



The Trail of Volition In the Old Testament

In Genesis, we find the principles concerning the origin of volition as a divine institution. We find negative expression resulting in the fall of man. Volition originated in the Garden to prove the fairness of God, with man being a factor in resolving the Angelic Conflict.

Volition originated in the Garden to exact a responsibility from man with regard to responding to information and directives from a holy God. Volition is the vehicle or capacity, common to all mankind, whereby there can be a non-meritorious act of faith. Faith is the capacity to believe that which is understood. Volition is the capacity to choose that which is understood.

Volition in its origin always had to act upon understandable information whether true information from God or false information from Satan. Volition in its origin was designed to be the cement holding together the other blocks of the divine institutions: family, marriage and nationalism. Without volition, the other three divine institutions would fail. Volition in its origin was designed to function within the structure of other things. Just as cement needs to be applied with good masonry techniques to hold a brick wall together, volition is best applied under certain structural principles and techniques.

In Exodus, we have the structures in which volition is to operate, the Law structure, social structure, military structure, religious structure, and the tabernacle relationship structure, etc. Volition is always properly expressed in conjunction to a structural expression. A spirituality structure. A growth structure. A self-discipline structure. A family structure. A social structure. A communication structure. An authority structure. A production structure.

In Leviticus, we see the responsibility of volition with regard to Christ as His person and work are expressed through the tabernacle, sacrifices, etc. As Exodus gives the principle of the general structure for volition, Leviticus gives the specific requirements accompanying volitional acts.

The specifics about animal sacrifices. The specifics about procedures. Lev. 1:3-4.

"If his offering is a burnt offering from the herd, he shall offer it, a male without defect; he shall offer it at the doorway of the tent of meeting, that he may be accepted before the LORD. 'He shall lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering, that it may be accepted for him to make atonement on his behalf.' (Leviticus 1:3-4, NASB)

The specifics about the significance of volitional acts. Lev. 4:13; Lev. 4:22.

"Now if the whole congregation of Israel commits error and the matter escapes the notice of the assembly, and they commit any of the things which the LORD has commanded not to be done, and they become guilty;" (Leviticus 4:13, NASB)

"When a leader sins and unintentionally does any one of all the things which the LORD his God has commanded not to be done, and he becomes guilty," (Leviticus 4:22, NASB)

The specifics about the sacrifices for certain types of sin. Each had their specific remedy. Lev. 5. The specifics about participation in the volition act by the priest. The specifics about the participation in the volitional act by the person. The specifics about the preparation of the priesthood for service. Lev. 8. The specifics dealing with those who express negative volition when in production. Lev. 10:1-2.

"Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took their respective firepans, and after putting fire in them, placed incense on it and offered strange fire before the LORD, which He had not commanded them. And



fire came out from the presence of the LORD and consumed them, and they died before the LORD." (Leviticus 10:1-2, NASB)

The specific requirements about their food. Lev. 11. The specific requirements related to motherhood. Lev. 12.

In Numbers, there is maximum negative volition which cannot be reversed. The wilderness wanderings of Israel with the first generation dying there is an indication of the principle of non-reversible negative volition. Num. 14:30-45.

Israel's refusal to go into the Land, then confession, their attempt to enter, their defeat, their wilderness wanderings. The attack on the authority of Moses by the sons of Korah. As a result, 250 men perished. Num. 16:28-33.

"Moses said, 'By this you shall know that the LORD has sent me to do all these deeds; for this is not my doing. 'If these men die the death of all men or if they suffer the fate of all men, then the LORD has not sent me. 'But if the LORD brings about an entirely new thing and the ground opens its mouth and swallows them up with all that is theirs, and they descend alive into Sheol, then you will understand that these men have spurned the LORD.'" As he finished speaking all these words, the ground that was under them split open; and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, and their households, and all the men who belonged to Korah with their possessions. So they and all that belonged to them went down alive to Sheol; and the earth closed over them, and they perished from the midst of the assembly." (Numbers 16:28-33, NASB)

The attack on the authority of Moses by the congregation. 14,700 died from the plague. Num. 16:41-50.

