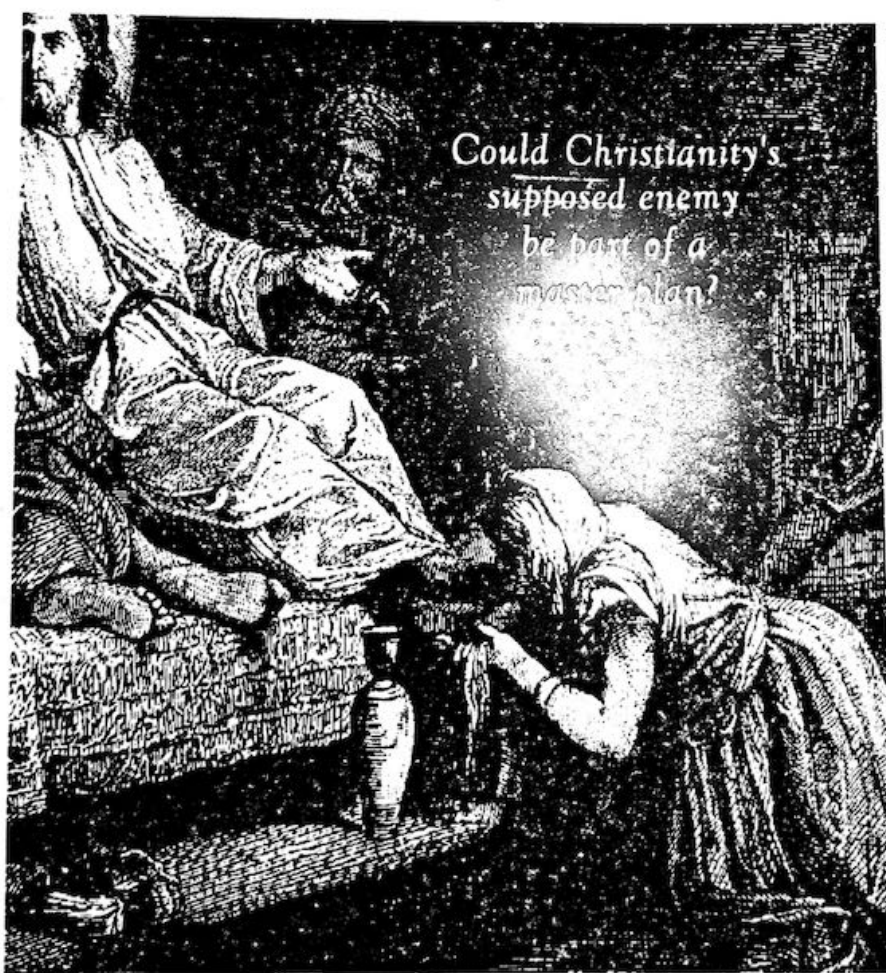


# THE NECESSITY *of* SIN



An illustrated revelation

Jeff Priddy

# *The Necessity of Sin*

**Jeff Priddy**



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### **About the translations used in this book**

Accuracy is my foremost concern throughout. Unless noted, all Scripture references are quoted from the Concordant Literal New Testament and the Concordant Version of the Old Testament. These translations I have found to be the most consistent in their uniform English renderings of Greek and Hebrew words. Where ease of reading is my object, I quote from either the New International Version, the New American Standard Version or The New Testament in Modern English, by J.B. Phillips, yet only as these maintain the literal sense. Where a familiar point-of-reference is needed, I employ the King James Version.



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**Note:** the terms "Christianity" and "Christian," used in this book, refer to the orthodox religion and its followers, not to the truth of Christ and those who embrace it.



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You must believe in God,  
in spite of what the clergy say.

--Benjamin Jowett



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# *Introduction*

## *Scene I*

A woman crashes into the home of Simon the Pharisee. She neither knocks nor removes her sandals. She is the city sinner, to which every eye here attests. Whoredom is fresh on her clothes, yet something belying this has happened to her face.

An unusual thing had occurred that morning, after the last man had slipped into the Jerusalem night. As she looked about her room, a dread of the future suddenly gripped her. Is this how her days would end, in the squalor of dirty pleasures? Was this to be her consummation, to satisfy strange and hungry men? Was this who she was, and the reason for her birth?

