

WHY DOES GOD PERMIT EVIL?

HOW EVIL BEGAN

"Webster defines *evil* as: *"that which produces unhappiness; anything which either directly or remotely causes suffering of any kind."* This subject, therefore, not only inquires regarding human sorrows, pain, and death, but goes beyond all these to consider their *primary cause*--sin--and its remedy, the only permanent cure for the malady.

Perhaps no difficulty presents itself more frequently to the inquiring mind than the questions: "Why does God permit the present reign of evil?" "Why did He permit Satan to tempt our first parents after creating them perfect?" "Why did God allow the forbidden tree to have a place among the ones not forbidden?" Despite all attempts to turn aside, these questions cannot be silenced. Could not God have prevented any possibility of man's fall?

Undoubtedly, the difficulty arises from a failure to comprehend the **Plan of God**. God *could* have prevented the entrance of sin, but the fact that He did **not** should tell us something. Its present permission is sufficient proof that it is designed to *ultimately* work out some *greater good*. God's plan, seen in its completeness, will prove the great wisdom of the course pursued. Some inquire, "Could not God, with whom all things are possible, have interfered to prevent the full accomplishment of Satan's design?" Doubtless He could have; but such interference would have prevented the accomplishment of His own purpose, which was *to make manifest the perfection, majesty and righteous authority of His law, and to prove to both men and angels the evil consequences resulting from its violation*. Furthermore, some things in their very nature are impossible with God, as the Scriptures state: It is *"impossible for God to lie"* or to *"deny Himself"* (Heb. 6:18; 2 Tim. 2:13). God *cannot* do wrong, and therefore He could never choose any course of action but the wisest and best plan for those whom He created. His ways and thoughts are higher than ours with our shortsighted vision, which, without the enlightenment of His Holy Spirit, would fail to discern the hidden springs of His infinite wisdom. In Revelation 4:11 we find the declaration that all things were created for the Lord's pleasure. As amazing as it seems, this Awesome God and Creator of all things desires and delights in our fellowship! He delighted to dispense His myriad blessings on the human family, and to exercise the attributes of His glorious being. Even though the working out of His benevolent designs permits evil and evildoers to play an active part for a time, in the light of eternity, it is *"but for a moment."* Our Creator is never in league with sin, for His Word declares that He is *"not a God that has pleasure in wickedness"* (Psa. 5:4). Though God is opposed to evil in every sense, He permits it (i.e., does not hinder, but allows it) for a time, because He sees the way in which the permission of evil will be an everlasting and invaluable lesson to all His creatures, and knowing good from evil, they will gladly choose good.

It is a self-evident truth that for every right principle there is a corresponding wrong one. For instance, there is truth vs. lies, love vs. hate, justice vs. inequity. We distinguish these opposite principles as right and wrong by their *effect* when put into action. We call that principle, the result of which is beneficial to ultimate order, harmony and happiness a **right principle**. We call the opposite, which is unprofitable and produces unhappiness, discord, and destruction, a **wrong principle**. We term the results of these principles of action as *good or evil*. We call an intelligent being either virtuous or wicked -- whoever is capable of discerning *right* principles from *wrong*, and is governed by one or the other through choice.

This faculty of discerning between right and wrong is called the *moral sense*, or *conscience*. It is by this moral sense which God has given to man that we are able to recognize that God is *Good*. It is to this moral sense that God always appeals, to prove His righteousness and justice. By the same moral sense Adam could discern sin, or unrighteousness -- to be evil -- even before he knew all of its consequences. The lower order of God's creatures are not endowed with this same moral sense. A dog has some intelligence but not to this degree. Though he may learn that certain actions bring the approval and reward from his master, and others his disapproval, it could not be termed a *sinner* if it stole or took a life, and it would not be called *virtuous* if it protected life and property. This is because it is ignorant of the *moral quality* of its actions. God could have made mankind devoid of the ability to discern between right and wrong, or to be able only to discern and do right; but to have made him so would have been to make a living robot -- certainly not one made in the mental and moral image of his Creator. Or God might have made man a perfect and free agent as He did, and have guarded him from Satan's temptation. In that case his experience being limited to good, man would have been continually liable to suggestions of evil from without, or ambitions from within, making the everlasting future uncertain. Thus, an outbreak of disobedience and disorder would always be a possibility. Beside all this, good would never have been so highly appreciated, except by its contrast with evil and its dire results.

