

EXPLANATORY NOTES WILL FOLLOW THIS CHAPTER, AFTERWARD

Chapter 2 *Is God in Absolute Control?*

Romans 13:1

Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

Let verse 1 of Romans chapter 13 sink in a bit . . . *What exactly are the higher powers?* But, more importantly, we must digest the second and third parts of that passage: "there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." This, of course, will also depend on our interpretation of how much power God has over this universe, this planet, and our very lives. I addressed this question earlier, remember? *How much does God intervene with our lives?* Well, I will tell you for sure that this book assumes that God intervenes *one hundred percent* with *most* of the life forms on this planet.* *Is that a bad assumption?* Well, if we are to believe the scriptures, then we have no choice but to believe it . . . Let's observe:

Psalms 46:7-10

The LORD of hosts *is* with us; the God of Jacob *is* our refuge. Selah. Come, behold the works of the LORD, what desolations he hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire. Be still, and know that I *am* God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.

Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Bible*

(on **Psalms 46:8**)

See empires destroyed and regenerated; and in such a way as to show that a supernatural agency has been at work. By the hand of God alone could these great changes be effected.

The Treasury of David*

(on **Psalms 46:9**)

His voice quiets the tumult of war, and calls for the silence of peace. However remote and barbarous the tribe, he awes the people into rest. He crushes the great powers till they cannot provoke strife again.

Colossians 1:16-17

For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or **powers**: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*

(on Colossians 1:16)

All things were created . . . for Him: that is, for his pleasure, that he may take delight and complacency in them, and in his own perfections displayed by them; and for his service and use, as the angels, to worship him and minister to him and for others, he sends them to: elect men are made to serve and glorify him with their bodies and spirits, which are his; and even the non-elect are made to subserve his mediatorial kingdom and interest; yea, the whole world is built and kept in being purely on his account, until he has finished the great affair of the salvation of his people.

1 Timothy 6:14-16

That thou keep *this* commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: Which in his times he shall shew, *who* is the blessed and **ONLY POTENTATE**, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom *be* honour and power everlasting. Amen.

John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible

(on 1 Timothy 6:15)

And only Potentate . . . or, Governor of the whole world, which can be said of none but himself: he is the Governor among the nations, and over all the nations of the earth; his kingdom rules over all other kingdoms; and he has his power and government from himself, whereas all other potentates have their power from him, as follows: the King of kings, and Lord of lords; from whom they receive their sceptres, crowns, and kingdoms; by whom they reign, and are continued in their power; for he sets up kings, and removes kings at his pleasure, and to him they must be accountable for all their administrations another day; and at present they are under his influence, and at his control; he has their hearts, and their counsels, as well as kingdoms, in his hands, and under his overruling providence; and causes all to answer his wise and eternal purposes.

1 Chronicles 29:10-12

Wherefore David blessed the LORD before all the congregation: and David said, Blessed *be* thou, LORD God of Israel our father, for ever and ever. Thine, O LORD, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all *that* is in the heaven and in the earth *is thine*; thine is the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honour *come* of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand *it is* to make great, and to give strength unto all.

John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible

(on 1 Chronicles 29:12)

"Both riches and honour come of thee": Whatever of either the children of men have is not owing to their merits, nor to their diligence and industry, and wise conduct, but to the providence of God, Ecclesiastes 9:11, so the gods with the Heathens are said to be givers of riches: "and thou reignest over all": govern the world by wisdom, and dispose all things in it for the best. "in thine hand is power and might": to do whatsoever he pleaseth. "and in thine hand it is to make great": in worldly things, and so in spiritual.

"and to give strength unto all": against their enemies, and to do the will and work of God; of all which David had had an experience.

Isaiah 45:7*

I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these *things*.

Geneva Bible Translation Notes*

(on Isaiah 45:7)

I send peace and war, prosperity and adversity.

Job 12:9-10

Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the LORD hath wrought this? In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind.

John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible

(on Job 12:9-10)

*In whose hand is the soul of every living thing . . . Of every animal, of every brute creature, as distinct from man, in the next clause: the life of everyone of them is from him, and it is continued by him as long as he pleases, nor can it be taken away without his leave; two sparrows, which are not worth more than a farthing, not one of them falls to the ground, or dies without the knowledge and will of God, **Matthew 10:29**; of the soul or spirit of beasts, see **Ecclesiastes 3:21**.*

Albert Barne's Notes on the Bible*

(on Job 12:9-10)

In whose hand is the soul of every living thing . . . The idea is, that all are under the control of God. He gives life, and health, and happiness when he pleases, and when he chooses he takes them away. His sovereignty is manifested, says Job, in the inferior creation, or among the beasts of the field, the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of heaven.

Proverbs 19:21

There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand.

Geneva Bible Translation Notes

(on Proverbs 19:21)

Man's device will not have success, unless God governs it, whose purpose is unchangeable.

Isaiah 14:24

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.

John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible

(on Isaiah 14:24)

surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; as he had shaped and schemed it, and drew the form and image in his own mind, or fixed and settled it there, so should it be done in due time, as every thing is that is determined by the Lord; and this shows that nothing is casual, or comes by chance, but everything as it is purposed of God; and that as everything comes to pass which he has resolved, so every such resolution proceeds from thought, and is the produce of the highest wisdom and prudence . . . And as I have purposed, so it shall stand; or "counselled"; within himself, for he does all things according to the counsel of his will; and which always stands firm, sure, and unalterable, let what devices soever be in the heart of man.

1 Samuel 2:6-7

The LORD killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up. The LORD maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up.

Poor Man's Commentary by Robert Hawker*

(on 1 Samuel 2:6-7)

These are all so many beautiful repetitions of the same important doctrine, in asserting God's sovereignty over all things, both in the kingdoms of providence, and of grace.

Psalms 50:10-11

For every beast of the forest is mine, *and* the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field *are* mine.

