

Our Culture & Our Character

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8. Answering the Commandments

There is something that I need to experience. Yesterday we read a verse that referred to the 'shama' of the Hebrew people. The most important expression for them in their rabbinical tradition, "The Lord our God, He is One". "Hear O Israel, the Lord thy God is One Lord."

Hebrew people never had a problem with atheism. The Old Testament begins saying, "In the beginning—God." The sense that is transmitted in the original language is, "At the head of all things—God."

The Lord—only Him.

Nothing in me—only He; and ONLY Him—that should be our experience.

He says, "All the heart"; "All the head"; "All our mind"; "All our strength"; everything! What remains for me? What for me? The only thing that remains for me—is Him—that's the only thing. And that's the experience that I most need.

But it is difficult to understand because the enemy has changed this order. I am the sovereign one. I am the only one—and only I. UP and higher and no one above me! We are atheists—worse than atheists.

And the Lord says, that in our brain; in our head; in all this—only He. It's difficult to understand this—for us in this Western culture—because what do we have on our minds? What is in our mind? At least we have thoughts of money. Is that what we have on our minds? We have that in our minds—or only He is in our minds?

Therein lies all of our problems! Therein lies all of our problems; because the head, the Lord did not create it for adding; for multiplying; but we do not conceive that! All our head; all our brain; all our frontal lobes; all our capacities; the millions and millions of neurons; only for Him—so that He might be all in all.

It is very difficult to imagine this, but that's how we were created! We were created for Him, for His glory, for His honor, not for ourselves and the work of the enemy is that I am for myself. And even my wife is for me. So we become lords—we become lords, and human beings are below us. But that is not God's order. These are not God's values.

Which are our values? All our values are egocentric—self centered, but all of God's values are alterocentric—other centered. He has never had things on His head. Never in His mind! In God's mind, never has He had things. In the mind of God, in the brain of God—only you; only us—that's what is on His mind. We are His treasure—His only treasure—in His mind.

And He created us in His image and likeness, so that in our heart, in our mind, in every impulse from neuron to neuron, HE should be the impulse; HE should be the motive; HE should be the reason; and HE should be everything. Have we changed that order? And we have problems everyday.

Every day we are more sick and more destroyed, because in our mind, in our neurons, in our brain, in our strength and in all our being, He is absent. He is not real. He is only an idea. That's why we even have ulcers, and we are sick and our colon is destroyed, because our mind—He is absent from it. My self and my things and all that is a death process.

How were we created? Notice the order of God and God's values. God's values should be ours. Psalm 8: and we're going to read it slowly, this Psalm contains great truths.

"O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens. Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger. When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; [then I ask myself] What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?"

What is man? What is his son? That Thou visitest him?

"For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion. . ."

He made him lord—but lord of what? Of the things, but not over human beings. He made him lord over all the creatures that don't have the image of God in them. So follow the order of God: "over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet:"

Everything! All Things! Where do we put all things? Where did God put all things in terms of man's dominion? Where did He put the things? In his head? In his heart? Things? Where did God place them? Under his feet!

Under his feet—under his feet—cars; the airplanes; our bank account; money; under our feet! Not in the head. He knows if we have them in our head, they will destroy us. Things in our head destroy us. Things should be under our feet and that will make us according to His Image and likeness.

For whom do we live? For things? Do we live for things? Thus we destroy God's image in us. Who doesn't live for things? Jesus did not live for things. This is difficult to understand in our Western culture—this fact. But God in His mercy placed under the feet, money and things, because under the foot, in this space, there are no nerve endings. Under our foot; on the bottom of our foot, we have lost sensibility.

Under our shoes we have no feeling. We are not supposed to feel 'things'. 'Things' are not for being loved. We are not to desire things. Things are to serve. They are ways and these means should not have a connection with our mind. Strange! What should be in our mind? What should be in our head? Only one thing—HE! Only God.

Are we atheists? We are atheists and at the same time, theologians—what a contradiction! That's schizophrenia! And the Lord says: Psalm 8: "Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands;"

In which way? How did He do it? All things! Every thing!

"Thou hast put all things under his feet:"

All things—nothing in his head; nothing in his heart; nothing in his being—everything under his feet. Was God wise? Is He wise? Is He intelligent? Does He know what He has created?

The image of God: and scripture says that Jesus lived the very same experience. He was the image of God. 1 Corinthians 15:27-28; "For he hath put all things under his feet." And He says; "But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."

He! The only ALL; and I—He should be my all! I was created so that He might be my all, and I should not be my all in me. That is God's creation. And redemption—the purpose of redemption—is to restore this.

But we have changed the order. Follow with what happens when we are in sin. In sin that scale of values is overturned and things are in our head and on our mind; and my neighbor is under my feet. We don't feel—we don't feel them. We cannot love them. We cannot comprehend him and we cannot receive him. He is a stranger and we separate him and we break apart, because in our values, our values have become just material.

Our interests are in things. Our interest is not He. He is an interest that is just an idea. But the materialized and concrete interests are things. Have we changed the order? Have we changed the values? And Jesus said, "Wherever your treasure is, there also will be your heart."