God first made His creatures acquainted with good, surrounding them with absolute perfection in Eden's garden. Later, as the predicted penalty for disobedience, He gave them a severe lesson in the knowledge of evil by expelling them from Eden and depriving them of His fellowship. He let them experience sickness, pain and death that they might forever know evil and the exceeding sinfulness of sin; yet this was not given without hope. By this comparison they came to an appreciation and proper estimate of both good and evil and its fruitage. "*And the Lord said, 'Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil'"* (Gen. 3:22). Their posterity shared in this penalty, although those born thereafter will not fully realize perfect goodness until they experience it in the promised Kingdom, the result of their salvation in Jesus who will then be their Judge and King.

The moral sense (judgment of right and wrong) and the liberty to use it, which Adam possessed, were important features of his likeness to God. The law of right and wrong was written in his heart. It was part of his nature, just as it is part of the divine nature. But let us not forget that this image or likeness to God -- this originally law-inscribed nature of man -- has lost much of its clear outline through the erasing, degrading influence of sin. It is not now what it was in the first man. Ability to love implies ability to hate. Hence, we may reason that God could not make man in His own likeness, with power to love and do right, without the corresponding ability to hate and do wrong. But this liberty of choice (*free moral agency* -- or *free will*) is a part of man's original endowment; this, together with the full measure of his mental and moral faculties, constituted him an image of his Creator. Today, after some 6,000 years of sin, much of the original likeness to our Creator has been erased. Mankind is bound, to a greater or lesser extent, by sin which comes more easily to fallen man than righteousness.

We need not question how God could have given Adam such a vivid impression of the many results of sin as would have deterred him from it. We believe that God foresaw how an *actual experience* with evil would be the surest, most lasting lesson to serve man eternally. For that reason God did not prevent but, rather, permitted him to make his choice and feel its dire consequences. Had an opportunity to sin never been permitted, man could not have resisted it. Consequently, there would have been neither virtue nor merit in his right-doing. "*God seeks such to worship Him as worship in spirit and in truth"* (John 4:23, 24). He desires intelligent, willing obedience, rather than mechanical service. He already had inanimate agencies in operation, accomplishing His will. His design was to make an intelligent

creation in His own likeness -- whose loyalty and righteousness would be based on an appreciation of right and wrong, desiring to do right.

The principles of right and wrong have always existed. All perfect intelligent creatures in God's likeness must be free to choose either, although only right principles will continue to be active forever. Scripture informs us that when the evil principle has been permitted long enough to accomplish God's purpose, it will cease to be active forever. All who refuse to submit to His righteous control shall forever cease to exist (1 Cor. 15:25, 26; Heb. 2:14). Only the willingly obedient will live forever.

THE WAYS MAN EXPERIENCES EVIL

The question comes to mind in another form: "Could not man have been made acquainted with evil in some other way than by experience?" Yes, there are 4 ways of *knowing* things, namely:

1. *by Intuition*, 2. *Observation*, 3. *Experience*, and 4. *Information*.

An *intuitive knowledge* is a direct apprehension, without the process of reasoning, or the necessity for proof. Such knowledge belongs only to Jehovah, the eternal fountain of all wisdom and truth and to His Son since His resurrection. Of necessity and in the very nature of things, God is superior to all His creatures. Therefore, man's knowledge of good and evil could not be intuitive. It might have come by observation, but in that event there would need to have been some exhibition of evil and its results for man to witness. This would imply the permission of evil somewhere, among other beings -- so why not with mankind here on earth?

Why should not man have been the illustration, and get his knowledge by *practical experience*? So it is. Mankind *is* gaining practical experience while furnishing an illustration to others for all times, as well as being "*made a spectacle to angels*" (1 Cor. 4:9). Adam already had a knowledge of evil as a result of his disobedience. Adam and Eve knew God as their Creator, and hence as the one who had the right to control and direct them. God had said of the forbidden tree, "*In the day you eat of it, dying you will die*" (Gen. 2:17). Before they sinned they had a *theoretical knowledge* of evil, though they had never *observed* or *experienced* its effects. Consequently, they did not appreciate their Creator's loving authority and His beneficent law nor the dangers from which He thereby proposed to protect them. Thus, they yielded to the temptation which God wisely permitted.

