

The Old Time Religion

“Gimme that old time religion, gimme that old time religion, gimme that old time religion, it’s good enough for me.”

Really? Perhaps we should examine that old time religion and examine the foundation.

The ten commandments are said to be the basis of the old time religion. It’s the Christian religion. The law of the 10 commandments is supposed to be the foundation of the Christian religion, but when we look closely we can see that there are some serious issues. Some of the commandments have been explained away so that the very guidelines are turned 180 degrees from the original meaning. Just as Gorge Orwell revealed in his satirical novel, *Animal Farm*, that laws could be adjusted by those in power, so the Christian powers seem to have manipulated the commandments to state something altogether different than the original meaning. This article deals with the 6th commandment and the foundation underpinning it.

The 6th commandment (Exo 20:13)

Thou shalt not kill – (is modified to mean, Thou shalt not kill unless I expressly tell you to do so, or unless the other people are beyond hope of repentance).

Many religious people will make moral decisions based on the belief that to kill the ‘immoral/amoral’ enemies, will be to do God’s will. They believe that they will think to do God ‘service’ when they fight to destroy the "evil infidels." Jesus Himself prophesied that these murders would happen in John 16:2, but He revealed that it was His own holy, loving people who were being murdered by those religious people who thought they were killing God’s enemies!

Killing is wrong, as pronounced in the 6th commandment, but religious people have become confused, thinking that killing ‘bad’ people is a righteous execution and that God will be pleased with their ‘service.’ This murderous act and even the attitude is condemned by Jesus. Jesus said that His people would love their enemies, do good to those who persecuted them and to pray for their abusers (Matt 5:44). Jesus wants to show His love to the so-called ‘ungodly infidels’ and He asks that His people allow themselves to be channels of His love to them.

Jesus warned His disciples James and John that they were ignorantly motivated by an evil spirit for wanting to destroy the disrespectful Samaritan town. They supposed that 'bringing fire down from heaven to burn them up' was a just execution of the 'pagan infidels.' Jesus rebuked them by saying, "You don't know what spirit you are of." He added, "The Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives but to save them. And they went into another village"(Luke 9:55, 56). If people don't want you, your advice, your assistance or your religion, Jesus demonstrated that the only 'right' you have is to leave them to their own choice and to go elsewhere. This is what the Father must do also when His children resist His love and give their allegiance to the enemy of God. As Jesus again demonstrated, Divine Love cries tears over the pain and death that awaits those who reject His love. Jesus wept at human sadness (John 11:35) and He lamented, grief-stricken over Jerusalem when the Jewish leaders rejected Him (Matt 23:38). In fact the religious leaders were plotting to murder Him and Jesus was grieved for the common people who were also deceived by the leaders. The Son of God was grieved knowing that He was powerless to change their decision and that He was unable to shield them from the inevitable suffering that they would endure because of their selfish choices.

Selfishness, when it matures, always ends only in homicide and suicide. The wages of sin is death. God does not need to inflict an artificial death on sinners. Death from selfishness happens just the same way that other natural laws happen - like gravity. Every pagan and loveless religion is based on the gospel of works. Obey and you will receive blessings. Disobey and you will receive punishment including the death sentence inflicted by a wrathful god, or his wrathful, arrogant followers. All these pagan religions, through their works gospels - uphold a potent, wrathful divine being who is breathing fire and brimstone at those who dare to disobey their commands. Humans in these pagan religions must obey or be punished. If they disobey they must bring a sacrificial offering to atone for their bad behaviour. The sacrifice has to be valuable to the 'sinner' ie the person who is considered to be evil for not obeying some command. The sinner was often required to give a blood sacrifice. Many works gospel religions demand the sacrifice of a child, however a substitute sacrifice could be made in the form of a valuable animal.

Often the gods demanded their first born son -including the son of a king. There were other sacrifices like harvest produce that were sacrifices or offerings that were made by worshippers with petitions for rain and good crops and fertile herds. Often these petitions were accompanied by sexual orgies where the petitioners had sexual relations with the temple 'priestesses' (temple prostitutes), but the disobedience sacrifices most often had to involve the shedding of blood because blood offerings were representative of life. "The life is in the blood" (Leviticus 17:11).

A sacrifice of repentance -penance - had to cause the sinner emotional grief, financial loss, and even physical pain which still is thought to constitute a "just" punishment. The Roman Catholic religion so clearly demonstrates this serious deviation from the true gospel of Love. The blood represents the life, but the sacrificial rituals transferred the value of the blood from life to death. Jesus life is not valued by His followers. They instead focus on His death - His murder - as if it was part of the sacred plan to redeem humanity. Jesus' death would have accomplished nothing if He had have stopped loving while He was living. If the law of love was changeable surely it was changeable by Jesus when he was being tortured to death on the cross. But Love was not changeable and Love did not fail despite being the mortal body being destroyed. If Jesus was not murdered, He would have continued to love until his body died of old age. He had taken mortality upon himself when He became human. That was a sacrifice. Satan however wanted to blame the Father for demonic cruelty and in order to do so, he continued to impress human hearts with the pagan theology that God demands a sacrifice of blood/death from sinners (ie those who have committed selfishness/sin/selfish works).

Isn't it strange that the Creator did not 'demand' any kind of sacrificial services from the angels in heaven after they doubted God's love? God did not provide a Saviour for them either. The angels simply repented of their doubt and the Creator simply forgave them. Why was it different with human beings when they doubted God's love? Why is it now that all pagan and apostate Christian religions teach that the salvation of humanity requires a blood sacrifice in order for forgiveness to be granted?

In the world's history, many religions have demonstrated the spirit that Jesus identified when He rebuked James and John. The two disciples were asking for permission to call down fire from heaven

on the disrespectful Samaritan village for shaming their Master. They were just imitating Elijah's example when Ahab's soldiers disrespected him as the prophet. This legend was recorded orally and retold to the people. Eventually it was written down and passed down as a tradition to the Jewish descendants. The story made Elijah out to be like every other hero - a messiah-type who used divine force against his enemies. Elijah's vengeful and perhaps proud response to being disrespected is strange. Elijah's character is said to represent the 144,000 who are translated without seeing death. This is the commonly held belief drawn from the Mt of Transfiguration where both Moses and Elijah met with Jesus with Peter, James and John. (Matt 17:2). Moses was representative of the righteous that die in Christ, while Elijah represented those who were translated to heaven at the second coming of Jesus, 'without seeing death.'

