

this facet of the gem: The Freedom of Man.

There is an alternative presented. The wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. There is an alternative. There is this or there is that. There are wages and there is a gift. There is the suggestion that man at least has a certain amount of freedom, of choice. He has the ability of choice and selection of which of these two he will have. There have been many who have tried to deny the freedom of man. There are the Determinists, a large philosophical group today who try to make out that everything we do is strictly the result of events and tendencies and background and environment and we can't help ourselves. We are this or we are that and we can't help ourselves and it is very easy to see in the lives of some of them how this is an excuse to follow your least inclination and thus do anything that you feel like, regardless of its effects upon others. I wonder if anyone ever in his heart thoroughly believes that doctrine. Certainly no one can find such a doctrine taught in the word of God. All through the Word of God, there is clearly taught and strongly taught and stressed-- the responsibility of man for his choice and of his actions. The fact that every man every day of his life finds alternatives before him and he has a choice to make and will be judged before God as the choice which he makes.

I think that the prophet Isaiah brought this out very clearly in the 29:11-13. He points to the attempt of the people in his day to make excuses for their failure to do what they knew was right. He says in vs. 11-13--"The vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed: and the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned. Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people ~~xx~~ draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men:" They all have excuses. "Therefore will I proceed to do a marvellous work among this people--for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid." He says to them: Here is your choice. Here is the book before you. Here is the vision and then you have some excuse. You have some reason--one man has this excuse and another has that. He tells them to get away from their excuses and recognize the fact that you have a responsibility