Few people appreciate the severity of the temptation under which our first parents fell, or the justice of God in attaching so severe a penalty to what seems to many to have been so slight an offense. A little reflection will make it all plain. The Scriptures tell the simple story of how the woman was *deceived* into transgressing God's law. Her experience and acquaintance with God were even more limited than Adam's, for he was created first. He had already received knowledge of the penalty of sin from God before her creation, while Eve most likely received it from Adam. Evidently, she did not realize the extent of her transgression when she ate of the fruit -- having put confidence in Satan's deceptive misrepresentation, though she probably had misgivings and slight apprehensions that all was not well. Although deceived, Paul wrote that she was a transgressor though not so culpable as Adam in his willful disobedience.

We are told that, unlike Eve, Adam was *not* deceived (1 Tim. 2:14). So he transgressed with a fuller realization of the sin and against greater light. With the penalty in view he certainly knew that he must die. We can readily see what the temptation was which impelled him thus to recklessly incur the pronounced penalty. Bear in mind that they were perfect beings, in the mental and moral likeness of their Maker. The godlike element of love was displayed with marked prominence by the perfect man

toward his beloved companion, the perfect woman. He realized her sin, and feared Eve's death. Adam, in despair, recklessly concluded not to live without her. (*His loss of her seemed with no hope of recovery, for no such hope had yet been given*). Deeming his life worthless without her companionship, he willfully shared her act of disobedience in order to share the death-penalty. Both were "*in the transgression*," says the Apostle (Rom. 5:14; 1 Tim. 2:14).

GOD NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR SIN

God foreknew that man would disobey, having given him freedom of choice, *for man lacked a full appreciation of sin and its results*. Furthermore, He saw that becoming acquainted with sin, man would so impair his moral nature that evil would gradually become more agreeable and desirable to him than good. God designed to permit evil, having already provided a remedy for man's release from its consequences in His Plan of Redemption. He saw that the result of disobedience would lead him, through experience, to a full appreciation of "*the exceeding sinfulness of sin*" (Rom. 7:13) and of the matchless worth of virtue by contrast. This lesson would teach man to love and honor his Creator more, who is the source and fountain of all goodness, and forever to shun that which brought so much misery. The final result will be a greater love for God and a greater hatred of all that is evil. The end result will be the firm establishment in everlasting righteousness of all such as shall profit by those lessons God is now teaching, through the permission of sin and its resulting evil.

A wide distinction should be observed, however, between the indisputable fact that God has **permitted** sin, and the serious error of some who charge God with being the *author* and instigator of sin. The latter view is both blasphemous and contradictory to the facts presented in the Bible. Those who fall into this error generally do so in an attempt to find another plan of salvation than that which God has provided through the sacrifice of Jesus as our ransom-price. If they succeed in convincing themselves and others that God is responsible for all sin and wickedness and crime..., and that as an innocent tool in His hands, man was *forced* into sin, they have cleared the way for their belief that neither a sacrifice for our sins nor mercy in any form was needed but simply JUSTICE. They also lay a foundation for another part of their false theory: Universalism. They claim that since God *caused* all the sin and wickedness, He will also *cause* the deliverance of everyone from sin and death. Reasoning that God *willed* and *caused* the sin, and that none could resist Him, they also claim that when it is time for Him to *will* righteousness -- all will likewise be powerless to resist Him. Two texts of Scriptures are used to sustain this theory (Isa 45:7 & Amos 3:6), but by a misinterpretation of the word "*evil*" in both texts. *Sin is always an evil, but an evil is not always a sin*. An earthquake, a conflagration, a flood or a pestilence would be a calamity -- an *evil* -- but none of these would be *sin*. The word *evil* in these texts cited signifies calamities. The same Hebrew word is translated *affliction* in Psalm 34:19; 107:39; Jeremiah 48:16 and Zechariah 1:15. It is translated *trouble* in Psalm 27:5; 41:1; 88:3; 107:26; Jeremiah 51:2 & Lamentations 1:21. It is translated *calamities, adversity & distress* in 1 Samuel 10:19; Psalm 10:6; 94:13; 141:5; Ecclesiastes 7:14; Nehemiah 2:17. In other places the same word is rendered *harm, mischief, sore, hurt, misery, grief* and *sorrow*.