Which is our treasure? And it should be something very concrete, not a text, not a poem, not a Bible verse, it should be a reality. In Jesus it was a reality. Jesus' treasure—you are His treasure. Human beings are the treasure of Jesus. "For him I descend. For him I humble Myself. For him I empty Myself." For him He took upon Himself human nature—fallen human nature. "And for him," He said, "I accept the cross. For him I die. My blood, I give for him."

The values of Jesus are not things. Things were under His feet. In the order of redemption, values are changed. And that is the work of the gospel. It is the work of God—to change our values. And if we permit that to Him, He can do it! That is His work. That is why He came to redeem us, in order to change our values.

Back to Psalm 8:7; "All sheep and oxen."

All! In the days of Abraham, in the days of antiquity, how did they estimate richness? Oxen; cattle; sheep; camels; all that was equivalent to richness and wealth. In that time, the verb 'to have', 'having', still did not exist. In linguistic study, values in terms of 'having' come in later. The verb, 'to have', was non-existent, because in the beginning of man's history, people did not 'have'. Adam did not 'have'. Eve did not 'have'. The values of 'having' things, I have; I acquire; I possess; this is mine; and then I put a fence—that was non-existent. It was absent and studies on linguistics resist that fact.

But in the measure that we degraded ourselves; the more we made ourselves selfish; the values of having things were incorporated even in our language patterns and grammar. And grammar began to place adjectives that were possessive, and pronouns that were possessive and then 'Mine' appeared. But in the beginning, that was nonexistent.

That's what linguistics studies show, because things—how were they manifested? 'This'—for the service of; 'this'—to help someone. 'Things' were for service; they were means of service and help. The verb 'having', 'possessing', was something abstract. It was not something concrete. But for us with our Western mind, it is difficult to fathom this. It's difficult to imagine, and to be it—impossible.

In Genesis chapter 1, there is no competition. In creation there is no competition. In creation, you don't acquire; you don't possess. In creation, you only serve; you only serve.

And God made His first work in the first day and He did not make it for Himself. He didn't create it for Himself. For whom did He create His first work? For the crown of His creation. And then He created on the second day, and He didn't make those things for Himself either. He made it for man. And in the third day He created more, and what was the purpose of the things created on the third day? For mankind.

How many bananas from earth has God eaten? How many fruits has He begun to import from earth to heaven? Nothing! All He made it for us—for us. Fourth day, fifth day and sixth day—and then He called man and He told him, "all these things; all these things; all what I have created, is under your feet. Handle it. Take care of it. Use it. But don't love it."

Without loving it; without wanting it; can we imagine that? Handling things; without loving them? Taking care of things without loving them. Why?

Fathers and children are distanced, parents and their children—why? Do you know why? Because parents—very soon we have things on our head. We don't have time to have communion with a son. We don't have time.

I have time to get things. I have a lot of time—for things; but I don't have time for human beings. I don't have time; not even to hear them on the phone, I don't have time. We don't have time, not even to greet each other and encounter each other, we don't have time. For what is time? For things.

God did not great time for things. He created time in order that we might become; time is for being, just as He is. It is within time that we love; it is within time that we comprehend; it is within time that we forgive; and it is within time that we humble ourselves. In time, we dispossess ourselves, and in time we surrender. Time is to become as He is. Time is the matter of the spirit; so that we might come to be in His image and likeness.

But in this Western culture—no one has time; and much less for Him. We don't have time for Him. For what is time? And we say that time is gold, why do we say that? Because, time for us, is in order to obtain spaces; time for us, is for acquiring things; and for us, time is to possess things. And we, we transform time into a slave; we have enslaved time, in order to acquire and possess.

And if we don't acquire and possess, then, we are worried; we are burdened with anxiety. We get stressed out. None of us here should have that kind of stress. What is the cause of stress? Things in our head. Things in our head.

God in me does not produce stress. What is it that produces stress? What produces anxiety? What produces ulcers? What damages the colon? When I have things in my head and not God in my head! If He were in my head then I would have life and health and peace, harmony and reconciliation. But the more things I have—the less I am.

The more I have, the less I am. The more anxious I am of having things, the less capacity I have of being. And in that way, man degrades himself—he degrades himself—more; and he corrupts himself; because God's scale of values is different.

The Lord, knowing these things from creation, even when He created us, He placed things under our feet and He, He was in our mind! That's God's order and He is not going to change it. He is not going to change it. Redemption—what redemption achieves, is restoring that order.

Why can't people sleep? Why do we have insomnia? Why do we run around all day long—up and down—and the great concern of people is working twenty years, thirty years, and then they are so anxious for their retirement. They are worried about their retirement—with how much will I retire? With social security; with a company; with how much? And then we add it up and we figure out how much is it that we are going to receive.

And the enemy has invented the rental plan. People like to like off rents. Oh my friends, this Western culture, contrary to God's plan—in God's economy, within the sphere and context of sin, God did not create the plan of rents.