The mud-plastered walls of that room were now all she could see. Stars twinkled outside these, but she could not see them; they were hidden from her. A sun shone somewhere on the other side of the world, but not her world. In her world there was only a long, leathery shadow cast from a table lamp. The shadow ran from her feet to a corner of the room, then up the wall, across the ceiling and back again. The shadow could not escape the cubicle. Floor, wall, ceiling, then back again. In this shadow she beheld her life, and she wanted to scream.

Her hands went to her face. "My God," she breathed into them, "this is what I am. This is what I will always be."

She now had to get out of that room or she would cry out and wake the city. She could scream into her pillow. But looking at her pillow now, she hated it and could not get near it. Yet she had to do

something. She had to move. Her soul had to break where the neighbors couldn't hear it.

Not one soul occupied the side street where she burst from her home. Urgency along this void of humanity became her silent scream. She had to be alone for the breakdown. And she had to hurry to it.

She did not run down that street; her walk was more purposeful. She knew where she was going now. She was going outside the city to a cornfield beside the Bethlehem Road. No one would hear her there.

Outside the Essene gate, down the valley of Hinnom, up again over the aqueduct, then west toward the road. That brought her to the place.

The soil was cold, not that her feet felt it. The field was recently gleaned, so it was dead and quiet. The heavens were large and quiet above her. God had placed a cob stripped of kernels for her foot to find, and this is precisely what happened. Now the cob would absorb her agony. She picked it up as a man of her day would grasp a stone, except that her index finger found the nose of the cob. Her left eye was already trained onto the heavens, right wrist cocked.

All agonies now shifted to the act of throwing. Every sinew, muscle, joint and fragment of despair worked to send the cob Godward. She would hit Him, yes. And the mind also was ready with the forbidden question, "What in hell have You *made* me?!"

The cob went far into space, propelled with the impetus of the word "*made*." But it fell to earth, though she never heard it.

She had missed.

The forbidden question, however, did not miss. It hit square and she knew it. Something had happened. Now she felt millions of invisible eyes upon her. She had unmistakably commanded something, perhaps everything. It felt very much like a stage. And so it was. Upon such a stage came a liberating rush of boldness. If she was naked before God, then she would *be* naked. What happened next happened too quickly to stop.

Grasping at her robes, she tore them aside to expose her breasts. They were large and perfect, hung with care by a Master Craftsman. Next she withdrew a vial of olive oil from a small



leather pouch strung around her waist. With insane patience and pre-meditation, she waited until a good pool of it sat in her left palm. Then she applied it. Shaking her breasts lightly back and forth, she slapped and cupped the oil to them. Nothing glistened, for not one celestial orb either rose or fell above the distant row of acacia trees.

Now she gave it to God and whoever else was there. "This is what I am!" she cried. "This is what I do! This is what You made me. This is what *You* made me!"

She let her arms fall to her sides, then shook her breasts back and forth before the Creator of the universe, faster and faster, harder and then harder still. Her breathing quickened to panting, her hair flew about her face, her waist hurt from the twisting. Surely, she was mad.

"Look at me!" her voice quavered, the tears now coming hot. "Look at me, will You! This is what I am! This is what I do! This is what You *made* me!"

Less than a minute of this and it was over, mercifully. It was enough, too much. She wrapped the sections of clothes around her. Then, still breathing hard, she fell to her hands and knees in the field. The soil was indifferent to her suffering, her tears. She, too, was soil. Now she did not dare look into heaven.

She waited very still for the lightning bolt that would kill her. At least it would be fast. She would at least meet it kneeling, her face now in her hands.

Thirty seconds. Still alive. One minute. The lone figure in the cornfield of death, still alive and waiting. One minute and a half: still alive. Two minutes. What was taking so long? She peeked between her fingers. Perhaps the ground would part and swallow her. She wished it would hurry.

Two and a half minutes.

Now something very unusual happened. Instead of the lightning bolt, a saying came into her mind. The saying came uninvited and wholly unimagined. It came distinctly, fashioned of two words. The two words were: "I know." These words calmed her enough so that she dropped her hands to her sides and fixed her eyes toward a faint glow to the East, above Jerusalem. Her agony felt dispelled.

