

Just What Do You Mean, the Carnal Mind? Part 2

As we have learned in Part 1, the difference between the “natural” and “carnal” is the element of *pride*.

Leviticus 26:14-20 (NKJV)

¹⁴ **But if you do not obey Me, and do not observe all these commandments,** ¹⁵ **and if you despise My statutes, or if your soul abhors My judgments, so that you do not perform all My commandments, but break My covenant,** ¹⁶ **I also will do this to you:** I will even appoint terror over you, wasting disease and fever which shall consume the eyes and cause sorrow of heart. And you shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it. ¹⁷ I will set My face against you, and you shall be defeated by your enemies. **Those who hate you shall reign over you,** and you shall flee when no one pursues you. ¹⁸ And after all this, if you do not obey Me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins. ¹⁹ **I will break the pride of your power;** I will make your heavens like iron and your earth like bronze. ²⁰ And your strength shall be spent in vain; for your land shall not yield its produce, nor shall the trees of the land yield their fruit.

These passages are in regard to the people of Israel who were delivered from Egypt through Moses. Why would they apply to us? Consider.

1 Corinthians 10:11 (ESV)

¹¹ **Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction,** on whom the end of the ages has come.

What is recorded in the Old Testament concerning the nation of Israel was “written down for our instruction,” not just some, *but all of it*, including that which we read above. In fact, if you continue to read in Leviticus, Chapter 26, it continues to speak about God’s judgment because of disobedience and rebellion.

Consider verses 14 and 15. Why would we “despise” His statutes? Why would we “abhor” His judgments and break His covenant? Is it not due to pride, to our independent attitude that no one should rule over us or keep us from fulfilling every desire of the flesh and mind (Eph. 2:1-3)? And what is the Lord’s response to such rebellion? *“I will break the pride of your power.”*

Psalms 40:4 (NKJV)

⁴ Blessed *is* that man who makes the Lord his trust, **and does not respect the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies.**

Here’s the reality. The television news is filled with stories about our proud and rebellious leaders who have no faith whatsoever in their Creator or in His Word. Lying is the norm, so much so that it is impossible to determine who is speaking the truth if anyone at all. Yet, we gather around them, demanding them to solve our problems while we stand back and watch them argue among themselves about what to do, more concerned about placing blame than finding solutions. And the solutions at best are ludicrous, lacking sound reason and wisdom because again, they are too busy placing blame, too proud to admit that they don’t really know what to do.

We cannot fix our problems with the same mind that created them. The carnal mind is not capable of finding any solutions because it is continually corrupted by pride. Until those in power have been humbled, there will be no resolutions of any lasting value. And what is true in the secular realm is also true in the religious segments as well.

Think about it. Our society is overwhelmed by so many things that few of us even stop to really consider them. Our abundance has become our enemy, our imagination our destruction, while we ignore the long-term effects of the conveniences we have and continue to invent.

Do we really think it's normal for American society to have a plethora of drugs available for so many diseases? Do we not see how truly sick and diseased we have become due to our food and drink? Do we not realize that the many things we take for granted are responsible for the tremendous influx of the physical, emotional, and psychological problems that plague us today? Friend, we are reaping what we have sown, our carnal knowledge creating an illusion of freedom that is bondage in disguise.

I would challenge you to reconsider the parable of Adam and Eve. Yes, I said "parable." Think about it. There is no such thing as a tree of knowledge or a tree of life. Neither is there a Garden of Eden or a talking snake. All of these are symbolisms depicting the inward working of the heart and mind of the natural man which abides in all of us and what our natural man does when confronted with the divine aspects of God's living Word (law).

Beloved, understand that the "Garden" of Eden speaks to us of the *divine and universal principle of sowing and reaping*, so too the presence of Adam, the *male* (sowing), and Eve, the *female* (reaping). To be even more specific, Adam defines the *mind* (sowing) while Eve defines the *heart* (reaping). And the serpent? It illustrates the *deceitful nature of the pride* that arises in our own heart that seeks to challenge the wisdom of our heavenly Father (Jer. 17:9-10). This is why we see the serpent with Eve, not Adam.