Albert Barne's Notes on the Bible

(on Psalms 50:10-11)

*It is a beautiful and impressive thought, that the "property" in all these animals - in all living things on the earth - is in God, and that he has a right to dispose of them as he pleases. What man owns, he owns under God, and has no right to complain when God comes and asserts his superior claim to dispose of it at his pleasure. God has never given to man the absolute proprietorship in "any" thing; nor does he invade our rights when he comes and claims what we possess, or when in any way he removes what is most valuable to us. Compare **Job 1:21**: "And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD."*

If one is to not know that God is supreme and omnipotent, then one does not know God! For further research, also see **Luke 1:37; Jeremiah 32:27; Isaiah 40:28; Job 42:2; Isaiah 44:24; Revelation 19:6; and Jeremiah 10:12.**

Considering a God like this, can we truly say that it's impossible for Him to intervene in our lives? *But, wouldn't that interfere with free-will, though?* No, it doesn't. God must certainly intrude in on our *flesh-feast* if we are ever to learn about Him, *right?* Does not the scripture say that we cannot even come to Him unless the Spirit first draw us? * If God didn't intervene even at *that* moment, then there is truly no hope for any of us! And, if He first draw us, what's to stop Him from participating in our lives afterwards? So, to balance

and make sense of all these things – and I will walk the tightrope here in *not* trying to get caught up in the *Predestination vs Free-will* debate*, nor of what Satan's in-depth role is in all of this commotion* (*for I shall cover both subjects in upcoming books*) – I will certainly be as informative as possible in my present task on this vast subject.

Now, let's dig even deeper to see that God can truly intervene in our personal lives...

Proverbs 20:24

Man's goings *are* of the LORD; how can a man then understand his own way?

John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible

(on **Proverbs 20:24**)

Man's goings are of the Lord . . . In a natural and literal sense, the instruments of going are of the Lord; the act of motion from place to place is not without the concurrence of his providence; as in him we live, and move, and have our being, so "in and by him we move"; he preserves our going out and coming in; and as the preservation, so the success and prosperity of journeying are owing to his providence, and the whole is under his care and direction: and so likewise, in a civil sense, all the civil concerns, business, and actions of life, are guided by his providence; there is a time for every purpose under heaven, and the success of all depends on a divine blessing; and things are with every man in civil life according to the providence of God, and as it is his pleasure they should be; and it is by him they are directed to take this and the other step, the issue of which is according to his will: and this may be applied to men's goings in a spiritual and religious sense.

Adam Clark's Commentary on the Bible

(on **Proverbs 20:24**)

Man's goings are of the Lord - He, by his providence, governs all the great concerns of the world. Man often traverses these operations; but he does it to his own damage. An old writer quaintly says: 'They who will carve for themselves shall cut their fingers.'

Albert Barnes Notes on the Bible

(on **Proverbs 20:24**)

The order of a man's life is a mystery even to himself. He knows not where he is going, or for what God is educating him.

Matthew Henry's Commentary on the whole Bible*

(on **Proverbs 20:24**)

We are here taught that in all our affairs, 1. We have a necessary and constant dependence upon God. All our natural actions depend upon his providence, all our spiritual actions upon his grace. The best man is no better than God makes him; and every creature is that to us which it is the will of God that it should be. Our enterprises succeed, not as we desire and design, but as God directs and disposes. The goings even of a strong man (so the word signifies) are of the Lord, for his strength is weakness without God, nor is the battle always to the strong . . . 2. We have no foresight of future events, and therefore know not how to forecast for them: How can a man understand his own way? How can he tell what will befall him, since God's counsels concerning him

are secret, and therefore how can he of himself contrive what to do without divine direction? We so little understand our own way that we know not what is good for ourselves, and therefore we must make a virtue of necessity, and commit our way unto the Lord, in whose hand it is, follow the guidance and submit to the disposal of Providence.

So much that one little scripture can say! But, let's continue:

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which* is in you, which ye have of God, and **ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price:** therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

The People's New Testament*

(on 1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

Ye are not your own. But members of Christ, and hence have not the right to use our bodies to our own pleasure. Ye are bought with a price. Christ paid the price, even his blood. Hence, since both body and spirit are God's, both should be used to glorify him. The fact that we are his, purchased, parts of his spiritual temple, makes the obligation imperative to consecrate the body and spirit to his service.

John Wesley's Explanatory Notes*

(on 1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

And even your body is not, strictly speaking, your own even this is the temple of the Holy Ghost - Dedicated to him, and inhabited by him.

Albert Barnes Notes on the Bible

(on 1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

We are purchased; we belong to God; we are his by redemption; by a precious price paid; and we are bound, therefore, to devote ourselves, body, soul, and spirit, as he directs, to the glory of his name, not to the gratification of the flesh.

The Biblical Illustrator*

(on 1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

Ye are not your own: To be "our own" is our very greatest ambition. To be our own masters, that is nature . . . God has been pleased so to order it, that no man can truly say, "I am my own"; "Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are," &c . . . Of all the happy conditions upon earth, the happiest is to give up the whole heart to an authority which the whole heart can quite love and respect . . . God's property in you: A father has a right to his child, but God has done more than made you His child, for He has given you the spirit of a child, to cry "Abba Father." . . . Christ has more than a right to His body, being the Head, and we all members in particular; so that each condition of life teaches us with one common voice, "Ye are not your own."

Adam Clark's Commentary on the Bible

(on 1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

And ye are not your own? - Ye have no right over yourselves, to dispose either of your body, or any of its members, as you may think proper or lawful; you are bound to God, and to him you are accountable.

But what about my right to choose my own will? I, for one, do believe in free-will, but that it has its limitations. *What do I mean?* Well, let's consider Jonah, who had made up his mind that he was going to go against a direct order from God and not go to Nineveh to preach. His own free-will told him *no*, but even though he made that free-will choice, God, on the other hand, *intervened* with that decision, and ended up changing Jonah's mind about preaching there because of a tribulation that God sent him through, *which Jonah ended up calling hell!* – **Jonah 2:2*** – that is, considering the severity of the trial in which he endured. Jonah then, after spending a few days in the whale's belly, made a *new* choice – choosing, instead, to do *God's* will . . . So, what does that mean? It means that we can make our own decisions, but if they are the *wrong* decisions, and if those decisions go against God's will*, then He will end up changing our minds for us. *Does He really do that? And, if so, is that wrong for Him to do?* And just because this happened to Jonah, does it necessarily mean that it'll happen to us?

Romans 9:20-21

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?

It's not too hard to interpret Paul's words here. Simply put, God has complete control over His creation, to do with it as He sees fit, or as He pleases. And, while trying to explain these kinds of thoughts all during chapter 9 of Romans, Paul was very tempted to say – *and actually did say:*

Romans 9:14

What shall we say then? *Is there* unrighteousness with God? God forbid.

