

“The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea side. And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore. And he spake many things unto them in PARABLES, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow... Who hath ears to hear, let him hear. And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in PARABLES? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, BUT TO THEM IT IS NOT GIVEN...Therefore speak I to them in PARABLES; because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive. For this people’s heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they shall see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.” Mat. 13:1-3,9-15.

Sam Jones was a Civil War era lawyer and evangelist who lived with his large family in rural Georgia, and traveled the United States successfully hawking an Arminian, Methodist brand of heresy to large, and mostly ignorant, and willingly gullible people. I used to have a book of sermons by Jones, and in one of his sermons he said that Jesus was a wonderful preacher in part because he talked to the people about things they were familiar with. If His audience was composed of fishermen and their families, Jesus would illustrate his sermons with stories of fishermen and their experiences. If His audience was full of farmers, the Lord would tell stories about farming. Housewives would hear stories of cooking and sewing and cleaning and so forth.

Beloved. That’s the exact opposite of the way Jesus preached; and it shows how profoundly mistaken Arminians are about how they handle Scripture. The Lord Jesus – speaking as plainly as words can be used – said that He was speaking ONLY IN PARABLES (metaphors, figures of speech) to the multitudes, FOR THE EXPRESS PURPOSE of keeping His message HIDDEN from them. Now, Beloved, this is an amazing thing, and it is so revolting to the natural mind as to make this DOCTRINE downright offensive – even repulsive – to all but God’s Elect. In fact, I believe this “REPULSIVE” DOCTRINE to be that certain “*stumblingstone and rock of offence*” which God Himself has laid in Zion whereby to cause all mankind to fatally stumble, and fall, and go to Hell (except for God’s Elect); to wit:

“What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone; As it is written, Behold, I lay in Zion a stumblingstone and rock of offence; and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.” (Rom. 9:30-33)

Make no mistake, Beloved. This Holy Doctrine plainly holds that God Himself deliberately blinds the eyes of the reprobate (the non-Elect) so that he cannot possibly see the truth; and that He purposefully stops up the ears of the reprobate for the express purpose of rendering him absolutely incapable of hearing the truth; to wit:

“According as it is written, GOD HATH GIVEN THEM THE SPIRIT OF SLUMBER, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear; unto this day.”
(Rom. 11:8)

This amazing Old Testament passage, as divinely inspired by the apostle Paul in this context, refers to the 29th chapter of Isaiah; to wit: *“Stay yourselves, and wonder; cry ye out, and cry;”* – (or, see, margin: *‘take your pleasure, and riot’*); – *“they (the non-Elect, the reprobate) are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink. For THE LORD HATH Poured OUT UPON YOU THE SPIRIT OF DEEP SLEEP, and hath closed your eyes;”* – (and now, in addition to the New Testament passage); – *“THE PROPHETS AND YOUR RULERS, THE SEERS HATH HE COVERED.”* Isa. 29:9,10.

Now you see how additionally perilous and hopeless is the spiritual condition of the reprobate (the non-Elect). And you now see how silly and sinful is the doctrinal framework and so-called “win-them-all-to-Jesus-world-wide-evangelistic crusades” (think, Billy Graham, et al.) of the Arminian evangelists and missionaries. If the Almighty Sovereign God declares that He has poured out upon every reprobate (non-Elect) the spirit of deep sleep, and has closed his/her eyes, all deliberately to keep them from seeing or hearing the Gospel truth which is necessary for salvation; and not only so, but this passage adds another impossible hurdle for the non-Elect sinner to clear; to wit: that same Sovereign God has declared that He has similarly stopped the ears and eyes of every Arminian prophet, spiritual ruler and seer, so that, even if the non-Elect sinner himself is not so afflicted, God has so arranged it that the only preachers the sinner is ever able to hear, – (for one reason or another), is an Arminian heretic, preaching Arminian lies.

Beloved. Have you not marveled at this great phenomenon, known to all the world as Westboro Baptist Church? Has not the Lord our God so arranged it that WBC is universally hated and vilified – such that this humble place is everywhere despised, marginalized and irrationally demonized. The BBC called the documentary they did about us, “The Most Hated Family in America,” and this was two or three years ago. Since that time, with the blessings of God on our humble labors, we would surely be promoted to, The Most Hated CHURCH in the WORLD – without the slightest whiff of hyperbole or exaggeration. All this is the sovereign work of a Sovereign God, who *“worketh all things after the counsel of His own will.”* Eph. 1:11.

“The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve (i.e., preserve, pickle) the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished.”
(2 Pet. 2:9)

Moreover, the determination of the Lord God Almighty to engage Himself actively in seeing to it that none of the non-Elect (the reprobate) will hear His word, believe, repent, and be converted – extends further than to pour upon the reprobate the spirit of deep slumber, and to close their eyes and ears; and it extends further than to frighten them off of being identified – in the slightest degree – with the Lord’s prophets for fear that the cost will be too high in reproaches & persecutions, ala WBC; it extends to supernaturally sealing up the Book of God; to wit:

“And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee; and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed. And the book is delivered to him that is NOT learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee; and he saith, I am NOT learned.”
(Isa. 29:11,12)

In other words, upon the slightest, and most frivolous pretext, the Bible is always rejected. Furthermore, there is even Bible-evidence that we should pray for God to blind their eyes that they should not see; to wit:

“And David saith, LET THEIR TABLE BE MADE A SNARE, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompence unto them; LET THEIR EYES BE DARKENED, THAT THEY MAY NOT SEE, and BOW DOWN THEIR BACK ALWAY.”
(Rom. 11:9,10)