Now she felt warm, as if an arm had been laid on the back of her neck and shoulders, sending warmth through the rest of her body. She even looked at her left shoulder, as if she would see a hand there. She did not see one. But the arm lifted her to her feet and the words came again, "I know," only this time they were followed by her name.

Later that day, near midday, a friend came to her house.

"I saw the Teacher!" said the friend.

She was drinking a cup of coffee then, her fifth. "Jesus? Where did you see him?"

"He entered the home of Simon, the Pharisee. Maybe a half hour ago."

(Luke 7:36--"Now a certain one of the Pharisees asked Him, that He may be eating with him. And entering into the Pharisee's house, He reclined.")

"I'm going there," she said. And she got up to leave.

"You can't just go there," said the friend. "You can't just walk in."

But she had already done so, in her mind. "Why am I doing it, then?" she asked.

"Let me tell you about him first!"

"I already know about him. I've heard." She was already through the doorway.

"What will you do when you get there?" asked the friend, following.

"I don't know yet."

"You are mad."

"He lives near the Tower of Mariamne, right?"

"Simon? Yes, but you'll never find his place."

"I *will* find it. I'll ask someone." And with that, she was gone.

## *Scene II*

Luke 7:37-38--"And lo! A woman who was in the city was a sinner. And, recognizing that He is lying down at table in the Pharisee's house, fetching an alabaster vase of attar and standing behind, beside the feet of Jesus, lamenting, she begins to rain tears

on His feet, and with the hair of her head she wiped them off and fondly kissed His feet, and rubbed them with the attar."

Attar is an essential oil obtained from--flowers.

Jesus knew the timing. So when Simon finished a sentence that ended in "coming," the Teacher looked toward the door. Simon's glance followed His. Several seconds elapsed. What was He staring at? Then the door burst open.

Lo! A woman. She quickly scanned the room, looking for Him. Many eyes pierced her. Again. But these, she did not care for. She looked only for the Teacher's eyes. And she found them. No words were exchanged, or needed to be. Her eyes said, "I am here." His said, simply, "I know."

A vase of attar manifested itself next to the couch where Jesus and Simon were reclining. She grasped it, no one rising to stop her. Then, coming around, she knelt at the feet of Jesus and began to rain tears upon His feet. She wiped the tears with her long hair. Then she kissed His feet, rubbing them with the attar.

Simon was aghast. He looked at the Teacher, Whose eyes were closed. He appeared to be enjoying what was happening to Him.

Simon looked pleadingly at one of his servants. Each knew what the other was thinking, thanking God for the privacy of thoughts, and for the Teacher's sealed vision.

(Luke 7:39- "Now, perceiving it, the Pharisee who invites Him said in himself, saying, 'This one, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman it is who is touching him, seeing that she is a sinner.'")

Simon turned back toward Jesus, a false calm plastered to his face. Suddenly, Jesus locked onto him. "Simon, I have something to say to you."

Simon's veneer crumbled. "Teacher, say it!"

"Two debtors paying usury were owing a certain creditor. The one owed five hundred denarii, yet the other fifty. Now, they having nothing to pay, he deals graciously with both. Which of them, then, will be loving him more?"

"I take it that it is he with whom he deals the more graciously."

"Correctly do you decide." Jesus then gestured toward the woman with His left hand, His gaze still locked onto the man beside Him. "Are you observing this woman?"



"Yes, Teacher."

"I entered into your house; water for My feet you do not give, yet she rains tears on My feet and with her hair she wipes them off. A kiss to Me you do not give, yet she, from the time I entered, did not intermit fondly kissing My feet. With oil My head you do not rub, yet she with attar rubs My feet."

"Oh, my God."

"On behalf of which, I am saying to you, pardoned are her many sins, for she loves much. Now to whom there is scant pardoning, there is scant loving."

Then, turning to the woman, Jesus said, "Go in peace."

### *Scene III, some months later*

The Teacher is now pinned to a Roman stake, dying. Rivulets of blood find the secret places of His manhood; he is naked. His mother is crying. Someone named John is trying to console her. Several local women, too squeamish to approach, look on from the Gennath Gate.

But there are other people here laughing and taunting the Teacher. Surprisingly, they are the city's religious elite. These became jealous of Him because His love outworked their many rules and laws. His love changed lives that their laws and ceremonial washings never touched. He ate with sinners, who worshipped Him. He raised some people from the dead, restoring sight to others. He said He was God's Son. The elite of Judaism knew this could not be.

