

To the Praise of the Glory of His Grace

Chapter 19

Ephesians 4:17–19

Ephesians 4:17 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind,

VERSE 1 of chapter four the apostle began with beseeching and imploring the Ephesians on how they were to walk in order to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they were called.¹ The apostle then, in verses 2–4, reveals² how this could be began. Now, in verse 17 of the same chapter the apostle reveals how the Ephesians should not walk, *as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind.*

It is worthy to note that in a proper Christian walk, what is not pursued, is as equal and significant, as what is. This is why the apostle addresses the vanity of the Gentiles and how they walk, as a manner of living, which all true Christians should both avoid and separate themselves from.

The Greek word for *vanity* is #3153 *mataiotés* (mat-ah-yot'-ace). *Strong's Lexicon* defines the word as "Vanity, futility, emptiness." The word origin is "Derived from the Greek word ματαίω (*mataioō*) (mat-ah-yo'-o), meaning 'to make empty' or 'to render vain.'"

The usage of the word *mataiotés* (mat-ah-yot'-ace) "refers to the concept of vanity or futility, often used to describe the transient and purposeless nature of worldly pursuits and human endeavors apart from God. It conveys the idea of something that is devoid of real value or significance, highlighting the emptiness of life when it is not centered on divine purpose."

HELPS Word-studies defines #3153 "*mataiôtēs* (mat-ah-yot'-ace) (a noun)—*aimlessness* due to lacking *purpose* or any meaningful end; nonsense because transitory."

Ellicott states that vanity is that state where individuals, "In losing the living conception of a living God, it [a man] has lost also the conception of the true object and perfection of human life; and so wanders on aimless, hopeless, reckless, as in a dream."³

It is the lost, those who wander without any spiritual direction in life, and without any real purpose for living, that Jesus came to save; those who know not the reason for their existence, nor how true inward happiness can be gained. To pur-

1 Eph. 4:1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,

2 Eph. 4:2–4 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; ³Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ⁴There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;

3 Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers, Eph. 4:17

To the Praise of the Glory of His Grace

sue and follow vain things, is to ultimately become as empty and useless as what is sought. To also pursue the transitory objects in this world such as fame, wealth, and/or the praise of man, shall result in becoming as brief, temporary, and passing⁴ as them. This is why if a man sets his affections on things which will one day pass away,⁵ and are even now perishing before his eyes, then the only potential future before him, shall be as vain and profitless as the things he pursued. Consequently to live and walk as Gentiles walk, in both their mind and vanity of life, is to eternally perish, as they shall perish. (Luke 19:10) *For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.*

HELPS Word-studies defines *lost* #622 *apóllymi* (ah-POL-li-mi) “(‘violently/ completely perish’) implies permanent (absolute) destruction, i.e. to cancel out (remove); ‘to die, with the implication of ruin and destruction’ (L & N, 1, 23.106); cause to be lost (utterly perish) by experiencing a miserable end.”

This world is proceeding towards a path of total and one day absolute and complete destruction.⁶ Much like the past, in the days of Noah, when the earth was overrun with wickedness and every imagination of man’s heart was evil,⁷ so is the world today being influenced towards pursuing a similar degrading and ultimately catastrophic end.⁸ It is at this end, the day of the Lord,⁹ when all who have ever lived

4 I John 2:17 *And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.* II Pet. 3:10–12 *But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.* ¹¹Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, ¹²Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Rev. 21:1 *And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.*

5 II Pet. 3:7 *But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.*

6 Matt. 24:29 *Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:* Joel 2:30–31 *And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke.* ³¹ *The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the LORD come.*

Isa. 13:9–13 *Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it.* ¹⁰*For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine.* ¹¹*And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.* ¹²*I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir.* ¹³*Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the LORD of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger.* Rev. 6:12–14 *And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; ¹³And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. ¹⁴And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.* Isa. 24:20 *The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again.*

7 Gen. 6:5 *And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.*

8 II Tim. 4:3–4 *For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; ⁴And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.*

9 I Pet. 4:5 *Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead.*

II Tim. 4:1 *I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;*

upon the earth, will stand before, in judgment, the bar of God, and so many shall bemoan the futile things they pursued on the earth, apart from their Creator.¹⁰ To have a vain mind, is to be led by vain things. It is to pursue objects and endeavors which have no eternal value, nor any possible ability to save the soul. It is to perish as the world also shall perish.

