

An Attempt To Listen To God On

The Loathings of Christ

By

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# Meditations on The Loathings of Christ

When we think of Christ, loathing is not a characteristic we would attribute to Him because our natural tendency is to consider his love and disregard the need for balance. If the Lord was entirely love, without the balance of hatred for sin, softheartedness would give way to leniency, the very thing God hates (Prov. 17:15). In all of life there must be checks and balances, consequently:

- 1) A Christ who was all hatred and had no love would be a hardhearted insensitive individual.
- 2) A Christ who was all love and no hatred would be a sentimental unjust individual<sup>1</sup>.
- 3) The attribute of grace, void of truth, would soon deteriorate into casualness without boundaries.
- 4) All truth without love results in legalism without boundaries.

When the balance between love and hate is nullified, love then becomes emotionalism and hatred becomes vicious maliciousness. There must be a balance, consequently there are things the Lord loves and hates. This is to be expected because of His character and because these are characteristics of God which He was revealing. He hates certain things because they are contrary to His essential perfection.

There are several things mentioned in the scriptures which are abominations to Divine persons:

- 1) The froward is an abomination to the Lord. (Prov. 3:32)
- 2) A false balance is an abomination to the Lord. (Prov. 11:1)
- 3) The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord. (Prov. 15:8)
- 4) He that justifieth the wicked and he that condemneth the just, both are abominations to the Lord. (Prov. 17:15)
- 5) Divers weights, and divers measures, both of them are an abomination to the Lord. (Prov. 20:10)
- 6) "These six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto Him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, an heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief. A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren." (Prov. 6:16-19)
- 7) "This thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate." (Rev. 2:6)
- 8) "Them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate." (Rev. 2:15)

For the Lord to be the perfect manifestation of God, there must be things He loves and hates. Among the many statements of our Lord, the apostle John records two which are relevant to our theme.

- 1) "Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world." (Jn. 8:23)
- 2) "I am the light of the world." (Jn. 8:12)

Since no scripture can be taken out of context, it is necessary to see the background of both these expressions. On a particular day a group of religious rulers came to the Lord seeking to discredit Him. They had a woman whom they said was caught in the act of adultery, and they asked the question: "Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest Thou?" (Jn. 8:4-5). If He upheld the law, where was the love for the woman and if He set aside the law where was the love for the principles of God?

He brilliantly challenged those who brought the woman with the words: "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her" (Jn. 8:7). It is very possible His answer carried the idea: "The one who is without this sort of sin, let him cast the first stone", a matter which apparently was supported by the ancient Greek text. The fact is the only one who could act as executioner would be one who had never done this sin, or any sin matter. How could they condemn her when they had in heart committed the same sin?

Consciences were pricked and the accusers went out (but not all the Pharisees v.13). Speaking to those who were left, the Lord said: "I am the Light of the world" (v. 12). He was then accused of lying (v. 13). The Lord then gave evidence for His word being the truth:

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<sup>1</sup> If Christ ignored wrong doing then He would be condoning it and there would be no love for holiness.

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- 1) He was conscious of where He came from and was going. (v. 14)
- 2) It was because he did not judge after the flesh. (v. 15)
- 3) The Father also bore witness to His claims. (vv. 14-17)

The questioning continued until the Lord said: "Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world" (Jn. 8:23). This was a basic distinction between them and the Lord. They were of the world loving its approval. They were liars like their father the devil (Jn. 12:43 & 8:44). It was impossible for the Lord to love anything which had its origin in the "deceiver" (Rev. 12:9); "the wicked one" (1 Jn. 5:18); "the accuser" (Rev. 12:10); "the enemy" (Matt. 13:39); "the father of lies" (Jn. 8:44), and "adversary" (1 Pet. 5:8). Paul wrote: "Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love" (Rom. 12:9). In the first clauses there is love with regard to principles, and in the second, love relative to persons. Christ loved the law of God and its principles and anything contrary to it was obnoxious to Him. It was impossible for He, the Light, to have any sympathy with the Prince of Darkness and his associates. The way of life for his satanic majesty's followers was detestable to Him. It must be understood, while the Lord found their attitudes obnoxious, His words would have been spoken in tender compassion, not out of spite. To see humans blinded by sin and in ignorance reject the light, would have prompted exceeding pity.

