

The evidence of God's care and providential control of His creation is perhaps one of the most comforting and thought-provoking themes of the Bible. The Scriptures teach more than the fact that God is, and has created all things, more also than that He sometimes influences the course of men. It is not enough that we understand God can send rain when He wishes, that He can turn the course of history to fulfill his plans. The Scriptures teach that God is the maker of all history. God wants us to know that rain never comes, or could come except He send it, that He not only at times influences history, but that He has written it, decreeing the end from the beginning. Yes, God cares. How often we have heard those words and experienced them too, yet how frequently we act as if He has ceased to care. Satan may even tempt us to think God does not care, or that He has voluntarily limited himself and is no longer King of the earth. Some even teach that Satan, not God, rules the earth. Such teaching would lead us to the deepest despair or else cause us to labor under a morose contentment. Certainly we could not "rejoice ever more," and "in everything give thanks" if we had to believe that Satan were king and we his temporary subjects. The Scriptures show profusely that the whole universe to the very hairs of our heads and Satan himself is under God's watchful eye and His providential care.

Bethune has given us a careful definition of providence in the following: "The word 'providence' is taken from the Latin, and by its etymology means foresight, not merely in the sense of seeing before but in the sense of taking care for the future, or rather an ordering of things and events after a predetermined and intelligent plan; it supposes wisdom to devise and power to execute."

GOD HAS A PLAN

"Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world." Acts 15:18

"According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." Eph. 3:11.

"Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me. Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Isaiah 46:9,10.

"Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Matt. 25:34.

"According as he hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love." Eph. 1:4.

"Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." II Tim. 1:9.

"Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Acts 2:23.

"For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast annointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel were

gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." Acts 4:27,28.

"And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of the life of the lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Rev. 15:8.

IT IS UNCHANGEABLE

"God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent; hath he said, and shall he not do it, or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" Num. 23:19.

"For he is not a man that he should repent." I Sam. 15:29.

"The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, surely as I have thought so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." Isaiah 14:24.

"The Lord hath sworn and will not repent." Ps. 110:4.

"I have purposed it and will not repent." Jer. 4:28.

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." James 1:17.

"For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Mal. 3:6.

"There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the Lord that shall stand." Prov. 19:21.

"Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven." Psa. 119:89.

IT IS SOVEREIGN

"See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand." Deut. 32:39.

"Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven, and earth, in the seas, and all deep places." Psa. 135:6.

"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?" Dan. 4:35.

"The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand:

"For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it, and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?" Isaiah 14:24,27.

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, all power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." Math. 28:16.

"In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Eph. 1:11.

"I know that thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from thee." Job 42:2.

"But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath please." Ps. 115:3.

"So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." Isaiah 55:11.

"Nay but, O Man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus?"

"Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?" Rom. 9:20,21.

IT IS DECREED

"Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." Psa. 139:16

"Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass." Job 14:5.

"...Thus saith the Lord; such as are for death, to death; and such as are for the sword, to the sword; and such as are for the famine, to the famine; and such as are for the captivity, to the captivity." Jer. 15:2.

"And there were added to the church such as should be saved." Acts 2:47.

"As many as were ordained to eternal life believed." Acts 13:48.

"But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory." I Cor. 2:7.

"For whom he did foreknow he did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son." Rom. 8:29.

"And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined, but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed." Luke 22:22.

"Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Acts 2:23.

IT IS GOOD

"The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works." Psa. 145:17.

"That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Gen. 18:25.

"The Lord is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works." Psa. 145:9.

"I the Lord speak righteousness, I declare things that are right." Is. 45:19.

"He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he." Deut. 32:4.

"For the word of the Lord is right and all his works are done in truth. He loveth righteous and judgment: the earth is full of the goodness of the Lord." Ps. 33:4,5.

"O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him." Ps. 34:8.

"Yea, the Lord shall give that which is good." Ps. 85:12.

"Thou art good and doest good." Ps. 119:68.

"That ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God, To them who are the called according to his purpose." Rom. 12:2.

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Rom. 8:28.

"Oh, that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men." Ps. 107:8, 15, 21, 31.

IT IS ALL-INCLUSIVE

a. In nature

"Jehovah doeth His will in the whirlwind and in the storm." Nahum 1:3.

"He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust." Matt. 5:45.

"Behold he withholdeth the waters and they dry up: also he sendeth them out, and they overrun the earth." Job 12:15.

"And I also have withholden the rain from you, when there were yet three months before the harvest; and I caused it not to rain upon another city." Amos 4:7.