The latter part of Romans chapter 1 provides great insight on how those governed by the flesh, vanity, and vain imaginations ultimately will incur God's wrath. But what is not known by most, is that an example of God's divine wrath is being revealed from heaven, is even today. This present *wrath of God* (v. 18), though it is surely not the day of His wrath,¹¹ nor the day of the Lord,¹² remains an element of

Acts 10:42 And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead.

10 II Cor. 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

Rev. 22:12 And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

11 Zeph. 1:15 That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness,

Zeph. 1:18 Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy: for he shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land.

Rev. 11:18 And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.

Isa. 13:13 Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the Lord of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger.

12 Joel 2:1-11 Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand; ²A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations. ³A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them.

⁴The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses; and as horsemen, so shall they run. ⁵Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains shall they leap, like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble, as a strong people set in battle array. ⁶Before their face the people shall be much pained: all faces shall gather blackness. ⁷They shall run like mighty men; they shall climb the wall like men of war; and they shall march every one on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks: ⁸Neither shall one thrust another; they shall walk every one in his path: and when they fall upon the sword, they shall not be wounded. ⁹They shall run to and fro in the city; they shall run upon the wall, they shall climb up upon the houses; they shall enter in at the windows like a thief. ¹⁰The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble: the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining: ¹¹And the LORD shall utter his voice before his army: for his camp is very great: for he is strong that executeth his word: for the day of the Lord is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?

Isa. 13:5-10 They come from a far country, from the end of heaven, even the LORD, and the weapons of his indignation, to destroy the whole land. ⁶Howl ye; for the day of the LORD is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty. ⁷Therefore shall all hands be faint, and every man's heart shall melt: ⁸And they shall be afraid: pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them; they shall be in pain as a woman that travaileth: they shall be amazed one at another; their faces shall be as flames. ⁹Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. ¹⁰For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine.

II Pet. 3:10-12 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. ¹¹Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, ¹²Looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? I Thess. 5:1-4 But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. ²For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. ³For when they shall say, Peace and

To the Praise of the Glory of His Grace

God's anger being executed towards those, who have been given the opportunity to know, honor, and be thankful to God, have rejected Him. It is also because of this that sinners are without excuse (v. 20) experiencing an element of God's divine wrath being revealed upon them.

Romans 1:18–32 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

¹⁹Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.

²⁰For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made,

even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

²¹Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

²²Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

²³And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.

²⁴Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:

²⁵Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature

safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. ⁴But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

Amos 5:18–20 Woe unto you that desire the day of the LORD! to what end is it for you? the day of the LORD is darkness, and not light. ¹⁹As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him. ²⁰Shall not the day of the LORD be darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it?

Joel 2:30–32 And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke.

³¹The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the LORD come. ³²And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call.

Zeph. 1:7–16 Hold thy peace at the presence of the Lord GOD: for the day of the LORD is at hand: for the LORD hath prepared a sacrifice, he hath bid his guests. ⁸And it shall come to pass in the day of the LORD's sacrifice, that I will punish the princes, and the king's children, and all such as are clothed with strange apparel. ⁹In the same day also will I punish all those that leap on the threshold, which fill their masters' houses with violence and deceit. ¹⁰And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD, that there shall be the noise of a cry from the fish gate, and an howling from the second, and a great crashing from the hills.

¹¹Howl, ye inhabitants of Maktesh, for all the merchant people are cut down; all they that bear silver are cut off. ¹²And it shall come to pass at that time, that I will search Jerusalem with candles, and punish the men that are settled on their lees: that say in their heart, The LORD will not do good, neither will he do evil.

¹³Therefore their goods shall become a booty, and their houses a desolation: they shall also build houses, but not inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, but not drink the wine thereof. ¹⁴The great day of the LORD is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the LORD: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly. ¹⁵That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, ¹⁶A day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities, and against the high towers.

Matt. 24:21–22 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. ²²And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.

Isa. 2:11–17 The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day. ¹²For the day of the LORD of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low: ¹³And upon all the cedars of Lebanon, that are high and lifted up, and upon all the oaks of Bashan, ¹⁴And upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills that are lifted up, ¹⁵And upon every high tower, and upon every fenced wall, ¹⁶And upon all the ships of Tarshish, and upon all pleasant pictures. ¹⁷And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low: and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day.

more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

²⁶ For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:

²⁷ And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.