In the middle of all this, with the sky darkening, His mother crying, the priests laughing, John working in vain and some Roman soldiers gambling for His last garment, the Teacher says: "Forgive them, Father."

The earth can't stand it and quakes. A huge curtain in the temple, weighing hundreds of pounds, tears itself down the middle. A Roman soldier, awestruck at the sufferer's words and the other manifestations, breaks down at the foot of the stake. He throws down his helmet, kneels, pushes the top of his head against the wood to heave against it and cries: "Surely, this was God's Son!"

Move the scene to a palm tree a few miles from Jerusalem.  
Move it to a cloudless day, near the lake. Put a picnic basket there,  
some happy kids, a few hot fish. "Forgive them, Father."

It doesn't work.

Try it at the temple, under a marble carving and a statue, with a  
few of the elders present and a man waving incense. Jesus is  
gesturing, His arm emerging from the soft folds of His tunic.  
"Forgive them, Father."

No effect.

Move it to the Pool of Bethesda; it's cool there and the bathers  
will make a ready audience. "Forgive them, Father."

Nothing.

Is there something wrong with the Script? Move the scene back  
to the Place of the Skull.

"Forgive them, Father."

I am falling to my knees at the stake now, pushing the top of my  
head against the wood, to heave against it.

✠   ✠   ✠

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## *Chapter 1*

---

### **It needs to be here**

The Catholics kneel because of Him. The Pentecostals raise their hands. Baptist ministers get sing-songy and glisten with sweat. All of this because the Creator of the world took flesh at Bethlehem. "Thank God He came!" is the cry of these faithful. The revelation of God's love has changed their lives. With Him, they have something to live for.

The worship session is over, however, and it's time for Phase 2. All must be damned now that has ever withstood Christ. The Catholics distribute flagellums and begin beating themselves (all right, most merely give up chocolate) for their sins. The Pentecostals yell at Satan until he retreats behind a snare drum. The Baptists burn Pilate in effigy, along with some videos.

What is missing from this picture? Mature reflection. There would be no Christ to kneel before unless Sin had invaded the world. No resurrection could be grasped had not Satan killed the Savior. And where would be the Crucified One without Romans who could crucify? Someone had to master that necessary torture.

I would like, at this time, to make three statements. Some will consider these heretical, for they are logical. Logic, we know, is the enemy of all religion. Nevertheless, the three statements are as follows: 1) sin is necessary 2) Satan is necessary 3) since God is God, He provided for these on purpose.

I am thanking God now for freedom of speech, and that it is entirely illegal in this country to burn people on purpose. If, however, some Duty Bound Defenders of the Irresponsibility of the

Deity and the Blaming of the Devil and Sinful Man For Everything That Has Ever Ruined an Otherwise Glorious Day in the Lives of Blissfully Ignorant Saints (their bumper stickers are quite large and unwieldy) *must* whip up a Christian-styled vendetta against me, I would like a park dedicated in my memory (no dogs on the running track, please), where people can sit and think. But before any of these festivities get underway, I would like my calmer readers to understand three things about what I've said:

1) I am not saying we should gild sin, or promote it in our schools; I'm only saying it's necessary. Sin, I believe, can be disciplined without being damned. Let us not panic or worry about it, that's what I'm saying. The Scriptures say not to worry about anything.<sup>1</sup> Why *should* we worry, if sin had to come? More than this, I believe that the spirit-filled thinker, understanding the necessity of sin, can know peace *now*, even in the midst of his vilest failings.

2) I am not saying that the likeness of Satan (whatever it is) should be bronzed and standing in our city squares; I'm only saying he is necessary. We can resist him, I believe, without assailing him or imparting to him the power of Deity. The Adversary likes attention, however he can get it. When we rail against him we please him, for by thus capturing our attention he has transferred our energies from Christ to himself.

3) It is not that we should like or promote those who murdered Messiah; anyone with a Pilate poster or high priest trading cards ought to look into baseball. But I think we should learn to consider

*Mature  
Reflection*



"Of course God purposed Pontius for that Great Hour. Oh, Alan, why hadn't I seen it before?"