"But on the next day all the congregation of the sons of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron, saying, 'You are the ones who have caused the death of the LORD'S people.'" It came about, however, when the congregation had assembled against Moses and Aaron, that they turned toward the tent of meeting, and behold, the cloud covered it and the glory of the LORD appeared. Then Moses and Aaron came to the front of the tent of meeting, and the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Get away from among this congregation, that I may consume them instantly." Then they fell on their faces. Moses said to Aaron, "Take your censer and put in it fire from the altar, and lay incense on it; then bring it quickly to the congregation and make atonement for them, for wrath has gone forth from the LORD, the plague has begun!" Then Aaron took it as Moses had spoken, and ran into the midst of the assembly, for behold, the plague had begun among the people. So he put on the incense and made atonement for the people. He took his stand between the dead and the living, so that the plague was checked. But those who died by the plague were 14,700, besides those who died on account of Korah. Then Aaron returned to Moses at the doorway of the tent of meeting, for the plague had been checked." (Numbers 16:41-50, NASB)

The attack on the institution of marriage at the instigation of Balaam resulted in acts of volition that were non-reversible and resulted in the death of 24,000. Num. 25:9.

"Those who died by the plague were 24,000." (Numbers 25:9, NASB)

The overstepping of Moses' prerogatives in leadership set up a condition that was non-reversible. He could not enter the Land because of rebellion to a specific commandment regarding hitting the rock. Num. 27:12-14.

"Then the LORD said to Moses, 'Go up to this mountain of Abarim, and see the land which I have given to the sons of Israel. 'When you have seen it, you too will be gathered to your people, as Aaron your brother was; for in the wilderness of Zin, during the strife of the congregation, you rebelled against My



command to treat Me as holy before their eyes at the water." (These are the waters of Meribah of Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin.)" (Numbers 27:12-14, NASB)

In Deuteronomy, we find the challenge to positive volition. First, not to follow the previous generation and secondly, to have follow-through volition once the nation had taken possession of the Land. The challenge to positive volition in follow-through from the past. Deut. 4. The stability of positive volition in follow-through in the future. Deut. 6:6-25.

Stability in positive volition follow through is built into the person in their normal spiritual growth process and previously built into the person by their divine institutional training. The success of positive volition in follow-through is based on obedience to God's Word. Deut. 7:12-26.

The failure of volition to follow-through positively is based on forgetting what they learned from their testing and forgetting that man cannot live by bread alone, but by every Word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. Deut. 8:1-3.

"All the commandments that I am commanding you today you shall be careful to do, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land which the LORD swore to give to your forefathers. "You shall remember all the way which the LORD your God has led you in the wilderness these forty years, that He might humble you, testing you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. "He humbled you and let you be hungry, and fed you with manna which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you understand that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the LORD." (Deuteronomy 8:1-3, NASB)

Affluency of prosperity sidetracked them from their true objectives in life. Deut. 8:11-14; Deut. 8:15-20.

"Beware that you do not forget the LORD your God by not keeping His commandments and His ordinances and His statutes which I am commanding you today; otherwise, when you have eaten and are satisfied, and have built good houses and lived in them, and when your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and gold multiply, and all that you have multiplies, then your heart will become proud and you will forget the LORD your God who brought you out from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery." (Deuteronomy 8:11-14, NASB)

"He led you through the great and terrible wilderness, with its fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty ground where there was no water; He brought water for you out of the rock of flint. "In the wilderness He fed you manna which your fathers did not know, that He might humble you and that He might test you, to do good for you in the end. "Otherwise, you may say in your heart, 'My power and the strength of my hand made me this wealth.' "But you shall remember the LORD your God, for it is He who is giving you power to make wealth, that He may confirm His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day. "It shall come about if you ever forget the LORD your God and go after other gods and serve them and worship them, I testify against you today that you will surely perish. "Like the nations that the LORD makes to perish before you, so you shall perish; because you would not listen to the voice of the LORD your God." (Deuteronomy 8:15-20, NASB)

Fear in the face of the enemy kept them from their true objectives in life. Deut. 9:1-3.