²⁸ And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

²⁹ Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,

³⁰ Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,

³¹ Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:

³² Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

This record reveals not only that divine judgment is being revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men (v. 18), but also why (v. 21) *Because that, when they [men] knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.* It is this process of unbelievers becoming *vain in their imaginations*, and choosing to walk, *in the vanity of their mind* as Paul referenced as to how Gentiles walk, which will ultimately lead to the willful sinner's destruction. An eternal destruction also which has as its origin and core cause, people thinking themselves wise in their own eyes.¹³ (v. 22 *Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.*)

It is this vanity of life, which is produced through being led by *vain imaginations* and men thinking themselves wise, that the apostle Paul sought to warn the Christians at Ephesus to avoid. To live as a Gentile, and pursue the same vain and temporal things as them, shall result in suffering the exact the same divine judgment¹⁴ that God has promised shall come all who have abandoned pursuing God in their life.

13 Isa. 5:21 *Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!*

Prov. 12:15 *The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise.*

I Cor. 3:18-20 *Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.* ¹⁹*For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.* ²⁰*And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain.*

Prov. 26:12 *Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him.*

Jdgs. 21:25 *In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.*

Jdgs. 17:6 *In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes.*
Deut. 12:8 *Ye shall not do after all the things that we do here this day, every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes.*

14 Rom. 2:8-13 *But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath,* ⁹*Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile;* ¹⁰*But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile:* ¹¹*For there is no respect of persons with God.* ¹²*For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law;* ¹³*(For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.*

I Sam. 12:15 *But if ye will not obey the voice of the LORD, but rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then shall the hand of the LORD be against you, as it was against your fathers.*

To the Praise of the Glory of His Grace

What is also observable in the Romans record, is the result that *vain imaginations* have upon the intellect of man. Ultimately, it is impossible to walk in sin and not experience as a result, an increased loss of intelligence and the darkening of one's understanding, *their foolish heart was darkened*. Practically, to pursue vain things and be led by vain imaginations, even greater advances the sinner's cognitive loss of both natural and spiritual intelligence.

(*Barnes' Notes on the Bible*, Rom. 1:2) *And their foolish*, αἰσθητος, (ah-SOO-neh-tos) their undiscerning, unintelligent, imprudent *heart was darkened*—Instead of being enlightened by these sophistries, it was more and more involved in ignorance and error, and rendered impenetrable to the simplicity of the most important truths. What a terrible instance have we of this in the writings of Lucretius! What *vain reasonings*, yet how dark a heart, amid pompous professions of wisdom! *Professing themselves to be wise*—Greek, φασκοντες ειναι σοφοι, *saying that*

they were wise; “*cum se dicerent, aut se dicerent sapientes*:” *when they called, or suffered themselves to be called, wise men.*—Grotius. It evidently refers to their assuming the philosophic character, and to the pride they took in the title of *wise men*, or *lovers of wisdom*. *They became fools*—Degrading, in the lowest and most infamous manner, the reason which they so arrogantly pretended to improve, and almost to engross. (END QUOTE)

In Isaac Newton's third law of motion it is stated, that for every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction. This means that when one object exerts a force on another object, the second object exerts an equal and opposite force on the first object. These forces always act in pairs and are equal in magnitude but opposite in direction.¹⁵ In regards to God and His divine law of rewarding good for those who do good¹⁶ and punishing evil, for those who commit it,¹⁷ it is evident when sin is committed against the Lord, an equal and just response shall come from Him.

15 “Newton's Third Law.” NASA Glenn Research Center, NASA, <https://www1.grc.nasa.gov/beginners-guide-to-aeronautics/newtons-laws-of-motion/>. Accessed 26 Apr. 2025.

Young, Hugh D., and Roger A. Freedman. *University Physics with Modern Physics*. 15th ed., Pearson, 2019.

16 *Matt. 10:42 And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.*

Luke 6:35 But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.
Col. 3:23–24 And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; ²⁴Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.

Ps. 58:11 So that a man shall say, Verily there is a reward for the righteous: verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth.

Prov. 19:17 He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD; and that which he hath given will he pay him again.

Isa. 3:10 Say ye to the righteous, that it shall be well with him: for they shall eat the fruit of their doings.

Matt. 6:3–4 But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: ⁴That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly.

17 *Rom. 1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;*

Rom. 2:8–9 But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, ⁹Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile;

Prov. 11:21 Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished: but the seed of the righteous shall be delivered.

Nah. 1:2–3 God is jealous, and the LORD revengeth; the LORD revengeth, and is furious; the LORD will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies. ³The LORD is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked: the Lord hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet.

