

## The March Toward Globalism (Part 2)

Satan Is in the Business of Child-training

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In the previous sermon and sermonette I gave on the subject of globalism, I focused on the elements shown in the Bible's examples of previous deep formations needed for one to form in our time. I will give them to you.

1. A human leader must arise to focus efforts and provide direction.
2. Concentrations of high-density population.
3. A goal must be established that provides sufficient potential for personal gain to support motivation for a long enough period of time.
4. A human spiritual leader must arise to provide support to the political leader.
5. Satan is absolutely necessary to imbue all with the same general purpose and drive.
6. There must be a matrix from which can be drawn other workers of the same general mindset. The matrix is of course what we call "the world."
7. There must be a specific and broad clique of loyal supporters of the top human leader to whom important responsibilities are delegated over long periods of time while this thing is forming.

I did not place them in an order of importance, but as they appear to have formed. The first four are shown in Genesis 10 and 11, and they appear to form there very quickly. Numbers 6 and 7 develop more gradually. Number 5 was involved from the beginning, and it is by far and away the most important, and that is the unseen but very involved participation of Satan.

This created spirit being, invisible to human eyesight, has been laboring to destroy God and His purpose for a long, long time. His attempts in the past are recorded in scattered places in the Bible, but focus upon in Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28 in the Old Testament. Since man's creation, his efforts to destroy mankind's loyalties to God's revealed purpose are focused upon in Revelation 12, 13, 20, as well as Ephesians 2 and 6 in the New Testament.

In the New Testament, and in a few other places in Scripture, there are also individual mentions. He has been ever working for millennia now to purposely mislead mankind to choose destruction rather than life. He is held in check only by God, and God, in His mercy to us, has revealed enough and enabled us to sufficiently grasp some of Satan's operations. Our responsibility is to be alert to and resist his temptations so that we can remain faithful in spite of our inability to literally see him; thus we have to operate by

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faith.

Evidence of his operations is revealed by what is going on in the world. That is one reason I have a comment every week so that we are kept up to date with something that has a measure of influence on the fulfillment of prophecy; but we must nonetheless keep on our toes, as the saying goes. So today we are going to look into a major part of what is going on in the background of his deceiving operations that enable him to keep up his destructive efforts, moving toward *his* goal of destroying and replacing God the Creator.

It is helpful for us to recall the first descriptor given in God's word of Satan's line of thinking, and thus his general mode of operation. He is described as cunning, crafty, or subtle. The *Reader's Digest Encyclopedic Dictionary* defines "cunning" as "skilled in deception."

Satan is an apostle of what one author termed "the accomplishment of deterioration through gradualism." This is pretty good. This is a cunning form of subtle persuasion, motivating people to compromise. We commonly know this term as "the frog-in-boiling-water" syndrome. If a frog is placed in a tank of cool water, and then if the temperature of the water is ever so gradually raised, the frog will acclimate to the gradually rising temperature, and allow itself to literally boil to death without making an effort to escape. What Satan does is provide crafty justification for compromise in people's knowledge of truth.

Now how does Satan accomplish this with humans when his purpose is not boiling in water, but rather enslavement to his cunning purpose of destroying God's purpose of creating us in the image of Christ? First of all, it is helpful that he is invisible. Second, and far more important, is that though people may express that they believe he exists, their lack of concern about him in real life, in real time, gives evidence that they truly do not believe the reality of what God reveals about Satan's constant efforts to destroy. What I am talking about here is something that only people of faith in God are able to use accurately enough to keep track of what he is doing, because they believe God and what He says about what Satan is doing.

As we begin here, I want us to be reminded of several realities from five Scriptures regarding Satan's continuing unseen influence. We are going to begin in the book of Jude, verse 6. It might be helpful and reassuring to know that this book was written by Jesus' flesh and blood half-brother. He grew up in the same family.

**Jude 6** And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their

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own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day.

Without any comment we are going to go to II Peter 2:4 where Peter reinforces what Jude said.

**II Peter 2:4** For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell [to Tartaroo—a place of restraint] and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment;

Let us go now to II Corinthians 11:3.

**II Corinthians 11:3-4** But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or if you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted—you may well put up with it!

**II Corinthians 11:13-14** For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light.

Now turn to Revelation 12:9.

**Revelation 12:9** So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called The Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

What can we learn from these five references?