Being the Light resulted in His exposing the distortions of sin in man. Men deliberately distorted the truth of God, setting it aside to uphold their man made laws. This defiance of God was obnoxious to Him. Some of their repugnant attitudes were:

- 1) Pride in thinking they were more spiritual than others, failing to heed the words of Micah: "What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Mic. 6:8). An illustration of this was when the Lord ate with publicans and sinners and it is recorded: "And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners? But when Jesus heard that, He said unto them: "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance". (Matt. 9:11-12)
- 2) He could not tolerate the petty ambition of men for the acclamations of others. This He condemned when:
  - a) He spoke of them going after the chief seats in the synagogue and uppermost seats at feasts (Mk. 12:39)
  - b) or their pseudo spirituality by praying long repetitious prayers (Mk. 12:40)
  - c) or dropping amounts of change in the collection plates to be seen as generous (Mk. 12:43-44)
  - d) or the superficial adherence to the law, or suppressing the truth of the law for their own ends (Matt. 23:15)These He condemned because they were contrary to God and His own essential character.
- 3) He found their twisted idea of separation loathsome. Separation had been degraded into isolation. It was Israel which should have been a witness to the nations.
  - a) "I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light to the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house." (Isa. 42:6-7)
  - b) "And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth." (Isa. 49:6)
  - c) "For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth." (Acts 13:47)

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In being God's witnesses to the Gentiles, they failed by splitting themselves into multiple groups, mainly Sadducees and Pharisees. They had become "holier than thou" religious separatists! This had another affect because the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans (Jn. 4:9). They had to learn what a true neighbour was (Lk. 10:30-36). It was abominable to the Lord that in two of the lovely reasons God himself had chosen them, they failed. They failed to be a light to those around and as faithful stewards of the word of God, for they had corrupted it by adding and deleting.

- 4) It was loathsome to Him that they had distorted the blessings of God, making them the only reason for living. God had promised they would never lack and His blessings would be upon them if they obeyed His commands. In their waywardness, they ignored His commands and "things" became the major reason for living. The possession of animals and land was never to be used for self exaltation yet that is what happened. The Lord said: "Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Lk. 12:15).
- 5) His anger will burn on those who know the truth, but being stubborn, refuse to see and accept it. His anger was not of uncontrolled passion but of grief due to the hardness of their hearts and hatred for the sin they exhibited. How stark are the words: "And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other" (Mk. 3:5).
- 6) He could not tolerate those who falsified God's laws by bringing people into bondage instead of the freedom and comfort<sup>2</sup> of God. The distorting of God's laws became a means of control and self exaltation. God never brought His people out of the slavery of Egypt to bring them under the slavery of pseudo spirituality. It is a lesson many "elders" need to learn when saints are controlled by man made decisions. How did the Lord look on such people? He said:
  - a) "The scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat", as the interpreters of the law of Moses and the sole teachers of it (Matt. 23:2). Sadly, their teaching was not in accord with the Scripture of truth. Their works were evil therefore He said:
    - i) Beware of the scribes, which love to go in long clothing, and love salutations in the marketplaces, and the chief seats in the synagogues and uppermost rooms at feasts: Which devour widows' houses. (Mk. 12:38-40)
    - ii) To the words of Mark, Luke adds: "And for a shew make long prayers". (Lk. 20:47)
  - b) In scathing rebukes, the Lord says: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees" seven times over (Matt. 23 vv. 13, 14, 15, 23, 25, 27, 29). He also calls them "blind guides" twice (vv. 16, 24); and "fools" (v. 19). He singles out the Pharisees by the expressions: "Thou blind Pharisee" (v. 26) and "ye serpents, ye generation of vipers" (v. 33). He was showing His loathing to their whole life style.
  - c) He told them plainly in Matthew 23 they were:
    - i) "Obnoxious", their attitude to those who sought to enter the kingdom of Heaven. (v. 13)
    - ii) "Repulsive", their behavior to widows. (v. 14)
    - iii) "Contemptible", their proselytizing activity. (v. 15)
    - iv) "Odious", their distortion of the law. (v. 16)
    - v) "Intolerable", their separation of the law to suit their purposes. (v. 23-24)
    - vi) "Nauseating", their superficial piety. (v. 25-26)
    - vii) "Revoltng", their pseudo spirituality. (v. 27-28)
    - viii) "Insufferable", their hypocrisy. (v. 29-30)

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<sup>2</sup> There was a comfort in knowing justice was being executed, and if through circumstances one was sold into slavery, they had to be released on the year of Jubilee, and the property given by God would never go out of the family (Lev. 25:8-55).

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- d) These sorts of men were totally opposite to the Lord for:
- i) “They bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men’s shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers” (Matt. 23:4). This attitude was loathsome to He who said, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest” (Matt. 11:28).
  - ii) They do their works, “to be seen of men” (Matt. 23:5). The Lord did His works by the power of God and for the glory of God, and in their failure to fulfill the purpose they had been created, He found them loathsome.
  - iii) They failed to recognize God’s position was God’s alone, and that which was Christ’s was Christ’s alone (Matt. 23:7-10), and in so doing, considered themselves a class above others.

