

MY THOUGHTS NOT YOUR WAYS

"My thoughts are not your ways" describes God's directive to the capstone of His creation, human beings, to accept and appreciate His thoughts. He is expressing His absolute sovereignty and authority over humans and their ways; His behavior never subjected to human scrutiny. But alas, such an edict proved no lasting deterrent to lawless human behavior throughout history. The Bible cites the Israelites, both kingdoms, disobeying His laws on numerous, woeful occasions. Belief in Yah and Yahshua, names of the One True God, has always been challenged. In centuries past, many few genuine believers were exterminated, the final horror after being tortured, their lives ended as martyrs, true to their faith. Unfortunately, today many of the faithful across the earth are also being physically persecuted because Christian beliefs are vehemently assaulted by extreme hostile, highly contrasting religious and nonreligious dogmatic agendas. In our contemporary America, no such physical threat currently exists which is most fortunate, but complacency is never warranted as trends can radically change. For instance, over the last several decades, pervasive assaults challenging beliefs in God have been dangerously insidious. How? An erosion of morality has been subtly introduced. Sustained "relaxed" moral value changes, especially directed upon our youth including young adults, have been wildly successful, being effected through an avalanche of rapidly advancing, instant communication networks. Burgeoning data additions from a variety of internet sources promote humanistic life style values that substantiate a separate amoral country within America resulting in a relative "whatever goes" attitude. This trendy "now" behavior has either resulted in an outright abandonment of God's laws or has significantly modified them to the extent that this new social etiquette defines a life style structured in direct opposition to His truth, especially His laws mandating His ways.

Within my generation, I have witnessed fellow Christian sects and many others beyond our boundaries flocking into adopting their own contrived, behavior as a hallmark in establishing a new way in which to live their lives, fully believing this permissive, open ended mindset represents an actual spiritual higher ground in contrast to what they believe is God's stern, inhumane, outdated laws. Such a blasphemous course questioning God's ways is profoundly fool hardy. Why? Because if this new behavior is fully implemented, human beings by then would have selected a fatal alternative that abandons His promise by seeking their own ways to presumably obtain salvation. They would have become fully capable of endangering any relationship God left open to humanity as set forth in detail within His Plan of Salvation that provides an eternal place with God in His Kingdom. A place earned, God guaranteed, through believers living their lives in loving obedience to His laws.

Ancient Judah found itself in the similar ungodly position due to its disobedience to His laws that prompted God's ire against them as described in Jeremiah 11: 6-8, in the Complete Jewish Bible.

Jer 11:6-8 ADONAI said to me, (Jeremiah) "Proclaim all these words in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem: 'Listen to the words of this covenant, and obey them. 7 For I solemnly warned your ancestors at the time when I brought them out of the land of Egypt; and until this day I have frequently warned them, "Listen to my voice!" 8 But they have not listened or paid attention; instead, each one has lived according to the stubbornness of his own evil heart. For this reason I have brought upon them all the words of this covenant, which I ordered them to obey, but which they did not obey.'" (CJB)

And they suffered brutal consequences for disobeying his ways, being led off to Babylon having Jerusalem destroyed, the king blinded after he was forced to witness his sons being slaughtered.

Already I can assume that the initial interest of some readers has waned because of my dire

