

Men's Bible Study – Sept. 7, 2009

God Never Sins

Reading Job 38-42:6- We are going to start by reading this. It will get us in the right frame of mind moving forward.

We ended in May talking about the sovereignty of God over everything. God ordains and governs all things and God foreknows all things. This creates a problem doesn't it? Anybody think of our problem off the top of their heads? Evil. If God ordains evil, isn't he guilty of committing that evil? If God ordains evil, isn't He unjust in punishing evildoers? The Bible doesn't try in anyway to hide God's involvement in evil events to come about or evil deeds being done. Before we get started here I want to note two things:

1. The scriptures never show God as directly doing anything evil but rather bringing about evil deeds through the willing actions of moral creatures.
2. Scripture never blames God for evil or shows God taking pleasure in evil and never excuses humans for their evil behavior.

Texts: I want to give you a good bit here so hang with me.

1. Story of Joseph

- a. Gen 37:11 - Brothers were jealous of him
- b. Gen 37:4, 5, 8 - Hated him
- c. Gen 37:24 - Cast him into a pit
- d. Gen 37:28 - Sold him into slavery
- e. Gen 45:5 - God sent me before you (into Egypt)
- f. Gen 50:20 - God meant it for good
- g. Here we have a combination of evil deeds done by sinful men who are rightly held accountable for their sin and the overriding providential control of God whereby God's purposes are ultimately accomplished.

2. Exodus and the battles afterward

- a. Exodus 4:21, 7:3, 9:12, 10:20 & 27, 11:10, 14:4, 8 - I will harden Pharaoh's heart.
 - i. Some people will argue that Pharaoh hardened his own heart which Ex. 8:15, 32 and 9:34 states but even here it is clear that God clearly says He's going to harden his heart before this. Plus as we saw in Joseph both divine and human agents are working in these incidents.
- b. Romans 9:16 - God hardens Pharaoh's heart to show His power over man's might. We see this clearly in Ex 14:17 which says "*And I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they shall go in after them, and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, his chariots, and his horsemen*".
- c. Josh 11:20 - Concerning the Canaanites- *For it was the LORD's doing to harden their hearts that they should come against Israel in battle, in*

order that they should be devoted to destruction and should receive no mercy but be destroyed, just as the LORD commanded Moses.

3. Sampson's demand

- a. Sampson demanded to marry an unbelieving Philistine woman.
- b. Judges 14:4 - *His father and mother did not know that it was from the LORD, for he was seeking an opportunity against the Philistines. At that time the Philistines ruled over Israel.*

4. Sons of Eli

- a. Eli tries to rebuke his sons for the evil they had done
- b. 1 Samuel 2:25 - *If someone sins against a man, God will mediate for him, but if someone sins against the LORD, who can intercede for him?" But they would not listen to the voice of their father, for it was the will of the LORD to put them to death.*

5. David

- a. Murder and Adultery - Nathan's confrontation
- b. 2 Samuel 12:11-12- *Thus says the LORD, 'Behold, I will raise up evil against you out of your own house. And I will take your wives before your eyes and give them to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun. For you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel and before the sun.'* This is fulfilled in 16:22
- c. That God could bring evil against him stays with David when Shimei curses David and throws rocks at him the mighty men want to kill him but David says in 2 Samuel 16:11-Let him alone, and let him curse, for the Lord has bidden him.

6. Some more to ponder

- a. 1 Kings 22:23 - Puts a lying spirit in the mouth of Ahab's prophets.
- b. Isa. 10:5 - Sent the Assyrians as the rod of his anger to punish Israel.
- c. Jeremiah 25:9 - Sends Babylon against Israel.
- d. Jeremiah 25:12 - Punishes Babylon for coming against Israel.
- e. Amos 4 - God gave the hunger, drought, blight, mildew, locust, pestilence and the death of men and horses yet they did not return to him.

Now it's important to remember that in none of these texts is God doing evil directly but rather bringing about evil deeds through the willing actions of moral creatures nor is he ever blamed for evil.

What is happening is that God is bringing about his plan through the willing choices of real human beings who are morally accountable for their actions. In a way not understood by us or revealed to us, God causes men to make willful choices to do what they did.

I try and say it like this...all men will glorify God. There is no choice in the matter...by being a trophy of grace or a vessel of judgment.

Conclusion:

- 1) God uses all things to fulfill his purposes and even uses evil for His glory and our good.
 - a. This enable Joseph to say what you meant for evil God meant for good. I need you to keep in mind that he did this decades after he was sold into slavery, resisted the advances of a whorish married woman and ended up in jail, saved a kingdom and was forgotten in jail and finally had the authority and opportunity to kill everyone who did him wrong legally.
 - b. Raises up evil to crush it.
- 2) Nevertheless, God never does evil, and is never to be blamed for evil
 - a. Luke 22:22- For the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed!"
- 3) God rightfully blames and judges moral creatures for the evil they do.
- 4) Evil is real and not an illusion. We should never be a part of evil for it will always harm us and others.
- 5) In the end we have to come to grips with the reality that God being able to ordain that we carry out evil deeds and yet hold us accountable and not be blamed for them is far beyond our brains ability to understand

Next week: Human Moral Accountability