In Isaiah 45:7 and Amos 3:6, the Lord reminded Israel of His covenant made with them as a nation -- that if they would obey His laws, He would bless them and protect them from the calamities common to the world in general. But, if they forsook Him, He would bring calamities (*evils*) upon them as chastisements. Deut. 28:1-32; Leviticus 26:14-16; Joshua 23:6-16.

When calamities came upon them, they were inclined to consider them as *accidents* rather than *chastisements*. Therefore, God sent them word through the prophets, reminding them of their

covenant. They told them that their calamities were from Him and by His will, for their correction. So it is absurd to use these texts to prove that God is the author of sin!

In all such reasoning, man's noblest quality is entirely set aside--*liberty of will*, or *choice*. Such is the most striking feature of his likeness to his Creator. It's true that God has power to force man into either sin or righteousness. But His Word declares that ***He has no such purpose***. He could not consistently force man into sin for the same reason that "*He cannot deny Himself*" (2 Tim. 2:13). This is inconsistent with His perfect character and an impossibility. We say again, God seeks only those who worship and love *Him in spirit and in truth*. To this end He has given man a liberty of will like unto His own, desiring him to choose righteousness.

Permitting man to choose for himself is what led to his fall from divine fellowship and blessings. God's foreknowledge of what man would do is not used against him to degrade him to a mere robot. On the contrary, it is used in man's favor. God, in His wisdom, did not hinder him from experimentally tasting sin and its bitter results. But He began at once to provide a means for recovery from his first transgression by providing a Redeemer -- a great Savior able to save to the uttermost all who would return unto God through Him. To this end -- that man might have a free will and yet be enabled to profit by his first failure in disobedience to the Lord's will -- God has not only provided a ransom for all, but also a knowledge of reconciliation with Himself, which will be testified to all in due time (1 Timothy 2:3-6).

The severity of the penalty wasn't a display of hatred and malice on God's part. It was the necessary and inevitable final result of evil, which He thus allowed man to see and feel. God can sustain a life as long as he sees fit, even against the destructive power of evil. But morally, it would be as impossible for God to sustain such a life everlastingly as it is for Him to lie. Such a life could only become more and more a source of misery and unhappiness to itself and others. God is too good to sustain such a useless and injurious existence. With His sustaining power being withdrawn, destruction -- the natural result of evil -- would ensue. Life is a favor, a gift of God, and it will be continued everlasting *only* to the willingly obedient.

MAN KIND NOT NOW ON TRIAL

No injustice has been done to Adam's posterity in not affording them each an *individual* trial. Jehovah was in no sense bound to bring us into existence. Having brought us into being, no law of equity or justice binds Him to perpetuate our being everlastingly, or even to grant us a trial, as He did Adam. Mark this point well! The present life which, from the cradle to the tomb, is but a process of dying, *is a favor!* Notwithstanding all its evils and disappointments, it would still be so, even if there were no hereafter. The large majority so esteem it, the exceptions (suicides, those mentally unbalanced) being comparatively few. The actions of the perfect man -- Adam -- show us what action his children would have taken under similar circumstances, i.e., without the knowledge of what evil brings.

Many have imbibed the erroneous idea that God placed our race on trial for life with the alternative of eternal torture. But nothing of the kind is even hinted in the pronounced penalty. The favor or blessing of God to His obedient children is *continuous life*, which will be free of pain, sickness and every other element of decay and death. Adam was given this blessing in the full measure. But he was warned that he would be deprived of this *gift* if he failed to render obedience to God: "*In the day that you eat of it, dying, you shall die.*" He was told *nothing* of a life in torment as the penalty of sin.

Everlasting life is nowhere promised to any but the obedient. Life is God's gift, and death is the penalty He prescribed for disobedience.

Eternal torture is nowhere suggested in the Old Testament, and in the New Testament only a few statements can be so misconstrued as to appear to teach it. These are either found among the *symbolism* of Revelation, or among the parables and dark sayings of our Lord, which were not understood by the people who heard them (Luke 8:10). They seem to be but little better understood today. Contrary to eternal torture, "The wages of sin is **death**." "The soul that sins, it shall **die**" (Rom. 6:23; Ezek. 18:4).