previous sentence warning of the terrible consequences of losing God's influence in our lives. I offer this next autobiographical incident as a case in point demonstrating God's lessening influence occurring right in my own neighborhoods. Late last summer, I was attending a cookout on a beautiful day with many young adults, many in their late thirties, early forties, the males standing around consuming beer around the grill. The conversation rather remarkably veered away from being usually sports dominated into talking about marriage because two guys revealed they were having difficulties over not being able to resolve certain issues with their wives. They became increasingly exasperated as they explained their respective viewpoints with no forthcoming solutions offered by the group. Then one man suggested that prayer might be used to help in resolving these difficult issues. Immediately, both men simultaneously fired off the retort, "what good does praying to a God that probably doesn't even exist; how can you still believe in those fairy tales?" The others, including me, just stood in uncomfortable silence. Those words quickly dispersed us. The Bible says in Matthew 10:33 that if one denies me (Yahshua) before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven." Those words instantly flashed into my mind, knowing that I had lost my snapshot of opportunity to speak up. I felt a betrayal of guilt focused in the pit of my stomach for not having rallied to the defense of the one man whose faith humbly sought out God for help. This example shows how brazen so many are, being instantly ready to dismiss God, attacking Him in ignorance, not realizing His extreme love and patience unconditionally and continuously being bestowed upon us. How we humans both in ancient times and now often remain stiff-necked, stubborn, sin induced, unappreciative as His most obstreperous creation, especially when petitions to Him are not favorably resolved. We want immediate service regardless of our ways!

Perhaps one reason not respecting God lies in not fully appreciating and grasping the fact that God's thoughts and ways through Yahshua encompass the creation of all things. That realization coupled with Yahshua miraculously speaking creation into existence is not only pushed aside, it is dismissed as absolutely impossible, ridiculous! End of discussion for most. But when one devotes an effort to contemplate this wonder, this miracle of our created world, this utterly vast, still expanding universe, how can anyone upon conclusion of his or her devoted research not be utterly blown away! Let me give two examples: I am not a mathematician but as a botanist I know that in explaining the process of photosynthesis, how sunlight striking the surface of a plant leaf eventually produces a sugar that basically feeds the world! To explain this process requires a fantastic number of exquisitely synchronized changes that are represented by equations. Each equation represents a part of a vastly complex process toward manufacturing this final sugar product. I believe it is glucose. How many equations does it take before the final sugar product emerges? I have no idea. But the process is phenomenal! Who designed that process?

Let us now pull away into outer space for a second example. Telescopes view earth as seeming to float amid our solar system. Think about the probability of a planet, our Earth, founded upon the exact blend of air, water, minerals, temperature, atmosphere, sunlight and a million other factors, consummately coalescing to have become what it is presently. The odds against randomness, of colliding myriad factors, to form our Earth would produce a number having more exponential zeros than would fit across this paper. In other words impossible!

Isaiah 40:28 Haven't you known, haven't you heard that the everlasting God, ADONAI, the Creator of the ends of the earth, does not grow tired or weary? His understanding cannot be fathomed. (CJB)

Romans 11:33 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

The Bible says that Yahshua, devoted in obedience to the Father in promoting His thoughts, became the greatest teacher. I agree. If I were to give a child, say four or five years old, a piece of paper with a picture of two green hills separated by blue water and I asked him or her

to draw something that would allow me to get across the water from one hill to the other hill because I can't swim, they would invariably draw a line or a couple of lines and voila a bridge in its most simple form would appear. I know I've asked this. In contrast, can you imagine the hundreds of drawings necessary to construct the Verrazano Bridge—all the necessary calculations regarding the tensile strength of the cable, the height of the towers both above and below ground, the depth, composition and diameter of cable connectors driven into solid rock and what force they would bare when thousands of daily vehicles would be traveling over the bridge? Highly intricate, complicated, far, far beyond a four or five year old mind, or most any adult layman's mind for that matter. Regardless, that little girl or boy drew the prototype: a bridge! Idea conveyed!