What would prompt him to even ask such a question? Surely, he knew that others would ask it. And, his answer? *God forbid!* In other words, *No!* – there is no unrighteousness with God. Simply put, God is God, and there is none other beside Him. He is before all things, and by Him all things consist. He has the power to intervene with our lives, and make them go into directions that pleases Him . . . Does that take away our free-will? Again, *no*, it does not. But, our freedom is limited when we make stupid decisions. Decisions, that is, that will end up harming us, or destroying us; or, and more especially, decisions that would end up harming other people . . . Folks, this works in the very same manner as a parent gives limited freedom to their own child. In that, if something will harm the child, the parent will step in and dictate the situation. Only, God does this on a much larger scale.

Therefore, with all this in mind, it's *not* crazy to think that God intervenes and interferes with our lives. It's *not* crazy to think that He can lead and guide our steps. And, it's *not*

crazy to say that if we aren't following His will, that he can make us change our minds so that we do the right things.

But, even if this is so – that is, leading and guiding, and intervening in people's lives – what about those who don't serve God? Can God control their movements as well?

Isaiah 10:5-6

O Assyrian, **the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their 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 mire of the streets.

Albert Barnes Notes on the Bible

(on Isaiah 10:5)

The Hebrew would bear the interpretation that the Assyrian was, an object against which God was angry; but the former is evidently the sense of the passage, as denoting that the Assyrian was the agent by which he would express his anger against a guilty people.

Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary

(on Isaiah 10:5-19)

The king of Assyria, in his pride, thought to act by his own will. The tyrants of the world are tools of Providence. God designs to correct his people for their hypocrisy, and bring them nearer to him . . . The Assyrian boasts what great things he has done to other nations, by his own policy and power. He knows not that it is God who makes him what he is, and puts the staff into his hand . . . When God brings his people into trouble, it is to bring sin to their remembrance, and humble them, and to awaken them to a sense of their duty; this must be the fruit, even the taking away of sin.

Judges 2:14

And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and **he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them**, and he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies.

Joshua 11:20

For it was of the LORD to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that he might destroy them utterly, *and* that they might have no favour, but that he might destroy them, as the LORD commanded Moses.

Deuteronomy 32:8

When the most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel.

John Wesley's Explanatory Notes

(on Deuteronomy 32:8)

And therefore he so guided the hearts of several people, that the posterity of Canaan, which was accursed of God, and devoted to ruin, should be seated in that country which

God intended for the children of Israel, that so when their iniquities were ripe, they might be rooted out, and the Israelites come in their stead.

Psalms 75:7

But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another.

The Treasury of David

(on Psalms 75:7)

“But God is the judge.” Even now he is actually judging. His seat is not vacant; his authority is not abdicated; the Lord reigneth evermore “He putteth down one, and setteth up another.” Empires rise and fall at his bidding. A dungeon here, and there a throne, his will assigns. Assyria yields to Babylon, and Babylon, to the Medes. Kings are but puppets in his hand; they serve his purpose when they rise and when they fall. A certain author has issued a work called “Historic Ninepins,” a fit name of scorn for all the great ones of the earth. God only is; all power belongs to him; all else is shadow, coming and going, unsubstantial, misty, dream-like.

Ezra 1:1-2

Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and *put it* also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, **The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth;** and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah.

Geneva Bible Translations Notes

(on Ezra 1:2)

For he was chief monarch and had many nations under his dominion, which this heathen king confesses to have received from the living God.

Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary

(on Ezra 1:1-4)

God governs the world by his influence on the spirits of men; whatever good they do, God stirs up their spirits to do it.

Daniel 4:34-35

And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation: 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?**

John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible

(on **Daniel 4:35**)

He [God] disposes of men on earth, and puts them into such stations, and such conditions and circumstances, and appoints them such business and services, as he thinks meet . . . The "inhabitants of the earth" are the men of it, as before, with whom he does as he pleases in things temporal and civil, making some rich, and others poor; raising some to great honour and dignity, while others live in meanness, poverty, and disgrace . . . he does what he will with his own; he bestows grace and glory on whomsoever he pleases, as free grace gifts, without any merit of the creature, according to his sovereign will and pleasure.

Acts 17:23-28 (Paul speaking)

For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and **hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation**; That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: **For in him we live, and move, and have our being**; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.

Jamieson, Fausset and Brown Commentary*

(on **Acts 17:26-27**)

And hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation — The apostle here opposes both Stoical Fate and Epicurean Chance, ascribing the periods and localities in which men and nations flourish to the sovereign will and prearrangements of a living God.

Acts 4:26-28

The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. 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.**

John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible

(on **Acts 4:28**)

And thy counsel determined before to be done: God's decrees are from eternity; there is nothing comes to pass in time but what he has beforetime determined should be done, either by effecting it himself, or doing it by others, or suffering it to be done, as in the case here. Whatever was done to Christ, either by Jews or Gentiles, by Herod or Pontius Pilate, was according to the secret will of God, the covenant he made with Christ, and the council of peace that was between them both: what they wickedly did, God designed for good, and hereby brought about the redemption and salvation of his people: this

neither makes God the author of sin, nor excuses the sinful actions of men, or infringes the liberty of their wills in acting.

Deuteronomy 8:18

But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for **it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth**, that he may establish his covenant which he swore unto thy fathers, as *it is* this day.

Geneva Bible Translation Notes

*(on **Deuteronomy 8:18**)*

If things concerning this life proceed only from God's mercy, how much more do spiritual gifts and everlasting life.

Deuteronomy 7:15

And the LORD will take away from thee all sickness, and will put none of the evil diseases of Egypt, which thou knowest, upon thee; **but WILL lay them upon all them that hate thee.**

Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary

*(on **Deuteronomy 7:15**)*

Diseases are God's servants; they go where he sends them, and do what he bids them . . . God will do his own work in his own method and time; and we may be sure that they are always the best.

John Wesley's Explanatory Notes

*(on **Deuteronomy 7:15**)*

[Repeating Matthew Henry] Diseases are God's servants, which go where he sends them, and do what he bids them.

He even, at times, controls individual people:

1 Samuel 16:14

But the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and an evil spirit **FROM** the LORD troubled him.

Geneva Bible Translation Notes

*(on **1 Samuel 16:14**)*

The wicked spirits are at God's commandment to execute his will against the wicked.*

Also, seen in **1 Samuel 16:16**; and **19:9**.

Exodus 9:12a

And **the LORD** hardened the heart of Pharaoh...

Poor Man's Commentary by Robert Hawker

(on 1 Exodus 9:12a)

Observe the change of expression. Upon several instances before, it is said that Pharaoh hardened his own heart: but here it is said, that the Lord hardened it.

