

Disinterestedness: Our Spiritual Iron Dome

Protecting Ourselves Against Satan's Fiery Darts

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Please turn over to a scripture we have come to appreciate increasingly more over the last several years, Ecclesiastes 2:3.

Ecclesiastes 2:3 I explored with my mind {how} to stimulate my body with wine while my mind was guiding {me} wisely, and how to take hold of folly, until I could see what good there is for the sons of men to do under heaven the few years of their lives (The Amplified Bible).

Notice the telling clause, “. . . while my mind was guiding {me} wisely.” These are not the words of a man who had given himself over to pleasure, practicing a hedonistic or epicurean philosophy. These are not the words of an irresponsible partygoer, attempting to drink himself under the table for a short term thrill. These are not the words of a burned-out derelict who has come to the conclusion, “Eat, drink, and be merry for tomorrow we die.”

Rather, these words come from a rigorous, methodical, anthropological scientist, using the scientific method to inductively measure the relative qualities of life experiences—exhilarating, pleasurable, sorrowful, terrifying, and all the emotional states along that spectrum. Solomon was a serious, pragmatic scholar having been imbued with the gifts of wisdom, understanding, and discernment from his inauguration. He has been credited with contributing three significant works as part of the Wisdom literature of the Bible, profitable for living successfully in this current world, and profitable for preparation for life in God’s future Kingdom.

In my Feast of Tabernacles message, Re-Embracing the Berean Model, given back on October 2, 2012, I mentioned that Solomon’s mindset encapsulated what practitioners of General Semantics refer to as self-reflexiveness, or the practice of systematically thinking about our thinking.

The Victorian poet, critic, and philosopher Matthew Arnold had yet another term for this Solomon-like practice of thinking about our thinking—a term he called disinterestedness or the ability to deal with ideas without getting caught up in the emotional passion. He did not intend us to be *uninterested* in what we were scrutinizing, but disengaged from the so-called practical aspects such as, “Does it have any military applications?” or “Can

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we exploit it for profit?" etc.

There have been, are, and will be times when we need to get off the emotional jet stream created by a rogue media, where the news has increasingly managed to advance a sinister, ideological agenda.

- An emotional jet stream created by a host of blogs on the Internet can unwind endless infomercials where a cartoon handwrites on an electronic flipchart about how to save us from being ripped off by big Pharma.
- An emotional jet stream created by dire warnings of the impending collapse of the dollar, from which we can save ourselves if we just send in \$30.00 for a book or booklet filled with information on how we can get on the ground-floor of the new alternative currency.
- An emotional jet stream from warnings of FEMA camps morphing into concentration camps and how to protect ourselves with a survival kit worth thousands of dollars, but which we can have for \$37.95 if we act in the next 10 hours.

If you recall, Julie and I were preparing to become naturalized Mexican citizens last fall, following the Feast because secret documents had disclosed that California was to be annexed to Mexico—it did not happen (well, not yet anyway).

We live in an explosive information age which erupts as violently and continuously as the Norris Geyser Basin in Yellowstone National Park—with the deadly, furious intensity of Mount St. Helens, spewing out vile lies, virulent half-truths, and occasionally one or two viable truths.

A similar explosive information age occurred during the Victorian Age, the time-frame of Matthew Arnold's writing. One could say the Victorian age was ignited by the Industrial Revolution and a host of pathogenic "isms", all of which still dog us today:

- Marxism
- Socialism
- Mercantilism

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- Communism
- Utilitarianism
- Capitalism
- The Theory of Evolution
- The infant study of Psychology

New strident voices emerged on the scene, such as Marx, Engels, Huxley, Lyell, and Sigmund Freud, clamoring to be heard in the marketplace of ideas. The Victorian era split the populace with a yawning chasm of faith and doubt.

John Henry Newman, disillusioned by the secularism of the Anglican Church, fearing that “man and society were in grave danger of unregulated liberalism” (which he characterized as false liberty of thought), embraced the Roman Catholic Church.

Thomas Carlyle, with the fervor of an evangelist, railed against materialism, mammonism, and utilitarianism, fearing that the machine and money were Moloch’s gobbling up the souls of men.

Matthew Arnold, who in his “The Function of Criticism at the Present Time,” called for a total time-out, attempting to extract himself and the Victorian populace from partisan wrangling, religious polemics, and endless philosophical disputes. He wrote:

The rule may be summed up in one word-disinterestedness. And how is criticism to show disinterestedness? By keeping aloof from what is called “the practical view of things”; by resolutely following the law of its own nature, which is to be a free play of the mind on all subjects which it touches. By steadily refusing to lend itself to any of those ulterior, political, practical considerations about ideas, which plenty of people will be sure to attach to them, which perhaps ought often to be attached to them, which in this country at any rate are certain to be attached to them quite sufficiently, but which criticism has really nothing to do with. Its business is, as I have said, simply to know the best that is known and thought in the world, and by in its turn making this known, to create a current of true and fresh ideas. Its business is to do this with inflexible honesty, with due ability; but its business is to do no more, and to leave alone all questions of practical consequences and applications, questions which will never fail to have due prominence given to them.

