

28. Left Hand of God

Introduction

Vertical verses in a horizontal book like Proverbs demand our attention.⁸⁶ Note Proverbs 21:1 in the several translations given below.

- 21:1 The king's heart [is] in the hand of the LORD, [as] the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will. KJV
- 21:1 The king's heart is in the hand of Jehovah as the watercourses: He turneth it whithersoever he will. ASV
- 2:1 The king's heart is [like] channels of water in the hand of the LORD; He turns it wherever He wishes. NASB
- 21:1 The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD; he directs it like a watercourse wherever he pleases. NIV
- 21:1 The king's heart [is] in the hand of the LORD, [Like] the rivers of water; He turns it wherever He wishes. NKJV
- 21:1 The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of the LORD; he turns it wherever he will. RSV
- 21:1 The Lord controls rulers, just as he determines the course of rivers. CEV
- 21:1 The Lord controls the mind of a king as easily as he directs the course of a stream. TEV
- 21:1 The king's heart is like a stream of water directed by the Lord; he turns it wherever he pleases. NLT

The terms used—rivers, watercourses, channels, stream, course could refer to a canal or channel of water such as an irrigation ditch. Just as the farmer directs the irrigation ditch so as to bring water where he wants it, so God directs kings and other rulers to do what He wants done.

⁸⁶ Psalms is a vertical book. That is, most of the Psalms are dealing with humans talking and/or hearing from God (vertical communication). Proverbs is dealing for the most part with humans relating to each other (horizontal relationships or activity). So then in a book dealing with horizontal relationships or activity it behooves us to note those few vertical passages. They demand our attention.

Every missionary better learn this verse and its view of God very quickly. For missionaries operate in countries controlled by others. They must abide by decisions made by political rulers—usually not in favor of their being in the country. Missionaries learn to trust God to move in the affairs of these pagan rulers.

Glasser Phrase

Dr. Arthur Glasser uses the phrase, the *Left Hand of God*, to call attention to God's use of non-believers to accomplish His purposes. This *Left Hand of God* is seen numerous times in the Old Testament. Table Hab 28-1 depicts just a few of them.

Table Hab 28-1. Some Occurrences of the Left Hand of God

Passage	Persons Involved	Explanation
Genesis 20, 21	Abraham, Sarah, Abimelech	Abraham lied to Abimelech about Sarah his wife. God protects her while she is with Abimelech and gives Abimelech a dream to let him know who Sarah is.
Genesis	Joseph, Pharaoh	God sends two dreams to Pharaoh, which need to be interpreted. Joseph comes to the forefront by interpreting these dreams and suggesting a wise course of action. Joseph is elevated to high position and is in place to deliver his people when the famine hits hardest.
Daniel	Nebuchadnezzar	Daniel ch 4 is one of the clearest examples of the king's heart being in the hand of Jehovah. God humbles Nebuchadnezzar, a very powerful ruler.
Isa 45	Cyrus; Daniel et al	God predicts He will use Cyrus and He does as noted in Table Hab 28-2 below.
Hag 1:1,2	Darius, Haggai	It is clear that Darius was used by God to help the remnant back in the land.
Ne ch 1 et al	Artaxerxes	Artaxerxes not only wrote decrees allowing the Jews to go back in the land, but he also helped fund their return.

Restoration Leaders

All the restoration leaders were very much aware of the Left Hand of God. They were rebuilding the work of God back in the land. They were there because God had moved in the hearts of pagan rulers, very powerful ones. Those rulers—particularly Cyrus, Darius, Xerxes, Artaxerxes—were moved to aid God's people. Esther, Mordecai, Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi were all aware of the Left Hand of God.

One of the astounding things is God's prediction that He will use these rulers to accomplish His purposes. A beautiful illustration of this is Isaiah's famous passage, Isa 45. Table Hab 28-2 below illustrates just a few of the passages referring to Cyrus.

Table Hab 28-2. God's Left Hand Working Through Cyrus

Passages Predicting	Passages Fulfilling
<u>Isa 44:28</u> That saith of Cyrus , [He is] my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.	
<u>Isa 45:1</u> Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus , whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut;	
<u>Isa 45:13</u> I have raised him (Cyrus) up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways: he shall build my city, and he shall let go my captives, not for price nor reward, saith the LORD of hosts.	
	<u>2Ch 36:22,23</u> Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD [spoken] by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and [put it] also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the LORD God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which [is] in Judah. Who [is there] among you of all his people? The LORD his God [be] with him, and let him go up.
	<u>Ezr 1:2, 7, 8</u> Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which [is] in Judah. 7 Also Cyrus the king brought forth the vessels of the house of the LORD, which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jerusalem, and had put them in the house of his gods; 8 Even those did Cyrus king of Persia bring forth by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer, and numbered them unto Sheshbazzar, the prince of Judah.

Closure

Most of us as leaders know something of the *Right Hand of God*. We have experienced God's intervention in our lives and ministries in such a way as to be awed by

His power. But can we see His *Left Hand* working today. We need to be aware of this facet of God's power. And we need discernment, maybe even prophetic voices, to point out to us the *Left Hand of God*. It is especially comforting to believe we have a sovereign God in our world controlled by the most part by non-godly political leaders. May we see God turn the heart of the kings to accomplish His purposes.

See *Sovereign Mindset*; **Glossary**.