What is God's plan? The plan of sweating; that is God's plan. But we don't understand that and in this culture the enemy has invented some jobs where we don't have to sweat. Not even in agriculture do you sweat nowadays. That's the enemy's plan. The tractor has a tremendous cabin with air-conditioning, and who works? The machine, but not man. And we don't understand where we are.

God said, "With the sweat of thy face." Within the context of sin, heaven knows that I need sacrifice—self sacrifice—every day! Every day. Until when? Until this body becomes dust again; until that moment. And when is that moment? Until death. But we don't understand that economy. People want to live off just rents; sitting down; eating; without any pains; without sweating; just sitting down.

In the Old Testament, God said every seven years, we'll have a sabbatical year; and you will not plant, you will not plant anything. The land will rest. And at the same time that the land is resting, you are going to forgive your brother. And what you have lent to your brother, on the seventh year, will be forgiven, pardoned.

People, do we understand that type of economy? Do we understand that economy? Because God's economy, the divine economy, is not on the foundation—is not based on making wealth—taking advantage of the need of my neighbor.

All Satan's economy, a man becomes wealthy based on taking advantage of some one else's need. That is satanic economy, earthly and diabolic. When you do marketing, in the science of marketing, and in the science of administration, what do they teach you? We have to create a need. And they have created in us millions of needs.

And after you create a need, then, make a crisis of shortage. So the people that produce, put away the things, and they create a shortage, so that you will develop more anxiety.

Some years ago there was a strike in Venezuela. There was no ice. And the people were willing to kill in order to have ice. Did they create that need in us? We need the refrigerator? We need the freezer? We need the cold water? And we depend on that and we depend on those needs, and those needs materialize in our mind, and when we don't have them—we stress ourselves. We become anguished. We can't live.

What happens in our stomach? What happens in our stomach and in our colon? We destroy ourselves. An economy of needs. When God created, He did not create needs. What He created was abundance; completely bountiful.

How much oxygen did God create? How much water did God create? How much land did God create? How much atmosphere did God create? No shortage of anything! And for whom? In an experience completely other centered. So that humanity would never lose His values; so that in our head, in our mind, in our being, only He should reign. Because when He is the only one present, the manifestation, the reality that He is in me is that my self is you and not myself am I. And my relationship, my relationship—my basic relationship is to love my neighbor as myself. That's the Law of God. That's the principle of the Law.

And we have come to the moment in which our neighbor—human being—is a thing also, is also a thing. We possess him and we are lords over him. And we place him under our feet and we treat him under our feet—even our wives or our husbands in this Western culture—wives; children; mother in law; human beings under our feet. We have become materialized.

And when people approach marriage, human constitutions say—I don't know what the American constitution says on this—but the Columbian constitution says that the marriage is a contract. It's a business, between two. Oh, my beloved, marriage is God's image. Marriage is I, a gift, a complete gift—totally—my mind; my heart; my brain; all my faculties; my pocket; my money; all what is mine—an offering for him or her.

That is God. And the Lord finishes shedding His blood because in Him, things are not on His head. What is in His head is you and me. And when He lost me, and when I went astray and when I became His enemy—then He shed His blood for me, in order to restore me.

Which are Jesus' values? Those are the values of the Kingdom of God. And my beloved brethren, under the latter rain; the experience of the latter rain, is a change of values. God in the head, and if God is in the head, the next thing in me is my neighbor and I disappear.

Haven't you seen God's Law? Have you seen God's law—have you seen it? We divide it and in the first section, in the first, second, third, and fourth commandment, Who is present? Him. He—is in the fourth commandment, in the third, in the second, in the first commandment too. And in the sixth commandment, and in the seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth commandment—my neighbor—the other one.

Where am I? Where am I? Where I am I?? Even in the family we have destroyed the Law of God. And my beloved, let us think on these things, let us meditate on these things. It's my need—it's my need—that He might be in me; only He in me; nothing else than He in us—the hope of glory.

In the primitive church, see what happened, in the primitive church under the outpouring of the Holy Spirit—the reality of the Spirit—what does the reality of the Holy Spirit do? Acts chapter 4—we can read two verses—first we will read in chapter 2:44, Ac 2:44-47 “And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.”

Acts 4:32, “And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.”

What type of economy? What type of economy? The economy of the new creation.

Acts 4:33-35, “And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all. Neither was there any among them that lacked:”

What was the result of the power of the resurrection—neither was there any among them that lacked.

“for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.”

The early rain; how are the 144,000 going to live? Only with a concept? Or with a reality. God is the only One who should be in us. Let us pray:

Heavenly Father;

We thank Thee for Thy word and we ask forgiveness for our up-side-down values, and we pray that you might always be on our head and our neighbor as our self—and that we might learn to handle things according to Thy creation. We ask that these things might not be hard for us, because if we love Thee with all our heart, our mind and strength, then these things will not be difficult for us to grasp and understand that if we make the kingdom of heaven our treasure and the first thing, then all things whatsoever are needed shall be added to us. May we by faith understand the principle of God's economy and God's plan of redemption; God's plan of health and living and eternal life. We pray in the Name of Jesus: Amen.