MAN'S FUTURE OPPORTUNITY WILL BE GREATER

Many have supposed God unjust in allowing Adam's condemnation to be shared by his posterity, instead of granting each one a trial and chance for everlasting life just as that which Adam enjoyed. But what will they say, if it now is shown that the world's future opportunity and trial for life will be much more favorable than was Adam's? And that, too, is because God adopted this plan of permitting Adam's race to share his penalty in a natural way. God assures us that as condemnation passed upon all in Adam, He has so arranged for a new father or life-giver for the race, into whom all may be transferred by faith and obedience. In that *all in Adam* shared the curse of death, so *all in Christ* will share the blessing of restitution on earth, except for the Church (Rom. 5:12, 18,19). Thus seen, the death of Jesus --the undefiled and sinless one -- was a complete settlement toward God for Adam's sin. As one man had sinned and *all in him* had shared his penalty, so having paid the penalty of that one sinner, Jesus bought not only Adam, but all his posterity, who by heredity shared his weaknesses, sins and the penalty of these, which is death. Our Lord, "the *MAN* Christ Jesus," Himself unblemished, approved and with a perfect unborn seed (race) in His loins -- untainted with sin, gave His ALL of human life as an offering for sin and the complete ransom-price for Adam and his seed (race) in him on the Cross.

After fully purchasing the lives of Adam and his race, Christ offers to adopt as His seed Adam's children, all of his race who will accept the terms of His New Covenant and thus come into the family of God by faith and obedience and receive everlasting life. Thus it is written: "*For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ ALL shall be made alive*" (1 Cor. 15:22 NAS).

By God's favor, the injury we received through Adam's fall (we suffered no injustice) is to be more than offset with favor through Christ! In God's "*due time*" all will sooner or later have a *full opportunity* to be restored to the same standing that Adam enjoyed before he sinned. The great majority of mankind (including children and heathen) fail to receive a *full knowledge* in this present time, nor an enjoyment of this favor from God. But they'll assuredly have these privileges in the next age or "*world to come*" -- that dispensation to follow this present age. To this end, "*ALL that are in their graves... shall come forth...(the resurrection)*" (John 5:28). Whether it will be now or in the next age, as each one becomes fully aware of that ransom-price given by our Lord Jesus, and of his subsequent privileges, he is considered on trial as was Adam. Obedience will bring lasting life; disobedience will bring death, the "second death". Perfect obedience, without perfect ability to render it, is not required of anyone. Under the *New Covenant of Grace* during the Gospel Age, members of the Church have had the righteousness of Christ imputed to them by faith, which made up for their deficiencies through the weakness of the flesh. Divine Grace will also operate toward "*whosoever will*" of the world during the Millennial age. Absolute moral perfection of such will not be expected until a physical and mental perfection is reached at the close of that 1,000 year Kingdom. That trial, the result of the ransom and

the New Covenant, will differ from Adam's trial, for each one will affect only *his own future* (Ezek. 18:20-23).

Some may ask, "*Wouldn't this be giving some of the race a second chance to gain everlasting life?*" Well, the first chance for that was lost for Adam and all his race "*yet in his loins (unborn)*" (Heb. 7:10) by father Adam's disobedience. Under the original trial "*condemnation passed upon all men*" (Rom. 5:18). God's plan is that Adam and all who lost life through his failure, *after* having tasted of the exceeding sinfulness of sin and felt the weight of its penalty, will be given the opportunity to turn to God through faith in the Redeemer because of His redemption-sacrifice. You can call it a second chance for Adam, (though he lacked the *knowledge of God's plan* and the *experience of sin* prior to his original trial); but it will be the first individual opportunity for his descendants, already under condemnation to death when born. ALL were sentenced to death because of Adam's disobedience, and ALL will enjoy a full opportunity in the Millennial age to gain everlasting life under the favorable terms of the New Covenant.