Also seen in **Exodus 10:20; 10:27; 11:10; and 14:8.**

1 Kings 22:23

Now therefore, behold, **the LORD hath put a lying spirit** in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and **the LORD hath spoken evil** concerning thee.

Adam Clark's Commentary on the Bible

(on 1 Kings 22:23)

The Lord hath put a lying spirit - He hath permitted or suffered a lying spirit to influence thy prophets. Is it requisite again to remind the reader that the Scriptures repeatedly represent God as doing what, in the course of his providence, he only permits or suffers to be done? Nothing can be done in heaven, in earth, or hell, but either by his immediate energy or permission. This is the reason why the Scripture speaks as above.*

2 Chronicles 18:22

Now therefore, behold, **the LORD hath put a lying spirit** in the mouth of these thy prophets, and **the LORD hath spoken evil** against thee.

I want to point out that God can, and does, exercise complete control over His entire creation. And if that is so – *as the scriptures that I used dictate* – then can it be absurd for me to say that it was by the power of God that on that certain day at my job the folks were being cruel in the morning and were as gentle as lambs in the afternoon? Can it really be that God was using this example for my benefit and education? And, especially, so that I could pass this knowledge on for the sake of others?

EXPLANATORY NOTES for Chapter 2:

Is God in Absolute Control?

****God intervenes one hundred percent with most of the life forms on this planet...***

My wording in this sentence may seem a bit odd, and curiously placed. Unfortunately, it probably won't make much sense at this point in the book, and as to why I even said it this way, until the reader digs deeper into the pages . . . As will be seen later, the 100% estimation will be concerning, primarily, the *elect* of God, whilst leaving the ungodly with 0% to 75% intervention from the Master's hand (*that's a huge estimation, no doubt!*); depending, that is, on how much He needs them for His temporal employ . . . I hope to convey that even though I believe God is a major, major part of a Christian's life (more so than what most folks realize – *i.e. He is their everything!*), that it does *not* dictate, *even*

in the slightest (according to the theme of this book), that all of it revolves around trials and tribulations. Later on, in Chapter 3, I do illustrate that point. Basically, as we live this life, we see that it is full of ups and downs . . . Or, I should say, filled with both trials and blessings from the Master's hand . . . But, like I said, keep reading, and this will all make better sense later on.

***Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Bible...**

Published in 1810-1826; public domain.

Wikipedia, the Online Encyclopedia

Adam Clarke (b. 1760–1762, d. August 28, 1832) was a British Methodist theologian and Biblical scholar. He was born in the townland of Moybeg Kirley near Tobermore in Northern Ireland . . . He is chiefly remembered for writing a commentary on the Bible which took him 40 years to complete and which was a primary Methodist theological resource for two centuries . . . It may be the most comprehensive commentary on the Bible ever prepared by one man. By himself he produced nearly half as much material as the scores of scholars who collaborated on the twelve-volume The Interpreters' Bible.

***The Treasury of David, by Charles Haddon (CH) Spurgeon...**

Published in 1869-1885; public domain.

Wikipedia, the Online Encyclopedia

Charles Haddon (CH) Spurgeon (19 June 1834 – 31 January 1892) was a British Particular Baptist preacher. Spurgeon remains highly influential among Christians of various denominations, among whom he is known as the "Prince of Preachers". He was a strong figure in the Reformed Baptist tradition, defending the Church in agreement with the 1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith understanding, and opposing the liberal and pragmatic theological tendencies in the Church of his day . . . Spurgeon was the pastor of the congregation of the New Park Street Chapel (later the Metropolitan Tabernacle) in London for 38 years. He was part of several controversies with the Baptist Union of Great Britain and later he left the denomination over doctrinal convictions. In 1867, he started a charity organisation which is now called Spurgeon's and works globally. He also founded Spurgeon's College, which was named after him posthumously . . . Spurgeon was a prolific author of many types of works including sermons, an autobiography, commentaries, books on prayer, devotionals, magazines, poetry, hymns and more. Many sermons were transcribed as he spoke and were translated into many languages during his lifetime. Spurgeon produced powerful sermons of penetrating thought and precise exposition. His oratory skills held his listeners spellbound in the Metropolitan Tabernacle and many Christians hold his writings in exceptionally high regard among devotional literature.

***John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible...**

Published in 1748-1763; 1809; public domain.

Wikipedia, the Online Encyclopedia

John Gill (23 November 1697 – 14 October 1771) was an English Baptist pastor, Biblical scholar, and theologian who held to a firm Calvinistic soteriology. Born in Kettering, Northamptonshire, he attended Kettering Grammar School where he mastered the Latin classics and learned Greek by age 11. He continued self-study in everything from logic to Hebrew, his love for the latter remaining throughout his life . . . John Gill was

the first major writing Baptist theologian, his work retaining influence into the 21st century.

***Isaiah 45:7...**

In consideration of this verse, of God actually creating *evil*, I must say a few things on that here at this point. Even though I breeze through it in the main part of this book (since this certainly isn't our *main* topic; and, especially since I will be tackling this controversial issue head-on in the second part of this particular series [in my book entitled: *Satan, the Devil, and Hell*], which will be our main focus then), I must, however, speak on it somewhat here in this *End Note*, considering that such an important matter as this is – which, incidentally, *does* coincide directly with the topic at hand – it, therefore, just simply cannot be ignored. So, let's consider, *according to Biblehub.com*, when it lists parallel verses for **Isaiah 45:7** from other translations, of the 22 different Bible versions compared, that only 10 of them use the English word *evil* for the Hebrew word *Ra*; insinuating that what God created, as opposed to *wicked* evil, was (as some suggested) *disaster* or *calamity*. This is completely understandable, since we all know of the goodness of God, and that it is impossible for Him to bask in anything bad; or, for Him to even look upon sin. Therefore, these other versions, which say *disaster* or *calamity*, are, instead, suggesting some *other* type of bad things (such as, for instance, *natural disasters*), rather than actual *wicked* evil . . . But, are they really justified in using a word other than *evil* in their translations? What does *Strong's Hebrew Dictionary* have to say about the Hebrew word *Ra*?