"Hear, O Israel! You are crossing over the Jordan today to go in to dispossess nations greater and mightier than you, great cities fortified to heaven, a people great and tall, the sons of the Anakim, whom you know and of whom you have heard it said, 'Who can stand before the sons of Anak?' "Know therefore today that it is the LORD your God who is crossing over before you as a consuming fire. He



will destroy them and He will subdue them before you, so that you may drive them out and destroy them quickly, just as the LORD has spoken to you." (Deuteronomy 9:1-3, NASB)

The entanglement with the golden calf of religion. Deut. 9:9-25. The failure to remove all the obstacles hindering your production. Deut. 12:1-3.

""These are the statutes and the judgments which you shall carefully observe in the land which the LORD, the God of your fathers, has given you to possess as long as you live on the earth. "You shall utterly destroy all the places where the nations whom you shall dispossess serve their gods, on the high mountains and on the hills and under every green tree. "You shall tear down their altars and smash their sacred pillars and burn their Asherim with fire, and you shall cut down the engraved images of their gods and obliterate their name from that place." (Deuteronomy 12:1-3, NASB)

The investigations into other strange doctrines. Deut. 12:29-32.

""When the LORD your God cuts off before you the nations which you are going in to dispossess, and you dispossess them and dwell in their land, beware that you are not ensnared to follow them, after they are destroyed before you, and that you do not inquire after their gods, saying, 'How do these nations serve their gods, that I also may do likewise?' "You shall not behave thus toward the LORD your God, for every abominable act which the LORD hates they have done for their gods; for they even burn their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods. "Whatever I command you, you shall be careful to do; you shall not add to nor take away from it." (Deuteronomy 12:29-32, NASB)

The disillusionment of pseudo production. This is the snow job done by all the gimmick religions of our day. This is being sucked in by the false systems of our day or being “brotherly” to them. Deut. 13:1-5.

""If a prophet or a dreamer of dreams arises among you and gives you a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder comes true, concerning which he spoke to you, saying, 'Let us go after other gods (whom you have not known) and let us serve them,' you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams; for the LORD your God is testing you to find out if you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. "You shall follow the LORD your God and fear Him; and you shall keep His commandments, listen to His voice, serve Him, and cling to Him. "But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death, because he has counseled rebellion against the LORD your God who brought you from the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of slavery, to seduce you from the way in which the LORD your God commanded you to walk. So you shall purge the evil from among you." (Deuteronomy 13:1-5, NASB)

The distractions to other avenues of ministry by relatives. Deut. 13:6-10.

""If your brother, your mother's son, or your son or daughter, or the wife you cherish, or your friend who is as your own soul, entice you secretly, saying, 'Let us go and serve other gods' (whom neither you nor your fathers have known, of the gods of the peoples who are around you, near you or far from you, from one end of the earth to the other end), you shall not yield to him or listen to him; and your eye shall not pity him, nor shall you spare or conceal him. "But you shall surely kill him; your hand shall be first against him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all the people. "So you shall stone him to death because he has sought to seduce you from the LORD your God who brought you out from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery." (Deuteronomy 13:6-10, NASB)

The failure to keep the distinguishing factors in your practical lives. Deut. 14. The concept of greed or the principle of continuous gain. Deut. 15. The failure to keep reality in the ritual. They were just going through the motions. Deut. 16:1-22. They honored the Lord with their lips, but their heart was far from



Him. The leadership disobeyed direct commands from God. Deut. 17:14-20. The king was not to multiply to himself wives or horses. Solomon did both of these.

