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GOD NOT THE AUTHOR OF SIN.

A BROTHER who was greatly helped by the vindication of God's character in the article, "Christian Common Sense," in our March 1 issue, refers us to Job 42:11 as a positive statement that the *evil* which befell Job was brought upon him by Jehovah.

In reply we quote from our issue of Aug. 1, '94, page 245, as follows: –

"Satan is indeed the prince of the air, the present heavens – *ecclesiasticism, both heathen and nominal Christian* – and only the Lord's "little flock" are kept, so that the "wicked one toucheth them not." – 1 John 5:18. [R1800 : page 93]

"But in another sense Satan is prince of the air power, – literally. When Job was given into his hand to be tried, he manifested his power of death. He caused fire to fall from heaven (probably a bolt of lightning), and destroyed [R1800 : page 94] several of Job's servants and his sheep. He caused a great wind (a cyclone or tornado) to come upon Job's house, and thus killed Job's sons and daughters.

"Satan's object evidently was to make Job suppose that God caused those calamities and thus to cause Job to feel bitter and resentful against God, and to 'curse God and die;' or to shake his faith in there being any God. Indeed, that such was Satan's object is implied in the narrative; and Job's friends, although God-fearing men, were deceived into this view, and tried for days to convince Job that his afflictions were the work of the Lord. But of Job it is written, 'In all this Job sinned not, *nor charged God* foolishly [with being the author of his calamities.]" – Job 1:22."

Nevertheless, Job knew to recognize his adversities as God permitted (Job 2:10); because Satan could do no more than God would permit him to do.

However, the Brother only partially grasped our argument; which was *not* that God never causes calamities, such as Job experienced, such as Israel experienced, and such as are promised in the judgments of the "Day of Jehovah;" but that God never commits sin (*moral* evil), nor influences nor compels men to do so.

We do not wonder that the real points might be confused in some minds in which Christian Common Sense rules, to whom it would be too absurd – nay, too blasphemous – to suppose that the Holy One, who is the very standard and pattern of righteousness (1 Pet. 1:15,16), could be the author and instigator of "all sin, wickedness and crime," as some are declaring is the "new light" into which they have come and into which they are striving to lead others. – See 2 Cor. 11:14.

Another inquiry is with reference to the Hebrew word rendered *evil* in Isa. 45:7 and Amos 3:6, which in our issue of March 1 we showed had not the remotest reference to *moral* evil, sin.

We reply, – The word in Hebrew is *ra*. It is translated thirty-two different ways in our common version, thus: – Adversity, Affliction, Calamity, Distress, Grief, Hurt, Ill, Mischief, Misery, Sorrow, Trouble, Wicked, Wickedness, Evil, etc.

Thus it will be seen that like our English word *evil* it might be used in referring to anything not good, undesirable; and both in the Hebrew and the English we should be obliged to judge from the context whether moral evil (sin) or physical evil (pain, trouble, etc.) is meant. We showed beyond question in our article referred to that the context showed that *physical* evil (trouble, calamity, etc.) is the only meaning which can be drawn from "evil" in the texts cited as *proof-texts* (Isa. 45:7; Amos 3:6) by those who would blasphemously, as well as

foolishly, charge God with being the author and instigator of "all the sin and wickedness and crime" of the world.

An illustration of the use of *ra* where it does signify sin, wickedness and crime may be found in Isa. 5:20. It there, however, seems to apply to those who are traducing God's character – calling his good *evil*, calling his righteousness *sin*, and in general confusing themselves and others by calling darkness *light*, and light *darkness*. Verily, "If the light that is in thee become darkness, how great is that darkness." – Matt. 6:23.

[We still have over 1000 extra copies of our March 1 issue which we will supply *free* to our readers to loan to people disturbed by the blasphemous doctrine it opposes and exposes. An occasional one whose *head* has been confused by sophistry, but whose *heart*, as well as his tongue, is still loyal to the Lord, may be reached; but our experience is – not many. Whenever the blasphemous words have eaten "as doth a canker" (2 Tim. 2:17) into the heart, so that they *love* darkness rather than light, when both are before them, – prefer to think of God as the one from whom cometh every evil thought, propensity and act, rather than to recognize him as the Light wherein is no darkness – you may conclude that not only is the head confused, but that the heart also is radically antagonistic to both the spirit and the Word of God. Turn from such, notwithstanding their "feigned words," and turn to and fellowship "him that hath an ear to hear" and a heart to love the first principles of the gospel and only such further teaching as is in full harmony with those first principles. As our Lord did, let us give special attention to "Israelites indeed, in whom is no guile."]