We know that the 144,000 will be keeping the commandments of God perfectly without needing a Mediator. "These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins." They are faultless, not defiled with women (false doctrines/churches) and no guile is found in their mouth (Rev 14:1-4). They will "know their God" (Daniel 11:32). They will know God's character, be filled with His loving spirit- so they won't make mistakes - bad choices - in serving Him. They will have the faith that Jesus lived by (Rev 14:1-4). They will not be killing their enemies but loving them as Jesus advocated (Matt 5:44) and indeed did Himself (Luke 23:34).

People can be devout in serving God but they can be genuinely misled, and it is prophesied by Jesus that these passionate people will even kill others and in so doing, believe they are doing God service (John 16:2) as Saul did before His conversion to becoming Paul. If Saul had written some "holy books" before he became Paul, the Jewish leaders would have conceivably declared them sacred and holy and included them in their holy writings. The test of holy writings is not that man has traditionally labelled them as being holy. The test as to whether any writing is holy is only based on whether they align with the Way, the Truth and the Life. If they speak not according to This Word it is because they have no light in them (Isaiah 8:20; Rev 19:13) .

Jesus lived what He preached. He didn't preach "if you don't love me and obey me, I will kill you. " Instead Jesus desired that His

people loved him. He had compassion on the people and drew them to Him with love. If they loved Him, He would have the legal right to protect them from Satan's attacks. Jesus mourned, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not" (Matt 23:37).

Jesus empowered people to follow His ways. Jesus demonstrated through His example and instruction that those who wished to be filled with His spirit would be empowered to love their enemies. In Matt 5:43-45 Jesus said, "You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor' and 'Hate your enemy.' But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous." Jesus also said, "But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also" (Matt 5:39).

Our works/deeds don't dictate whether we receive blessings or curses in this sinful/selfish world. Bad things can happen to those who haven't done anything to deserve it. The story of Job demonstrates this principle. Job was unaware that he was being attacked by Satan precisely because He believed that God sent the good and the bad upon people. "shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips (Job 2:10). Job believe wrongly that God sent evil as a repayment for wrong deeds, but Job was confused because he believed he had not purposely committed any sin. The issue was more complicated because Job also believed that God sent fire down from heaven as a judgment/curse upon the disobedient (Job 1:16). Job failed to understand that 'every good gift and every perfect gift is from above and cometh down from the Father of Lights, in whom is no variableness and neither shadow of turning'" (James 1:17). "This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5). And God "causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous." (Matthew 5:45). Jesus assured humanity that He was exactly the same in character as was His Father. "If you had known Me, you would know My Father as well. From now on you do know Him and have seen Him." Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the

Father, and that will be enough for us.” Jesus replied, “Philip, I have been with you all this time, and still you do not know Me? Anyone who has seen Me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father?’” (John 14:7-9). “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever” (Heb 13:8). How much more reassurance could Jesus give humanity that neither He nor His Father are double-minded, blended gods, narcissistic, ferocious, terrifying, despotic, yin/yang divine beings?

God did not send the “fire of God” to incinerate Job’s sheep. Job was apparently not aware that Satan can command fire from the sky as later Bible writer revealed: “And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men” (Rev 13:13).

Bad things are not God’s fault. God has tried to warn humanity of the serious, lethal effects that will result from selfishness. The selfishness can be committed by humans or angels or even animals. The end result of selfishness is that it eventually causes death by either homicide or suicide. God is Love. Love is creative power. Love is Life. God is Love and Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life. Selfishness is the absence of Love/Life. To separate from Love/Life, is to choose to die. “... all they that hate me love death (Proverbs 8:36).

Consider the sad situation where a child is accidentally killed when she is hit by a drunk driver. It is not the child’s fault - but it’s also not God’s fault. God presented the rule to humanity - don’t get drunk. Human laws affirmed God’s rule in part - don’t drive while drunk. When the law of Love/Unselfishness is disregarded, death results. In the case of the drunken driver, God did not kill the child and God did not inflict the Babylonian law of ‘an eye for an eye’ upon the drunk driver. God doesn’t take revenge and kill the drunk driver, nor does He advise His followers to do so. God’s heart breaks for both the victims of selfishness. He pities the child whose life was cut short, but He also pities the drunk who has destroyed his/her own life as well as the child’s life. God warns us that selfish thoughts and behaviour will injure us in the same way that any breaking any natural law will injure us. God does not have to inflict any artificial punishments to make the sinful result more painful. The consequences of sin/selfishness are severe and life destroying.

Regarding the plea from James and John to have Jesus consent that they 'rain down fire from heaven on these Samaritans,' Jesus informed James and John that they did not know what spirit motivated them. It is obvious that both disciples were ignorant about God's true character. They thought God would be pleased if the Samaritan villagers were burnt to death. A modern day corresponding event would be the incineration of thousands of Jewish people, including children, who were purposely burned alive in burning buildings at Auschwitz, Kolomyja and Raw-Russka in 1941 and 1942. How could anyone believe that such horrific crimes might be an action that God would approve of and that they 'were doing God service?' James and John were indoctrinated with the double-minded God theology. The double-minded God theology teaches that God is not only the Creator, but the destroyer. He is not only the Life-Giver, but the life-taker. He not only gives blessings, but He also dispenses wrathful vengeance and curses. Not only is God the Saviour but He is the Executioner. The double-minded God rewards the good acts of the obedient people, but He also inflicts artificial consequences/punishments for those unbelievers who perform evil actions. This old time religion is the gospel of works. If you perform good works, you'll earn heaven as your reward. If you do bad works, you'll burn in hell. The gospel of works is what self does when it operates out of fear of the double-minded God. The gospel of faith in Jesus is what God produces when His Love operates in the human heart. Selfishness is the absence of Love. Selfishness produces fear because the selfish person understands that they are 'on their own.' They must meet all their own needs. That can bring overwhelming fear. But many people choose to try to meet their own needs because they believe there exists a mean, vengeful, murderous divine being who they call 'God.' Rather than worship or show respect to such a monstrous being, these people choose to ignore 'God' and understandably so. Such a horrible being is not worthy of worship, adoration or service. This type of fearful, terrifying 'divine' being is at the centre of the "Old Time Religion" and it is not good enough for anyone who has come to know Jesus!