"When you enter the land which the LORD your God gives you, and you possess it and live in it, and you say, 'I will set a king over me like all the nations who are around me,' you shall surely set a king over you whom the LORD your God chooses, one from among your countrymen you shall set as king over yourselves; you may not put a foreigner over yourselves who is not your countryman. Moreover, he shall not multiply horses for himself, nor shall he cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, since the LORD has said to you, 'You shall never again return that way.' He shall not multiply wives for himself, or else his heart will turn away; nor shall he greatly increase silver and gold for himself. Now it shall come about when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself a copy of this law on a scroll in the presence of the Levitical priests. It shall be with him and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, by carefully observing all the words of this law and these statutes, that his heart may not be lifted up above his countrymen and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, to the right or the left, so that he and his sons may continue long in his kingdom in the midst of Israel." (Deuteronomy 17:14-20, NASB)

Negative volition climax: 2 Thess. 2:11-12; Exodus 3:19; Exodus 4:21; Exodus 7:3; Exodus 7:13; Exodus 8:15; Exodus 8:19; Exodus 8:32; Exodus 9:34; Exodus 10:1; Exodus 11:10; Heb. 3:13; Rom. 2:5; Rev. 9:20-21.

"For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false, in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness." (2 Thessalonians 2:11-12, NASB)

"But I know that the king of Egypt will not permit you to go, except under compulsion." (Exodus 3:19, NASB)

"The LORD said to Moses, "When you go back to Egypt see that you perform before Pharaoh all the wonders which I have put in your power; but I will harden his heart so that he will not let the people go." (Exodus 4:21, NASB)

"But I will harden Pharaoh's heart that I may multiply My signs and My wonders in the land of Egypt." (Exodus 7:3, NASB)

"Yet Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he did not listen to them, as the LORD had said." (Exodus 7:13, NASB)

"But when Pharaoh saw that there was relief, he hardened his heart and did not listen to them, as the LORD had said." (Exodus 8:15, NASB)

"Then the magicians said to Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God." But Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he did not listen to them, as the LORD had said." (Exodus 8:19, NASB)

"But Pharaoh hardened his heart this time also, and he did not let the people go." (Exodus 8:32, NASB)

"But when Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunder had ceased, he sinned again and hardened his heart, he and his servants." (Exodus 9:34, NASB)

"Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go to Pharaoh, for I have hardened his heart and the heart of his servants, that I may perform these signs of Mine among them," (Exodus 10:1, NASB)

"Moses and Aaron performed all these wonders before Pharaoh; yet the LORD hardened Pharaoh's



heart, and he did not let the sons of Israel go out of his land." (Exodus 11:10, NASB)

"But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called "Today," so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin." (Hebrews 3:13, NASB)

"But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God," (Romans 2:5, NASB)

"The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, so as not to worship demons, and the idols of gold and of silver and of brass and of stone and of wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk; and they did not repent of their murders nor of their sorceries nor of their immorality nor of their thefts." (Revelation 9:20-21, NASB)

In Joshua, there is maximum initial positive volition. This is expressed in the original entrance under Joshua to take the Land of Canaan and drive out the enemies. There was maximum positive volition, but along with negative volition as expressed through Achan, for example.

In Judges, we find maximum negative volition follow-through. The problem centered around the tribes of Israel not completing what they had started and becoming satisfied with a partial completion of their task. In the Book of Judges we see that the things remaining because of a lack of follow-through in volition were to become soon, the thorns in their sides and the source for their divine discipline. Those things accepted and allowed to co-exist in your life that volition fails to deal with become the first things that God uses to punish you.

In Ruth, there is maximum positive volition to the faith of the God of Israel by Ruth and the fruits of such in the provision of a husband for Ruth, that being Boaz.

In 1 Samuel, we have the classic example of negative volition to God's immediate authority. Israel rejected the theocracy of God in their midst. They wanted someone else like that of other nations. This principle in application would be seen in a church that rejects the daily teaching of the Word of God and embraces instead program gimmicks, spirituality by tabooism, etc.