Ps. 37:9–10 For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth. ¹⁰For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be.

An element of this judgment will include, when led by vanity and vain things, men becoming even more obtuse, dull-witted, and stupid, than even their natural genetics birthed them to be. (Ps. 73:22) *So foolish was I, and ignorant: I was as a beast before thee.*

(*Matthew Poole's Commentary*, Ps. 73:22) *As a beast.* Heb. *beasts*, which may signify a great beast; a most stupid and sottish creature, like one not only void of grace, but of reason too; for reason itself, especially assisted by the Holy Scriptures, did sufficiently discover that, all things considered, I had no sufficient cause to envy the prosperity of wicked men. I minded only present things, as the brutes do, and did not consider things to come, as reasonable creatures do, and ought to do.

Before thee; in thy sight or judgment, and therefore in truth, Romans 2:2,¹⁸ howsoever I seemed to myself or others to have some degree of reason and discretion. (END QUOTE)

To continue to live in sin and reject that knowledge of God which is clearly visible to all mankind through God's creation, shall result in even greater spiritual blindness coming upon the offender. This is practically made visible when the Lord withdraws all restraint previously exercised upon the sinner; consequently, allowing him to move closer and closer to the darkness he has chosen to embrace. This is why today, and not merely tomorrow, heavenly judgment is being revealed against all *ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness* (v. 18) This judgment, as we

shall soon learn, is the Lord completely and fully, without restriction, withdrawing both His presence and grace, from those, though God has given evidence of the Godhead and His power,¹⁹ remain being satisfied and governed by their own carnal and corrupt nature. To assume that a degree of divine wrath is not being executed upon the wicked, is to be ignorant of God's Word, His rule, and the Lord's true feelings towards those who sin, and take pleasure in it. (Ps. 7:11) *God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day.*

(*Barnes' Notes on the Bible*, Ps. 7:11) *And God is angry with the wicked*—The phrase “with the wicked” is supplied by our translators, but not improperly, since the writer evidently intends to speak of these in contrast with the righteous. The words “God is angry” must, of course, be understood in a manner in accordance with the divine nature; and we are not to suppose that precisely the same passions, or the same feelings, are referred to when this language is used of God which is implied when it is used of people. It means that his nature, his laws, his government, his feelings, are all arrayed against the wicked; that he cannot regard the conduct of the wicked with favor; that he will punish them. While his judgment in regard to the righteous must be in their favor, it must just as certainly be against the wicked; while he will vindicate the one, he will cut off and punish the other. Of the truth of this in respect to the divine character there can be no doubt. Indeed, we could not honor a God - as we could honor no other being - who would deal with the righteous and the wicked alike, or who would have no respect to character in the treatment of others, and in his feelings toward them.

Isa. 13:11 And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.

Rev. 21:8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

18 Rom. 2:2 But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things.

19 Rom. 1:20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

To the Praise of the Glory of His Grace

Every day—Continually; constantly; always. This is designed to qualify the previous expression. It is not excitement. It is not temporary passion, such as we see in men. It is not sudden emotion, soon to be succeeded by a different feeling when the passion passes off. It is the steady and uniform attribute of his unchanging nature to be always opposed to the wicked—to all forms of sin; and in him, in this respect, there will be no change. The wicked will find him no more favorable to their character and course of life tomorrow than he is today; no more beyond the grave, than this side the tomb. What he is today he will be tomorrow and every day. Time will make no change in this respect, and the wicked can have no hope on the ground that the feeling of God toward sin and the sinner (as such) will ever be in any way different from what it is at the present moment. This is a fearful truth in regard to the sinner; and both aspects of the truth here stated should make the sinner tremble;

(a) that God is angry with him—that all His character, and all the principles of His government and law, are and must be arrayed against him; and

(b) that in this respect there is to be no change; that if he continues to be wicked, as he is now, he will every day and always—this side the grave and beyond—find all the attributes of God engaged against him, and pledged to punish him.

God has no attribute that can take part with sin or the sinner. (END QUOTE)

The exact manner in which the Lord judges the wicked, is revealed in clear and uncompromising detail in the upcoming verses.

Romans 1:24 Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:

Romans 1:26 For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their wom-

en did change the natural use into that which is against nature:

Romans 1:28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

The Greek word for *God also gave them up* is #3860 *paradidómi*. (pah-rah-DEE-doh-mee) *Strong's Lexicon* defines the word "To deliver, to hand over, to betray, to entrust." The meaning of the word is described as "I hand over, pledge, hand down, deliver, commit, commend, betray, abandon."