As the angels declared, this truly is "*Good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people*" (Luke 2:10). And as the Apostle declared, this grace of God -- that our Lord Jesus "*gave Himself a ransom for all*" -- must be "*testified*" to all "*in due time*" (Romans 5:17-19; 1Timothy 2:4-6). *It is men*, not God, who have *limited* this chance or opportunity of attaining life to the Gospel age. On the contrary, God tells us that the Gospel age is for the selection of the Church -- those who will be "*joint-heirs with Christ*" -- through whom all others shall be brought to an accurate knowledge of the truth in a succeeding age, and be granted a full opportunity to secure everlasting life.

GOD'S METHODS ADVANTAGEOUS TO MAN

You may wonder what advantage there was in the method God pursued. Why didn't He now give everyone an individual chance for life without the long process? There was Adam's trial and condemnation; the share by his offspring in his condemnation; the redemption of all by Christ's sacrifice; and the new offer to all of everlasting life under the New Covenant conditions. *If evil must be permitted because of man's free moral agency, why does He allow so much misery to intervene and to come upon many, if they will ultimately receive the gift of life as His obedient servants anyway?* That is the point on which interest in this subject truly focuses! Suppose God had ordered differently the propagation of our species so that children would *not* partake of the results of parental sins -- mental, moral and physical weaknesses. And suppose the Creator so arranged that all would have a favorable Edenic condition for their testing, and that only trans-gressors would be condemned, under those favorable conditions how many, might we presume, would be found worthy of life, and how many not?

If the one instance of Adam be taken as a standard (he being a sample of perfect manhood in every respect), the conclusion would be that *none* would have been found perfectly obedient and worthy. That is because none would possess clear knowledge of evil's consequences nor have experience with God, which would develop in them full trust in Him, beyond their personal judgment. We are sure *it was Christ's knowledge of the Father that enabled Him to trust and obey implicitly* (Isa. 53:11).

But continuing in that supposition, let's say that one-fourth would gain life; or even more, that one-half would be found worthy, and the other half would suffer the wages of sin which is death. Then what? Let us suppose the first half had neither experienced nor witnessed sin. Might they not forever feel a curiosity toward things forbidden, only restrained through fear of God and of the penalty? Their service couldn't be so hearty as though they *knew* good and evil, and hence had a full appreciation of the benevolent designs of the Creator and the laws which govern the course of His creatures. Consider

the half that would go into death as a result of their own willful sin. They would be forever cut off from life. Their only hope would be that God might lovingly remember the work of His hands, and provide another trial for them and that if they were thus reawakened and tried again, some, by reason of this experience, might choose obedience and live.

But even if such a plan was as good in its results as the one God adopted, there would be serious objections to it. How much greater is the wisdom of God shown in *confining sin to certain limits*, as His plan does. How much better to have one perfect and impartial law, which declares the wages of willful sin is death. God thus limits the evil which He permits, by providing the 1,000-year reign of Christ in His Kingdom when the full extinction of evil and evildoers will usher in an eternity of righteousness, based on full knowledge and free-will obedience by perfect human beings.

But there are two other objections to that suggested plan of first trying each individual separately. One Redeemer was quite sufficient in God's plan, because only *ONE* had willfully sinned and only *ONE* was condemned (even though others shared his condemnation). But if half of the race had sinned and been condemned on an individual trial, the sacrifice of a redeemer for *each* condemned individual would have been required. One perfect life could redeem only one forfeited life, and no more. That one perfect man, "*the man Christ Jesus,*" who redeemed fallen Adam (and us in him), could not have been "a ransom for ALL" under any other circumstances than that chosen by God in His wisdom and economy!

The other objection to that plan is that it would seriously disarrange God's plans, relative to the selection and exaltation to the divine nature of a "*little flock*" -- the Bride of the Lord Jesus Christ who are being tested now.

Condemning *all* in *one* man opened the way for the ransom and restitution of *all* by *one Redeemer*. Those who can appreciate this feature will find in it the solution of many perplexities and bow before the unexcelled wisdom of God. In His Plan they will see that the condemnation of *all* in *one* was the reverse of injury and really a blessing to all. We rejoice to know that one day evil will be forever extinguished when God's purpose is fully accomplished. It is not possible to rightly appreciate this feature of God's plan without understanding: the exceeding sinfulness of sin; the nature of its penalty -- death; the importance and value of the ransom which our Lord Jesus paid; and the complete restoration of an individual to favorable conditions under which he will have a full and ample trial, before being judged worthy of either everlasting life or eternal death.