1. Angels were here on earth before we were created. Just follow this line of thinking. They were able to be deceived.
2. Earth was *their* proper domain. It was *their* home. We are late-comers on the scene of earth.
3. Those angels, led by Satan, rebelled against God, were defeated, and were cast back to earth.

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4. Those rebels are still here. Satan is still their leader, and he has succeeded in deceiving all of mankind besides.
5. So thorough is his deception, he is unknowingly worshipped by mankind as god of this world, and he uses men already deceived to deceive other men. He has got us working against each other. That is how thorough his deception is.

The sum of this brief insight is that Satan and his cohorts are, to this day, continuing their work of destruction in and through men. How does he accomplish this? What are the practical means he uses? There are a couple of passages of Scripture we need to examine more closely. I mentioned this first scripture in a previous sermon, but we are going to go to it again. It is Romans 9.

In Romans 9, Paul's overall purpose in this chapter is to show both Israelites and Gentiles in the Roman congregation, and now us, that salvation becomes a choice for us only as a result of God's active intervention in individual lives. In other words, God removes supernaturally our blindness so that we can begin to see. It is through God's personal invitation for a relationship to begin with Him.

One's ability to understand and to choose to have salvation does not arise as a result of anybody's natural abilities, inclinations, or works, but from what God does on His personal initiative. In every case, what Paul is showing is that God is sovereign in all the operations of His purpose. He does things deliberately. He does not do things accidentally. No one makes Him do anything. He is in charge of Himself and His creation, and no accidents are made in His calling. So God is sovereign in all the operations of His purpose; therefore, it is He who inclines a person to choose salvation.

Turn now to Romans 9:16.

**Romans 9:16** So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy.

What I just explained is what this verse is saying. But now this raises an additional question. If this is so, why does God hold the sinful conduct of the uncalled against them? What is the answer to that? Paul's brief answer is in verse 21.

**Romans 9:21** Does not the potter have power over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor?

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Paul is saying that God is sovereign. He is free to do whatever He pleases with His creation, and if He wants to hold the sinners guilty, He will do it. This seems difficult for us to understand and accept because we have been told by the world that God is so kind; He is so benevolent; He is so forgiving; He is so merciful that He could not possibly do something like this—call the uncalled guilty, hold them responsible for what they have done even though they were blinded.

This seems difficult to understand and accept because we mistakenly believe God owes us salvation. Wrong, brethren. He owes us nothing. We are not entitled to salvation even after we have been forgiven. If we believe He owes us salvation, it puffs us up, and believe it or not, God eventually becomes our servant because He "owes" this to us. No, He does not. We have to learn to be humble and realize where we stand.

I do not know how many times I heard Herbert Armstrong say that he had to come to the realization that he was nothing more than a burned out hunk of junk, ready to be buried in a dump, and that was after he was converted. This is why Paul said, after at least twenty years of conversion, "O wretched man that I am!" His salvation was in the hands of somebody else, and all he could do was submit to the One he owed his life to; and that was Jesus Christ, because Paul was not owed salvation either. Despite all the work that he did, and despite him becoming a martyr, God still did not owe it to him. There is here a fine distinction between what we in reality are, and what God in reality *is*. God is reality. Brethren, we are nothing more than being like a reflection in a mirror. How much is a reflection in a mirror really real in terms of personhood?

Let us look at verses 22 and 23.

**Romans 9:22-23** What if God, wanting to show His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory?

These verses begin a bit more detailed answer than the one that I am most concerned about within this sermon, and I am most concerned with the word "prepared" that appears in both verses. "The called"—those converted—are being prepared for glory, and the verse dogmatically states that God is preparing them. However, verse 22 says nothing about who prepares the vessels of wrath—the "uncalled." The verse does not say that God prepares both the called and the uncalled.

The term "prepare" indicates a creative activity, and in verse 18 it says—"Therefore He

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has mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wills He hardens." Verse 18 does imply He hardens those not shown mercy. Well, how does He harden? How does "harden" fit into "preparation of the vessels of wrath"? I think that there are two options available to us. The one is that God prepares the vessels of wrath simply by doing nothing. He simply leaves them to their own devices. But even though He may do this, He allows no room for thinking He is responsible for their condition. Let us prove that scripturally. Let us go to Romans 1:18-21.

