this.

If it was found in the hiphil stem, it would tell us that the wicked's ruination, destruction would be caused to fall upon them with God directing it, or allowing it. But in the piel stem it's more intensive and factual looking at the condition of the whole situation. Which is to say, **they brought it upon themselves! Ruin lies on the path they are taking in life.**

For example, a man stands before a fork in the road wondering which path to take. So he asks another man, a good man, standing there about the two paths. The man kindly points out to him that the one path is the best one to take. There is water to drink along the way, food one can gather, no real pitfalls or problems, no cliffs to climb, or other hazards. And the people he might meet along the way are basically decent people, who will give him no problem.

While the other path he points out has very few watering holes, little or no food to gather, the terrain is rough and unforgiving, and the people who live along that path are violent and the worse sort of reprobates in the whole area. Travel that path at your own peril. The young man, however, rejects his advice and decides he wants to travel down the latter path, the wrong path, and it ends in his **ruination!** He ends up beaten, his goods stolen and becomes a slave for one of these people! Whose fault is it? **He brought it on himself**, as we would say, because he would not listen to the advice of the good man.

Ruination lies on the path that the wicked take. It's an objective concept. They follow down the wrong path in life, because they are making bad decisions. They are making bad decisions, because they either don't have the wisdom that Bible Doctrine would give them, or because they been presented with the wisdom and rejected it! Either way they are taking the wrong path to their ruination.

There's a few things that enter in here that help explain all this. First, is the matter of rejecting the guidance of God with the result that the believer takes the wrong path in life. Secondly is the matter of no protection; no protection in the sense that God has for the righteous believer. Thirdly, are the pitfalls that lie along the path.

Let's say that a believer has before him two paths that lie before him that he can take in life. At the trail head God stands there instructing him on which path to take. He says, this is the way, walk ye in it. But the believer has free will and has his own choice to make. "*What man is he that feareth the LORD? him shall he **teach in the way that he shall choose.***" Psalms 25:12

But the believer rejects the wisdom, advice and guidance of the Lord and so he rejects the right path. He doesn't like what he thinks he sees on the path. He thinks that this path will not give him what he wants, the money, the riches, the things, the fun, the pleasure. So he rejects the right path and opts for the other one. But on that path lies ruination and loss for him.

We see this with Abraham and his nephew Lot. Lot was faced with a choice as to where he would move and settle down. "*Is not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if *thou wilt take* the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if *thou depart* to the right hand, then I will go to the left.*" Genesis 13:9

Lot had a choice between two paths he could take in life. So what motivated him? What was it that prompted Lot to choose for Sodom? And we see it in the next verse, where it talked about the well watered plain which would feed his herds, which in turn would end up with him being financially prosperous and secure. *“And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar.”* Genesis 13:10 But, as we see from Scripture, the choice he made had disastrous consequences for him and his family.

Many a believer has rejected the guidance and counsel of God and chose to take the wrong path in life. They chose for the world over the Word, for the things of the flesh over the Spirit, for their own plans and not the plan of God, for their own will and not the will of God. The path they chose may be pleasant and fun for awhile, but it will end in ruination, misery, despair, loss of the soul's well being and even, perhaps, death. It's not God's fault, nor is it his will, that these terrible things happen to them. It's just that they *come with the territory*, as we would say. They lie along the path.

It's like staying in a hotel in downtown Los Angeles and you want to go to a certain restaurant or place. So you inquire of the concierge as to how to get there. He directs you to go down this street to your destination, but to avoid another street, due to the reports of gangs and violence. But you reject his instruction, because the street looks cute or fun, and besides you assume nothing will happen to you. And what happens? You get robbed, beaten, maybe even shot! So whose fault is it that your life has been ruined? The concierge? God? Or yourself? Safety was the condition on the right street, while danger and destruction was the situation on the wrong street!

Or like parents who beg and plead with their children to not do drugs. But they reject their parents pleading and go down the path of drugs, where they will only find misery, despair and death. They destroy their own lives. They lose their families, their homes, their education, their money, their health, their minds and their self respect. The path they went down in life resulted in *abad* for them. Ruination, destruction and despair. Did God do it to them? No! They did it to themselves because it was on the path they chose.

Just like those, who reject the gospel of Christ to enter into the narrow gate and take the narrow path, choose to go through the broad gate and take the broad path. Only to find that at the end of that path destruction in Hell! *“Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.”* Matthew 7:13,14

Many a young man or woman have played loose in the areas of partying and sex. Some having over one hundred sexual partners! Resulting in many of them contracting one or more sexually transmitted diseases! It is estimated now that over one hundred million Americans have some sort of venereal disease! Some have lost the ability to have children, others have to live with a painful condition under medication, while others have lost their lives! And why? Because they refused to listen to Biblical instruction in their pride and decided to go down the wrong path.

But here's the good news. If you come to your senses and realize that you are traveling down the wrong path in life, you can call out to God, who will be merciful to you, and he will get you back on the right path. And when he does, then you must never allow yourself to get into that situation again! And we do so by living each day in the Word of God and applying his teaching to our lives. *“Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word.”* Psalms 119:67