The usage of "The Greek verb '*paradidómi*' (pah-rah-DEE-doh-mee) primarily means to deliver or hand over something or someone to another. It can imply a positive action, such as entrusting something valuable to someone, or a negative action, such as betrayal. In the New Testament, it is often used in the context of delivering someone to authorities or betraying someone, as seen in the accounts of Jesus' betrayal and arrest."

The cultural and historical background of the word is described as "In the Greco-Roman world, the act of '*paradidómi*' (pah-rah-DEE-doh-mee) could involve legal and social transactions, such as handing over a prisoner to authorities or entrusting a child to a tutor. The term carries significant weight in the New Testament, especially in the Passion narratives, where it describes Judas Iscariot's betrayal of Jesus, a pivotal event leading to the crucifixion. This act of betrayal was seen as a grave violation of trust and loyalty, reflecting the deep cultural emphasis on honor and fidelity."

HELPS Word-studies defines #3860 "*paradidómi* (pah-rah-DEE-doh-mee)

(from 3844 /*pará*, (pah-rah) ‘from close-beside’ and 1325 /*didōmi*, (DEE-doh-mee) ‘give’) – properly, to give (turn) over; ‘hand over from,’ i.e. to deliver over with a sense of close (personal) involvement.”

By these definitions of *paradidōmi* (pah-rah-DEE-doh-mee) it is unequivocally documented, that after repeatedly trying to save men from their sin—if the Lord is still rejected—then He will eventually consider Himself completely done and finished with the sinner, eternally giving him over to the vile, carnal, and conceited affections he has chosen to be governed by. Hence, just as Judas betrayed Jesus and handed Him over to the Romans,²⁰ so does God—when sufficiently provoked by people not honoring Him, and giving thanks to Him—ultimately hand over sinners to themselves. Teaching us, that the Lord’s longsuffering is not eternal. So that if He is sufficiently provoked by evil, then divine and heavenly judgment shall follow. This act, when God fully gives men over to their vile affections, is among the

harsheshest judgments that any transgressor of divine will can receive. Simply because it is this judgment, this eternal judgment for continuing in sin, and failing to recognize God, and give Him the honor, glory, and thanks due Him, which shall lead to the sinner’s complete removal from God’s presence. When after sin has run its course, and all the grace and favor of the Lord²¹ has been withdrawn, and all efforts to save the sinner have proven to be useless, then he shall be left with the choices he has made, and reap exactly as he has sown. (Gal. 6:7) *Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.*

(Barnes’ Notes on the Bible, Gal. 6:7) *Be not deceived*—That is, in regard to your character, and your hopes for eternity. This is a formula of introduction to some admonition that is especially weighty and important. It implies that there was danger that they would be deceived in reference to their character. The sources of the danger were the corruption of their own hearts, the difficulty of knowing their true character, the instruc-

20 Matt. 26:14–16 *Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests,* ¹⁵*And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.* ¹⁶*And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him.*

Matt. 26:47–50 *And while he yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people.* ⁴⁸*Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he: hold him fast.* ⁴⁹*And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, master; and kissed him.* ⁵⁰*And Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come? Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus and took him.*

John 18:2–12 *And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with his disciples.* ³*Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons.* ⁴*Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye?* ⁵*They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them.* ⁶*As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground.* ⁷*Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth.* ⁸*Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he: if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way:* ⁹*That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none.* ¹⁰*Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the high priest’s servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant’s name was Malchus.* ¹¹*Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?* ¹²*Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound him,*

21 Eph. 2:8 *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:*

II Tim. 1:9 *Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,*

Rom. 3:24 *Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:*

tions of false teachers, etc.; see the note at 1 Corinthians 6:9.²²

God is not mocked—He cannot be imposed on, or mocked. He knows what our real character is, and he will judge us accordingly. The word rendered “mocked” (μυκτηρίζω *muk-tērízō*) (mook-tay-RID-zo), means, properly, to turn up the nose in scorn; hence, to mock, or deride, or insult. The sense is, that God could not be imposed on, or could not be insulted with impunity, or successfully. To mock is, properly:

- (1) To imitate, to mimic: to imitate in contempt or derision.
- (2) to deride, to laugh at, to ridicule.
- (3) to defeat, or to illude, or to disappoint.
- (4) to fool, to tantalize—Webster.