**Romans 1:18-20** For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse,

God is not responsible for mankind's sins. God, in His judgment, has supplied plenty of truth of His existence so that anybody should be able to say, "This earth was made by God." "I was made by God." "God is still running everything. He gives me every breath of air that I need to continue life. He feeds me. He waters my garden and all of those things because He is the Creator of the weather patterns." God does not allow anybody an excuse for not knowing that He exists, because the evidence is easily seen.

Verse 21 goes on.

**Romans 1:21** ...because, although they knew God...

They did not know God like we know God, but they certainly are capable of knowing Him by the fact that He is Creator, if nothing else.

**Romans 1:22** . . . they did not glorify Him as God [they did not give Him the credit for making things], nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

Do you see that? What they thought led to their spiritual blindness. So God is not responsible for their spiritual blindness either. All of what is going on on earth was not God's creation, but is man's creation in cooperation and companionship with Satan the Devil. God allowed mankind no excuses. Even the unconverted are responsible for their

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conduct. God did not make the world the way it is. Mankind's choices did. It began with Adam and Eve. Then outside the garden, Cain did what he did. God did not force any of those people to make the choices that they did. This indicates that God prepares the vessels of wrath simply by doing nothing.

The second option is this. It has something to be added to it. We will see, as we go through the sermon, that Satan both promotes and takes advantage of mankind's bad choices. He moves in and actively prepares them for his uses. I think that is the option that is open, but even here God has some involvement, and we will see this shown in a couple of places. The first place we are going to go to is I Kings 22 to a little bit of insight into God's sovereignty over what is going on.

**I Kings 22:19-22** Then Micaiah [a prophet of God] said, "Therefore hear the word of the LOORD: I saw the LOORD sitting on His throne, and all the host of heaven standing by, on His right hand and on His left. And the LOORD said, 'Who will persuade Ahab to go up, that he may fall at Ramoth Gilead?' So one spoke in this manner, and another spoke in that manner. Then a spirit came forward and stood before the LOORD, and said, 'I will persuade him.' The LOORD said to him, 'In what way?' So he said, 'I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.' And the LOORD said, 'You shall persuade him, and also prevail. Go out and do so.'

Let us go to a more familiar place in the book of Job, chapter 1. I know you are all familiar with this. Then we can put a close to these two verses on this particular aspect of the sermon.

**Job 1:6-12** Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LOORD, and Satan also came among them. And the LOORD said to Satan, "From where do you come?" So Satan answered the LOORD and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it." Then the LOORD said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?" So Satan answered the LOORD and said, "Does Job fear God for nothing? Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face!" And the LOORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your power; only do not lay a hand on his person." So Satan

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went out from the presence of the LOORD.

When we put these two together it gives us a bit of an overall oversight into what is going on in the background of all of it. First of all, it reveals that God's sovereignty is over all, including Satan. He could only do as much as God permitted. Second is that it does not give Satan and his demons a completely free hand. God set boundaries: this far, and no farther. Third, we have the witness that Job successfully resisted Satan. Ahab did not.

Job fought off the carnal arguments coming from the world through Bildad, Eliphaz, and Zophar, and this gives insight for us to know that Satan, despite his invisibility, despite his powers, with God's help he is not unbeatable. We are not helpless. We are not without resources, but we have got to trust God and resist compromise.

To me, option two for Romans 9 is the strongest case for the truth of this matter. Preparation of the vessels prepared for destruction ("the vessels of wrath") is a cooperative effort between man and the unseen and cunning Satan. We understand there is strong influence from the matrix of the world, and that is a major tool of Satan, but even in the preparation for these vessels of destruction, there is some small but important measure of involvement by God in His sovereign oversight at setting limits: "this far, and no farther." He is most assuredly not involved as directly in His creative efforts with them (the vessels of wrath) as He is with us (the vessels prepared for glory).

The logic of this is that God wants certain things to work out, so He allows Satan to step in, and the people He is going to use are hardened (as He did with Pharaoh of Egypt), but these people do not lose their opportunity for salvation later on. If this were not true—that is, if God does have a small part in this—then Romans 9:18 would not be true, because it does say that *He* hardened. Because He surely *is* sovereign, He is indirectly involved simply by withdrawing Himself and setting boundaries to some degree.

There is an aspect of Satan's involvement in the "vessels fitted for destruction" that I think would be helpful for us to understand better. So we are going to go to John 8, verses 31 through 33, verse 39, and verses 41 through 44 where certain words keep popping up.