This 'old time religions' is the same theology that was taught by all the 'pagan' religions in the land of Canaan and absorbed into the Israelite religion. This is demonstrated many times. Here is one example.

James and John thought they were being incredibly 'righteously angry' to defend their Master's honour when He was spurned by the Samaritan villagers. James and John believed they were justified in executing the entire village as punishment for their disrespect. Why did they feel so righteous in wanting to destroy an entire village? They were simply following the example of the prophet Elijah when he inflicted severe punishment - death - on another group of disrespectful people - Ahab's soldiers.

The story is told in the book of 2 Kings chapter 1. Ahab sent out parties of men to search for Elijah. When Elijah was discovered, the captain followed his king's orders and commanded that Elijah accompany him to King Ahab. Elijah responded in an affronted manner apparently and in retaliation of that disrespect, Elijah petitioned God who supposedly 'rained down fire' on the soldiers and they were supernaturally incinerated. This occurred twice (2 Kings 1:10).

If Elijah acted in such a manner in response to being disrespected, was it actually the One True God who sent the fire from heaven and burned up the soldiers? Ahab's soldiers were simply obeying their king's orders and both times, the Bible records that the captain requested quite politely, "*Man of God, the king declares, 'Come down at once!'*" (2 Kings 1:9, 11). Perhaps the Bible writer assumed, as in the case of Job, that the supernatural fire was sent by the Creator, when in fact, it is recorded just 4 verses before, that the fire was sent by the demonic destroyer (Job 1:12, 16).

In comparing similar instances in the Bible, we recall that Moses made a prideful error when he struck the rock twice (Numbers 20:11). Pride might also have caused Elijah to react to being disrespected, but it is likely that the Israelites wrote into their history, another warrior-messiah legend. The Israelites did not want a pacifist Messiah. Even those 'heroes' depicted in the faith chapter (Heb 11) are those considered to be violent, warrior-messiahs. Eg Samson, David, Gideon, Moses Barak, Jephthah, Samuel.

Perhaps the record of the mass-killings on Mt Carmel was distorted. Perhaps credit was given to Elijah when in fact, the historical record uplifted the glorified violent, warrior-messiah, rather than the pacifist-messiah.

Elijah was credited with killing 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of Asherah on Mt Carmel. What a super-human feat that would have been for one man to physically commit himself on the one afternoon! There were no machine guns handy on that day to help speed up the executions. However, we can see a clue about how this might have happened, in the same way as violent, mass-murder of the unsaved, is predicted to occur at the end of time.

The Israelites had just endured a severe 3 ½ year drought (James 5:17). They were desperate to please the 'gods' in order to achieve the 'blessing' of rain as payment of their many sacrifices. After the turning point on Mt Carmel where Elijah proved that the worship of Baal and Asthoreth was futile, there was bedlam. The fury of the Israelites on Mt Carmel might be difficult to restrain against the priests who had demanded their first-born sons as sacrifices, and their flocks and herds as tithes/taxes for their priestly services etc. This mass slaughter by the enraged Israelites might well have been credited to Elijah since he was the 'ring-leader' of the rebellion against the Baal and Asherah religion. The Creator too has been credited with performing many evil actions that He did not perform, based on the fact that He had not prevented others from committing the evil acts. Love cannot intervene to save anyone against their own will, so the Creator is blamed repeatedly for 'taking' the loved one away (death) when it was in fact, not 'an act of God.'

Compare the prophesy recorded in The Great Controversy, p 655 paragraph 4. ***"The people see that they have been deluded. They accuse one another of having led them to destruction; but all unite in heaping their bitterest condemnation upon the ministers. Unfaithful pastors have prophesied smooth things; they have led their hearers to make void the law of God and to persecute those who would keep it holy. Now, in their despair, these teachers confess before the world their work of deception. The multitudes are filled with fury. "We are lost!" they cry, "and you are the cause of our ruin;" and they turn upon the false shepherds. The very ones that once admired them most will pronounce the most dreadful curses upon them. The very hands that once crowned them with laurels will be raised for their destruction. The swords which were to slay God's people are now employed to***

destroy their enemies. Everywhere there is strife and bloodshed. "

Compare the similarities between the two situations.

Elijah is said to represent the righteous (144,000) who are alive at the end of time and who are translated - having never died. Moses was said to represent those that died 'in Christ' as per (1 Thess 4:16).

The 144,00 at the end of time are translated without seeing death.

Elijah is on Mt Carmel and the people are furious with the priests of Baal and Ashtoreth.

Fury controls the unsaved people at the end of time and the people attack the false priests/pastors (Isa 56:9 - *"dumb dogs they cannot bark"*).

According to the Bible record, Elijah is supposed to have killed 850 priests on Mt Carmel, plus the 102 soldiers that He organised to have incinerated with 'holy fire' - supposedly fire that was rained down on them from God for being disrespectful to him. If this is true, then Elijah is a party to their murder/execution. The grounds for the murder of his opponents are that he disagrees theologically with those who disrespect him, BUT here is the difficulty. Elijah is supposed to represent the 144,000 - those who keep the commandments of God perfectly.

This is where something is obviously wrong with the parallel between Elijah and the 144,00. The 144,000 are saints who keep the commandments of God including the 6th commandment that prohibits murdering/killing. They do not react with violence to being disrespected or even tortured and threatened with death. There is not even any guile (deceit) in their mouths and they are not defiled with women (symbol of being joined with wrong theological beliefs). These believers stand in the presence of the Creator, without an intercessor/mediator.

The comparisons are worthy of contemplation. As the prophecies reveal, it is the enraged, unsaved, deceived people who kill the

false pastors at the end of time. In the same way, it is highly likely that Elijah did not personally perform the mass killings of the priests on Mt Carmel, but that the enraged, deceived unsaved people did so themselves.

Jesus revealed that James and John were not motivated by the spirit of Love/God. James and John were raised in the Jewish culture. The Jews through their writings, revealed that they always wanted a powerful, violent, warrior-messiah. The violent soldier has been and still is made in the same mould as all the pagan religions which are based on force and fear.