The original and ongoing edict of God was "let them have *dominion*" (Gen. 1:26). Ah, but before that dominion could be justly dispensed, God said, "Be *fruitful* and multiply" (Gen. 1:28). Without the "fruit of the Spirit" (Gal. 5:22-26), we are subject to conceit and envy (Gal. 5:26), and this, my friend, is exactly what we are seeing in society at large, from the highest positions of government to the man on the street.

The manifestation of pride is encapsulated in the "works" or deeds "of the flesh." It is pride which provokes us to "adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like" (Gal. 5:19-21). It is pride which deceives us into thinking that we can continually do these things without repercussions (hence "deceitful"; Jer. 17:9). Ah, but the repercussions are clearly evident when we are willing to look at things around us openly and honestly. As we continue on in these things we are finding that the next generation is taking it even further, clamoring in the streets to remove all boundaries and any mention of God and His law.

Brother and sister, pride is evidence of our *willful ignorance* and our unwillingness to admit it. It is evidence of immaturity and lack of knowledge, and because we have rejected knowledge, the Lord has rejected us from being a priest to Him and He has forgotten our children (Hosea 4:6).

2 Chronicles 7:12-14 (KJV)

¹² And the Lord appeared to Solomon by night, and said unto him, I have heard thy prayer, and have chosen this place to myself for an house of sacrifice. ¹³ If I shut up heaven that there be no

rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people; ¹⁴
If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

It's a given, my friend, that the world is in darkness, in the clutches of the deceitful pride of the carnal man (I John 5:19). But we, beloved, are called to be the "light of the world" (Matt. 5:14), setting forth an example of the love and wisdom of Christ. And so it is us, His people, who need to humble ourselves and pray and seek His face and turn from our wicked ways. When we do, He will hear from heaven, forgive our sins, and heal our land.

In keeping with Leviticus, Chapter 26, we find that it is the Lord who shuts "up heaven that there be no rain" of His Spirit and commands the "locusts to devour" (Rev. 9:1-12) our fruitfulness and sends "pestilence" or death, the increase of the works of darkness among us in order to humble us. As our heavenly Father, He cannot ignore our disobedience and rebellion any more than we can ignore the same in our own children. His divine love for us will not and cannot allow it (Heb. 12:5-11).

God is love (I John 4:8, 16), not the politically correct and sentimental kind of love, but the open and honest kind that speaks plainly against our disobedience and rebellion. By means of His divine principle of sowing and reaping, He is speaking "today" if we will but "hear His voice" (Heb. 3:7). His "voice" is His Word and His Word is living, active, and evident in all that He has created, therefore, we are without excuse (Rom. 1:20).

2 Chronicles 32:24-26 (NKJV)

²⁴In those days Hezekiah was sick and near death, and he prayed to the Lord; and He spoke to him and gave him a sign. ²⁵But Hezekiah did not repay according to the favor *shown* him, **for his heart was lifted up; therefore wrath was looming over him and over Judah and Jerusalem.** ²⁶**Then Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart, he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the wrath of the Lord did not come upon them in the days of Hezekiah.**

Consider our passages above in regard to Hezekiah, king of Judah. Note how it is recorded that "his heart was lifted up; therefore *wrath* was looming over him and over Judah and Jerusalem. Then Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart, he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, *so that the wrath of the Lord did not come upon them* in the days of Hezekiah."

Friend, we are plainly told by Paul that "the law worketh (accomplishes) wrath" (Rom. 4:15; KJV). This being true, it exposes one of the most damnable heresies ever propagated by the religious segments of our time that we are under grace and not under the law. Do we not realize that without law, there is no need for grace, and without grace, there is no need for law? They are two sides of the same coin. As a believer in Christ, we should know and understand that the New Covenant is not the doing away of the moral essence of God's law but the "writing" of it in our minds and hearts (Heb. 8:10). Furthermore, Jesus did not come to destroy the law or the prophets, *but to fulfill it* (Matt. 5:17). Jesus added the "prophets" to this statement to indicate the prophetic components of the law which are even now being fulfilled in our time.

Now, what do I mean by "moral essence"? Consider.