**John 8:31-33** Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." They answered Him, "We are Abraham's



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descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can You say, 'You will be made free'?"

**John 8:39** They answered and said to Him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham.

**John 8:41-44** You do the deeds of your father." Then they said to Him, "We were not born of fornication; we have one Father—God." Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me. Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word. You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.

Recall that the Bible uses the terms "son," "daughter," "children," not only in the normal sense of broad relationships, but also in the sense of character and conduct relationship. That is the one Jesus is making here.

The Jews that Jesus preached to bore the character and conduct-image of their spiritual father—Satan. This is the connection that I want to make. Even as God is our spiritual Father, Satan is *their* spiritual father, and even as God is using child-training procedures on us, Satan is also using child-training procedures on *his* spiritual children. The Jews Jesus preached to bore the character and conduct-image of their spiritual father, Satan; not their physical forebear, Abraham, because Abraham's spiritual forebear was the God whom he, by faith, obeyed.

I bring this father-son attitude and control and conduct relationship up because I want us to understand that Satan and his demons are actively involved in their purpose of raising us, as it were, in their image. They are, in effect, forming a sanctified people even as God is forming a sanctified people, but Satan's sanctified people are unknowingly committed to destruction, because he is so cunning and so crafty they will not believe what sin does either in the end and production along the way to the end.

There is a wedge into us that opens the way for preparation by Satan. I would not go so far as to say it is a flaw that Satan can use to tempt us to follow him rather than Christ; however, it is a reality all of humanity shares with each other. It is a fruit of Satan's spirit.

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It is the cause of most of mankind's attitude, character, and relationship problems.

I am not saying it is the only cause, but if left uncontrolled, it will cause untold suffering in virtually every area of one's life regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, or economic standing. Many in the world are in ignorance or are in denial of its constant influence in one's decisions in life, but brethren, no Christian should be. A Christian knows that he must strive to overcome it, because if he does not get it under control to a great extent, there is a possibility he will not be in the Kingdom of God. This influence we all possess to a greater or lesser extent is self-centeredness, and the heart of each person is its home base. A familiar Scripture appears in Matthew 15, verses 15 through 20, spoken by Jesus Christ, and He should know. He said this to those standing around Him, many of which were Pharisees. The apostles were also there.

**Matthew 15:15-20** Then Peter answered and said to Him, "Explain this parable to us." So Jesus said, "Are you also still without understanding? Do you not yet understand that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and is eliminated? But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. These are the things which defile a man, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile a man."

Self-centeredness is the drive in life to turn as much as possible to one's own advantage. Everybody does not possess it to the same degree, but its influence is nonetheless residing in our heart, and because it is there we carry it with us regardless of where we go, and therefore it has the potential to influence us at all times. It is a major part of the cross that Jesus warns us in Luke 27 that the Christian must bear if he is to follow Christ.

This is rather sobering to think about, because it was on the cross, on the stake, that Jesus was put to death, and He had to carry it to the place where He was put to death. Jesus is saying that what is in our heart is *our* cross, and we carry it with us everywhere we go, so we are never fully free from it; but yet this is the very thing God wants to cut loose from us so that we are not influenced by it.

It was very possible that we were aware of our self-centeredness even before we were called, but it was not until God called us that we became much more acutely knowledgeable of the importance of its negative effect on the quality of life. Self-centeredness may also be called egoism, self-concern, self-importance, self-absorption,

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egomania, or narcissism depending upon the degree of a person's knowledge or of the understanding of the degree of involvement that self-centeredness is in one's character. Regardless, everyone has it, and its potential for destruction is very great. However, it is not all bad. I believe that God created in us some small measure of a pull toward the self for the purpose of self-preservation and for the care of the self, and from this, if rightly used, comes a healthy self-esteem.

Turn now to Job 32, verses 6 through 8.

**Job 32:6-8** So Elihu, the son of Barachel the Buzite, answered and said: "I am young in years, and you are very old; therefore I was afraid, and dared not declare my opinion to you. I said [that is, he said to himself], 'Age should speak [he was deferential toward the age of those men who were arguing], and multitude of years should teach wisdom.' But there is a spirit in man, and the breath [or the spirit] of the Almighty gives him understanding.