A religion based on fear is a "works" religion. Works do not change the heart away from selfishness. It is powerless to do so but Love - the spirit of love - is powerful enough to cast out fear and to replace the vacuum with the power of Love (1 John 4:18) which comforts us with these words. "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love."

The true Messiah was non-violent. He was a true pacifist regardless of what Satan did to try to force Him to stop loving us and save Himself. Jesus was victorious because He refused to stop loving His Father and humanity. It is said of the Messiah, "He had done no violence." Isa 53:9. Jesus' life showed us the Father's character (John 14:8). The Father was in the Son living the Father's life (John 17:23), motivated by the true spirit of Love.

Love is the government of heaven. Selfishness is really what evolution is based on - it is called "survival of the fittest" but it is really just survival of the most selfish, the strongest bully, the most selfishly greedy and forceful person.

Genuine Christianity follows the example of Jesus through the spirit of the Father. There is no violence in the Father. His pain over selfishness/sin, is wrongly translated from the Hebrew and Greek as "wrath" when the correct translation is "grief." If you were accidentally heading to walk in front of a speeding truck, I might scream at you, begging you to "stop walking and come back here or you'll die." It doesn't mean I am going to kill you if you dare not to come back to me. It is the horror of the consequences of your actions that cause the screaming that I'm doing, to try to save you.

Most Christians confuse the warning and attach a death penalty to the warning, when in fact the death is caused by the person's own choice. God doesn't kill people. Selfishness is the killer. Every pagan religion is based on the fallacy that God the Creator kills and desires to punish His disobedient creation. What do we blame Satan for then? He is innocent? Jesus said that Satan was the destroyer and a murderer from the beginning (John 8:44). But Christians seem to prefer to believe Satan's accusations that God is full of vengeance and that even God can't keep His own law of love. The Creator is accused of being a divine bully, a killer-god.

The Father told humans to "listen to My Son" (Matt 3:17; Matt 17:6), but they seem instead to prefer to listen to other human beings who wrote what they thought they knew about God but could really only see through a veil darkly (1 Cor 13:12). No wonder Jesus had to say to his disciples, "I have much to tell you but you cannot bear it yet" (John 16:12).

Jesus had tried to tell the Jewish people that there were major issues with their holy writings (Matt 5:21-48), but that was not received well at all. They could not bear that Jesus was telling them their old beliefs were completely the opposite of the truth. "You have heard it said from long ago.... (in the Mosaic law, or ancient writings, but I say..... (the opposite)." At times the people tried to stone him (John 10:32-34). They put him on trial over such truths saying "He spoke against our law and our temple" (Matt 26:61). They could not bear to have their psychological idol - their beliefs - threatened (John 19:7). They refused to let the Truth remove the idol from their minds. Their written idol and their beliefs were their emotional security. The 'old time religion' motivated them. They were terrified of the double-minded divine being; their god was fiery, wrathful, vengeful and powerful. This being was so terrifying that any logical person knew that good works were absolutely vital to their security. This 'god' had no capacity for compassion or forgiveness. It was a religion of fear that required constant sacrifices and ritualised ceremonies to keep the 'god' placated.

Jesus spoke specifically against the 'eye for an eye' law. Originally taken from the Babylonian Hammurabi Law, the 'eye for an eye' law was absorbed into the Mosaic law. It was supposedly given to Moses by God then written down in Exodus 21:23-25 which states, "But if there is harm, then you shall pay life for life, eye for eye, tooth for

tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe." Leviticus 24:19-21 echoes this assertion, "Anyone who injures their neighbour is to be injured in the same manner: fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth. The one who has inflicted the injury must suffer the same injury."

Jesus said, "You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.' But I tell you do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also. And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well. If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles. Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you" (Matthew 5:38-42). The Jewish people believed that every word in their holy writings originated from the mind/mouth of God and this belief was their strongly protected idol. When Jesus threatened that belief/idol, the Jews leaders did not take it well. Jesus even exclaimed, "Is it not written in YOUR law.....And the Scriptures cannot be loosened" when He was asking them a question that required intellectual acuity and honesty to answer. The Jews did not believe that the Scriptures could be anything but the totally holy utterance from the mouth/mind of God. They were trying to make the writings have divine attributes, just as the Roman Catholic religion makes idols from relics and from dead people that they label as saints. Many other religions have similarly deified 'holy books.'

By having a holy book, the leaders are able to exercise more control over the people. Moses commanded a certain ritual, so the common people are going to perform the ritual out of fear of upsetting a vengeful 'god.' If a person writes a 'holy book' after many years, they might be considered a 'holy man' or a saint and every word that the person had written then seems to become absolute truth by the followers. Eventually the 'holy book' is not questioned and it is forbidden to speak against the writings or the originator of the writings as if to do so, would be speaking against the 'god' who inspired those writings. Isaiah 8:20 says that the writings should be tested. There is a standard to which all supposedly holy writings must adhere. It is the Love of God as demonstrated in the life of Jesus that determines which writings are holy, inspired by the spirit of Love, and which writings are demonic, inspired by Satan.

Whoever controls the 'holy books' often become very powerful

and are able to control those people who believe that the writings are inspired. Those who control the writings can review and edit it. This is a grasp for power that occurred when the common people believed that only the Jewish priest and later the Catholic priest and then the Protestant ministers could clarify the contradictions in what they believed were the 'holy' writings. The 'holy writings' were elevated to divine status. They became an idol. In fact, only the LIVING WORD - the Son of God - bears those attributes on earth. If the Son declares something in the writings to be true, then they are able to be trusted as coming from the mouth/mind of the Divine One, the Father Who is Love. The warning was placed in the writings by Isaiah, "If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isaiah 8:20). Discern the spirits. Not all who say "Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom" (Matt 7:21). Neither are all writings deemed to be Christian and sacred, will be proved to be holy upon comparison with the One True Word - the Son of God.