Robert Haldane, (bn. 1764) in his famous book, An Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans, says in the preface, “*The human mind is ever prone to soften the strong features of Divine truth, and to bring them more into accordance with its own wishes and preconceived notions. These lowering and debasing MODIFICATIONS of the doctrines of Scripture, by which, in some popular works, it is endeavored to reconcile error with orthodoxy (i.e., truth), are imposing only in theory, and may be easily detected by a close and unprejudiced examination of the language of this Epistle.*”

Beloved, just here is the test of divine truth – and Haldane recognizes it as such. And then he proceeds to FAIL THE TEST ! I beseech you to pay the closest of attention until you RECOGNIZE THE TEST; and thereupon, that you PASS THE TEST ! Haldane says, “*By studying the Epistle to the Romans, an exact and comprehensive knowledge of the DOCTRINES OF GRACE*” – (i.e., the 5 POINTS OF CALVINISM) – “*may be obtained. Here they appear in all their clearness, unmixed with the wisdom of man.*” What a beautiful sentence. Then Haldane says, “*The human mind is ever prone to soften the STRONG FEATURES of Divine truth, and bring them more into accordance with its own wishes and preconceived notions.*”

Well said. But when he begins to expound **Romans 11:8-10**, he COMPLETELY LOSES HIS FIRM GRIP ON GOD’S WORD ! Does God predestinate people to live in sin, die in sin, and go to Hell for their sins? That, Beloved, is the hardest question of all, and is called REPROBATION – the antithesis of ELECTION. Listen closely to what God plainly says, and then see how the great Haldane pitifully mangles it with clumsy, juvenile sophistry; completely forgetting – (or ignoring) – the powerful warning he himself had ended his Preface with; to wit: “*(According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear,) UNTO THIS DAY. And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompence unto them. Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back alway.*” **Rom. 11:8-10.**

“In a general way, this passage simply announces the unmitigated predestinated wrath of God to be poured out upon all reprobates, without hope of reversal; and, in addition, announces that David is praying for the painful and utter destruction at all levels of all reprobates; to wit: Let them have only misery and disappointment in all their concerns – whether sacred or common in their daily activities – the metaphor of their table being a snare, and trap, and stumblingblock being an especially grievous daily curse affecting everything; the common table being empty of food and thus symbolizing poverty and starvation; and the sacred table symbolizing such as the Passover Supper and the Lord’s Supper; and hence David’s prayer was for their complete and total devastation at every level of life, originally calculated to be for their welfare and prosperity, but now in answer to David’s prayer, reduced to nothing but punishments on earth and in Hell, all at the hands of an angry God.”

“Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling-block, and a recompence unto them.” Rom. 11:9. Strong Scripture, indeed. Too strong? Haldane thinks so. And so he proceeds to water it down and soften it – exactly what he warned against doing in the Preface as quoted above; to wit: “*These words of the Old Testament Scriptures are too strong...*” Hold it, Robert ! What do you mean, TOO STRONG? You said in the Preface of your famous book, An Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans, the last paragraph, to wit:

Sunday, May 17, 2009

Sermon Outline...page 4

“The human mind is ever prone to soften the STRONG FEATURES OF DIVINE TRUTH, and to bring them more into accord with its own wishes and preconceived notions.” And now, now that you have reached the plain, blessed language of the Holy Spirit at **Romans 11:8-10**, you weasel around like a wild-eyed Arminian heretic and begin talking about, *“These words of the OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES are TOO STRONG.”* Meaning, that when God’s words are too much for you to handle when taken in their plain, simple, ordinary meaning, and in their natural context; then you begin scratching around like a dog with fleas, in your cheap sophistry and tacky fall-back positions; like pitting the Old Testament Scriptures against the New Testament Scriptures; or, like pretending that the CONTEXT forbids interpreting or expounding the passage simply and plainly as the words demand.

Just listen to this pitiful and convoluted treatment Bro. Haldane gives to the plain words of David, Paul, and the Holy Ghost; to wit: ***“And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompence.” Rom. 11:9.*** Now hear how Haldane mangled this simple and plainly-worded passage; to wit: *“These words of the OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES are TOO STRONG to represent anything else...but the fearful blindness of the Jews in the time of the Messiah, when they saw His miracles, and nevertheless did not perceive their import; when they heard, yet did not listen to the calls of His Gospel. Then, truly, their heart was made fat, and their ears heavy, and their eyes were closed.”*

Well, Beloved, my heart is truly sad, that Robert Haldane would resort to the cheap exegetical tricks of pretending the Old Testament is not quite as trustworthy as the New Testament; and pretending the passage has been fulfilled already and elsewhere, and has no further application and vitality to the here and now (i.e., Westboro Baptist Church). Beloved, this matter has been said so many times, in so many Scriptures, over such a lengthy period – it is now quite beyond cavil; to wit:

“That the saying of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore THEY COULD NOT BELIEVE, because that Isaiah said again, HE HATH BLINDED THEIR EYES, AND HARDENED THEIR HEART; THAT THEY SHOULD NOT SEE WITH THEIR EYES, NOR UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEART, AND BE CONVERTED, AND I SHOULD HEAL THEM. These things said Isaiah, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.” (Jn. 12:38-41)

Luther, in his debates with Erasmus, said on one occasion, *“Your thoughts of God, my dear Erasmus, are too human.”* Predestination – consisting of two parts: Election and Reprobation – requires thinking like God thinks, and no Scripture illustrates this better than **Isaiah chapter 6**; to wit:

“Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me. And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and 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 convert, and be healed. Then said I, Lord, how long? And he answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate, And the Lord have removed men far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land.” (Isa. 6:8-12)

That is, the Holy Seed, God’s Elect people, shall preach this strong message – (no longer in PARABLES) – to the end of the world; and they only shall survive.

I love you. Amen.