Pontius and other vessels of dishonor with mature reflection. Did God not purpose Pilate for that Great Hour? Then he was necessary. Remove him from office, yes. Cut his pension. Repossess his condo in Caesarea, by all means. But do not send him to an eternity of torment for doing what God designated beforehand to occur.<sup>2</sup>



Let us pause and think. Only sin can highlight grace. Only an antagonist can oppose, and thus reveal, the Hero of the drama. Do away with sin now and you do away with grace. Eliminate the devil now and you eliminate God's anvil where He pounds out revelation. Whoever curses evil, curses the only field against which good can appear. Don't you think God knows what He's doing? He could eliminate any or all of this in a zap. That He doesn't makes me think that God still needs these things and that He has a....a master plan?

Sorry about that. Now I've done it. I didn't mean to say that God has a master plan. I didn't mean to sound so juvenile and simplistic this early in the book. I wanted to come across, early on at least, as a respected Christian author full of sound, fury and platitudes, signifying nothing. My idea of God having a master plan would mean this: that I believe God to be using sin, evil and the devil in an intelligent and premeditated way, in order to carry out His plan. Besides being childlike, this belief would offend every axiom of religion.

Do I really want to do that, this early in the project? It would mean that I believe God's plan to be unstoppable and unavoidably successful. How? If sin, evil and the devil cannot stop it (but rather help it along), what can? And no belief could so wound the system as the one claiming God's plan to be this: He is using sin, evil and the devil as foils for the purpose of revealing His goodness and grace. He is using sin, evil and the devil as a means of ultimately reconciling an estranged and hurting universe, all of it, to Himself. Further, He is using the worst "sin" and "evil" ever committed--the crucifixion of His beloved Son--to accomplish this grand purpose.<sup>3</sup>

Now I've really done it. Could I really say that? Let's say that I could say it. Assuming that I could say it (that God will someday reconcile an estranged and hurting universe, all of it, to Himself through the "sin" of the cross), what if it were true? And if I could say it and if it were true, what if its trueness were traceable in the holy Scriptures themselves (footnote 3), invisible these many centuries to the Book's self-appointed defenders who, if they knew this truth were there, might get up some new translation to remove it?

What if this thing, said by me, found to be true, supported in Scripture, then entered the hearts and minds of the so-called laity? Would not peace replace panic in many sectors of the world? Would not a blessed expectation replace the fear and dread taught by the so-called clergy? Then the Christian Coalition for the Devitalizing of Christ's Blood for Everyone But Themselves would be neatly out of work. Do I really want to disemploy so many fine people?

Yes.

### Chums and projects

This Christian religion of which I speak cannot be trusted with anything as vital as truth. Dinners and songfests, yes. Truth, no. Christianity has become a club of chums and projects, something to join, a place to eat, to fellowship, to feel needed. Few think there anymore, in the church. Few argue over doctrine, or care to. Doctrine divides, they say, and unity outweighs truth. Discussing who God is makes some people mad. If you make some people mad, they might leave. Then who will play the Bethany Broncos in the Saturday night basketball league? Who will play the organ? If we offend Mrs. Johnson, who will mind the nursery?

This religion is too excitable, too self-righteous, not careful enough with big and vital themes. It seems unable to think maturely or consistently about sin, evil and Satan. It seems incapable of teaching with any enthusiasm or authority on the outcome of the universe. (Could this be because the universe, according to its teaching, winds up worse after Calvary than before it? Who could be enthusiastic about that? Hollywood, maybe. Or the Prozac people. Does anyone reading this book care about the outcome of the universe? I am here to talk about it, to broach this strangely forbidden topic.) It runs



The Committee on Doctrine  
discusses the nature of God.

roughshod over Scripture, pulling verses out of context (those that support its schemes), then discarding the rest.

And politics. This religion has become so politically bent that mature reflection has drowned in front of the Lincoln Memorial. Jesus did not rouse the rabble. He went to the mountains to pray, to be quiet, to acknowledge God in every circumstance. He did not fight, petition or plead for political deliverance. He sought His Father's will, nothing more. When He preached, He meant to change the inner man rather than the outward circumstance. It would be the fruit of peace that would alter the political landscape (as well as the landscape of sin), not a petition with twenty-thousand signatures.