In the same manner, our "enlightened" society relegates the entire biblical story, the creation of everything, as myth, a fairytale. Most scholars issue condescending statements: How naively simple! Really? Could our human minds possibly grasp the calculations involved within the designs of the universe, the sublime mathematics or whatever presentation type lies beyond waiting to become fully discovered, that would offer us an understanding beyond matter's physical and chemical properties that when divinely spoken of would then have activated into substance? God is the greatest teacher placing what's ineffable, arcane into cognitive explanations expressly designed for the maximum number of humanity to understand, from the greatest of intellects to lovingly embrace the mind of a child. A mark of a great teacher is one who can take a great breadth of multifaceted knowledge and distill it down into concise, accurate, understandable terms. Genius! God, always possessing the greatest knowledge, becomes the greatest of teachers with lessons designed for our utmost living here tailored for maximum eternal advantage. He, through the centuries, entreats us as a loving Parent would to follow His ways: His laws, statutes and ordinances so as to not suffer the pitfalls of disobedience with negative eternal consequences.

God, our Creator has absolute knowledge of a beginning stretching to an end relative to our understanding of time, of an earth having begun proceeding to its end. That knowledge includes all the happenings that are mandated, God controlled, or at least known by God if He chooses to know them. Regardless, all events are collectively allowed to exist within creation to realize the end as stated in the Bible: Scripture cannot be denied. Living our lives amid this irrefutable system of godly logic becomes our greatest challenge of faith. God created our mind with a capacity that often associates with carnality. Our will, desire, understanding, is often pitted against, often resisting God's immutable intellect speaking to us about how we are to live righteous lives. Thus through a living obedience to his ways allied with God's indispensable mercy of forgiveness, humans are uniquely gifted to achieve our eternal goal: life with Him as spirit beings in His Kingdom. Thus GOD lovingly but sometimes bluntly sums Himself up to us: I am the truth and the life, the way it's going to be: Irrefutable fact: "MY THOUGHTS ARE NOT YOUR WAYS." Accept them God says, even though you as a human can never ever begin to fathom the entirety of My mind. Thus we are to obey the portion of His thoughts and ways custom made understandable to us. Period!

Isaiah 55:8 "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, and your ways are not my ways," says ADONAI. (CJB)

How many heartfelt, unanswered prayers have become crumbled up, each in a wad, and faithlessly tossed filling our mind's caldrons with bitterness, stinging in rejection? We can all name terrible happenings to the innocent, a new born baby seemingly healthy that suddenly dies, tragic house fires, horrible war crimes, robberies, kidnappings, unspeakable brutalities of wars, conquests that occurred despite fervent petitioning for protection.

In the Book of Job, God has provided rare behind the scenes theatre, a play format of a human immersed in a brutal trial initiated by God but inflamed by Satan. Job, already thread bare emotionally and in massive physical pain and overall discomfort is now additionally assaulted by three so called friends, plus one wise youth. We have the prescient vantage point of knowing

that Job's sudden misfortune was inflicted on him as a result of a wager between God and Satan to ascertain the mettle of Job's righteousness, his meticulous adherence to worship God that was known publically far and wide. But the message to us shows Job, just like anyone of us living our own life, was clueless as to why this sudden horrific change of events was happening. As his physical and emotional conditions spiraled downward, Job begins to strongly question, then demand a face to face dialogue with God in order to ascertain the rationale behind such victimization on a human being, who at least from Job's self-analysis, was a man who had led an exemplary life of faith in God while also exhibiting good works to his family and community. Of course, the book concludes that Job did evidence overt self-righteousness in crediting his life and especially in his demonstrated inability to remotely comprehend and fully appreciate the power and unlimited ability of God to create and administer creation. God rebuked Job's friends who had assigned Job as guilty of sinning against God with no proof other than Job's misfortunes. God then restored everything Job had double.

One could take numerous examples of Job's suffering in not understanding how God's way was allowing this flashpoint of suffering to suddenly have entered his once prosperous life lived in obedience to God.

Job 30:20-31 "I call out to you [God], but you don't answer me; I stand up to plead, but you just look at me. 21 You have turned cruelly against me; with your powerful hand you keep persecuting me.