I believe that there is a clue to the origin of self-centeredness in the relationship between God's gift of the spirit in man and the gift of understanding. Awareness of self is an aspect of the spirit in man which gives him intelligence, the ability to think spatially, and self-knowledge to a degree that animals are incapable of. However, like intelligence and the ability to think spatially, self-awareness is a two-edged sword. It can be influence for good or evil, and therefore it must be tightly controlled.

The Bible confirms that in this world there exists an excessive preoccupation with one's own well-being and interests, and in many cases, it usually is accompanied by an inflated sense of self-worth. Now this adds to feelings of entitlement because the pull towards self was allowed to be nurtured beyond what God intended. This nurturing is a result of the influence of Satan's spirit. I want you to turn with me to a couple of familiar scriptures so that we can be reminded of where this fits into the development of our pride, the development of our use of this "misunderstanding," because we want to use this wonderful gift the best we possibly can.

**Ephesians 2:1-2** And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, . . .

The "sons of disobedience" are those who are being used and prepared by Satan as

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vessels of wrath, and they are under the total influence almost of Satan's spirit.

**Ephesians 2:3** . . .among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.

So there is the ultimate source of the influence that takes advantage of our self-concern, our self-awareness, and works to expand it over what God intended.

In the book of I John, chapter 2, verses 15 through 17 we are warned, we are admonished:

**I John 2:15-17** Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

Now Satan is the source of our inflated sense of self-worth, and his spirit permeates the cultures he has developed and this amplifies his spirit influence, and nobody escapes this influence. However, some are influenced more than others, and because of this, the pull toward the self was allowed to be nurtured.

Satan influences us to love this world and to be thoroughly self-absorbed before God ever gives His calling to conversion. At birth we are all basically the same, and it is very helpful for parents to know that at birth that little bundle of cuddly joy is already on its way to becoming a narcissist at the very core of its existence; and if it is allowed, parents are going to pay for it, and so will the child. It is part of a parent's responsibility from God to hedge that kid in so that his sense of self-worth does not grow out of bounds, because he is going to be driven by it if it is allowed.

His physical limitations exaggerate his narcissism because he is so helpless. He cannot walk, he cannot talk. He has had no life experience whatever to draw upon to modify behavior himself. What he can do, though, is demand your time, your care and attention. "Hey! Take care of me now! I am the one that is important." Do you know what begins to be developed? Entitlement. "I am entitled to be taken care of. It is owed to me." With it, the sense of pride, the ego, begins to be inflated. This is why I said earlier that we have no right to expect that God owes us salvation.

In addition, the child is born with a sharply acute proclivity for absorption of the around and the about of those who are the closest teachers of that environment. That is, the child is a born mimic, and in most cases what he mimics are the dispositions of father and mother, and they, in the over-majority of cases, are already heavily influenced from Satan's matrix, the world, and thus the imprinting of the next generation with worldly attitudes and perceptions begins in earnest immediately.

I can remember Herbert Armstrong saying once to the ministers, "If you do not teach your children, Satan will." That is the way he put it. It was that simple. That preparation by Satan begins in earnest immediately, and it never ends until God calls us and gives us His spirit, thus giving us far greater power to control our internal influences.

So at birth, the narcissistic babe emerges into an ever-expanding circle of carnal influences—influences that come from siblings, playmates, aunts, uncles, grandparents, schoolmates, teachers, educational systems, civil authority, laws, athletics, athletic figures, movies, TV entertainers, music, ethnic and racial prejudices. In addition there is religion and religious figures, employers, fellow employees, wealth, poverty, sickness, insecurities, joy, tears, war, pain, and death, and probably a lot more, and they are with us all the time, and that child is defenseless unless his parents are really on the ball.

This absorption of self-centeredness helps exaggerate a major fruit, because we experience that life is difficult and that the world is dangerous. Gradually that seeps into our mind, and so we see what it says to us here in Hebrews 2:14-15.

**Hebrews 2:14-15** Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

As a child grows, he begins to know that the world is dangerous and that life is difficult. Slowly but surely, we begin to pick up fears along the way, and as God is pointing out here, one of the biggest of them all is the fear of death. Impressions made on our mind become part of the mass of information we operate on and by which we make decisions.