***Ra*, # H7451, Strong's Hebrew Dictionary**

From H7489; bad or (as noun) evil (naturally or morally). This includes the second (feminine) form; as adjective or noun: - adversity, affliction, bad, calamity, + displease (-ure), distress, evil ([f-favouredness], man, thing), + exceedingly, great, grief (-vous), harm, heavy, hurt (-ful), ill (favoured), + mark, mischief, (-vous), misery, naught (-ty), noisome, + not please, sad (-ly), sore, sorrow, trouble, vex, wicked (-ly, -ness, one), worse (-st) wretchedness, wrong. [Including feminine ra'ah; as adjective or noun.]

Well, the official definition certainly went a bit further than just some random *calamities* (such as mere natural disasters), especially when the entry included things like: *Natural or moral evil; wicked; and wretchedness*. Calamity, however, was mentioned only *once* during the course . . . Let's dig even deeper, though, and consult another source – one that takes word study to a whole new level:

AMG's Annotated Strong's Dictionaries

© 2003

*An adjective meaning bad, evil. The basic meaning of this word [Ra] displays ten or more various shades of the meaning of evil according to its contextual usage. It means bad in a moral and ethical sense and is used to describe, along with good, the entire spectrum of good and evil; hence, it depicts evil in an absolute, negative sense, as when it describes the tree of knowledge of good and evil (**Genesis 2:9; 3:5; 22**) . . . The word takes on the aspect of something disagreeable, unwholesome, or harmful . . . In a literal sense, the word depicts something that is of poor quality or even ugly in appearance . . . Used as a noun, the word indicates realities that are inherently evil, wicked, or bad . . . The noun also depicts people of wickedness, that is, wicked people.*

And, that was just a small taste of what this extended dictionary relates about this word. But, since I am only allowed to use small portions of this reference herein, because of

copyright concerns, I would *definitely* recommend this wonderful and extremely useful study guide to all my serious readers . . . Even though *calamity* is certainly one of the word's meanings, it is, by far, the *mildest* of its definitions. Basically speaking, God created evil – *in all of its varied forms* – including, as we've read, *wickedness!* . . . But, if this is really so (*which it certainly appears to be!*) could this cause a problem for the Christians? *Absolutely not!* Do we not know that there isn't anything made that was made that wasn't by the hand of God? [see, again, **Colossians 1:16-17**] Our Lord had created *everything*, and set all things into motion – but, even if it can be proven that He created evil in the first place, it certainly doesn't mean that He is evil Himself, or that He takes pleasure in it! I have absolutely no problem in knowing that God, indeed, created evil – including *wicked* evil . . . But, again, this is but a small taste of what I'll be covering in Part 2 of this series. And, I know that this has probably raised more questions than what I have answered. But, for now, let's allow what I have just written to sink in – especially the official *Strong's Dictionary* meanings to the complex Hebrew word *Ra*. And, perhaps, as we plod along in this present book, the realization of what I have just presented will make more sense...

***Geneva Bible Translation Notes...**

Published in 1599; public domain.

Wikipedia, the Online Encyclopedia

The Geneva Bible is one of the most historically significant translations of the Bible into English, preceding the King James translation by 51 years. It was the primary Bible of 16th century English Protestantism and was the Bible used by William Shakespeare, Oliver Cromwell, John Knox, John Donne, and John Bunyan, author of Pilgrim's Progress (1678). It was one of the Bibles taken to America on the Mayflower (Pilgrim Hall Museum and Dr. Jiang have collected several Bibles of Mayflower passengers). The Geneva Bible was used by many English Dissenters, and it was still respected by Oliver Cromwell's soldiers at the time of the English Civil War, in the booklet "Cromwell's Soldiers' Pocket Bible" . . . This version of the Bible is significant because, for the very first time, a mechanically printed, mass-produced Bible was made available directly to the general public which came with a variety of scriptural study guides and aids (collectively called an apparatus), which included verse citations that allow the reader to cross-reference one verse with numerous relevant verses in the rest of the Bible, introductions to each book of the Bible that acted to summarize all of the material that each book would cover, maps, tables, woodcut illustrations, indices, as well as other included features — all of which would eventually lead to the reputation of the Geneva Bible as history's very first study Bible. Because the language of the Geneva Bible was more forceful and vigorous, most readers strongly preferred this version to the Great Bible. In the words of Cleland Boyd McAfee, "it drove the Great Bible off the field by sheer power of excellence."

***Albert Barne's Notes on the Bible...**

Published in 1847-85; public domain.

Wikipedia, the Online Encyclopedia

Albert Barnes (December 1, 1798 – December 24, 1870) was an American theologian, born in Rome, New York. He graduated from Hamilton College, Clinton, New York, in 1820, and from Princeton Theological Seminary in 1823. Barnes was ordained as a

Presbyterian minister by the presbytery of Elizabethtown, New Jersey, in 1825, and was the pastor successively of the Presbyterian Church in Morristown, New Jersey (1825–1830), and of the First Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia (1830–1868).

***Poor Man's Commentary by Robert Hawker...**

Published in 1805; public domain.

Wikipedia, the Online Encyclopedia

Robert Hawker (1753–1827) was an Anglican priest in Devon vicar of Charles Church, Plymouth. Called "Star of the West" for his popular preaching, he was known as an evangelical and author. The Cornish poet Robert Stephen Hawker was his grandson . . . He was a man of great frame, burly, strong and with blue eyes that sparkled and a fresh complexion. His humour was deep and razor sharp and his wit popular although he had a solemn exterior and in conversation would resort to silence while contemplating a difficult retort. He played the violin well and was an excellent scholar. Almost as soon as he arrived as curate he started writing and poured out over the year a long list of books, volumes of sermons, a theological treatise, a popular commentary, a guide to communion and also books of lessons in reading and writing for the schools. For a work of his on the divinity of Christ (combating the rise of Unitarianism) the University of Edinburgh conferred upon him a degree of Doctor of Divinity in 1792. He also produced the "Poor Man's Morning and Evening Portions" that were used long after his death.

***Unless the Spirit first draw us...**

St. John 6:44a [Jesus speaking]

No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him...

This passage certainly insinuates, without a doubt, that we are unable to come to God unless we are first called; or drawn . . . nay, *pulled!* We, who are born into carnality, have to be *pulled* into His service, else we would not come to Him at all.

Draw, Strong's Greek Dictionary

helkuo, #G1670: to drag (literally or figuratively): - draw.

AMG's Annotated Strong's Dictionaries

© 2003

To draw or drag; of persons: to drag, to force before magistrates; or out of a place; metaphorically to draw, induce to come.