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To illustrate with a modern example, I would point to the desire shared by most people for clean water and air, with a desire to clean up pollution and contamination. Somehow when it gets extended to the 'practical' political sphere, in which opportunistic, unscrupulous politicians in both political parties try to enact cap and trade legislation, putting a limit on our "carbon footprint" by foolishly outlawing carbon dioxide emission and taxing bovine flatulence in the process, then we have reached the realm of the ridiculous. Sadly, those who oppose this tyrannical, confiscatory legislation, based on the theory of global warming, are accused of wanting dirty air and water.

Incidentally, speaking of clean, drinkable water, Richard Ritenbaugh sent me a fascinating map last week (which he forwarded from Pat Higgins who found it on the Blaze) identifying the countries in the world that have safe tap water. Interestingly, the political boundaries of these countries are 89.9% coterminous with the lands occupied by the sons of Jacob.

In Proverbs 4, Solomon warns us to closely monitor what comes into our minds.

Proverbs 4:23 Keep {and} guard your heart with all vigilance {and} above all that you guard, for out of it flow the springs of life (The Amplified Bible).

Corollaries to this self-monitoring principle apply specifically to the words we allow penetrating our nervous system.

Proverbs 12:25 Anxiety in a man's heart weighs it down, but an encouraging word makes it glad.

One can make the inference that if encouraging words gladden the heart, discouraging words, as ingested from the news we watch on a daily basis, can burden our hearts, filling us with anxiety and fear. Consequently, being overwhelmed or saturated with a deluge of negative information can break our spirit and impair our physical health.

Proverbs 15:13 A glad heart makes a cheerful countenance, but by sorrow of heart the spirit is broken.

Proverbs 17:22 A happy heart is good medicine {and} a cheerful mind works healing, but a broken spirit dries up the bones.

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If we do not take concrete steps to control the intake of information deluge into our nervous systems, we will rapidly deplete our adrenals and could possibly subject ourselves to a premature death.

The best way to take control of our information flow is with the self-reflexive monitoring system described in I Corinthians 2:11, containing both a physical and spiritual monitor. My son Eric has a bank of video monitors in his home office, allowing him to swiftly move from room to room or to the front and backyard - almost like having eyes in the back, side, and top of his head. God has given us a similar set of monitors in which we can actually monitor ourselves, metaphorically standing over our own shoulder, thinking about our thinking, and continually adjust our new perspective. Paul explains:

I Corinthians 2:11 For what person perceives (knows and understands) what passes through a man's thoughts except the man's own spirit within him? Just so no one discerns [comes to know and comprehend] the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.

Let us just glom onto the first sentence at this time. We can infer that man's own spirit within him has the self-reflexive property of thinking about one's own thinking—monitoring our thoughts carefully, something rarely done any more. About 50 years ago, I was watching a movie with some friends of mine back in Minnesota, Fred and Emily Sorensen. The movie involved the antics of an evil, manipulative child. When I became visibly agitated and started calling the character some names, Fred turned to me and said, "That kid is a good actor." The wind of anxiety and rage immediately left my sails and I calmly started to evaluate my evaluations.

It reminded me of a scene in Igor Stravinsky's Ballet *Petrouchka* in which a riot in a public square in St Petersburg, Russia was caused by a disappointing end of a puppet show, in which the hero is killed by an unpopular antagonist. Clearly, the puppeteer pulled the strings manipulating a greater crowd of people than just the wooden puppets on the table.

A similar occurrence (involving a movie producer pulling my strings without my awareness) happened recently when my son Aaron rented the new Hollywood movie *Noah*. At first, my family concluded that the story was so weighted down with falsehood that no one in his right mind would believe that any correspondence existed between the Hollywood Noah and the Noah in the Bible. The creators of the Noah movie do not believe in the truth of the Bible anyway. But then I detected some strange reactions in

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my nervous system as I found myself getting wrapped up in the story, getting angry at the character Noah. At the time I felt my heart racing and my fists beginning to clench, I began to critically think about my thinking, disengaging myself from the emotional jet stream in which I had been cruising. These producers, I thought, are playing my strings like a Stradivarius. I am falling for their bait, prompting me to hate passionately a figure who actually stood as a type of Jesus Christ.

I remember having experienced another switchover from emotional to reflexive thinking in the movie *Avatar*, when I followed the pied piper producers of the Hollywood left, placing a higher value on trees and animals rather than on people.

The spirit that had prompted James and John, the Sons of Thunder, to ask Jesus, in Luke 9:54 “Lord, do you want us to command fire from heaven to consume them?”—the same spirit that prompted Peter to cut off the ear of the High Priest’s servant Malchus, recorded in John 18:10—and the same spirit of revenge driving Simeon and Levi, was the same spirit in Dave Maas, in the wake of constant barrage of rocket fire from the Palestinian guerillas, yelling, “Netanyahu, why don’t you bomb the Gaza strip off the face of the earth.” Although I am perhaps not the only one who has ever said or thought this, Jesus Christ exclaims “You do not know what kind of spirit you are of, for the Son of Man did not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them.”