22 You snatch me up on the wind and make me ride it; you toss me about in the tempest. 23 For I know that you will bring me to death, the house assigned to everyone living. 24 "Surely [God] wouldn't strike at a ruin, if in one's calamity one cried out to him for help. 25 Didn't I weep for those who were in trouble? Didn't I grieve for the needy? 26 Yet when I hoped for good, what came was bad; when I expected light, what came was darkness. 27 My insides are in turmoil; they can't find rest; days of misery confront me. 28 I go about in sunless gloom, I rise in the assembly and cry for help. 29 I have become a brother to jackals and a companion of ostriches. 30 My skin is black and falling off me, and my bones are burning with heat. 31 So my lyre is tuned for mourning, my pipe to the voice of those who weep. (CJB)

God's thought out ways simply delineate the basics of living righteously, replete with choices available enabling one to follow His laws that if followed will achieve maximum benefits for a quality lived life.

Deut 30:19-20 "I call on heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have presented you with life and death, the blessing and the curse. Therefore, choose life, so that you will live, you and your descendants, 20 loving ADONAI your God, paying attention to what he says and clinging to him - for that is the purpose of your life! On this depends the length of time you will live in the land ADONAI swore he would give to your ancestors Abraham, Isaac and Jacob." (CJB)

In these verses below in Romans, God is forthright informing believers of His thoughts; there is no excuse for not understanding His intent.

Rom 1:19-22 because what is known about God is plain to them, since God has made it plain to them.

20 For ever since the creation of the universe his invisible qualities - both his eternal power and his divine nature - have been clearly seen, because they can be understood from what he has made. Therefore, they have no excuse; 21 because, although they know who God is, they do not glorify him as God or thank him. On the contrary, they have become futile in their thinking; and their undiscerning hearts have become darkened. 22 Claiming to be wise, they have become fools!

Romans 6:23: For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Yahshua

our Lord.

Colossians 1:15-17 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: 16 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: 17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

God as the greatest teacher often chose those not having great amounts of formal education. He gave to these and others with no status in life the capacity to accurately assess and appreciate subject matter requiring profound understanding that confounded the most formally educated.

1 Corinthians 1:27-29 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; 28 And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: 29 That no flesh should glory in his presence.

Matthew 28:20 I am with you always even to the end of the world.

I have utilized two famous holy men of the Bible: Job and Paul to help us realize that God's thoughts and ways can seem foreign to us, with events not turning out as we feel they should. Depending on our upbringing, we can have different understandings of these painful situations. Unfavorable outcomes prompt doubt that question God's intent for us. Sometimes a hostile line of questioning over God's intent can lead to bitterness, hopelessness, and eventual loss of faith. During especially difficult trials, we hopefully will remember these two great examples who in their distress prayed for cures, for relief, a cessation of their suffering. But when this was not offered at the time, Job and Paul remained ever steadfast examples to us, true to their faith, believing, accepting God's flawless, grand-overview intent when His thoughts in fact did not embrace their way of thinking regarding the removal of physical suffering.

Summary. The significant impediment to our faith often arises when a discrepancy between what is prayed for differs from how the issue is ultimately resolved by God. If praying to God answered all of our requests would there be a need for our faith? Faith represents the actions of our belief collectively dispelling the certainty of doubt. With all answers in life immediately apparent, answered upon request, I would say, such a condition would minimize any need for faith. But we know, we never have all the answers. And for this reason, God is simultaneously the author of our faith while being our Creator demonstrating and offering His divine love to us through the sacrifice of His only Son. He knows how His limitless capacity of grace best contributes to the ultimate fabric of successful outcomes that ultimately benefit us optimally in every way. Each of our determined acts of loving obedience to "MY THOUGHTS ARE NOT YOUR WAYS" augments the transformative process of becoming a new creation, a refined holy person in His image, made exclusively possible through God's love, His earnest desire to be with us eternally. Selah

A Proverb to ponder:

Proverbs 6:23

For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life:

Action of Belief Ministry
ActionofBeliefMinistry@gmail.com

Our Website:
www.ActionofBeliefMinistry.org