This word can certainly take on the aspects of literally *forcing* somebody to go to a place where they did not wish to go. But, can that make any sense? Especially when most folks are taught that what God actually does is that He *woos* the potential Christian into His fold; i.e. *drawing* in a *gentle* manner. But, can this really be the case? . . . Like other rabbit trails in this book, I don't want to really go down this one at this point in time; but, do know this, that there are actually two schools of thought on this particular subject. I threw these thoughts in here (*a hit and run*) just to show the possibility of God literally *dragging* us into His service – which is a thought that is contrary to a lot of beliefs about God. But, know this, dear reader, that there is *nothing* good in us (other than what God places within) to where if we really had the initial choice (that is, a life-changing choice), then I'm convinced that none of us would make the right decision if it wasn't for God pushing us in...

Romans 3:23

For ALL have sinned, and come short of the glory of God...

If we've all fallen short, then how can we have the strength to pull ourselves in? But, even though this scripture seems to be bad – *as if nobody is going to make it to be with God* – Paul adds these sentences just afterwards:

Romans 3:24-25

Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.

Meaning, that salvation is *only* possible through Christ Jesus; and we cannot, therefore (being the *flesh-mongers* that we are), enter into His kingdom upon our own merits; so, God, knowing that His ways and thoughts are the exact opposite of ours, has to *drag* us thereunto . . . Now, on another note (and looking at this from a different view), that process of *dragging* may actually be in a pleasant manner: we can certainly, upon our first real encounter with God, experience His wonderful Spirit, and feel like we want to love and to save the entire world! But, then, after a few days, when that feeling has left, it's then extremely possible for the old, carnal man to start waking up, and, after seeing what has happened, begins to tug us into the other direction – questioning our new found life-style – as if asking us: "*What have you done?*" The initial calling is on an individual basis, and doesn't happen the same for one as it does for another. On one hand, God can actually force people into His kingdom by pushing the old man aside for a short time – *an invasion, if you will!* – and for others, it's a very smooth birthing process, where there is acceptance and compliance to a higher degree. This only shows how God can take a simple word, like *helkuo*, translated as 'draw' in the KJV, and can actually apply it to both a smooth wooing (which can continue to be smooth), but can also imply a hostile *take-over* that, once the old man wakes up and realizes what is happening, will only go kicking and screaming into the right direction.

2 Corinthians 4:15-16

For all things *are* for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God. For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish [i.e. the old, nasty man – i.e. our fleshly natures], yet the inward *man* [i.e. what is born of God] is renewed day by day.

Of course, there is so much more to say on all of this; but, like my other rabbit trails, this is temporary food for thought...

****Not trying to get caught up in the Predestination vs Free-will debate...***

One may laugh at my statement here, for, surely, I will be touching on that subject herein, even though I am trying to tread lightly with it. It's a fact that a lot of folks (or, at least some) are very uncomfortable with the subject, and it's because (at least, this is the way I see it) that they don't completely understand it. As one minister pointed out (and this I got second hand), no person can truly understand the depth of the subject with their human mind! Be that as it may (and whether that is even true or not), it stands to reason that it's a subject that *cannot* be ignored. Why? Well, the Bible does speak on it, even calling it by its name in several places [see, for example, **Romans 8:29-30**] and is therefore worthy of our attention. But, even so, I – as I've said – am going to try and dance around it as much as possible in this present work. *Is that because I'm afraid of the subject myself?* Nay; but is because, first of all, it's not our main topic here (even if it hits

on it in some respect), and secondly, it's a dominating topic that would take an entire book to speak on; which, incidentally, is what I fully intend on doing in the near future.

****Nor of what satan's in-depth role is in all of this commotion...***

Just like the *Predestination vs Free-will* topic, I will simply hit and miss, herein, on the subject of *satan*. And, also, like the *Predestination* subject, I certainly will be covering this bad-boy's role in an upcoming book. In fact, and as I have pointed out already in this present title (and I'm sure that I'll continue to do so a few more times), I will be speaking on such subjects as *satan*, the devil, and hell, in much detail in the 2nd part of the *Evil Side of Creation* series; in the book, entitled (*you've guessed it!*): *Satan, the Devil, and Hell* . . . In the meantime, though, I will give you some food for thought – *even if it may seem cruel to my readers for dangling this carrot in front of their eyes, and then ripping it away!* But, I must point out, for the sake of the flow of this present work, that *nowhere* in scripture can it be found that *satan* did anything without the express permission of God to begin with. *Am I sure about that?* Take, for example, the incident in **Job 1:6-12**; but, especially in verse 12, which reads: "And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD." . . . This situation, far from being easy to understand – considering the traditional view of *satan* in popular Biblical Theology – demands that we ask some uncomfortable questions, such as: *"How did satan convince God to allow him to hurt one of His subjects? Can God even be persuaded by the wiles of satan? Why did such a bad-boy like satan have to get God's permission to even hurt somebody to begin with? Being evil as he is, as is taught to us, wouldn't he simply have done so without such permission? And, not only so, but by even speaking to God about it in the first place, didn't he run the risk of God stopping him?"* . . . Now, I know for certain that I can't just hit and run like this, for I know of a certainty that my questions will bring up too many more questions that *must* be answered in order for this thought to be satisfactory for most readers. But, I promise to answer such questions in better detail in part 2. Please understand that this subject (*just like that of Predestination*) is just too big and dominating to discuss in small detail, and will overshadow the present topic at hand; they will need entire books just to scrape the surfaces . . . However, and at the same time, this short *End Note* will at least show the possibility that even *satan* needs to be given power by God (ordained by God) in order to do the things that he does; and proves, further, that God is the *only* power source in existence . . . Also, keeping in mind, about wrestling with *principalities* and **powers** in high places...

Ephesians 6:12

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against **principalities**, against **powers**, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

...that we *must* recognize that it was God Himself who ordained it so:

Colossians 1:16-17

For by him were **ALL** things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or **principalities**, or **powers**: all things were created by him, and **for him**: And he is before all things, and **by him ALL things consist**.

Again, there is no power source other than God!

***Matthew Henry's Commentary on the whole Bible...**

Published in 1708-1714; public domain.

