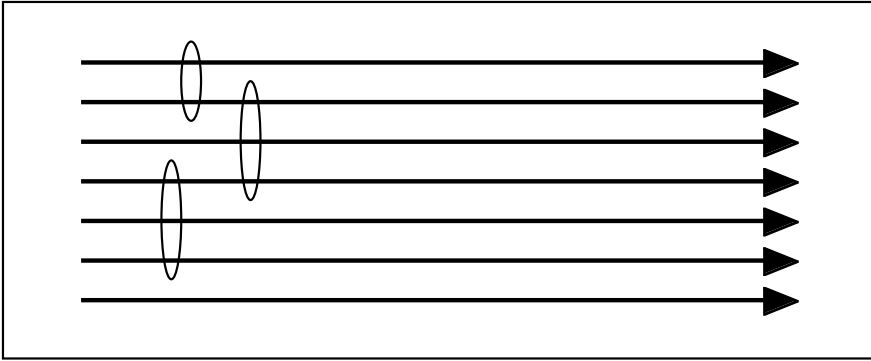


CHAPTER TEN

God's Appointed Time

God gave me three illustrations to explain why some deaths are not at His appointed time. To start with, we can imagine that in God's design, our spirit-souls were to move smoothly through life in the right direction. That means they are meant to peacefully coexist with all other spirit-souls. This is represented in the graphic below, showing seven lines with arrows pointing to the right.

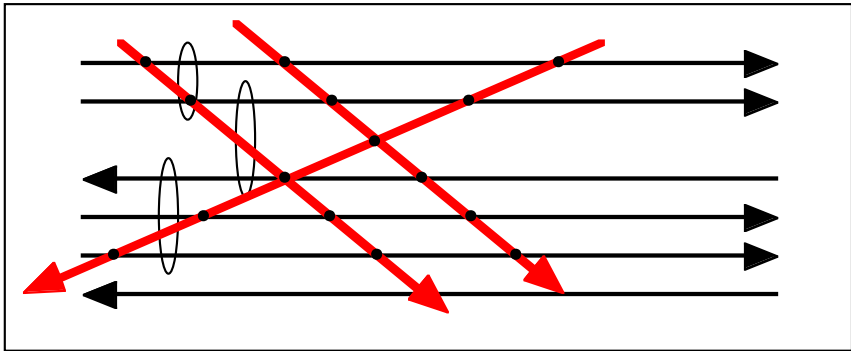
Each line is representative of a spirit-soul on this earth. The loops around the individual spirit-souls represent one or more groups of spirit-souls that fellowship and share life together. People might belong to more than one group, and in this way, our society grows by sharing life with each other. Sometimes there is a loner that likes to stay to his or herself [bottom arrow]. In God's design, we all get along. Now enters sin.



The Spirit-Soul Life As God Designed

The perfect plan of God did not unfold as God intended once man sinned, and the knowledge of evil entered man's thoughts. With all the chaos, it appears that Satan is the winner of many of the spirit-souls on this earth. What happened in Noah's time is set to happen once again. Few follow the narrow path and are saved according to Jesus. As a result of acquiring the knowledge of evil, this world was transferred to Satan. While temporarily, we now live on earth in a life of literal chaos.

All spirit-souls do not move in the "right" direction as God intended. Some now move all over the place, crisscrossing one another and, in essence, crashing into one another. Some spirit-souls move in direct opposition to God's will. This causes many contentions.



The Spirit-Soul Life In Satan's World

All the arrows that move in a direction not intended by God represent the chaos in this life that confronts our spirit-souls. The dots shown above are areas of conflict and contention because of opposing life forces at work.

It is one reason that someone dies prematurely because of the influence of a destructive habit force that cannot be changed or overcome. It is the reason that a 66-year old female drunk driver crashes into an 11-year old boy standing at the end of his driveway and kills him.

