

## IS GOD THE AUTHOR OF SIN?

**"Woe to them who call evil good and good evil, that put darkness for light and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!" Isaiah 5:20.**

The thought is suggested by some that "Evil is one of the grandest of all of God's creations," because, say they, "God is going to overrule it, and his character will be seen more grandly than if it had not been."

The suggestion is evidently built upon the arguments and reasons produced in the pamphlet issued from this office, entitled, "Why Evil Was Permitted"; but to charge God with being the author or creator of sin – moral evil, is going to an extreme as unreasonable as it is unfounded. How prone frail, fallen, human judgment is to err on one side or the other of every truth. The difference between creating evil and permitting it, because divine wisdom foresaw a way to so overrule it as ultimately to cause good results to flow from it, are totally different things. The latter is the view presented in our pamphlet and by its title. That which is actually good produces good only, and needs not to be overruled. If evil were really good, it would not require to be overruled by divine power and wisdom, for good results would naturally flow from it. But such is not the case. Evil is evil, and works out evil only, and goes from bad to worse, and that continually, except as God interposes, and by his wisdom and power overrules it, and uses its force to work out his plans in opposition to it.

To charge that God did evil, or that he in any way produced or caused evil that good might follow, is to charge the Holy One with what any honest man would be ashamed of. It is what Paul terms "slander" (Rom. 3:8). If God is the author or creator of sin (evil), then indeed he would be the chief of sinners.

If on this subject we apply the rule laid down by our Lord Jesus, it proves one of two things – either that God in causing or producing evil was unholy, impure, and sinful above all his creatures, or else that he is pure and holy, and as such could not be the creator or producer of any other quality. Jesus declared that "A good tree bringeth forth good fruit, but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." Every tree is known by his own fruit." "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil." Matt. 7:16-18; Luke 6:43-45; compare also James 3:11.

What shall we say to this logical argument? "Is God the author of confusion? Is God the impure fountain from whence sin proceeded, which has so ruined our race? Nay, nay; false and weak is the theory which needs such an illogical and inconsistent argument for its support. It is contradicted not only by God's character, but by his Word also, which declares that "God is not the author of confusion" (1 Cor. 14:33), while sin is the greatest confusion ever known. But we see, perhaps, the reason which underlies this theory that God was the arch-deceiver, seducer of our race, and author of sin. It is this: A writer accepting the logical conclusions of our argument on Why Evil was Permitted, built upon the Bible doctrine of Restitution, as a result of the RANSOM, makes use of the *conclusions* there arrived at, and attempts to harmonize those conclusions with a theory which he holds – that Jesus was not our RANSOM [corresponding price]. Said writer's attempt is to show that restitution will not be the result of a RANSOM, but because God *in justice owes* to the race a restitution from the penalty of sin; He being the real sinner, and not man, who was merely his tool, and did only what he could not have avoided; the omnipotent God being the author of the sin and compelling its performance.

To support this theory of *no ransom*, this writer was bound to find some reason for evil being in the world which would shift the responsibility and just penalty from man, and he thus forces himself to

this absurd and "slanderous" position of making God the bitter fountain of sin, the excuse being, that God, the creator or author of sin, will by and by blot out this feature of his creation, when it has served its purpose.

Not satisfied with this degree of "slander" upon God's character, this writer goes on to urge that so far from God's justice demanding a *ransom* for all, justice the rather is on man's part, and DEMANDS of God the restitution of all men *as a right*.

The writer seemingly does not see the inconsistency of his argument, which stands out thus: If God is bound by justice to restore men, it follows that God is now and has been for six thousand years punishing man unjustly. If justice *demand*s the sinner's release, justice must have been demanding it all along; and according to this theory it must be that God's conscience has been resisting the *demand*s of his own justice on man's behalf until now. Hence, though God (according to this writer's theory) has been punishing man for sin which God himself created and was responsible for, this writer has HOPE that God will repent and do man JUSTICE, and restore him soon. If such were our view of God we should give up hope of ever obtaining justice from [R849 : page 6] a God so devoid of justice as such conduct would indicate. This is indeed adding blasphemy to slander against Him who cannot look upon sin with any degree of allowance, and who is the very personification of purity. – Matt. 5:48; 2 Sam. 22:31.

And what foundation is there for all this calumny against the Almighty? None whatever; but two texts of Scripture have been so perverted as to give a seeming support to the view suggested. (Isa. 45:7, and Amos 3:6.) Neither of these however have any reference to *sin*, but refer to evil in the sense of calamities and trouble. God declared man guilty, and pronounced the righteous penalty to be death; and in the carrying out of this just sentence, various agencies and circumstances are allowed to operate against man. And thus God is said to "create evil" or more properly translated to prepare or arrange, or as taking

cognizance of and permitting calamities, etc., as agencies in carrying out the penalty prescribed against man.

Neither is it a fair or righteous statement of the matter, to say that God compelled man to sin either by making him imperfect so that he *could not* withstand, nor yet by designing and arranging the temptation, so that the creature Adam could not resist. To have so arranged would be to make of the trial in Eden a farce and a mockery, and under such circumstances it would have been unloving on God's part, and a gross violation of justice, to have inflicted the penalty which for sixty centuries has swept man from the earth.

The Justice of God is the very foundation of his throne as well as the foundation of all man's hopes; and properly, for God as well as man ought to be JUST above all things else. And, is the assurance not given us that "God tempteth no man?" – James 1:13.

Alas that theory should so far befog the moral sensibilities and the reason of the one whom we criticize! The theory which finds such a course necessary to its support is dangerous; for it would not stop at any obstacle to establish itself. In fact it has not stopped, for it steps clear over positive Scripture in repeated statements relative to the *ransom*, without even an attempt to analyze or expound them.

Evil never was a *good* thing and never will be; "woe to them that call good evil and evil good." Evil – sin, is a terrible malady and it is as improper to call it a blessing as to call the cholera or small-pox a blessing, even though under a skillful physician these maladies should be fully cured and leave no bad effects, and though the patient, restored to health, might by his dreadful experience learn to forever avoid contamination with it again. It would be absurd to argue that because of the benefits derived from experience with small-pox, that the disease is therefore a good thing. So with moral evil, sin, it is no less a terrible thing than at first, even though the divine wisdom and foreknowledge saw and arranged for its complete remedy and eradication.

Everything that God has made has been well made – good. Satan must have been created good – God could not create a sinful being. Sin is the *willful* act of the sinner – led astray of his own desire – ambition, pride, etc., as in Satan's case. Jehovah neither creates sinners nor tempts his creatures into sin.

Those who would refresh their minds upon the subject of why evil was permitted and the means God has provided for its legal and actual eradication can send to this office for a copy of "Food for Thinking Christians" – Free.

