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# The Dark Side of Love

***Stuff For Today***

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• Why Habakkuk disliked Babylon

**By Mr. Lyle (mrlyle1@gmail.com**

***The book of Habakkuk***

Scripture describes the love of God as perfect and complete. His chosen people, Israel, defied Him repeatedly, deliberately refusing to bow their stiff necks in reverence and respect for what He had accomplished on their behalf. God was ultimately patient with them in their repeated refusals to honor Him, and as a result, we can see from the Biblical account, the character of God in action. His merciful, kind and longsuffering nature did not destroy Israel even when they probably deserved such treatment. The honest individual will admit that their own behavior is, at times, just as abhorrent to God, and is deserving of judgment. We owe our lives to the fact that He is slow to anger. However, a line does exist over which a child of God should not cross. Where that line is technically, only God knows. The patience of God does have a limit, and we would do well not to test that limit. The prophets Habakkuk and Zephaniah explore a concept we will call “the dark side of love”. Consider the following story.

Under cover of darkness, two vehicles arrive at a small rural home. Some hushed words are exchanged between the three armed men as they exit their vehicles. One runs up to the front door, and finding it locked, kicks it open with a blow. All three then run hurriedly through the domicile, searching. One of them finds a small girl lying in her bed. He grabs her up. She is now screaming and does not want to go. She does not know these men, but they take her from the home, lay her in the back seat of one of their cars and tie her down with the seat belts, so she cannot move. All three quickly get back in their automobiles, and they are gone as swiftly as they arrived. As they drive to the other side of the county, they ignore many traffic laws. Moving with haste and arriving at a tall building, the young girl, still sobbing, is taken to the third floor where a fourth man has been waiting. She is laid out on a hard table. He places something over her mouth, and her cries are stifled. He then plunges a knife deep into her abdomen.

We think to ourselves, what an unfortunate turn of events. But a few key pieces of information were purposely subtracted from the account. The three armed men were policemen. The young girl was crying in pain, not fear. She had been home alone, and was suffering a severe attack of appendicitis and had called 9-1-1. This was a small town situation, and the law enforcement officials made the judgment call to take her to the hospital immediately, rather than wait for an ambulance. The doctor, waiting on the third floor, deftly removed the burst appendix and promptly saved her life. That information changes the complexion of the story completely. The trauma, caused by the actions of the policemen, was for the young girl’s ultimate good.

God had chosen Israel as His people and His covenant with Abraham would not be ignored or vacated by Him. But they were sinning greatly and sin left unattended will ultimately lead to death. In His sovereignty, God chose to salvage His people with love—the dark side of love. No parent enjoys punishing a child, and neither does God find pleasure in disciplining His children. The necessary reprimand is meant to admonish and correct a bad behavior.

Habakkuk was a curious prophet, a man of many questions. His inquiries are relevant even today, and worthy of a closer look. He understood God’s relationship with Israel, but as many today in our world wonder, how can God permit sin to continue and not be dealt with? It seemed then, as it does now, that the ungodly go along in life unchecked, able to do as they please, and the righteous suffer at their hands. God’s solution to the uncaring, wandering hearts of His people was a nation called Babylon. Habakkuk was informed that the Chaldeans would become a world power, the greatest the world would ever know, and they would be His tool of judgment upon His people. The prophet then points to the fact that the Babylonians were a ruthless horde. It seemed unconscionable that Jehovah God would raise up a godless nation to judge His own people. But God reminded him that Babylon, too, will be judged for her sins, eventually.

The warning of impending judgment rang clearly from Zephaniah. The patience of God is not to be mocked or taken lightly. He will ultimately judge. It will be a righteous act, and those who are guilty will be punished. The chastening of a loving God, and the repercussions accompanying that act, are not comfortable at implementation. Romans 8:28 reminds us that all things work together for the good of those who are His. The ultimate goal of God in the ensuing rebuking and disciplining of Israel, was to bring them back to Himself. They would see seventy years of captivity in Babylon for their sins. The severity of the consequences of their disobedience was mediated by the love of God. Displacement from Jerusalem was difficult for any Jew, but a hint of mercy is seen in the fact that God chose to send his people into captivity in the most technologically advanced nation of the day.

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**Keeping Your Room Clean This Summer**

By Mr. Lyle (mrlyle1@gmail.com)

A few helpful hints to facilitate your efforts to keep your room clean during the summer:

1. Remember ***Vern’s Theorem: E=TP2*** (Every one likes an extra role of toilet paper).

2. If you can’t remember the formula, have ***2 parts water—1 part Spic-n-Span*** tattooed on your forearm.

3. On the first day of each month ask yourself this question: Does my room really need to be cleaned this month?

4.***Percussive Maintenance:***

to whack the snickers out of an electronic device to get it to work again.

5. Keep a picture of your school janitor on your wall as a motivation to do well. Heroes are hard to find and a janitor is a great hero.

**Diputseromneve**

The word **Diputseromneve** may look ridiculous, but backwards it’s even more stupid!