Romans 13:10 (NIV)

¹⁰ Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore **love is the fulfillment of the law.**

It is here that we find the spiritual nature and moral essence of the law (Rom. 7:14). “Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.”

Matthew 22:35-40 (KJV)

³⁵ Then one of them, *which was a lawyer*, asked *him a question*, tempting him, and saying, ³⁶ **Master, which is the great commandment in the law?** ³⁷ Jesus said unto him, **Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.** ³⁸ **This is the first and great commandment.** ³⁹ And the second *is* like unto it, **Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.** ⁴⁰ **On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.**

Here beloved is the summation of all that God’s law entails, just two commandments. Understand that to love God is to love His law, for the law proceeded and came forth from our heavenly Father and expresses His holy and divine nature. It is fruitless to say we love Him and yet resist His commandments. And it is only through love that we will come to acknowledge, understand, and embrace His divine law within. Consider the very first Psalm.

Psalms 1:1-6 (NKJV)

¹ Blessed *is* the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; ² **But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night.** ³ He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper. ⁴ **The ungodly are not so, but are like the chaff which the wind drives away.** ⁵ Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. ⁶ For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

Also consider Psalms 19:7-9.

Psalms 19:7-9 (KJV)

⁷ **The law of the Lord is perfect**, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord *is* sure, making wise the simple. ⁸ The statutes of the Lord *are* right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord *is* pure, enlightening the eyes. ⁹ The fear of the Lord *is* clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the Lord *are* true *and* righteous altogether.

Our word “perfect”? It means, “*Entire,*” also, “*Integrity, truth.*” This being the case, there is no need for another law than that which was first delivered to Israel at Mount Sinai so long ago.

Yes, it’s true that the Lord’s death, burial, and resurrection did away with the many ordinances of the law (Eph. 2:15), but He did so by fulfilling its moral essence perfectly and completely. No longer do we need a Tabernacle or Temple, nor must we sacrifice animals or keep the feasts which were delivered to Israel at Mount Sinai. Rather, we are called to walk in love and thus fulfill the precious nature of that which was exemplified by these carnal ordinances. It is this, my friend, which the carnal mind resists.

What did Paul write? “Love does no harm to its neighbor.” No harm, beloved, whether physical or psychological, outward or inward. Can we honestly say that this is the case? No, we

cannot, for when we are truly willing to look at things today in the honest light of His law, we will find that there is a multitude of things which we take for granted which are causing “harm” to each of us on a daily basis. For the sake of convenience and societal acceptance, we have devised a multitude of chemically saturated products that are harmful to our physical being. And our televisions and Social Media ads tout these products in a manner that suggests our lives are less fulfilling without them.

Paul wrote that “the love of money is the root of all evil” (I Tim. 6:10), and there should be no doubt in any believer’s mind that this is truly the case. For the sake of wealth and material gain, we have propagated wars throughout the world, most of which make no real sense at all as to their purpose. We have been taxed over and over again, our governments placing such heavy burdens upon us that we struggle to make ends meet while our legislators pass laws and spend money on so many frivolous things that we should be embarrassed to even name them.

Due to the intense pride that is so prevalent among us, we have managed to shape a society that is rife with accusation, contention, and envy. We are filled with all manner of evil inventions, both physically and ideologically speaking, as the carnal minds of the multitude of collectives rise up around us and sound off on all forms of media in order to propagate the darkness they so readily embrace. No wonder John wrote, “We know that we are of God, and the *whole world* lies under the sway of the wicked one” (I John 5:19). And who is this “wicked one”? It is the serpent, devil, and Satan; *not a fallen angel as so many suppose* but the fallen, corrupt and haughty spirit of the carnal man which lurks beneath the surface of our own inward being. For this reason, Jesus said, “And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted” (Matt. 23:12).

Friend, the carnal mind is the mind of pride, consisting of any and all who think of themselves more highly than they should. The carnal mind sees itself as better than most and thus more deserving. It is the carnal mind which has entered the church, clothed in “sheep’s clothing” but inwardly, a ravenous wolf (Matt. 7:15). It is the carnal mind which is responsible for propagating the many false teachings, traditions, and commandments of men which have made the Word of God of no effect (Matt. 15:1-9).

