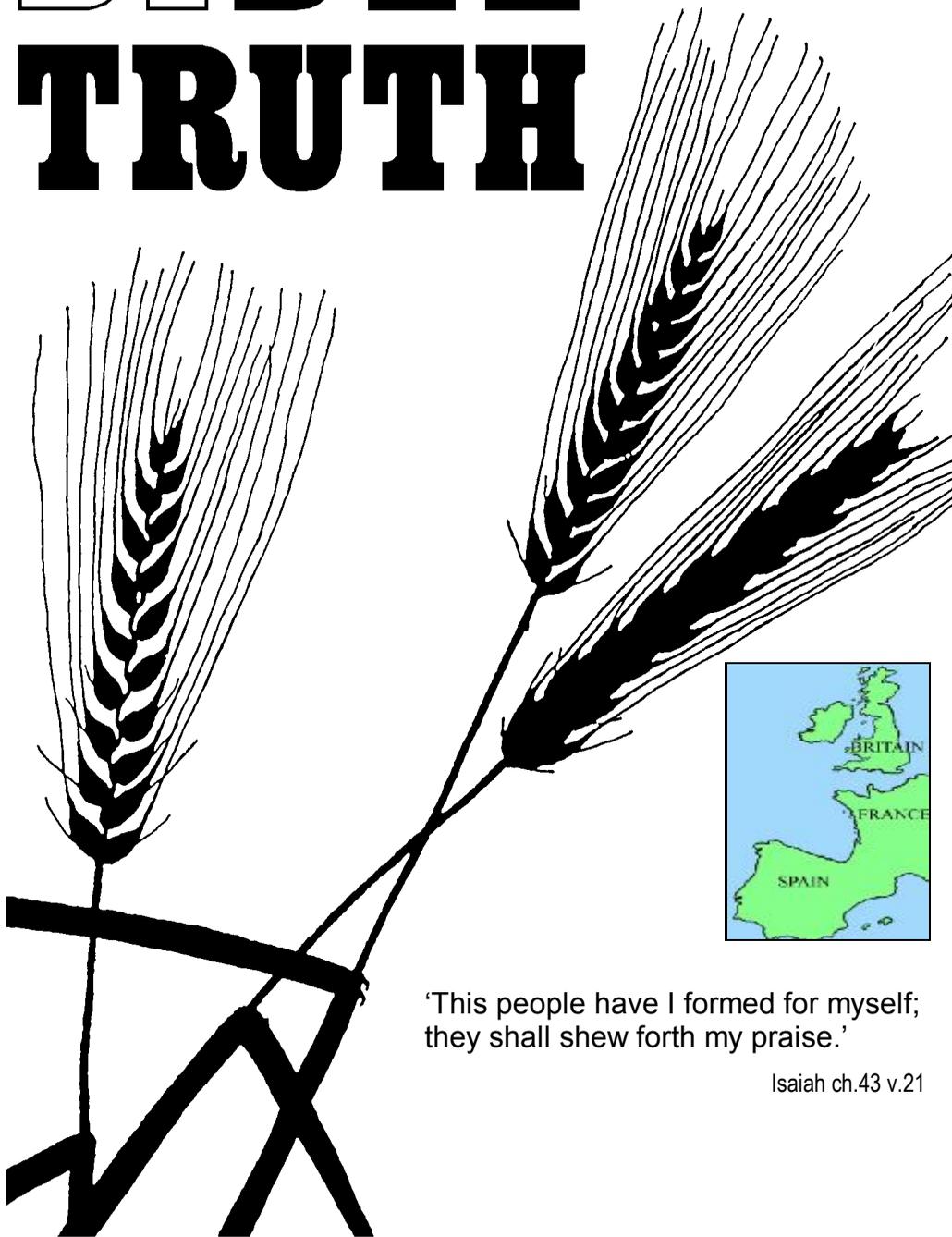


BIBLE TRUTH

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'This people have I formed for myself;
they shall shew forth my praise.'

Isaiah ch.43 v.21

WHAT is God's Will?

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'For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?'

Romans ch.9 v.17-24

People say, such phrases as 'The Lord willing' and 'If it is God's will', or 'I believe it is God's will', about many things. What do they mean? What does it mean to know God's will on anything? How can we be sure it is God's will?

God's 'will', means what God desires, what He wants done, what He justifies and blesses and directs and keeps. Where do we find out what God's will is on any particular question? Look in the Book!

Things that happen in nature occur at His pleasure. God wills and it happens! God says and it is! Is that not how the earth was formed in the first place?

'And God said, Let there be light: and there was light:'

Genesis ch.1 v.3

God's power is so great that He wills it into existence. It is the only time 'will' is a verb, not a noun. Look at the Book.

Jesus taught us to pray,

'... Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven'.

Matthew ch.6 v.10

We should pray, 'May Your will be done in me, not mine'. Jesus prayed this before His crucifixion.

'... Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.'