EGW states in the SDA Bible Commentary Vol. 7 976-7, that "force is the last resort of every false religion." In the Bible there are numerous examples of genuinely devout people who were confused about the character of God. Job was considered to be a holy man, one who genuinely served God. Despite his best intentions, Job didn't understand that it was Satan who had violently destroyed his family, his herds, his flocks and his health. Job was so confused because he thought he should be reaping all the divine rewards of doing good works. He deserved the blessings, not God's curses. Job's four friends thought the same thing. It was the same old pagan theology that confused their religion - the gospel of works. The ancient people never understood that the God of Love had not committed and would never commit any violent acts. God had tried to warn His people not to mix with the pagans so they would not become confused about His character. It didn't work because people kept trying to make God fit into their own religion where they could control their own salvation by their works. When Abraham left Egypt he took polygyny¹ (having more than one wife) and circumcision with him. When Jacob went to Egypt and his

¹When a person has more than one spouse, the word is polygamy. If the spouses are wives, polygyny is a more specific term. If the spouses are husbands, the appropriate word is polyandry. Thus, polygyny and polyandry are two forms of polygamy. <https://writingexplained.org/polygamy-vs-polygyny-difference> OR the state or practice of having more than one wife or female mate at a time <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/polygyny>

descendants became slaves, what did they take out of Egypt? They took 400 years of pagan religious beliefs including circumcision, polygyny, idol worship and belief in pagan gods.

Despite the 2nd commandment forbidding the forming of graven images for religious purposes (Exodus 20:4-6), God is reported to have instructed Moses to form a golden serpent and erected it onto a pole so that the Israelites can 'look and live' at the time when venomous snakes invaded their camp (Numbers 21:6-9). Moses had previously scolded Aaron for making a golden calf for the Israelites to worship (Exodus 32:21), but when a contradictory command is received 'from the Lord,' Moses himself forms a graven image for religious purposes. The golden image that Moses formed was that of God's demonic enemy - the serpent. Is it a coincidence that the worship of a serpent for protection was common practice in the religion of Egypt?

The Egyptian 'god' Agathadaemon was worshipped as a serpent-god of protection. Agathadaemon took the form of a serpent. "Agathodaemon is a benevolent spirit of healing, protection, luck, and good fortune who manifests as a snake. Veneration of Agathodaemon traveled from Egypt to Greece and Italy. He is a consistently benevolent spirit. In Egypt, he evolved into a Gnostic guardian angel."

<https://occult-world.com/agathodaemon/>

Agathadaemon is also mentioned in Alexander Hislop's book, ***The Two Babylons*** p 77 and in the unlikely resource - a PubMed study ***"Speculation has ranged from the skin-shed serpent emergent in new and robust health to putative associations with earlier Egyptian and Babylonian anguine (snake) symbols of life-determining power.... In Classical Greece, the Agathos Daimon was literally the "noble spirit", a personal companion spirit ensuing health and good fortune²."*** Was there ever a reference in the Bible prophecies to "the Snake of God that takes away the sin of the world?" Was there ever a reference in the Bible by any writer who proclaimed, "The Serpent of God that takes away the sin of the world?"

²Agathos Daimon and the Asklepiian serpent Pearn J. Agathos Daimon and the Asklepiian serpent. Vesalius. 2011 Jun;17(1):4-9. PMID: 22043596. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/22043596/>

In this story, Christians are expected to believe the Israelites were divinely authorised to:

- 1.symbolise the Messiah as a serpent;
- 2.form a graven image of the serpent for religious purposes;
- 3.justify the breaking of the second commandment (Exodus 20:4-6);
- 4.put faith in an image/idol of the serpent to be healed;
- 5.modify their belief that the serpent was NOT their enemy, but their Saviour;
- 6.believe in and look to the serpent for healing, despite understanding that in the Garden of Eden, the serpent was cursed by God (Genesis 3:14);
- 7.credit the serpent image as the healer and protector of God's people;
- 8.believe that the serpent represented the coming Messiah – despite the Messianic prophecy that the Messiah would crush the serpent's head (Genesis 3:15).

Who would feel comfortable symbolising Jesus as a serpent? Who would call Jesus 'a snake?' It is sacrilegious to think of Jesus in such a way. John the Baptist called the hypocritical Israelites 'snakes – a brood of vipers' (Matt 12:34; 23:33; Luke 3:7). Jesus Himself clearly declared that the actions of the pharisees and scribes were evil and compared them to serpents. "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" (Matt 23:33). Jesus Himself recognises no prophetic symbolism of the serpent with Himself.

Consider the situation in which the Israelites found themselves. They had again complained about the God they were following and again believed that they had been abandoned by Him (Numbers 21:6-9). The serpents were entering the Israelites' camp and attacking them. Once again, they Israelites did what they always

did - they turned back to the 'gods' of Egypt. When they believed that Moses had died on the mountain, they petitioned Aaron to let them return to the worship of the Egyptian 'goddess' Hathor³. Hathor was often depicted in the form of a cow and her worshippers performed their fertility worship ceremony with music, dance and naked, drunken revelry³. The Israelites, true to their past behaviour, again sought the gods of Egypt to deal with their latest emergency - the venomous snakes in the camp.

Even after wandering in the wilderness for 40 years, the Israelites did not forget the emotional pain caused by being slaves to the Egyptians while they were in servitude and captivity. Their servitude was based on racism. The Israelites were not treated as equals, but as objects, in a heartless manner, similar to how the light coloured skin people treated the dark coloured skinned people in many countries. Being treated like slaves and second-class citizens stung the pride of the Israelites and this pain was evident when Joshua arranged a mass circumcision ceremony to remedy the hurt and heal the national pride. Joshua chose a place for the spiritual ritual to be undertaken and called it Gilgal. (Find out more about Gilgal here: <https://leewoof.org/2014/02/01/what-is-the-meaning-and-significance-of-gilgal-in-the-bible/comment-page-2/>)

The name Gilgal means "the place of the solar wheel." There are many Biblical references to Gilgal and the stones Joshua ordered to be set up in a circle there. Is that a coincidence? Was he imitating pagan religions that also arranged large stones and named them Gilgal, "the place of the solar wheel" to worship their gods and perform their 'sacred' fertility rites? Joshua chose a place, erected stone pillars and conducted his own for the ritual ceremony that involved the fertility organ in circumcision. Worshipping with large stones was very common in the fertility religions of Canaan. 2 Kings 17:10 records when the Israelites used stones and Asherah