Here it cannot mean to imitate, or to mimic, but it refers to the principles of the divine administration, and must mean that they could not be treated with contempt, or successfully evaded. They could not hope to illude or impose on God. His principles of government were settled, and they could not impose on him. To what the reference is here, is not perfectly plain. In the connection in which it stands, it seems to refer to the support of the ministers of the gospel; and Paul introduces the general principle, that as a man sows he will reap, to show them what will be the effect of a liberal and proper use of their property. If they made a proper use of it; if they employed it for benevolent purposes; if they appropriated what they should to the support of religion, they would reap accordingly. God could not be imposed on in regard to this. They could not make him think that they had true religion when they were sowing to the flesh, and when they were spending their money in purchasing pleasure, and in luxury and vanity.

No zeal, however ardent; no prayers, however fervent or long, no professions, however loud, would impose on God. And to make such prayers, and to manifest such zeal and such strong professions, while the heart was with the world, and they were spending their money for every thing else but religion, was mocking God. Alas, how much mockery of God like this still prevails! How much, when people seem disposed to make God believe that they are exceedingly zealous and devoted, while their heart is truly with the world! How many long prayers are offered; how much zeal is shown; how many warm professions are made, as if to make God and man believe that the heart was truly engaged in the cause of religion, while little or nothing is given in the cause of benevolence; while the ministers of religion are suffered to starve; and while the “loud professor” rolls in wealth, and is distinguished for luxury of living, for gaiety of apparel, for splendor of equipage, and for extravagance in parties of pleasure! Such professors attempt to mock God. They are really sowing to the flesh; and of the flesh they must reap corruption.

For whatsoever a man soweth ...—See the note at 2 Corinthians 9:6.²³ This figure is taken from agriculture. A man who sows wheat, shall reap wheat; he who sows barley, shall reap barley; he who sows cockle, shall reap cockle. Every kind of grain will produce grain like itself. So it is in regard to our works. He who is liberal, shall be dealt with liberally; he who is righteous, shall be rewarded; he who is a sinner, shall reap according to his deeds. (END QUOTE)

(*Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary*, Gal. 6:7) *God is not mocked*—The Greek verb is, literally, to sneer with the nostrils drawn up in contempt. God does not suffer Himself to be imposed on by empty words: He will judge according to works, which are seeds sown for eternity of either joy or woe.

22 *I Cor. 6:9 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,* 23 *II Cor. 9:6 But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.*

Excuses for illiberality in God's cause (Ga 6:6) seem valid before men, but are not so before God (Ps 50:21).²⁴

soweth—especially of his resources (2Co 9:6²⁵).

that—Greek, “this”; this and nothing else.

reap—at the harvest, the end of the world (Mt 13:39). (END QUOTE)

Understandably, there is no greater damnation that can be inflicted upon sinners, than to allow them to go their own way²⁶ live as they carnally will, and continue towards a path of eternal alienation from God. Through choosing to live in sin, all hope of heaven is lost, and all chance of redemption has been permanently withdrawn. This is the practical reason why the apostle Paul warned the Ephesians to avoid and flee that *vanity of mind*, which Gentiles walk in, which if not repented of, shall lead to complete separation from the *life of God*, offered through God's Son.²⁷

In the end, the sinner's spiritual ignorance, can be directly traced back to his own chosen sinfulness. Just as in all areas of life, men are personally responsible for growing in intelligence. Spiritually it is man's responsibility to increase in learning²⁸ and therefore grow in understanding the rules which govern both the

natural and spiritual realm. To choose to remain ignorant of God, and His will for your life, can have no other effect, than to eternally be *alienated from the life of God*.

Ephesians 4:18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:

The *Amplified Bible* adds even more insight to this verse.

Ephesians 4:18 (AMP) for their [moral] understanding is darkened and their reasoning is clouded; [they are] alienated and self-banished from the life of God [with no share in it; this is] because of the [willful] ignorance and spiritual blindness that is [deep-seated] within them, because of the hardness and insensitivity of their heart.