Christ, who sought no other glory than God, could not fellowship with such deception and hated it. He treated men like Herod, with utter contempt when calling him, “that fox” (Lk. 13:32).

Had his loathing been only toward the religious rulers and not toward his own, that would not have been righteous judgment consequently, He loathed when the disciples began to put the others down in seeking position for themselves.

Characteristics obnoxious to Him were seen when:

- 1) The disciples were debating who was the greatest. (Mk. 9:34)
- 2) Peter professed to love the Lord more than the others. (Mk. 14:29)
- 3) They began sending the mothers away with their children. (Mk. 10:13-14)
- 4) They sought to tell the Lord how to deal with the Syrochonan woman. (Matt. 15:23)
- 5) James and John asked permission to command fire to come down out of Heaven. (Lk. 9:54)
- 6) Peter cut off the servant’s ear. (Jn. 18:10)
- 7) Peter rebuked the Lord relative to His going to Calvary. (Matt. 16:22)
- 8) Peter refused to allow the Lord to wash His feet, then he wanted all washed. (Jn. 13:8-9)

These attitudes were opposite to Christ’s character and He made no allowances for it. However, since men love darkness rather than light, the Lord pointed out to them the distortion in their religiosity. He then became obnoxious to them, the result being, they began to hate Him and sought means to put him to death.

Perhaps we see a shadowy reflection coming into view for the characteristics of the Jews and the disciples is also seen in the local assemblies. It is impossible to read the Lord’s admonishment of the churches in Revelation without recognizing His loathing of that which was happening in them.

In Revelation chapters two and three, the Lord gives messages to seven churches, listing a number of things which were loathsome to Him. It must be made very clear, these letters were not written to denominations or about the catholic church, they were written to assemblies such as we are. To these churches the Lord points out that which was objectionable to Him:

- 1) There were saints in Ephesus which had left their first love. (Rev. 2:4)
- 2) There were saints in Pergamos who held the doctrine of Balaam (Rev. 2:14), and the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes (Rev. 2:15).
- 3) Thyatira had a woman who taught the people of God to commit fornication and eat things offered to idols. (Rev. 2:20)
- 4) As a church, Sardis had a name that meant they lived but were actually dead (Rev. 3:1), and their works were not up to standard (Rev. 3:2).
- 5) As a church, Laodicea was lukewarm and had an imagined spirituality but were in an apathetic state. (Rev. 3:16-17)

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In Revelation 2:6, 15; the Lord mentions two things He hates, the deeds and doctrine of the Nicolaitanes. Since God left these people obscure, telling specifically only their name, a doctrine and deeds, we cannot go beyond that and try to discover who or what they were. Their name discloses all that is necessary. They are those who overcome and have victory over the people. Again, this is not the denomination with their pastors and clerics but a New Testament assembly. These are men who are called and hold the position of elders but have nothing of a shepherd's heart. They lord it over the saints, thus making a division among the saints. Their doctrine is on par with the Sadducees and Pharisees. The Pharisees added to the scriptures and the Sadducees refused to see that which the scriptures plainly taught. Both were power mongers usurping the place of the Lord as Head of the local church. It did not matter what the Scriptures taught, they had their own man made teachings and nothing would change them. Anyone who taught otherwise would be rejected. This is the sin of Diotrophes (3 Jn. 1:9), lording it over the saints. Paul speaks of this in Romans 13 where legalism and laws become the measure of spirituality.

Why is it the saints of God do not find sin objectionable, and the reason many things are not done is because the individual doesn't want to get caught? My lack of detesting sin is the measurement of my spiritual life. Speaking in gospel and ministry meetings, taking part in Bible studies, having a grasp of the scriptures, functioning as an elder, standing at the door or going to a meeting once a month are not signs of spirituality. True spirituality is likeness to the Lord, just apparently externally. True spirituality comes from the internal being changed, through His life being lived through me. When Christ in reality lives in me, then His character will be seen. There is not a foe I cannot stand against because it is not me fighting, but Christ doing it all. This is what Paul learned in Romans 7. Try as He might, He could not stand against the enemy. How then could he be delivered? Then he says: "I thank God" (v. 25), there is a way of deliverance, it is through Jesus Christ our Lord. This is not just asking: "What would Jesus do?", or striving to be holy, but the life characteristics of Christ flowing through me. My responsibility is to let God, for when I let go then I will not be a friend of the world which results in being conformed to the world, and will result in loving the world.

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**May God grant us good understanding as He, by His Holy Spirit, deigns to guide us into all truth.  
John 16:13**

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