³ Egyptians ate, drank, danced, and played music at their religious festivals. They perfumed the air with flowers and incense. Many of Hathor's epithets link her to celebration; she is called the mistress of music, dance, garlands, myrrh, and drunkenness. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hathor>

poles in their fertility rituals. It is difficult to see how such similarity to pagan rituals, could not be counted by Satan as the whole tribe's commitment to himself, represented by the sun god Ra. Joshua clearly did not understand the character of the One True God. Joshua knew that now the Israelites were out of Egyptian slavery, he wanted to declare his nation's freedom and so a cultural ritual was enacted to build unity and patriotism. These mental fortification was necessary for soldiers who were about to wage a very violent attack – a war on the inhabitants of Canaan. The enemy had to be identified as being 'bad' so they were labelled "uncircumcised, pagan, heathen and cursed by God." These morale-boosting strategies are still used today to build unity, morale and courage in almost every country's troops. After the circumcision ceremony, Joshua stated the real motivation for the ritual. He declared, "And the Lord said to Joshua, This day I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you." Joshua 5:9. The deity was given the credit for rolling away the reproach of the Egyptians, but Egypt was a broken nation already. The Israelites left Egypt as victors, with much of Egypt's assets. Why did the Israelites still feel the reproach of the Egyptians, 40 years later?

In Egypt, circumcision was a "sacred" religious ritual that only Egyptian royalty, the priests and the nobility were allowed to practice. If a person outside those high rankings was circumcised he would be put to death, because it was forbidden for a low ranking person to be circumcised in their religion. As slaves, the Israelites were obviously not eligible to be circumcised. The acceptance of this cast-type system was really racism against the Israelites and it was no wonder they relished in the circumcision ritual which 'rolled the reproach' of the Egyptians off them. Sadly, the violent and torturous act of circumcision, which has since been inflicted on babies, was not invented by God and given to Abraham as a sign of allegiance to Him. Circumcision was practised by the Egyptians at least by the 25th century - at least 3 centuries before Abraham was born. The only definitive image of Egyptian surgery depicts a circumcision which was taken from King Djedkare's tomb. He lived in the late 25th century BC and he was the 8th king of the 5th

dynasty. Circumcision was being performed as a ritual of spiritual allegiance to their pagan gods. The origins of circumcision were from the Egyptian trinity. "In the beginning," Osiris was the only god. He circumcised himself and out of his bleeding penis came two drops of blood that became two other gods. One was Isis - a female goddess and the other was Horus, the god of chaos. The Royal/priestly adherents of the trinity religion would likewise practice circumcision. Which god was Joshua swearing allegiance to at the solar wheel? From his own statement we can see that his mind was focused on "the reproach of the Egyptians," not on following the one true God whom he did not know. After the mass circumcision ceremony, Joshua led his likewise deceived followers into a war of total annihilation against the other pagans and claimed that "god" had told them to do so without mercy. The atrocities are recorded: Killing their enemies, stealing their possessions, raping their young women and offering human sacrifices. This is not the spirit of the Father that dwelt in Jesus. The Israelites were supposed to draw all nations to them by love, but they didn't even know the true God. Without the true God, they could not resist the only other option to save themselves - the works gospel of selfishness - that led them to commit violence resulting in homicide (Jesus, the prophets, a multitude of innocent victims including babies) and suicide (Saul, Judas).

Surely people today can recognise the difference between those who have the spirit of Jesus and those who are motivated by the loveless spirit of selfishness. Some might argue that before Jesus came to earth and demonstrated the Father's character there might have been an ignorance, confusion and lack of understanding about what God's character was like. But in reality Abraham supposedly spoke with God. The Israelites received the 10 commandments that clearly outlined the laws of love. What is hard to understand about "thou shalt not kill"? Where are the exceptions in the fine print? Thou shalt not kill except when I change my mind...or when My law of love won't work in that situation...or whenever you think it's too much trouble to witness to these pagans etc. Where does God add an exception in His law? Where does He change His law? He doesn't

ever change His law, because to change His law would be to admit that His law was faulty and that Satan's claims were right about the law being faulty so that there must be a fault with the Law-Giver. But love never fails and that is what the life of Jesus proved. He loved until He was murdered and that was the only thing that stopped Him from continuing being a channel of His Father's love.

It is a commonly held view that God is going to destroy the 'evil infidels.' Sadly, many religious people are looking forward to seeing the 'evil oppressors get their just desserts.' The pleasure at seeing the 'wicked' destroyed is condemned by Jesus in Matt 5:21,22. God certainly says that in Deuteronomy 32:35, "Vengeance is Mine; I will repay. In due time their foot will slip; for their day of disaster is near, and their doom is coming quickly." And in Hebrews 10:30,31, "For we know Him who said, 'Vengeance is Mine; I will repay,' and again, 'The Lord will judge His people.' It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." What must be remembered is that humans do not think as God thinks. "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways," declares the LORD. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so My ways are higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts" (Isaiah 55:8,9). "The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God" (James 1:20). The Creator is not a being who functions on a works gospel. The value of a human life is not proportional to their works. This confusion over the value of a human life is a common belief shared by all religions that have a works gospel. The value of a human being is infinite and represented in the parable Jesus told about the prodigal son (Luke 15).

If a husband tells his wife, ' I love you' then she will be filled with joy and delight to please him. That is how love works. But consider if that husband altered his sentence with, 'I love you, but if you don't obey my commands, I will kill you.'" Does that change the relationship from the wife's perspective? Previously she was overjoyed to please her husband because she felt secure in his love, but suddenly love has been removed and she is motivated only by fear. Does the husband's threat now leave the wife with a free

choice – to please her husband out of her loving heart or from fear of being murdered? Many people worship God because of fear of being murdered in the lake of fire or at least being cursed in this present life.

What draws the person to God? Does a person 'obey' Him out of love or of fear? Just like the “Old Time Religions” that spew out sermons of fear, based on the gospel of works, so too are all other religions that have a deity who will inflict death/punishment when he/she are displeased by certain behaviours. The wages of sin is death, (Romans 3:21) but it is not being murdered by God. It is our own choice and selfishness (sin) is a choice to be disconnected to the Source of All Life. Life is Love - Love is Life. Sin can thus only ever lead to homicide and suicide. The Son of God was murdered, but it wasn't God who murdered His Son. God did not plan for His Son to be murdered. The plan of salvation was that the Son would take on the curse of death and submit to it when He took on a mortal human body. He could have humanly died - lay down His life - as an old man. It was His pure loving life that saved us, not a murdered human sacrifice. The beaten, bleeding body would have achieved nothing if His life had not been loving in every situation. The victory of the Son of God was that He continued to love us regardless of what torture and agony of spirit, mind and body that Satan threw at Him. It was only Christ's refusal to stop loving us that was of any value. It's not the precious blood we should sing about, but the precious Love in our hymns. Power in the blood? The power is in the Life/Love of Jesus Christ. The whole power that caused the creation of this world and the universes was Love. Love is life. Love is the creative power.