In 2 Samuel, we see an example of the far reaching results of negative volition by a leader. The rebellion of David, his list of consecutive sins and their national effects are clearly noted in the book of 2 Samuel. The very rebellion and sin of David came back upon his own house many times.

In 1 Kings and 2 Kings, there is both positive volition centering around the reign of David and Solomon, and following in both the south and north, maximum negative volition as a national basis.

In 1 Chronicles and 2 Chronicles, we have the emphasis on the glories of the potential kingdom with David's reign as the example. We see here the fruit of positive volition in national honor and glory.

In Ezra, is the classic example of positive volition in production.

In Nehemiah is the exercise of positive volition in production. Production was done within the framework of the delegated authority of the king. Neh. 2:7-10.

"And I said to the king, "If it please the king, let letters be given me for the governors of the provinces beyond the River, that they may allow me to pass through until I come to Judah, and a letter to Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the fortress which is by the temple, for the wall of the city and for the house to which I will go." And the king granted them to me because the good hand of my God was on me. Then I came to the governors of the provinces beyond the River and gave them the king's letters. Now the king had sent with me officers of the army



and horsemen. When Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite official heard about it, it was very displeasing to them that someone had come to seek the welfare of the sons of Israel." (Nehemiah 2:7-10, NASB)

The exercise of positive volition in production need not always be made known. It is better for some people to not be told. They get upset, shaken up, etc. Neh. 2:11-16.

"So I came to Jerusalem and was there three days. And I arose in the night, I and a few men with me. I did not tell anyone what my God was putting into my mind to do for Jerusalem and there was no animal with me except the animal on which I was riding. So I went out at night by the Valley Gate in the direction of the Dragon's Well and on to the Refuse Gate, inspecting the walls of Jerusalem which were broken down and its gates which were consumed by fire. Then I passed on to the Fountain Gate and the King's Pool, but there was no place for my mount to pass. So I went up at night by the ravine and inspected the wall. Then I entered the Valley Gate again and returned. The officials did not know where I had gone or what I had done; nor had I as yet told the Jews, the priests, the nobles, the officials or the rest who did the work." (Nehemiah 2:11-16, NASB)

When the exercise of positive volition in production involves others, there must be communication between you to "clear the air" on all things. Neh. 2:17-20.

"Then I said to them, "You see the bad situation we are in, that Jerusalem is desolate and its gates burned by fire. Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem so that we will no longer be a reproach." I told them how the hand of my God had been favorable to me and also about the king's words which he had spoken to me. Then they said, "Let us arise and build." So they put their hands to the good work. But when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite official, and Geshem the Arab heard it, they mocked us and despised us and said, "What is this thing you are doing? Are you rebelling against the king?" So I answered them and said to them, "The God of heaven will give us success; therefore we His servants will arise and build, but you have no portion, right or memorial in Jerusalem."" (Nehemiah 2:17-20, NASB)

In the exercise of positive volition in production, your authority and work lies in that which is assigned to you. This is analogous to the spiritual gifts functioning. Each is in their own order. Your authority does not spill over into that of another's spiritual gift. In the exercise of positive volition in production, your human standing or status in life does not dictate your involvement. Neh. 3:1-32. In the exercise of positive volition in production, there will be opposition by mockery. Neh. 4:1-3.

"Now it came about that when Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, he became furious and very angry and mocked the Jews. He spoke in the presence of his brothers and the wealthy men of Samaria and said, "What are these feeble Jews doing? Are they going to restore it for themselves? Can they offer sacrifices? Can they finish in a day? Can they revive the stones from the dusty rubble even the burned ones?" Now Tobiah the Ammonite was near him and he said, "Even what they are building—if a fox should jump on it, he would break their stone wall down!"" (Nehemiah 4:1-3, NASB)

In the exercise of positive volition in production by a group, there will be a completion of the task. Neh. 4:6.

