

NATURE OF GOD

Psalms 50:14-23

Int.

1. Aim: To discuss the nature of God and what it means to us.
2. Psalms 50:21 NKJV "These things you have done, and I kept silent; You thought that I was altogether like you; But I will rebuke you, And set them in order before your eyes."
 - a. "you thought that I was one like yourself." ESV
 - b. Anthropomorphism = being in the form or likeness of man
 - c. It means that we think that of God as a human. The verses that speak of God as having hands, or eyes, or ears are taken in a literal sense.
3. One purpose of the Bible is to make known the nature of God. One of man's greatest needs.
4. The concept which man has of God influences his actions before God. Illus., Athenians who considered God to be another idol made by hands, of gold, etc. Acts 17:29
 "Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device."
5. Characteristic of idolatry is that men create idols, "gods," with same desires, lusts, etc., as their own. Man can "serve" his god while fulfilling his desires.
6. Never does man rise higher than his "god."
7. Mistake of man in all ages is to think of God in terms of his being like man. One has said that "man has made God in his image." Such a concept is responsible for man's actions.
8. The way in which man regards God influences his conduct.

Discussion**I. MAN THINKS OF GOD AS BEING LIMITED IN KNOWLEDGE**

- A. David's description of the conduct of the wicked. (Psa. 10:6-11) "He hath said in his heart, I shall not be moved: for I shall never be in adversity. 7. His mouth is full of cursing and deceit and fraud: under his tongue is mischief and vanity. 8. He sitteth in the lurking places of the villages: in the secret places doth he murder the innocent: his eyes are privily set against the poor. 9. He lieth in wait secretly as a lion in his den: he lieth in wait to catch the poor: he doth catch the poor, when he draweth him into his net. 10. He croucheth, and humbleth himself, that the poor may fall by his strong ones. 11. He hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten: he hideth his face; he will never see it."
- B. Difficult to conceive of a Being who is aware of all actions. However, OMNISCIENCE is a characteristic of God.
1. Job 34:21-22 "For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings. 22. There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves."
 2. Prov. 15:3 "Eyes of the Lord are in every place beholding the evil and the good."
 3. Conviction that one will be held accountable serves to restrain evil in the lives of some.
- C. INFLUENCE OF "GOD IS DEAD," - - "NO JUDGMENT" on society today.
1. Time Magazine Cover for April 8, 1966 - "Is God Dead?"
 2. The phrase "Living God" is found 30 times in Bible

3. 1 TIM 6:17 "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;"
4. HEB 10:31. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

D. Our Actions are written in a book.

1. PS 56:8 NKJV "You number my wanderings; Put my tears into Your bottle; Are they not in Your book?"
2. REV 20:12. "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."

E. Some would complain that such a concept of God is wrong.

1. "God doesn't trust man."
2. "Like a policeman trying to catch someone in commission of a crime."
3. God is not like a spy, but is a God of Love and Integrity.
4. One who would do right has no need of fear. Has no fear of "a cop behind bill-board."
5. Respect God's law because of love for Him. No fear in such.

II. MAN CAN BE DECEIVED: THEREFORE ATTEMPTS TO DECEIVE GOD.

A. O.T. examples:

1. Eve (Gen. 3)
2. Jeroboam (I Kings 14:2-5).

B. N.T. examples:

1. Ananias and Sapphira, (Acts 5);
2. Pharisees who deceived others, but not God.
3. LUKE 16:15 NKJV "And He said to them, "You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God"

C. Not only does God see the outward, but the inward.

1. I Sam. 16:7 NKJV "But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have refused him. For the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."
2. He "seeth in secret." (Mt. 6:18) NKJV ""so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly."
3. Heb. 4:13 NKJV "And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

- D. Realization that God is not deceived should cause man to remove any attempt of hypocrisy, insincerity.
1. One only deceives self if he thinks something hidden from God.
 2. Gal. 6:7-8 "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. 8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."
 3. Deceive = delude --- we cannot delude, trick God

III. MAN DOESN'T REGARD SIN AS A SERIOUS MATTER: THINK GOD DOES THE SAME.

- A. Psa. 50:16-21
1. The wicked hate instructions
 2. They had been going along with the wicked and sinful men
 3. They thought that God thought about sin as they did. But He told them....
 4. "But I will rebuke you, And set them in order before your eyes." v.21
- B. Concept that God could not be just if He punished sin as He has said.
- C. Sin regarded as a trifle.
1. However God recognizes it as a DISEASE OF THE HEART, a rebellion against the benevolent rule of God.
 2. I Sam. 15:23 "For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king."

D. In this light, "God is not mocked."

1. (Gal. 6:7) "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."
2. Cannot violate laws of God without suffering the consequences.
3. NUM 32:23. "But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the Lord: and be sure your sin will find you out."

IV. MAN IS PARTIAL IN DEALINGS: THINK GOD IS PARTIAL

- A. Acts 10:34,35 "Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: 35. But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."
- B. Jonah's desire for God to be Israel's exclusive God.
- C. Jewish idea that God was with them regardless of their conduct. "The temple of the Lord..." This was of no value to them.
- D. Thought expressed by some religious people today: Members of the church give impression that they think they are alright because they have obeyed "first principles."

**V. MAN OFTEN CHANGES HIS MIND WHEN HE MAKES A
DECISION: THINK GOD WILL CHANGE HIS MIND
CONCERNING PUNISHMENT OF EVIL.**

A. God does change His mind when man turns from evil.

1. Jer. 26:3, 13; "If so be they will hearken, and turn every man from his evil way, that I may repent me of the evil, which I purpose to do unto them because of the evil of their doings." V.13 "Therefore now amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the Lord your God; and the Lord will repent him of the evil that he hath pronounced against you."
2. Joel 2:12,13 "Therefore also now, saith the Lord, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: 13. And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil."

B. His purposes not changed as man changes. I Sam. 15:29 "And also the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent. For He is not a man, that He should repent."

C. Promises are not slack.

1. 2 Pet. 3:9 "The Lord is not slack {slow} concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."
2. Every promise of good, every warning of punishment to be fully carried out. His faithfulness is that which encourages man.

VI. MEN FORGET: THINK GOD DOES THE SAME.

"He hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten: he hideth his face; he will never see it." Ps. 10:11

- A. Time has no effect on the infinite mind of God.
 - 1. 2 Pet. 3:8 "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."
 - 2. When man is not punished speedily, some think such will not come, but not to be considered an indication that man has escaped. Punishment is "reserved."

- B. Men often forget, others forget action. God doesn't forget.

- C. LUKE 12:6. "Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God?"

- D. Unfaithful in past, slip back, fail to make proper correction. Over time, come to be considered "faithful," accepted without question.

- E. HEB 6:10. "For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister."

Conclusion

1. What is your concept of God? Do you think of Him as being "such a one as yourself"?
2. He is holy, demands such of you and me. Has all knowledge, not deceived by man.
3. Faithful to His promises: If obedient, promises of blessings. If disobedient, eternal punishment.
4. "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him; if we deny him, he will also deny us; If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: HE CANNOT DENY HIMSELF." 2 Tim. 2:12-13

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