(*Barnes' Notes on the Bible*, Eph. 4:18) Nothing is more obvious than that indulgence in sin weakens the mental powers, and renders them unfit for high intellectual effort. This is seen all over the pagan world now - in the stolid, stupid mind; the perverted moral sense; the incapacity for profound or protracted mental effort, as really as it was among the pagans to whom Paul preached. The missionary who goes among the pagan has almost to create an “intellect” as well as a “conscience,” before the gospel will make

24 Ps. 50:21 *These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes.*

25 II Cor. 9:6 *But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.*

26 Isa. 53:6 *All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.*

27 John 3:36 *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.*

John 6:40 *And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.*

John 3:16 *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

28 Matt. 11:29 *Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.*

Prov. 2:2 *So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding;*

Ps. 25:4-5 *Shew me thy ways, O Lord; teach me thy paths. ³Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day.*

To the Praise of the Glory of His Grace

an impression. It is seen, too, in all the intellect of the bar, the senate, the pulpit, and the medical profession, that is ruined by intemperance, and in the intellect of multitudes of young men wasted by licentiousness and drunkenness. I know that under the influence of ambition and stimulating drinks, the intellect may seem to put forth unnatural efforts, and to glow with an intensity nowhere else seen. But it “soon burns out”—and the wastes of such an intellect become soon like the hardened scoriae (score-ee-uh) of the volcano, or the cinders of the over-heated furnace. Learn hence, that if a man wishes to be blessed with a clear understanding, he should be a “good man.” He who wishes a mind well balanced and clear, should fear and love God; and had Christianity done no other good on earth than to elevate the “intellect” of mankind, it would have been the richest blessing which has ever been vouchsafed to the race. It follows, too, that as man has debased his “understanding” by sin, it is needful to make an exertion to elevate it again: and hence a large part of the efforts to save people must consist in patient “instruction.” (END QUOTE)

The Greek word for *ignorance* is #52 *agnoia*. (ag-no-ee'-ah) *Strong's Lexicon* defines the meaning of the word as, “ignorance, inadvertence, sometimes with the idea of willful blindness.”

The usage of the word is described as “In the New Testament, ‘*agnoia*’ (ag-no-ee'-ah) refers to a lack of knowledge or understanding, often in a spiritual or moral context. It denotes a state of being uninformed or unaware, particularly regarding God's will or the truth of the Gospel. This ignorance can be due to a lack of exposure to the truth or a willful neglect of it.”

The cultural and historical background of the word is revealed as, “In the Greco-Roman world, ignorance was often seen as a lack of education or enlightenment. In the Jewish context, ignorance could also

imply a failure to understand or adhere to the Law of Moses. The early Christian writers used the term to describe the spiritual blindness of those who had not yet received or accepted the revelation of Jesus Christ.”

Practically, people are ignorant for one of two reasons: either they have never been taught something, or they refuse to be taught it. You can liken this to an individual insufficient in knowledge, where they either do not know something because of a lack of being instructed in it, or they actually possesses no real, and/or genuine interest in learning the knowledge being presented to him. Sadly, in the spiritual realm, there exists vast multitudes of sinners, who, though there remains sufficient opportunity for them to learn of God, rather have chosen to remain willfully ignorant of Him. It is this *ignorance*, a willful, chosen, and ultimately preferred ignorance, that shall forever separate the sinner from God's presence.

The Greek word for *blindness* is, #4457 *pórosis*. (po'-ro-sis) *Strong's Lexicon* gives the definition and the meaning of the word as “Hardening, callousness,” and/or “hardness of heart, obtuseness.”

The word's origin is “Derived from the Greek verb ‘*πωρόω*’ (*poróō*), meaning “to harden” or “to petrify.”

The usage of the word, or “The term ‘*pórosis*’ (po'-ro-sis) refers to a state of spiritual or moral insensitivity, often described as a hardening of the heart or mind. In the New Testament, it is used to describe a condition where individuals are unable to perceive or respond to spiritual truths due to their hardened state. This hardening can be a result of persistent unbelief or disobedience to God's word.”

The cultural and historical background of the word is revealed as “In the Greco-Roman world, the concept of hardening was often associated with a loss of sensitivity or responsiveness, akin to the physical hardening of tissues or materials. In a biblical context, ‘*pórosis*’ (po’-ro-sis) is used metaphorically to describe a spiritual condition where individuals become resistant to God’s revelation and truth. This concept is rooted in the Old Testament, where the hardening of the heart is frequently mentioned as a consequence of sin and rebellion against God.”

HELPS Word-studies defines #4457 “*pórosis* (po’-ro-sis)—hardness (from ‘*póros*, (poor-oz) a kind of marble, used later of a callus formed on fractured bones); (figuratively) callousness or hardness in general’ (WS, 97); ‘originally petrification, hardness and then the result of this, i.e. metaphorically applied to organs of feeling, meaning insensibility, numbness, obtuseness, dulling of the faculty of perception, deadness’ (Souter).”

