

- 5 *The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity.*
6 *Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing: the LORD will abhor the bloody and deceitful man.*
7 ¶ *But as for me, I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercy: and in thy fear will I
worship toward thy holy temple. (Psalm 5)*

The sentiment that God has an unqualified and equal love for all men does not come from the Bible, but from the wishful thinking and human reasonings of fallen men. This may come as a shock to us who have been taught to believe that God Who is holy, hates sin, yet loves the sinner practicing his iniquity. The passage before us declares differently. It is expressly stated that God hates all the workers of iniquity; not just the iniquity, but the *workers*.

A person is inextricably identified with his deeds. Separate sin from the sinner, and neither exists any longer. You are what you do. Your deeds simply bear witness of the inner man. Evil, sin, wickedness do not exist in the abstract. A man *is* the wickedness he does, and the scriptures tell us that God abhors the bloody and deceitful man.

But this truth presents something of a problem to us. Is not God love? Is He not a God of infinite mercy and kindness? Is not the very essence of Christianity the fact that God loved and had mercy on wicked transgressors? All of this is most certainly true. Then how can we reconcile the fact that such a God actually hates men?

We should first understand that, although God is love, mercy, kindness, He is first of all, Holy. He cannot compromise His holiness in order to implement mercy. His primary trait is Holiness; and He must hate sin. He cannot be the God He is and do otherwise. Therefore, any love or kindness He displays and extends must be in keeping with His Holiness.

The second thing we must understand, is that when we speak of either love or hate in relation to God, we must not attribute to Him the unworthy sentiments which we usually experience these to be. God's hatred is not the malignant, petty, evil hatred that men hold in their hearts. This arises from fear avarice, envy, strife, covetousness, pride . . . all of which God is incapable. Love and hatred in respect of God are terms used to express relative favor or disapproval. Hate is to love what short is to long, light is to heavy, cold is to hot, little is to much. God is love, and all men enjoy His general indiscriminate goodness. He makes the rain to fall upon the just and the unjust alike.

But the psalmist is not now speaking of the universally diffused benevolence of Almighty God. He is speaking of God's judicial love and hate, exhibited in His special favor or special and particular judgments applied to particular individuals. Workers of iniquity will experience the eternal wrath of God. His abhorrence of murderous and deceitful men will be demonstrated in eternal punishment. Therefore, the person who would experience the love of God in salvation will "come into God's house in the multitude of His mercy." He know himself a sinner and deserving of the wrath of God, but finds God's mercy extended to him through faith in Christ Who was offered to bear our sins on the Cross.

-C.M.