We were meant to peacefully coexist, live a long life, and then die a natural death at God's appointed time. However, all bets are off unless we get close to God and take advantage of His protection to the maximum degree possible. God will protect His people, but remember that He has a bigger picture in which we only see a small

amount. To review God's bigger picture¹ for our life and healing, see the web page referenced in the footnotes.

When God says that His grace is sufficient—you will never fully understand why. Like Paul and myself, where healing did not result from prayers, it may be a bitter pill to swallow. Yet God knows what is best for us, and our understanding will be fulfilled at a later date when we see our Lord [God] and His Son.

For now, ponder the graphic above and understand that we live in a world that we were never supposed to live in. It is a world of evil desires and works of the flesh that conflict with God's ways. God has drawn a line down the middle of all cultures; choose a side, good or evil. Suffering will increase worldwide as sin increases, and morality sinks further.

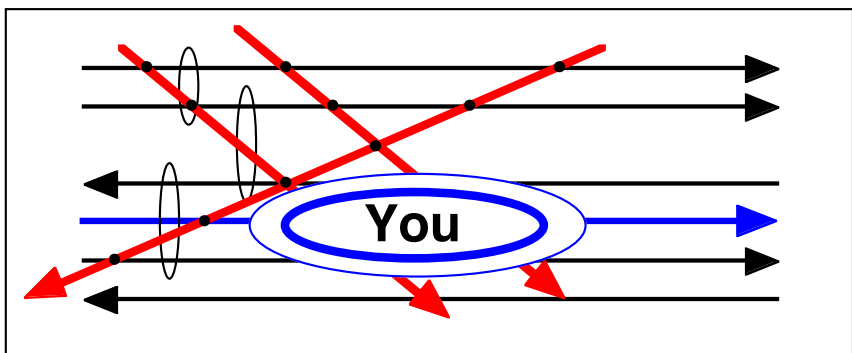
From the Gnostic Gospel of Philip chapter 3, we read the following concerning God's protection given to sincere believers. "The powers do not see those who are clothed in the perfect light, and consequently are not able to detain them. One will clothe himself in this light sacramentally in the union."

For years I have felt the protection of God in my life. It is an unusual feeling of security that moves with you wherever you go. Listen to some Bible verses that speak of the protection that God provides.

Satan said: "Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land." Job 1:10

Jesus said: "I do not pray that You [Father] should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one [and protect them]." John 17:15

"For He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways." Psalm 91:11



You In Satan's World With Holy Spirit

It is possible to move through this world with a high degree of God's protection. The graphic above shows a hedge of protection that surrounds God's servant. Think of it as a force field that can deflect the evil of this world so that its full impact is not felt. It is the result of putting on the whole armor of God². I have seen many examples of God's protection.

An adopted granddaughter survived a near-fatal car accident. The state patrol officer said it was unbelievable and almost always 100% fatal. Her car was hit head-on by a drunk driver driving down the interstate highway in the wrong direction. The rescue workers had to literally cut her out of the vehicle with a machine. The femur bone on each leg was broken in two, and she had to have them pinned and screwed together. She was only 20-years old and had a lot of other physical damage, but I am happy to report she is now doing fine and healed, fully walking again.

Where did God's protection come in? It came in the form of surviving the crash. Youth also plays a role in the healing of our bodies. When she was just a little girl, both her and I lost one of our big toenails. Hers grew back in only three weeks. Mine took a year to regrow. As we age, the length of our years becomes a healing factor. Make no mistake about it.

Like this adopted granddaughter, God offered similar protection for Jesus and his disciples. It often came in the form of survival or getting out of the way just in the nick of time. It usually involved pain and suffering too. Study Paul's travels for some classic illustrations of trouble coupled with divine protection.

In another case, a nine-month-old grandson was found choking on a bottle-cap sized chunk of jagged glass at the back of his throat. We managed to get it out. To all of our amazement, he did not have as much as a scratch. We believe that this is divine protection and an answer to our weekly prayers. We ask God for our family's safety every time we pray in our Bible study, and we have seen many such miracles.