When our own natural carnal human nature becomes surcharged with the mindset of the prince and power of the air, we turn into murderers, liars, and thieves, and become, in effect, children of wrath.

Ephesians 6:12 For we are not wrestling with flesh and blood [contending only with physical opponents], but against the despotisms, against the powers, against [the master spirits who are] the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spirit forces of wickedness in the heavenly (supernatural) sphere.

The prince and power of the air, the ruler of this present world, has succeeded in dividing all of us from each other—Gentile against Jew, rich against poor, Anglo against Hispanic, black against white, labor against management, young against old, vegetarians against meat eaters, city dweller against country dweller, liberal against conservative, Republican against Democrat, Tea-Party against Move-on, NRA against Green Peace, and Bloods against the Crips.

Satan does not care which side we choose, just as long as we hate as intently as we

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can, storing up the flames of the lake of fire as our destiny. Frequently we forget, as Mike Ford once mentioned, "We really don't have a dog in this fight."

We may have preferences, but as the late Rabbi Meyer Kahane stated, "We do not really have allies in our struggle, only common interests." The enemy of our enemy we cannot necessarily trust as our friend.

The spirit in man is not equipped to detect intruding demonic influences, nor does it have any ability or strength to fight them. Rubbing alcohol can combat staph infection, but is powerless to combat fungal infection or deadly Ebola virus. We need something more trustworthy to defend ourselves against Satan's rocket attacks just as the vulnerable Israeli's need the Iron Dome to protect against continuous Palestinian rocket fire.

I John 4:1 Beloved, do not put faith in every spirit, but prove (test) the spirits to discover whether they proceed from God; for many false prophets have gone forth into the world.

As I stated previously, the carnal mind is incapable of detecting these deadly spiritual gamma rays. How do we protect ourselves against satanic radioactivity? Please return back to I Corinthians 2:11 to look at our spiritual Iron Dome defense system.

I Corinthians 2:11 For what person perceives (knows and understands) what passes through a man's thoughts except the man's own spirit within him? Just so no one discerns (comes to know and comprehend) the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.

The only defense against deadly spiritual weapons is a spiritual Iron Dome equipped with a state of the art monitoring system. We can envision this monitoring system as a panel of nine video monitors as my son has for his security system, protectively monitoring nine aspects of our spiritual growth: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, and self-control.

If any one of the monitors picks up a threat, the iron dome defense system will go into effect.

II Corinthians 10:4-5 For the weapons of our warfare are not physical [weapons of flesh and blood] but they are mighty before God for the

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overthrow and destruction of strongholds, [Inasmuch as we] refute arguments {and} reasoning's and every proud {and} lofty reasoning's and every proud {and } lofty thing that sets itself up against the [true] knowledge of God; and we lead every thought{and} purpose away captive into the obedience of Christ [the Messiah, the Anointed One] (The Amplified Bible).

In other words, we do not let anyone control us or mess with our mind, but we do not necessarily want to pull our own strings with the perspective of our carnal mind, but we yield to Jesus Christ and God the Father and with the indwelling of God the Father—let Him pull our strings.

Personally, I find myself in danger of losing control of my blood pressure when I watch the mainstream media ABC, CBS, NBC, or CNN. Over one year ago, Julie and I decided to sever ourselves from Cable Television—yes, even from FOX news. We still have Internet so I can still watch Dragnet, Milton Berle, and Bishop Fulton J. Sheen, but I feel more in control of what I allow to take in as news, relying more on electronic print reports from the Drudge Report, which carries newspapers from every perspective from the Blaze to the Huffington Post.

I no longer have a compulsion to be obsessed with staying on top of world news in hopes that I could receive a gold star for guessing the identity of the beast before anybody else does.

I was grateful for Pat Higgin's *Berean* article last Wednesday, in which he concluded, "These facts lead to the conclusion that 'watch' in Luke 21:36 has little, or perhaps even nothing to do with watching world events. A careful reading shows that the 'watch' of Luke 21:36 is only minimally directing us to watch world events. Overemphasizing that meaning of this verse has overshadowed its real survival instructions Jesus gives to Christians living at the end."

What we must realize is that when we do watch world news, we must do so as if we were handling radioactive isotopes or deadly pathogenic bacteria. We could get suckered by the prince of the power of the air to pick a side in one of the millions of the world's disputes.

The current incident up in Ferguson, Missouri which has fomented out-of-control racial conflict and blatant lawlessness I blame to a large extent on the media. Putting on my self-reflexive blarney detector—as Richard calls it— (actually Carl Sagan calls it something else, but it is too coarse to use for this message) I methodically went through

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the stories from the Huffington Post and then on to the Blaze, self-reflectively examining the strings they were trying to pull on me. Looking at how it has torn the various ethnic communities apart and created a climate of lawlessness, I sensed that the god of this world must be gloating with pride.

It is not time for God's elect to get involved, but must be in continual preparation for a new regime—God's Kingdom—the wonderful World Tomorrow, a time spoken of in Micah 4:3 when “they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.”

Thy Kingdom come soon, I hope!