Luke ch.22 v.42

The inference here is that we may have some influence on when we want God's will to be done, or ours. We have a free will; that is, we are free to do what we will, but if it does not conform to God's will, it is not going to work.

We choose to sin. God does not want us to sin, but we sin against God's will. The Bible tells us that God is '... not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance' (see 2 Peter ch.3 v.9).

In Matthew's Gospel Jesus says,

'... it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish'.

Matthew ch.18 v.14

Yet we see children suffering and dying around us much of the time, Who's fault is that?

Our Lord tells us this through the words of John.

'... this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. 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: ...'

John ch.6 vv.39-40

It is time to do God's will and get our names in His book.

Jesus reminds us that our own resolution is not enough to accomplish God's will.

'... the [human] spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.'

Matthew ch.26 v.41

One single-minded little boy, was told by his father,
'Phillip, you ought not to want things your way'.

The boy thought about that for a minute, then said,

'But if I choose God's will and go His way because I want to, don't I still have my own way'?

Let God's will be yours and your will God's.

Thomas Aquinas said,

'A man's heart is right when he wills what God wills'.

I am reminded of my strong-willed four year old great grandson, Noah, who furnishes so many illustrations. He had done something wrong and was told to come and talk about it with his mother. After a minute, he asked,

'Can we stop talking about it now?'

His mother explained that if he only minded her he wouldn't have to stop and talk about it so often. So he concluded,

'If you didn't make so many rules, I wouldn't be having a bad day!'

The Apostle Paul relates the following,

'Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is'.

Ephesians ch.5 v.17

How can we know what the will of the Lord is?

'For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication:'

1 Thessalonians ch.4 v.3

Are we living in the will of God if our bodies are not sanctified holy to Him?

'Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.'

1 Thessalonians ch.5 vv.16-18

In Paul's letter to the Romans is found the following,

'I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God'.

Romans ch.12 vv.1-2

Paul considered himself, '... called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, ... (see 1 Corinthians ch.1 v.1). What a blessed assurance it is to know you are doing what God wills, living in the will of God! On the other hand, what a pity it would be to be living outside the will of God.

How then are we saved?

‘Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.’

James ch.1 v.18

David Livingstone was asked why he did not fear going into dark Africa that it was too difficult and too dangerous, but he answered, ‘I am immortal until the will of God for me is accomplished!’

Our regeneration and sanctification are by the will of God, by his grace, not by something we do to merit it.

‘By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.’

Hebrews ch.10 v.10

Our prayers must be within God’s will for us, not just our desires.

‘... this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us:’

1 John ch.5 v.14

The Scriptures tell us that after being transformed and sanctified, we have a duty to live no longer the rest of our lives in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God (see 1 Peter ch.4 v.2).

Even our lay work as well as Christian service must be within God’s will to work effectively for us and the Lord. As servants of the Lord we are to serve Him with ‘... singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart;’ (see Ephesians ch.6 vv.5-6).

This is summarised in the following words,

‘... that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God’.

Colossians ch.4 v.12

What keeps us from knowing God’s will and following it? Maybe it is the many distractions that we have in our busy lives. For example, the phone rings and you answer it, but the television is on, people are talking loudly all around you, the children are making noise at play, and a truck rumbles by your door. You cannot hear the person calling you because your life is too full of distractions. Maybe you need to get rid of many of these worldly noises to hear the voice of God.

Abraham Lincoln said the following about the difficult decisions he had to make trying to please all the men who advised him.

‘I am approached with the most opposite opinions and advice, and that by religious men, who are equally certain

that they represent the Divine will. I am sure that either the one or the other is mistaken in that belief, and perhaps in some respects, both. I hope it will not be irreverent for me to say that if it is probable that God would reveal His will to others, on a point so connected with my duty, it might be supposed that He would reveal it directly to me; for, unless I am more deceived in myself than I often am, it is my earnest desire to know the will of Providence in this matter. And if I can learn what it is, I will do it.'

Now we have discussed the will of God for us from the Scriptures and the experience of others, can we now summarise the will of God? Remember that God's will is never contrary to God's Word. You can find God's will in God's Word. Ask God to show His will for you by prayer, and then follow His leading. When you ask for God's will, then go forth boldly with courage that His will prevail against all opposing forces.

It is better to do God's will and appear to fail in your task than to succeed in your own task and fail in God's will .

This is the will of God for you

1. The salvation of children (Matthew ch.18 v.14)
2. Your repentance (2 Peter ch.3 v.9)
3. Your belief in Christ (Matthew ch.12 v.50)
4. Your everlasting life (John ch.6 v.39)
5. Your sanctification (1 Thessalonians ch.4 v.3)
6. Your thanksgiving (1 Thessalonians ch.5 v.18)

Is God's will yours?

God's will

1. Can be known (Romans ch.2 v.18)
2. Can be proved (Romans ch.12 v.2)
3. Must be done (Matthew ch.6 v.10)
4. Is sovereign over nations (Daniel ch.4 v.35)
5. Is sovereign over persons (Acts ch.21 v.14)