It is a continued rejection of God’s will, and choosing to remain ignorant of divine law, that will ultimately dull a man’s conscience to such a degree, that his soul, like all things petrified, will permanently be hardened and unrepentant against the Lord and all divine will for his life,²⁹ ultimately producing a completely hard and spiritually insensitive heart which has developed such a callousness

to God, whereby all hope of salvation is lost. This hardening of the heart, which the Scripture abundantly warn people to avoid³⁰ is potentially both incurable and unredeemable. By choosing to remain stubborn to divine will like Pharaoh,³¹ it proves itself unworthy of heaven, and any chance of eternal redemption.

Sin, as a rule, is deceitful. And no more so, than when it leads its subjects to harden their hearts against divine will, and the only true One, Who can deliver man from eternal death. (Heb. 3:13) *But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.*

(*Barnes’ Notes on the Bible*, Heb. 3:13) Sin is always deceitful. It promises more than it performs. It assures us of pleasure which it never imparts. It leads us on beyond what was supposed when we began to indulge in it. The man who commits sin is always under a delusion; and sin, if he indulges it, will lead him on from one step to another until the heart becomes entirely hardened. (END QUOTE)

Ephesians 4:19 Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

The Greek word for *being past feeling* is #524 *apalgeó*. (ap-alg-eh’-o) *Strong’s Lexicon* defines the word, “To become callous, to cease to feel pain, to be past feeling.”

29 Rom. 2:5 *But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;*

30 Ps. 95:8 *Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness: Heb. 3:8 Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness:*

Heb. 3:15 *While it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.*

Heb. 4:7 *Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To day, after so long a time; as it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.*

31 Exod. 8:15 *But when Pharaoh saw that there was respite, he hardened his heart, and hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said.*

Exod. 8:32 *And Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time also, neither would he let the people go.*

Exod. 9:34 *And when Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunders were ceased, he sinned yet more, and hardened his heart, he and his servants.*

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance also reveals that *apalgeó* (ap-*alg-eh'*-o) is “to become callous, apathetic. From *apo* (apo') and *algeo* (al*g-eh'*-o) (to smart); to grieve out, i.e. Become apathetic—be past feeling.”

The *Topical Lexicon* states “The term ἀπαλγέω (ap-*alg-eh'*-o) is used in the New Testament to describe a state of moral insensitivity or hardness of heart, where an individual no longer responds to moral or spiritual stimuli.”

The context of “The Greek term ἀπαλγέω (ap-*alg-eh'*-o) appears in the New Testament in the context of moral and spiritual insensitivity. It is used to describe a condition where individuals have become so hardened in their hearts that they no longer feel the pangs of conscience or the conviction of wrongdoing. This term is found in Ephesians 4:19, where the Apostle Paul speaks of those who have ‘become callous’ and have given themselves over to sensuality and impurity. The passage highlights the danger of persistent sin leading to a state where one is no longer responsive to God’s truth and righteousness. ... The concept of ἀπαλγέω (ap-*alg-eh'*-o) serves as a warning against the hardening of the heart, urging believers to maintain a tender conscience and a responsive spirit to God’s Word. It underscores the importance of repentance and the renewal of the mind to prevent spiritual callousness.” (END QUOTE)

(*Barnes' Notes on the Bible*, Eph. 4:19) *Who being past feeling*—Wholly hardened in sin. There is a total want of all emotion on moral subjects. This is an accurate description of the state of a sinner. He has no “feeling,” no emotion. He often gives an intellectual assent to the truth, But it is without emotion of any kind. The heart is insensible as the hard rock.

Have given themselves over—They have done it voluntarily. In Romans 1:24, it is said that “God gave them up.” There is no inconsistency. Whatever was the agency of God in it, they preferred it; compare notes on Romans 1:21.³² (END QUOTE)

It is when the heart has fully hardened, and has lost the capacity to be pained by sin, and the awful effect it has upon the conscience, that *lasciviousness* and/or wantonness, completely overtakes the soul. This is manifested by sinners indulging themselves in all sorts of *uncleanliness* and *greediness*. Uncleanliness and greediness go hand in hand, just as true holiness has as its companions, generosity and liberality. To be an unclean man, is to be a greedy man. And all this is the sad result of living a life of *vanity*, and the aimlessness it produces, when men are left with only their own corrupt natures to be governed by. This is how the Gentiles walked, but it is not how any who think themselves Christians, should walk. If they do, then it is certain that they are absolutely not a true Christian.

³² Rom. 1:21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.