

## The Unchanging God

*"God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?"* (Numbers 23:19)

One of the most difficult aspects of life is all the change that occurs. A promise is made; and then something happens and the promise is not kept, either because of the ability to keep the promise prevents the keeping of it as result of a change in circumstances, or because of an unwillingness to keep the promise as it is realized by the person making the promise that great loss will be suffered if the promise is kept. Ideas change; people change, some for the good others not so much. People are continually striving to change their circumstances. With mankind it seems that change is embraced almost as a religion; even to the point of making change when no change is required or needed. In those cases, change is sought for the sake of having or doing something different.

This is also true in religion. There are many who see God as One who even changes; they see truth as ever evolving and changing; they see God as One who changes according to the whims and notions of man's will, who only accomplishes His purposes if man allows Him to do so. Though most people understand God as unchanging in Being and in His attributes, or character, many will portray God as a God whose purposes and promises are subject to man's will; that is, according to man's choices that he make. They assert that God changes His mind in the keeping of His promises, the keeping of which is dependent upon man's choices and man's will. They have imposed their notions and ideas on God and His character and purposes; thus, making Him into a god of their own making. They understand God according their imaginations; how they think he ought to be like, and not as He has revealed Himself in Scripture. This has resulted in uncertainty, anxiety, superstition and fear. But does not even reason teach us that no change is possible in God, since a change is either for the better or for worse? God would not be God, if He were not perfect in His Being, in His attributes, and in His purposes and promises. Most of all, the God who has revealed Himself in Scripture is not a God who changes; especially, according to mankind's understanding of Him, which changes from person to person. In Malachi 3:6 the Lord God, Yahweh God, tells us something about His unique nature. Unlike a man, God does not change; He is devoid of all change. In James 1:17, this truth concerning God's character, or attribute is reaffirmed, where it says concerning the *"Father of lights, . . . there is no variation or shadow of turning."* In other words, God is the same yesterday, today, and forever; there never was a time when God changed in His character. Indeed, God is and always will be the same. Check out these other Bible references for further study in support of the truth that God is unchanging (Exodus 3:14; Psalm 102:26-27; Isaiah 41:4; Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 1:11-12; James 1:17). This means that His knowledge does not change; He does not learn, nor does He forget; He knows all things perfectly and completely, unlike man.

In light of His unchanging character, God's will never changes; He does not change His mind toward His people. When there appears to be change in God, it is not God that has changed; it is a change in the relations of men to Him. When *"Scripture speaks of His repenting, changing His intention, and altering His relation to sinners when they repent, we should remember that this is only an anthropopathic way of speaking. In reality the change is not in God, but in man and man's relation to God."* (Berkhof) His mercy and justice are eternal, whereby both eternal reward and punishment are basic to His nature. And most of all, God's love is unchanging. (Titus 1:2; Deuteronomy 23:19; Isaiah 41:26; 43:10-13; 46:9-10; Jeremiah 31:3)

When I think about the truth that God is unchangeable I am struck with a great and deep comfort and peace. Doesn't it you? Because God is unchanging we can be certain that He will accomplish His good purpose for His people, whom He has set His everlasting love upon and chosen from before time began. There is an assurance that what He purposes and promises He will do. Who God redeems, He will keep forever, as learn from Romans 8:32-39. Thus, no matter what trials and

troubles that are put in our path in this life, there is a sure confidence and peaceful comfort that as we put our trust in the unchangeable Lord God, Jesus Christ, it will work out for our good and to God's glory. This is especially true of all who by true faith alone look to Jesus Christ and His atoning work on the cross for the forgiveness sins, righteousness, salvation and everlasting life, embracing with a believing heart all these benefits He alone merited on your behalf. Those who reject the salvation that is by faith alone in Christ alone will suffer not only uncertainty, anxiety, and fear in this life, but will suffer eternally the wrath of God in hell, where there will weeping and gnashing of teeth. Won't you, this day, turn from the uncertainty, anxiety, and fear in putting your trust in man or in yourself, who changes continually, and by faith turn to God through Jesus Christ, where you will find unchanging rest, peace, and comfort, putting your trust in the everlasting arms of our beloved unchanging God and Savior, Jesus Christ? (Hebrews 13:8)

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