"So we built the wall and the whole wall was joined together to half its height, for the people had a mind to work." (Nehemiah 4:6, NASB)

In the completion of production under positive volition, there will not only come mockery but actual conflict and violence. Here again, the volition is tested in calling up a defense to protect the



accomplished production, to preserve it. Neh. 4:7-9.

"Now when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites and the Ashdodites heard that the repair of the walls of Jerusalem went on, and that the breaches began to be closed, they were very angry. All of them conspired together to come and fight against Jerusalem and to cause a disturbance in it. But we prayed to our God, and because of them we set up a guard against them day and night." (Nehemiah 4:7-9, NASB)

The preservation of production is one of the responsibilities of positive volition. Positive volition must provide the right decisions to meet the situation. The decisions of positive volition in the preservation of production: Made their prayer to God. Set a watch day and night. Worked with one hand and were ready for battle with the other. Neh. 4:15-20. Ran shifts to keep up the guard constantly and the work constantly. Operated on a completion of the task as the top priority. Neh. 4:23.

"When our enemies heard that it was known to us, and that God had frustrated their plan, then all of us returned to the wall, each one to his work. From that day on, half of my servants carried on the work while half of them held the spears, the shields, the bows and the breastplates; and the captains were behind the whole house of Judah. Those who were rebuilding the wall and those who carried burdens took their load with one hand doing the work and the other holding a weapon. As for the builders, each wore his sword girded at his side as he built, while the trumpeter stood near me. I said to the nobles, the officials and the rest of the people, "The work is great and extensive, and we are separated on the wall far from one another. "At whatever place you hear the sound of the trumpet, rally to us there. Our God will fight for us."" (Nehemiah 4:15-20, NASB)

"So neither I, my brothers, my servants, nor the men of the guard who followed me, none of us removed our clothes, each took his weapon even to the water." (Nehemiah 4:23, NASB)

In the exercise of positive volition in production, there will often be an exploiting of those doing the ministry. Neh. 5:1-13. In the exercise of positive volition in production, there are always allurements to draw you away from your work. Neh. 6:2-4.

"then Sanballat and Geshem sent a message to me, saying, "Come, let us meet together at Chephirim in the plain of Ono." But they were planning to harm me. So I sent messengers to them, saying, "I am doing a great work and I cannot come down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and come down to you?" They sent messages to me four times in this manner, and I answered them in the same way." (Nehemiah 6:2-4, NASB)

In the nation, there was a unity of positive volition toward their spiritual responsibilities with daily teaching of the Word. Neh. 8:3; Neh. 8:13; Neh. 8:18.

"He read from it before the square which was in front of the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of men and women, those who could understand; and all the people were attentive to the book of the law." (Nehemiah 8:3, NASB)

"Then on the second day the heads of fathers' households of all the people, the priests and the Levites were gathered to Ezra the scribe that they might gain insight into the words of the law." (Nehemiah 8:13, NASB)

"He read from the book of the law of God daily, from the first day to the last day. And they celebrated the feast seven days, and on the eighth day there was a solemn assembly according to the ordinance." (Nehemiah 8:18, NASB)



In Esther, there is maximum negative volition in the form of Anti-Semitism toward the Jewish people.

In Job, we find the test of volition under undeserved suffering. Negative volition is expressed by Job's wife and finally by Job after confrontation by his friends. This is the test of volition on the part of the mature believer.

In Psalms, positive volition is expressed in the utilization of Bible doctrine in the problems and pressures of life.

In Proverbs, positive volition is demonstrated in the getting of Bible doctrine.

In Ecclesiastes, we see negative volition expressed in human viewpoint toward things that make one happy in life.

In Song of Solomon, there is the proper expression of volition when faced with the marriage issue, that of the right kind of man and the right kind of woman.

In Isaiah, we have negative volition resulting in the fifth cycle of discipline for Israel and Judah.

In Jeremiah, negative volition is expressed in apostasy and the cause for the fifth cycle of discipline for Judah.