"Who giveth rain upon the earth, and sendeth waters upon the fields." Job 5:10
 "He gave you from heaven rains and fruitful seasons, filling your heart with food and gladness." Acts 14:17.

"Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with a span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?" Is. 40:12.

"Are not two sparrows sold for a penny and not one of them shall fall to the ground without your Father." Matt. 10:29.

"But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: Ye are of more value than many sparrows." Luke 12:7

"Behold the birds of the heavens, that they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; and your heavenly Father feedeth them." Matt. 6:26.

"The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God." Ps. 104:21.

"The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season.

"Thou openest thine hand and satisfiest the desire of every living thing." Ps. 145:15, 16.

"There go the ships: there is that leviathan, whom thou hast made to play therein.

"These wait all upon thee: that thou mayest give them their meat in due season.

"That thou givest them they gather: thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good.

"Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust." Psa. 104:26-29.

"He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth." Ps. 104:14.

"He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry." Ps. 147:9

"Who provideth for the raven his food? When his young ones cry unto God, they wander for lack of meat." Job 38:41.

b. Of nations

"The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will, and setteth up over it the lowest of men." Dan. 4:17.

"Let them say among the nations, Jehovah reigneth." I Chr. 16:31.

"For God is the King of all the earth." Ps. 47:7.

"He changeth the times and the seasons; He removeth Kings, and setteth up Kings." Dan. 2:21.

"Jehovah bringeth the counsel of the nations to naught; He maketh the thoughts of the people to be of none effect." Ps. 33:10.

"For lo, I raise up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation that march through the breadth of the earth to possess dwelling places that are not theirs." Hab. 1:6.

"...And said, O Lord God of our fathers, art not thou God in heaven? And rulest not thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen? And in thine hand is there not power and might, so that none is able to withstand thee? II Chron. 20:6.

"For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Phil. 2:13.

"Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy and whom he will be hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me: Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Shall the thing formed say unto him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" Rom. 9:18.

"Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith? or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? as if the rod should shake itself against them that lift it up, or as if the staff should lift up itself as if it were no wood." Is. 10:15.

"The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." Prov. 16:4.

OVER THE WILL OF MAN

(1) In His righteous acts

"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Phil. 2:13.

"And what hast thou that thou didst not receive?" I Cor. 4:7.

"For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." Gal. 5:17.

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Gal. 5:23.

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I but Christ liveth in me." Gal. 2:20.

(Although the righteous deeds of the saint are entirely the work of God in his life, yet on the basis of these he is rewarded. Consequently he will, in Heaven, cast his rewards at the feet of Christ and proclaim Him alone worthy of honor.)

(2) In His unrighteous acts

"And again the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and He moved David against them to say, Go number Israel and Judah. And David's heart smote him after he had numbered the people, and David said unto the Lord, I have sinned greatly in what I have done: so the Lord sent a pestilence upon Israel--and there died of the people from Dan even unto Beersheba 70,000 men." II Sam. 24:1,10, 15.

"And I, behold I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians and they shall go (into the Red Sea) after him; and I will get me honor upon Pharaoh and upon all his host." Ex. 14:17.

"Let him alone, and let him curse; for Jehovah hath bidden him." II Sam. 16:10,11.

"Behold Jehovah hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets." I Kings 22:23.

"An evil spirit from Jehovah troubled him (Saul)." I Sam. 16:14.

"And God sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and the men of Shechem, and the men of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech." Judg. 9:23.

(Of the wicked it is said.) "God did put in their hearts to do his mind, and to come to one mind, and to give their kingdom unto the beast." Rev. 17:17.

"He hath blinded their (Israel's) eyes and he hardened their hearts; lest they should see with thier eyes and perceive with their heart, and should turn, and I should heal them." Jn. 12:40.

"They (Eli's sons) hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because Jehovah was minded to slay them." I Sam. 2:25.

"So the King hearkened not unto the people; for it was a thing brought about by Jehovah." I Kings 12:15.

"And Absalom and all the men of Israel said, The counsel of Hishai is better than the counsel of Ahithophel. For Jehovah had ordained to defeat the counsel of Ahithophel, to the intent that Jehovah might bring evil upon Absalom." II Sam. 17:14.

"Thus saith Jehovah, behold I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house; and I will take thy wives before thine eyes and give them unto thy neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of the sun."
II Sam. 12:11.

"Saul took a sword and fell upon it--so Saul died for his transgressions-- He inquired not of Jehovah; therefore He slew him." I Chron. 10:4, 13, 14.

"There fell down many slain, because the war was of God." I Chron. 5:22.