BLESSINGS RESULT FROM THE PERMISSION OF EVIL

In view of God's great plan of redemption, and the consequent "*restitution of all things*" through Christ, one thing stands sure: we can see that *blessings* are the result of the permission of evil, which could not otherwise have been so fully realized. Mankind is not only benefited to all eternity by the experiences gained, and angels by an observation of those experiences; but all have further advantages by a fuller acquaintance with God's character, as manifested in His plan which when fully accomplished will enable ALL to clearly see His *Wisdom, Justice, Love* and *Power*. They will see: 1. the *Justice* which could not violate the divine decree, nor save the justly condemned race without a full cancellation of their penalty by a willing Redeemer; 2. how the *Love* which provided this noble sacrifice and which highly exalted the Redeemer to God's own right hand gave Him power and authority to restore to life those whom He had purchased with His precious blood; 3. how the *Power* and *Wisdom* which were able to work out a glorious destiny for His creatures would so overrule all opposing influences as to make

them either the willing or the unwilling agents for the advancement and final accomplishment of His grand designs. We cannot see how these results could have been attained had evil *not* been permitted and overruled by God's providence. The permission of evil displays a farseeing wisdom, grasping all the attendant circumstances, and devised the perfect remedy.

During this Gospel Age or Dispensation, sin and its attendant evils have been further made use of for the discipline and preparation of the Church. Our Lord's sacrifice and that of the Church, the reward of which is the divine nature, would have been impossible had sin not been permitted to test their faith. Jesus "learned obedience by the things suffered," as does the Church.

It seems clear that substantially the same law of God which is now over mankind must ultimately govern all of God's intelligent creatures. Obedience to it has the reward of life, and disobedience the penalty of death. That law, as our Lord defined it, is briefly comprehended in the one word, "**LOVE.**" *"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart...all your soul...all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself"* (Luke 10:27). When the purposes of God shall have been ultimately accomplished, the glory of the divine character will be manifest to all intelligent creatures, and the temporary permission of evil will be seen by all to have been a wise feature in the divine heart of God. Now, this can only be seen by the eye of faith, looking ahead in God's Word at things "spoken by the mouth of all the Holy prophets, since the world began" - *the restitution of all things* (Acts 3:21). Isaiah 55:8-11: "'For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,' declares the LORD. 'As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.'" **PRAISE GOD!**

MANKIND'S COMING BLESSINGS

**Christ tasted death for every man,
And this but once—no more;
God wills for all men to be saved;
He will all things restore.**

**Hebrews 2:9
Romans 6:9
1 Timothy 2:4
Acts 3:21**

**Soon all the dead shall hear Christ's voice
To wake them from death's sleep;
And death and hell shall yield their dead
From earth and ocean deep.**

**John 5, 28, 29
Daniel 12:2
Revelation 20:13
Isaiah 26:19**

**And Abraham's Seed shall bless the earth
And give to all the light,
That they may know God's Holy will
And learn that which is right.**

**Acts 3:25
John 1:9
Jeremiah 31:34
Isaiah 26:9**

**But those who will not hear the voice
Of the Spirit and the Bride
Will be destroyed in Second Death
Eternal life denied.**

**Acts 3:23
Revelation 22:17
Revelation 21:8
1 John 5:12**

But they "who will" need never die,
For plain will be the way
That leads to perfect human life
And joys of endless day.

John 11:26
Isaiah 35:8
Joel 2:28
Isaiah 35:10

With Satan bound a thousand years,
Beneath Christ's chastening rod
The ransomed race can seek and find
Full harmony with God.

Revelation 20:2,3
Psalm 89:32
Hosea 13:14
Rev. 21:3

A race redeemed, and earth made new,
Riches and wealth untold;
A world where righteousness will dwell
And man God's Grace behold!

Isaiah 65:17
Num. 14:21
2 Peter 3:13
Psalm 97:5, 6

Where pain and sickness, grief and death
Are memories of the past;
Where loving faithfulness to God
Forevermore will last.

Isaiah 33:22- 44
Rev. 21:4
Matt. 25:31- 40
Rev. 21:22- 26

When "every knee shall bow and every tongue confess...that Christ is Lord of all to the glory of the Father." Philippians 3:

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