The whole human race is doing a great job destroying themselves and the earth under Satan's influence but Satan gets away blame-free and almost everyone who has been victimised and tormented by him, blames God for their misery. God is thought to punish disobedient people by withholding the rain or sending plagues. 'Works religions' do not see God as a Saviour but as a wrathful deity who is ready to punish those who don't 'love and obey' him. But

God is the Creator and Sustainer. Why do His own professed followers accuse Him of being the destroyer?

As Jesus proved that Love was sufficient to meet every crisis, the Father and His heavenly government (Love) was vindicated. The government, the law of heaven was vindicated. Love was sufficient. Love was not faulty as Satan had accused. There was NO situation where Satan could anymore argue that the government of heaven (Love) was faulty. Ellen G White states that, "The last rays of merciful light, the last message of mercy to be given to the world, is a revelation of [God's] character of love." (Christ's Object Lessons, p 415). But what does the whole religious world promote instead of the character of God? The precious blood! The dead Jesus! But they miss the Satanic twist in their "Old Time Religion." The blood represents the Life! Praise the Life as it was shown in Jesus. God is Love. God is Life. God is not the destroyer. God is everything that you would want a divine Creator to be and much, much more. That is the converting message. Love is the gospel that changes lives. We can trust in Jesus, that He revealed the Father's true character to humanity. The Creator is far better than any being we can imagine.

We do not have to fear that we are more moral than the One True God. If we would not murder our disobedient child, then how can we believe that the Creator would do so? We are not more loving than God. Our love for our children originates with God (1 John 4:7).

God is love (1 John 4:8, 16).

Believe the testimony of Jesus, the Son of God and you will be empowered to love.

1 John 1:5

This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

Exodus 34:6,7

And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, ...

Psalm 86:5,15

For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee...

If God truly is love, what are His people to believe about the Biblical passages that credit the Creator with destructive and evil acts?

For example:

“I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things” (Isa 45:7).

“And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth” (Gen 6:13).

“Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven” (Gen 19:24).

“And I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt.” (Exo 7:3)

The Hebrew use of idioms has been misunderstood by non-Hebrew minds. In the writings of the “church father” Hippolytus of Rome (170 – 235 AD) it was explained as follows: “...’the word of Isaiah, I, the Lord, make peace, and create evil’; meaning by that, I maintain peace, and permit war.”

Victor Alexander collated many quotes from different Bible commentators and religious writers who similarly confirm the same use of the Hebrew idiom in the permissive sense of Isaiah 45:7. Other similar passages are similarly evaluated. For example,

“That is, in the course of my providence I will permit this to be done. Such phrases in Scripture do not mean that God either does or can do evil himself; but only that he permits such evil to be done as he foresaw would be done, and which, had he pleased, he might have prevented.” (Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge by Canne, Browne, Blayney, Scott, and others about 1880, with introduction by R. A. Torrey.)

“Our translators have not only made mistakes in what affects men, but in what regards the honour of God, in making him the author of sin in wicked men, that he might find occasion to destroy them.” (John Hale Murray, A Help for English Readers to Understand Mistranslated Passages in Our Bible; London: S. W. Partridge & Co., 1881, p133)

“Predictions of evils that God permits, but does not desire, are often expressed in the language of command; this circumstance simply indicates that such results of human depravity will not be prevented.” (Charles F. Schaeffer, Annotations on the Gospel According to St Matthew: Matthew XVI-XXVIII. Part II, New York: Scribner & Sons, 1895, p206).

Further references can be found at the following links: http://www.vindicatinggod.org/articles/Old_Books-Isa%2045-7.pdf

Youtube Video:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=95B6rCgDq_U

The Hebrew Idiom of Permission - The Misunderstood God (Canada Study) by Pablo Pancheco Jr

<https://characterofgod.org/i-create-evil/>

Compiled by Ray Foucher

Before jumping to conclusions regarding God supposedly causing a world wide flood, please note that Jesus prophesied that ‘As it was in the days of Noah, so will it be at the coming of the Son of Man.’

(Matt 24:37). Today, through the use of technology such as radar systems, ionic manipulation such as the recently closed down HAARP and also EMF, humanity is likely already fully capable of modifying and controlling the weather so that hurricanes, cyclones, tornadoes, earthquakes, floods, droughts can be 'steered' to hit targets. It might well be the case that 'in the days of Noah' humanity was also capable of destroying the earth and that as always, the Father, ever the Saviour of humankind, comes to humanity with a rescue plan for those who wish to give their allegiance to Him. Noah was apparently the only man who wanted to follow God as 'Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord' (Genesis 6:8). But was the flood 'an act of God' or an act of rebellious humanity who destroyed the world God had created - and themselves along with it? In a similar manner, did God save Lot from the seismic destruction that He knew was about to occur? Was this activity 'put on hold' by the angels that visited Lot just as is prophesied in Revelation 7:1-3? "And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, Saying, 'Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.' Rather than holy angels carrying out the destructive work, the angels are holding back the destruction that selfish humanity and demons are causing in the earth.

The end of time is described.

"...'The nations were enraged, and Your wrath has come. The time has come to judge the dead and to reward Your servants the prophets, as well as the saints and those who fear Your name, both small and great— and to destroy those who destroy the earth.' Then the temple of God in heaven was opened, and the ark of His covenant appeared in His temple. And there were flashes of lightning, and rumblings, and peals of thunder, and an earthquake,

and a great hailstorm....”(Rev 11:18-19).

Interesting resources on weather modification/weaponisation.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2jtU1g70ZOM>

The UnxPlained: Weather Control Weaponized by World's Military (Season 1) | History

<https://smartwatermagazine.com/news/smart-water-magazine/china-will-expand-weather-modification-practices>

<https://www.unrevealedfiles.com/weather-warfare-weather-modification-technology-in-warfare/>

<https://www.nytimes.com/1975/06/24/archives/a-ussoviet-ban-on-weather-use-for-war-is-near-pact-would-outlaw.html>

https://www.scmp.com/news/china/society/article/2148697/could-new-chinese-radar-system-really-be-used-play-god-weather?module=perpetual_scroll_0&pgtype=article&campaign=2148697

The word used to refer to God’s ‘wrath’ is also translated in a way that cleverly disguises His loving character.