2 Thessalonians 2:1-12 (NKJV)

¹ Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, ² not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come. ³ Let no one deceive you by any means; for *that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition,* ⁴ **who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.** ⁵ Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? ⁶ And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time. ⁷ **For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work;** only He who now restrains *will do so* until He is taken out of the way. ⁸ **And then the lawless one will be revealed,** whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming. ⁹ **The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders,** ¹⁰ **and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.** ¹¹ **And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie,** ¹² **that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.**

These passages give us much to think about concerning the aspects of pride and the carnal mind. Paul is addressing the “day of Christ,” the “coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him.” Clearly, that “Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition.” And who is this “man”? It is not an individual. Rather, it speaks of “the first man Adam” who was “made a living soul” (I Cor. 15:45), again the natural man who, because of pride, resisted the commandment of God. This is illustrated by the serpent in Genesis, Chapter 3, where we read, “Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden’?” Only pride questions what God has said, giving way to the deception which follows.

When there is no real love for the truth, we find that it is God who sends “strong delusion” that we might believe “the lie” and be “condemned.” And what is “the lie”? It is, “Has God indeed said”? Isn’t that the plight of Christianity at large in this hour? Isn’t that the reason we are so divided among ourselves? Are we not contending among ourselves about what God has said? Have we not created confusion among the body of Christ that is unprecedented in our time? Isn’t it clearly pride that opposes and exalts one “above all that is called God or that is worshiped”? Isn’t this what we have done by exalting our religious leaders above God and His Word, believing that they have succeeded in establishing the truth of Christ and the apostles?

Think about it, my friend. Every denomination and religious organization today can be traced back to a person or persons who long ago decided that they were qualified to lead God’s people in spirit and truth. As a result, we have churches filled with all manner of rote and ritual which has nothing to do with the inward transformation that is needful for our deliverance from this arrogant posturing. No man has the right to exalt himself to a spiritual position. It is Christ alone who chooses and exalts and He does not exalt those who are absorbed in their own self-importance. The true servant of God must be humbled before they are qualified to lead His people.

Friend, the kingdom of God is not about money, secular power, and recognition. It is not about entertainment and making ourselves friends with the world (James 4:4). The Lord Jesus and His disciples were not “popular” men, embraced by the religious segment of their time. Rather, they were hated and despised, scorned and ridiculed, rejected by those in religious power who were blinded by their own arrogance, so much so that they were willing to murder them. Ah, but God’s purpose was fulfilled, even in this.

2 Timothy 3:10-13 (NKJV)

¹⁰ But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, ¹¹ persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra--what persecutions I endured. And out of *them* all the Lord delivered me. ¹² **Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.** ¹³ **But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.**

Why do those who are “godly” suffer persecution? Because they expose those who don’t and believe me when I say that the proud do not like being exposed. This is evident each and every day in the media. Ah, but “evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived,” because they in their pride are readily accepted by those who are also filled with pride.

In II Thessalonians, Paul mentions “the mystery of lawlessness,” and it truly is a mystery, for most never give thought to their disobedience and rebellion against the living Word of God. Most never consider that what we embrace as life and living is neither life nor living, rather, it is darkness which we have chosen to call light.

Isaiah 5:20-24 (ESV)

²⁰ Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter! ²¹ Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, and shrewd in their own sight! ²² Woe to those who are heroes at drinking wine, and valiant men in mixing strong drink, ²³ who acquit the guilty for a bribe, and deprive the innocent of his right! ²⁴ Therefore, as the tongue of fire devours the stubble, and as dry grass sinks down in the flame, so their root will be as rottenness, and their blossom go up like dust; for they have rejected the law of the Lord of hosts, and have despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.

These passages are an adequate description of our plight today, both in the world and the church. We have fallen, my friend, far from the power and glory of the New Testament Church that was established by Christ and the apostles two thousand years ago. Ah, but inasmuch as Paul and all the other apostles knew and understood the glory that they walked in, so too did they know that this glory would soon dissipate as time went on, clarified by the law and the prophets to which they gave heed. The Lord and all of His apostles warned us of what would come so that we might flee to Him and escape the wrath of the Lord that is even now evident in our time.