Wikipedia, the Online Encyclopedia

Matthew Henry (18 October 1662 – 22 June 1714) was a Nonconformist minister and author, born in Wales but spending much of his life in England . . . Matthew Henry's well-known six-volume *Exposition of the Old and New Testaments* (1708–10) or *Complete Commentary*, provides an exhaustive verse by verse study of the Bible, covering the whole of the Old Testament, and the Gospels and Acts in the New Testament. After the author's death, the work was finished (Romans through Revelation) by thirteen other nonconformist ministers, partly based upon notes taken by Henry's hearers, and edited by George Burder and John Hughes in 1811 . . . Famous evangelical Protestant preachers such as George Whitefield and Charles Spurgeon used and heartily commended the work, with Whitefield reading it through four times – the last time on his knees. Spurgeon stated, "Every minister ought to read it entirely and carefully through once at least." John Wesley wrote of Henry: "He is allowed by all competent judges, to have been a person of strong understanding, of various learning, of solid piety, and much experience in the ways of God."

Page 22

***The People's New Testament...**

Published in 1889; public domain.

www.swordsearcher.com/christian-authors/barton-w-johnson.html

The following biographical sketch of B. W. Johnson was written by J. H. Garrison in 1891, before Johnson's death in 1894: "BARTON W. JOHNSON was born in 1833, in a log cabin on a clearing in Tazewell County, Illinois. His ancestry, on both sides, is of stock which had settled in this country before the Revolution; his father's parents were South Carolinians; his mother was born in Tennessee. His early education was such as could be obtained in a backwoods school, on a farm, and from the few books he could buy or borrow. In his eighteenth year he commenced to study at Walnut Grove Academy, now Eureka College, where he attended for two years. Then, after teaching for one year, he went to Bethany College in 1854. At that time the college was presided over by Alexander Campbell, aided by such professors as R. Milligan, W. K. Pendleton, R. Richardson, and others of less note. In 1856 he graduated in a class of twenty-seven, the honors of which were divided between him and W. A. Hall, of Tennessee . . . In the fall of 1856, he engaged in a school in Bloomington, Ill., preaching on Sundays in the vicinity. The next year he took a position in Eureka College, where he remained in all seven years, two years as its president. In 1863, he acted as corresponding and financial secretary of the American Missionary Society, and was re-elected to that position at the convention of 1864, but he declined to continue, having accepted the chair of mathematics in Bethany College. Here he remained two years, until after the death of Alexander Campbell, when he returned to the west. After a pastoral charge at Lincoln, Ill., he accepted the presidency of Oskaloosa College, in connection with the care of the Church at Oskaloosa. A failure of health compelled him to cease teaching two years later, but he continued to preach for the congregation for four more years. In the meantime, *THE EVANGELIST*, long published as a monthly, had assumed a weekly form, and he became its editor. For about sixteen years he has been engaged in editorial work; on *THE EVANGELIST*, in Oskaloosa and Chicago, and subsequently on the *CHRISTIAN-*

EVANGELIST in St. Louis. In the meantime he has written several books which have had a wide circulation: The Vision of the Ages, Commentary on John, The People's New Testament, in two octavo volumes, and the successive volumes of the Christian Lesson Commentary, from 1886 to the present time. In the summer of 1858 he was united in marriage to Miss Sarah S. Allen, of Bloomington, Ill., who has made him a devoted and self-sacrificing companion. Three children, all living, have been borne to the marriage. In his Bible studies he had been made to feel the need of a personal knowledge of the places mentioned in the Bible, of the people, manners and scenes of the east; and hence, in the summer of 1889 he crossed the Atlantic. During his absence of between four and five months, he visited Great Britain, France, Switzerland, Italy, Greece, Turkey in Asia, Palestine and Egypt. The enforced absence from his desk was of great advantage to his health, which had become somewhat impaired by his arduous labors. If his life is spared, additional volumes will in due time appear from his pen, which are already in preparation."

****John Wesley's Explanatory Notes on the Bible...***

Published in 1755-1766; public domain.

Wikipedia, the Online Encyclopedia

John Wesley (28 June 1703 – 2 March 1791) was an Anglican cleric and theologian who, with his brother Charles and fellow cleric George Whitefield, founded Methodism . . . Educated at Charterhouse School and Oxford University, Wesley was elected a fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford in 1726 and ordained a priest two years later. He led the "Holy Club", a society formed for the purpose of study and the pursuit of a devout Christian life; it had been founded by his brother Charles, and counted George Whitefield among its members. After an unsuccessful ministry of two years at Savannah in the Georgia Colony, Wesley returned to London and joined a religious society led by Moravian Christians. On 24 May 1738 he experienced what has come to be called his evangelical conversion, when he felt his "heart strangely warmed". He subsequently departed from the Moravians, beginning his own ministry . . . A key step in the development of Wesley's ministry was, like Whitefield, to travel and preach outdoors. In contrast to Whitefield's Calvinism, Wesley embraced the Arminian doctrines that dominated the Church of England at the time. Moving across Great Britain and Ireland, he helped form and organise small Christian groups that developed intensive and personal accountability, discipleship and religious instruction. Most importantly, he appointed itinerant, unordained evangelists to travel and preach as he did and to care for these groups of people. Under Wesley's direction, Methodists became leaders in many social issues of the day, including prison reform and the abolition of slavery . . . Although he was not a systematic theologian, Wesley argued for the notion of Christian perfection and against Calvinism—and, in particular, against its doctrine of predestination. He held that, in this life, Christians could achieve a state where the love of God "reigned supreme in their hearts", giving them outward holiness. His evangelicalism, firmly grounded in sacramental theology, maintained that means of grace were the manner by which God sanctifies and transforms the believer, encouraging people to experience Jesus Christ personally . . . Throughout his life, Wesley remained within the established Anglican church, insisting that the Methodist movement lay well within its tradition. In his early ministry, Wesley was barred from preaching in many parish churches and the Methodists were persecuted; he later became widely respected and, by the end of his life,

had been described as "the best loved man in England". In 2002, he was placed at number 50 in the BBC's poll of the 100 Greatest Britons.

***The Biblical Illustrator, by Joseph S. Exell...**

Published in 1900; public domain.