God’s ways are not like selfish human ways.

Isaiah 55:8-9

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.”

Jesus says that we are to call the Creator ‘our Father’ (Matt 6:9).

Our heavenly Father is grieved when His children reject Him. He is not consumed with anger. He does not struggle with resentment or have any desire to seek revenge on us. Instead, our heavenly Father understands the suffering, shame and guilt that our selfish behaviour has caused us. He longs to restore our happiness and to

assure us of His love and acceptance. Jesus demonstrated that the Father does not judge or condemn or shame us but pleads with us, cries tears over us. Just as a loving human parent is grieved over his teenage son's drug addiction, so the Father grieves over His sin-addicted children. Just as a loving, human parent would not punish their child for being drug-addicted, neither does God inflict punishment on His children. However when His children refuse to acknowledge their selfishness and instead try to justify and rationalise it, God's response is still always loving.

Love permits freedom of choice but when selfish choices are made, God is placed in the position where He is denied the opportunity to protect the sin-addict from the consequences of his behaviour. The sin addict is then left defenceless against Satan's attacks and 'reaps what they have sown' (Galatians 6:7).

Jesus tried to teach us that true punishment is actually the natural consequences of selfishness. From the Garden of Eden (Gen 2:17) until now, the divine warning has been given, that choosing to be separated from the Life-Giving power of creative Love results in death. The act of inflicting additional/artificial pain to a person who has angered another, is the work of the devil. Bible writers became confused and believed that revenge was punishment and that God is vengeful. "The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God" (James 1:20). His ways and thoughts are far superior to human ways, because God's ways are loving, not selfish (Isaiah 55:8,9). Jesus teaches a restorative system, not a punitive system.

God experiences no pleasure from the suffering of others 1. The teenage drug addict suffers the consequences or 'wages' of taking drugs. Those natural consequences are the punishment for the action. The punishment effects the addict as well as those who love the addict. Just as the drugs work destruction on the body and mind of the addict, so the sin-addict reaps the consequences of choosing to live separated from the Life Giver. The wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23) actually means that the consequences of selfishness will destroy the sin-addict. This explains the statement that "All that hate me, love death" (Prov 8:36). Without being connected to

and protected by the Life-Giver, only death remains in the form of suicide or homicide. God does not murder or artificially punish anyone. Jesus exposed the identify of the original murderer - the devil (John 8:44), so why have His followers disregarded His testimony and accuse the Creator of being the destroyer?

Furthermore, as previously discussed, Jesus demonstrated how God's wrath appears in the incident where James and John wanted to burn alive the disrespectful Samaritan village in Luke 9:54-56. Jesus again had to remind His disciples that "'the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them.' And they went to another village."

Another example is seen in Luke 13:34, 35 where when He was rejected by Jerusalem and reluctantly left the city for the last time, Jesus was grieved in His heart. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those sent to her, how often I have longed to gather your children together as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were unwilling! Look, your house is left to you desolate." Divine Love 'wrath' was displayed as Jesus in grief accepted that He had to leave the city's inhabitants to their own destruction.

Jesus had to "hand them over" to the death and disorder that selfishness caused to all of His creation. The expressions, "He handed them over to," or, 'gave him up to' are seen throughout the Bible and destruction follows after the Divine protection is very⁴ reluctantly removed.

Hosea 4:17 "Ephraim is joined to idols; leave him alone!"

Jesus demonstrates the same principle of loving, not fuming in anger, over those who are 'lost' in various ways. In Luke 15 is described Love's response toward the lost sheep, the lost coin and the prodigal son.

4

What if the Father actually was like Jesus demonstrated? What if we could trust the words of Jesus that insist that if we have seen Him, the Son of God, then we have seen the Father also - His character (John 14:8). What if the Father is like the Father in the parable of the prodigal son? What is the Father's wrath is heart-shattering grief for His rebellious children who are bent on destroying themselves? What if we aren't more moral, more holy, more loving than the Father? We love our wayward children - we don't kill them. We pray for them, forgive them, encourage them and try to protect them. How is it that we pretend to honour and worship and adore a supposedly divine being who does the opposite to his children? This divine being is recorded as:

1. requiring the death of His own Son;
2. slaughtering hundreds of thousands of rebels in a world-wide flood;
3. ordering His violent followers to annihilate entire 'pagan' tribes - men, women, children, babies and animals - and it wasn't in self-defence;
4. authorising the rape and discarding of very young 'pagan' virgins captured in battle;
5. slashing the throats of innocent bulls, cows, lambs, goats, doves as a way of easing the conscience after committing selfish acts;
6. threatening curses and death on those who disobeyed.

These attributes are describing an impostor!

Such a being is a violent tyrant, dictator - a divine bully, a liar, a sadist, psychopathic, serial murderer. In fact, that is what Satan's character is described as by Jesus (John 8:44). In contrast, Jesus was gentle, loving, forgiving, Life-Giving, healing, non-threatening.

How can God's people be so confused about their Creator's character?

They don't look to the Author and Finisher of their faith. (Heb 12:2). They read and memorise the Bible, the holy writings, the Scriptures, just as the pharisees and scribes did - and they learned about what other men 'believed' God was like - instead of looking to the Son of God and seeing what the Father was truly like (Hebrews 1:1).

It is understandable why would Jesus said to His disciples, "I still have much to tell you, but you cannot yet bear to hear it. However, when the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all truth."
" (John 16:12).

Are we now willing to sit at the feet of Jesus and learn those things that were too hard to bear previously?

2 Agathos Daimon and the Asklepian serpent Pearn J. Agathos Daimon and the Asklepian serpent. Vesalius. 2011 Jun;17(1):4-9. PMID: 22043596. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/22043596/>
3 Egyptians ate, drank, danced, and played music at their religious festivals. They perfumed the air with flowers and incense. Many of Hathor's epithets link her to celebration; she is called the mistress of music, dance, garlands, myrrh, and drunkenness. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hathor>