"I (God), will smite the Shepherd (Christ) and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad." Matt. 26:31.

"Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him (Christ)." Isa. 53:10.

"Not as I will, but as Thou wilt." Matt. 26:29.

"O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, the staff in whose hand is mine indignation. I will send him against an hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the more of the streets. Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so; but it is in his heart to destroy and cut off nations not a few. For he saith--As my hand hath found the kingdom of the idols--shall I not, as I have done to Samaria and her idols, so do to Jerusalem and her idols?...Wherefore it shall come to pass that when the Lord hath performed his whole work upon Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks. For he saith By the strength of my hand I have done it. Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith?" Isa. 10:5-15.

"O Jehovah, why dost thou make us to err from thy ways, and hardenest out hearts from thy fear?" Isa. 63:17.

(The sinner sins willingly; he loves his sin and therefore rarely feels its constraint. The saint willingly serves God and therefore rarely notices his servitude. God who alone has a completely free will cannot sin at all. Thus it is sin that binds the will.)

"Jesus answered them, verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin." Jn. 8:34.

"For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness..."
Ro. 6:21.

"And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will." II Tim. 2:26.

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"While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome of the same is he brought into bondage." II Pet. 2:19.

"His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins." Prov. 5:22.

"For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity." Acts 8:23.

"For thus saith the Lord, Ye have sold yourselves for nought; and ye shall be redeemed without money." Is. 52:3.

"But I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I know not; for what I would, that I do not: but what I hate, that do I... Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me... For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do, I find then a law...bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death."
Ro. 7:15-17, 19, 21, 23, 24.

God wills righteously what man wills unrighteously (see Gen. 45:5,8), but the plan is of God, not man.

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"Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life,

"So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house; and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt." Gen. 45:5,8.

"Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Acts 2:23.

"For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." Acts 4:27, 28.

"And truly the Son of man goeth as it was determined, but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed." Lu. 22:22.

God did not adopt men's plans. He himself made the plans in detail. His foreknowledge is not used in the scriptures as simply foreseeing. For instance it is not applied to the lost.

"For whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son." Ro. 8:29.

"Then will I profess unto them (the lost), I never knew you." Matt. 7:23.

God neither needs nor makes alternate plans. Israel could not have accepted Christ as Messiah for there would have been no salvation had he not shed his blood. God's mercy, justice, long-suffering, patience and grace could be shown no other way but through the existence and employment of sin. But God will permit no sin that is useless to his plan.

"Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." Ps. 76:10.

"For he doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men. To crush under his feet all the prisoners of the earth...the Lord approveth not. Who is he that saith it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not, Out of the mouth of the most High proceedeth not evil and good?" Lam. 3:37,38.

"With him is strength and wisdom: the deceived and the deceiver are his." Job 12:16.

"The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." Prov. 16:4.

"Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?" Ro. 9:21.

"Jesus answered Thou (Pilate) couldest have no power at all against me except it were given thee from above." Jn. 19:11.

(It is a common scriptural practice to ascribe the works of man to God.)

"They (Israel) got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them: but thy right hand and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, because thou hadst a favor unto them." Ps. 44:3,4.

"For I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me. But thou hast saved us from our enemies." Ps. 44:6,7.

"Thou makest us to turn back from the enemy." Ps. 44:9.

"There is no king saved by the multitude of an host: a might man is not delivered by much strength." Ps. 33:16.

"I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks. For he saith By the strength of my hand I have done it. Shall the axe boast itself against him that hewith therewith, or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it." Is. 10: 12, 13, 15.

"And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him (Herod) because he gave not God the glory; and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost." Acts 12:23.

"For promotion cometh neither from the east nor from the west, nor from the south, But God is the Judge: He putteth down one, and setteth up another." Ps. 75:6.

"Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain who build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." Ps. 127:1.

OVER THE ELECTION OF SAINTS

"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." Jn. 6:44.

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you that ye should go and bring forth fruit..." Jn. 15:16.

"But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation..." II Thess. 2:13.

"...to them who are the called according to his purpose." Ro. 8:28.

"For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and the base things of the world and the things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea and the things which are not, to bring to nought the things that are: that no flesh should glory in his presence." I Cor. 1:26-29.

"Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father." Jn. 6:65.

"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world... having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." Eph. 1:5.

"I will pardon them whom I reserve." Jer. 50:20.

"I (God) have reserved unto myself 7000 men." Ro. 11:4.

"In whom also we have obtained an inheritance being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Eph. 1:11.

"For the children being not yet born, neither haveing done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of him that calleth.... So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth but of God that sheweth mercy." Ro. 9:11, 16.

"Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man but of God." Jn. 1:13.

"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." Ro. 5:10.

"Turn thou me and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord my God. Surely after that I was turned, I repented." Jer. 31:18, 19.

"...if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth." II Tim. 2:25.

"Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance." Ro. 2:4.

"I (God) send thee to open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light." Acts 26:18.

"And a certain woman named Lydia...whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul." Acts 16:14.

"I the Lord have called thee in righteousness and wilt hold thine hand and will keep thee...to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house." Is. 42:6,7.

"They have not known nor understood: for he hath shut their eyes, that they cannot see; and their hearts, that they cannot understand." Is. 44:18.

"Make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and turn and be healed." Is. 6:10,

"Yet the Lord hath not given you an heart to perceive and eyes to see, and turn and be healed." Deut. 29:4.

"But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not: that the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled... Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias again said, He hath blinded their eyes and hardened their heart that they should not see with their eyes, not understand with their heart...." Jn. 12:37-40.

"A stone of stumbling, and rock of offense even to them that stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed." I Pet. 2:8.

"Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand." Lu. 8:10.

"But if our gospel be hid it is hid to them that are lost:" II Cor. 4:3,4.

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them." I Cor. 2:14.

"Neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." Mat. 11:27.

"Can'st thou by searching find out God?" Job 11:7.

"He that is of God heareth God's words; ye therefore hear them not because ye are not of God." Jn. 8:47.

"But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice...and I give unto them eternal life." Jn. 10:26-28.

"that he should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given him." Jn. 17:2.

"And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." Acts 13:48.

THE FRUIT OF UNDERSTANDING THIS DOCTRINE

1. ACCEPTS THE PROMISES

"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Phil. 4:19.

"They that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing." Ps. 34:10.

"...no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly." Ps. 84:11.

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee." Isaiah 26:3.

"The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." Deut. 33:27.

"Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." Is. 41:10.

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." Ro. 8:28.

II. OBEYS THE PRECEPTS

"...and be content with such things as ye have; for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Heb. 13:5.

"But seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Matt. 6:33.

"Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you." I Pet. 5:7.

III. EXPERIENCES THE TRUTH

"...for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." Phil. 4:11.

"But godliness with contentment is great gain." I Tim. 6:6.

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." Ps. 23:1.

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life..." Ps. 23:6.

"For thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall." Isaiah 25:4.

IV. TRUSTS ABSOLUTELY

"Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation." Havakkuk 3:17,18.

"All this is come upon us; yet have we not forsaken thee." Ps. 44:17.

"In God have I put my trust; I will not be afraid what man can do unto me." Ps. 56:11.

"So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me." Heb. 13:6.

"Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." Job. 13:15.

"Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace... but if not...we will not serve thy gods." Dan. 3:16-18.

V. REJOICES IN TRIALS

"In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God." I Thess. 5:18.

"Giving thanks always for all things unto God." Eph. 5:20.

"It is good for me that I have been afflicted." Ps. 119:71.

"I know, O Lord, that Thy judgments are right, and that Thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me." Ps. 119:75.

"We glory in our tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope." Rom. 5:3,4.

VI. UNDERSTANDS THE PRINCIPLES

A. THAT SUFFERING IS NECESSARY FOR EVERY CHRISTIAN

(1) PERSECUTION

"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." II Tim. 3:12.

"For unto you it is given, in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake." Phil. 1:29.

"We must through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom." Acts 14:22.

"Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you!" Luke 6:26.
 "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own, but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." Jn. 15:19.

(2) CORRECTION

"For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." Heb. 12:6-9.

"As many as I love, I rebuke." Rev. 3:19.

"But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world." I Cor. 11:32

(The Father chastens,)..."For our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness." Heb. 12:10.

"If children, then heirs...if so be that we suffer with Him." Ro. 8:17.

(3) TRIBULATION

"If, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that ye should follow in His steps: Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not." I Pet. 2:20-23.

"Why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?" I Cor. 6:7.

"Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed Him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." Ro. 12:19-21.

"Charity suffereth long, and is kind." I Cor. 13:4.

B. THAT SUFFERING IN CHRIST IS A SEAL OF ETERNAL LIFE

"If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him." II Tim. 2:12.

"And our hope of you is steadfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation." II Cor. 1:7.

"Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator." I Pet. 4:19.

"If ye be reproached for the Name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you." I Pet. 4:14.

"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." II Cor. 4:17.

C. THAT THE TRIAL OF OUR FAITH IS OF GREAT VALUE

"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ," I Pet. 1:7.

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