<http://www.biblesupport.com/e-sword-downloads/file/7024-exell-joseph-biblical-illustrator-56-vols-updated-v2/>

Joseph S. Exell edited and compiled the 56 volume Biblical Illustrator commentary. You will recognize him as the co-editor of the famous Pulpit Commentary (this commentary is even larger than the Pulpit Commentary). This remarkable work is the triumph of a life devoted to Biblical research and study. Assisted by a small army of students, the Exell draws on the rich stores of great minds since the beginning of New Testament times . . . The Biblical Illustrator brings Scripture to life in a unique, illuminating way. While other commentaries explain a Bible passage doctrinally, this work illustrates the Bible with a collection of: illustrations; outlines; anecdotes; history; poems; expositions; geography; sermons; Bible backgrounds; and homiletics, for nearly every verse in the Bible. This massive commentary was originally intended for preachers needing help with sermon preparation (because who else in that day had time to wade through such a lengthy commentary?). But today, the Biblical Illustrator provides life application, illumination, inspiration, doctrine, devotion, and practical content for all who teach, preach, and study the Bible . . . The Biblical Illustrator includes material from hundreds of famous authors of the day, including: Lightfoot; F.B. Meyer; Spurgeon; Barnes; Matthew Henry; D.L. Moody; John Trapp; J.C. Ryle; Alexander MacLaren; Thomas Manton; Handley; C.G. Moule; John Wesley; and Adam Clark.

***Which Jonah ended up calling hell!...**

Jonah 2:2

And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, and he heard me; out of the belly of HELL cried I, and thou heardest my voice.

This is more food for thought for the upcoming 2nd part of this Teaching Series, in that Jonah was in the belly of the whale, and not in the center of the earth, when he declared that he was in hell!

***If those decisions go against God's will...**

To bring up a point about God's *will*, I am going to quickly choose the subject of prayer. First of all, let's see what Jesus says about one particular case concerning prayer:

Matthew 21:22

And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.

I, by no means, am really trying to tackle the vast subject of prayer in this *End Note*; nor, indeed, in this book. Even though it's a simple concept, there are so many aspects about it, that books and books have been dedicated to the topic – *and they may have only scratched the surface with them!* But, here, I am only trying to make a particular point – only one, in the thousands of avenues that this topic could turn . . . In our example scripture, many people are fooling themselves this very day by thinking that God is a *magical genie*, to where you can rub the magic lamp and be granted three wishes . . . Well, *maybe more*, because this verse just said that ALL things, **WHATSOEVER** we ask in prayer, we're going to get! Well, that's good, because I'm sure 'ol Johnny would like a new

*Porsche! Perhaps, a yacht! And, let's go ahead and throw in a mansion in there while we're at it! You see where this can go? You see, I should ask, where this has gone? Not only so, but we need to be careful of what we wish for, because God can surely grant these things; but, then, we must certainly ask: what did we sacrifice to get them? [Matthew 6:19-20; Proverbs 28:20; Hebrews 13:5-6; 1 Timothy 6:10-11] If one is to truly know the Spirit of God, and God's intention with mankind, then they should know that this is the furthest thing from God's mind for His people . . . Does all this mean, therefore, that God doesn't want us to have any money? Of course He wants us to have money! How else can we live and eat, or take care of our families? [1 Timothy 5:8] I'm sorry if that's the impression that I'm giving – but that's not what I'm meaning; I'm speaking of spoiling His children with *unneeded excess*, which can harm a child [I speak further on this concept – that is, about the damaging effects of excess – later on, on the first two pages of Chapter 9]. He certainly blesses certain folks with money, but those people always end up giving in His name; so, that's not what I'm saying. I'm saying that God will not be responsible for wealth distributed for worldly, fleshly gain – unless it ends up serving a complex purpose. But, that purpose would *never* be to spoil the elect! . . . Just like our own kids, whom we don't want to spoil, there are limitations to what we are to ask; limitations, that is, of what we *should* ask . . . Now, let's counteract this with another scripture:*

1 John 5:14

And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing ACCORDING TO HIS WILL, he heareth us.

This is a bit different. Here, John's plainly saying that when we ask *according to His will*, then he hears us . . . Now, I guess somebody can come back on this and say that it was God's will for the elect to get that *Porsche, yacht, and mansion*; but, even though I disagree, we won't pursue that avenue in this book (*but, I intend on doing so in another*). But, here, the point I'm trying to get across is that both Matthew and John were correct in what they said; it's just that John filled in a little more detail, to show that there's more to prayer than just asking for materialistic things to fulfill our fleshly desires and lusts thereby! All things – *even prayers* – are according to God's will, and not by *our* will, or our fleshly lusts. *We must realize that our own will is very self-serving*. These new thoughts will now bring us to where this subject really needs to go, and that is to a point where we, again, begin to learn to pray according to God's will, as opposed to the will of the flesh [Luke 22:42]. *So, now we're getting somewhere!* Looking at things from this new perspective will change the course of our walk with God to a better and higher plateau – *guaranteed!* This would be a very new and exciting experience for a lot of folks; and, so our duty (*that is, if we're wanting to obtain this higher and closer walk with Him*) is to strive (in *new* prayer) for the Lord to show us how to walk this more narrow path...

***Jamieson, Fausset and Brown Commentary...**

Published in 1871; public domain.

Wikipedia, the Online Encyclopedia

The Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary refers to a Biblical commentary entitled: 'A Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible,' prepared by Robert Jamieson, Andrew Robert Fausset and David Brown and published in 1871; and derived works from this initial publication, in differing numbers of volumes and abridgements. The commentary uses the King James Version of the Bible as its text . . .

Robert Jamieson D.D. (1802–1880) was a minister at St. Paul's Church, Provanmill in Glasgow. Andrew Fausset, A.M. (1821–1910) was rector of St. Cuthbert's Church in York. David Brown (1803–1897) was a Free Church of Scotland minister at St. James, Glasgow, and professor of theology at Free Church College of the University of Aberdeen.

The writers described their work as: "humble effort to make Scripture expound itself." and prayed: "May the Blessed Lord who has caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning, bless this . . . effort . . . and make it an instrument towards the conversion of sinners and the edification of saints, to the glory of His great name and the hastening of His kingdom! Amen."

****The wicked spirits are at God's commandment...***

This claim may seem ridiculous to a lot of folks. Even though I placed this herein, I'm not really wanting to get off onto that subject in this book – just as I expressed about *satan* – simply because I will get into extreme detail in the other parts to this *Evil Side of Creation* series on them; and, too, it's just not the main purpose of what I'm trying to convey here. In the meantime, chew on the thought, for I whole-heartedly agree with the premise – *obviously* – else I would not have placed the thought within.

****Nothing can be done in heaven, in earth, or hell, but either by his immediate energy or permission...***

This is reminiscent of an earlier *End Note*, with the topic being "*Nor of what satan's in-depth role is in all of this commotion,*" in stating that *satan* could do nothing of his own will, but had to submit to the authority of God, and who only went on a rampage against Job when God gave His permission for him to do so.