We are seeing here that fear is a very *big* one, especially the fear of death. So what does that do? There is an automatic reaction to that. We learn to take care of ourselves. By nature we shrink from what we fear, and if we fear death, we are going to make efforts to protect ourselves. It is the protecting of ourselves that is important here. Fear

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of death helps move us to draw into ourselves, to protect ourselves by getting as much as we can for our comfort and advantage.

The fear of death intensifies self-concern, and though the fear of death is a biggie, it is not the only thing that we fear. We fear the loss of advantage. We fear not having enough money. We fear the loss of what we feel entitled to. We fear the loss of happiness.

I am not saying that all of these things are wrong. I am saying that they trigger reactions within us, and if we take these things negatively, what do you think we do? In order to prevent those things from happening, we learn to lie, to cheat, to steal, to fornicate, to even murder in an effort to accommodate what we believe we need. Our fears drive us to sin. They drive us inward in order to protect ourselves. It is almost like we are in a vicious circle that we cannot get out of, but it is this kind of thing that gives Satan a wedge into us, and it starts very early in life.

The greatest gift a newborn can be given is two truly loving parents. Why? Because, if they are truly imbued with the love of God, they will begin to carry through with their responsibility to God for rearing the newborn in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Again, this is another thing Herbert Armstrong said during instruction to the ministers. He said the greatest gift your children have is if you are converted and you are using God's spirit to raise them, because that will keep Satan at bay.

So eventually, these children, as they grow, will respect you enough that they will refuse to sin and allow Satan's entrance into their own hearts and minds. This is why God can confidently say that if a child is raised in the way that he *should* go, when he is old he will not depart from it because those things are part of his life, and they are part of his character. Even if he does not fully understand the spiritual aspects to this, he still respects you enough that he will do it because of you.

So, parents, what are we? In terms of Satan, we are our children's guardian—the guardian of their heart to keep self-centeredness from blossoming within them. If they fall for the persuasion of Satan, they will compromise from the standards that we should be giving them, and they will sin, and the self-concern will grow.

If we are having a good relationship with God, the deepest and abiding respect for God will be influencing the parents' disposition and conduct; and because of it they will be living it in the presence of the child and it will have a very positive and fitting effect on the development of self-concern.

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Now here are a couple of things that a parent who loves God will do. I want you to notice the stark reality of this verse in Proverbs 13.

**Proverbs 13:24** He who spares his rod hates his son, But he who loves him disciplines him promptly.

If a parent does not spank a child when the child has disobeyed *him*, God judges that the parent actually hates the child regardless of his affectionate feelings. It does not say here that the spanking should tear the kid to pieces and be a reign of terror. I think we should understand that God expects we should correct the child and pass on a bit of pain to the child so that the child will associate the act with the pain that it produced, but not beat the life out of a child. It should be in measure to the seriousness of the crime. So God is calling upon parents to make sure that they are in control of themselves when they give that spanking.

The second thing here is that spanking should not be put off to a later time. The child must make an immediate connection between his disobedience and the pain of the spanking. "He who loves him disciplines him promptly." Mom, do not wait for dad to come home.

**Proverbs 23:13** Do not withhold correction from a child, for if you beat him with a rod, he will not die.

So, do not withhold correction. That is a direct command from our Father in heaven. I think He knows how to rear children because He is doing it Himself. Ask yourself this question: Do you love your child enough to save him from the grave? The wages of sin is death. In God's judgment, real life and real love is saving him from the grave by doing something unpleasant, but necessary, for the child's heart to form in the right direction.

**Proverbs 22:15** Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; the rod of correction will drive it far from him.

What is foolishness? Very broadly, it is an act bringing upon him the death penalty through sin, or it is some bone-headed action that puts himself and others in danger of injuring, and therefore tempts God.

Parents are taught today by Satan's world that spanking is cruel. Maybe by a beast of a

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parent it can be, but a loving parent who fears God would not allow himself to do that. A loving godly parent knows that it is his responsibility before God to instill discipline into the child's character, because without spanking children's self-importance, self-absorption and sense of entitlement gradually grows until they, in their own minds, believe they can do no wrong. If nobody judicially corrects them, they gradually develop the thought that all that they do is approved.

We will stop here. I hope you will understand that what I am getting at here is that Satan has his own program of childrearing going on, and even as God is preparing us for places in His kingdom, Satan is paralleling the same thought, except his parallel is in going in the opposite direction, and he is preparing us for destruction and death.