I thank God that no Christian soldiers (the "onward" type) stalked Jerusalem then. Where were all the activists when our innocent Savior stood before Pilate at the Fortress Antonia? They were present, I suppose, yet bereft of the necessary technology to alter God's intention. The bullhorn, slogan and prayer chain had yet to be invented, praise Jesus. Thus free of compulsion (if you get enough people together and make enough noise, God *has* to accommodate you), God could follow His instincts and do what *He* wanted.

And then there's Eden, the hotbed of sin. Had Christian soldiers been *there*, Adam would have been a Promise Keeper, Eve a self-aware woman, and Satan the project of a national day of prayer. No sin ever would have marred the world; you simply cannot trick a self-aware woman. Even if you could, the Promise Keeper would keep his promise, leaving the woman to her fate. (What sort of children would come of this, with Adam on one side of the tree and Eve on the other, we can only guess.) Besides, as national days of prayer invariably work (as long as it's the first Thursday in May and the press releases have been distributed), Satan would have converted to Christianity, then flitted about the country doing radio spots; no

*He joined the prayer chain  
in the nick of time.*



"Mine was the final prayer  
that saved Christ."



tempter, no sin. No stage, either, readied for the advent of Life and Love. Oh, well. Onward, Able Fighters of Your Own Eternal Happiness.

I am beginning to wonder now if God is the outwiter of humanity, the smarter of the two. I am beginning to wonder if He frustrates religious zealots for their own good (while they are left musing, "Hmm. Maybe we need more money"). But there I go again, hastening my demise. You'll think of me, won't you, when you sit down in my park to think?

### The prostitute

What inspired the prostitute's worship? Jesus, yes, I know. But why did she respond so to Him? Wasn't it because she was a prostitute? Wasn't it *because* of her sin? Wasn't it because her desperate need drove her to the feet of a Savior?

"Here is my hair. I have teased men with it, yes. But what else do I have for you? You made my hair, it's long, it comes from my head through Your hands and now I give it to You. Tears fall from my eyes because of that arm in the cornfield. It rested on my shoulders with my robes still torn. You love me forever, whenever. I didn't know that until this morning, so I sought You, to worship You. Now I spill everything where You walk before I can think about what I'm doing. And I dab it dry with what comes from me in ringlets."

If this woman had not been what she was, this scene never would have happened. If mankind were not what it is today, God would be yet unrevealed; we would still be awaiting revelation of a Deity so tender that grown men, sinners themselves, lay their heads on His bosom. Why do you think this woman was a whore? Not so there could be one more whore in the world. Was Jesus Christ a Savior because this woman was a whore? I tell you, this woman was a whore because Jesus Christ was a Savior. And so God gives to the ages a demonstration of real worship.

(Now you may enter, you sin soldiers with the fisted stones. But wait. How do you know when the next scene begins? How do you know from which quadrant of the city His next project staggers? Scenes of grace come from town, not the temple. They come from

the tax collector's office, from the bar, from the fishing wharf and that mud-plastered cubicle near the Pool of Amygdalon. Who will be next, and who will dare to pray them back home? Perhaps you should rest and unhand the weapons. Hurry to your own cornfield. Why not leave God to His canvas? Let Him paint His masterpieces. Worship Him without wondering how to. Stay out of His paint.)

### Failure by design

2 Corinthians 4:7 reads, "Now we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the transcendence of the power may be of God and not of us."

We are clay pots by design, not because we have fouled God's intention for us. Let this revelation soothe the exhausted self-improver. Retire, Christian soldier. You fail by design, not because you are a failure. God wants you cognizant of the source of your power. He has many creative ways of driving this home. One of these is sin.

Wouldn't some of our race love to shed their earthenware now and still walk among mortals? Consider the Christian. His sins inhibit an exemplary walk, and he mourns this. Yet he doesn't understand that this is the idea. God puts His treasure in earthenware to keep the vessel from a high shelf in the drawing room.

Humility is a blessed thing. Vessels on high shelves sit poised, ready to topple and shatter on hard floors. Pride is burdensome and is known for preceding these falls. Can it be so bad to be delivered of this?

Thank God for the comfort of mistakes. Mistakes remind us of our pothood and drive us toward Him. When we finally quit chasing perfection and accept these vessels, we become happy. When we forget about ourselves, peace ensues. The happy acceptance of imperfection is the beginning of peace. How can you be peaceful and flogging yourself simultaneously? You can't.

Some people can't stop looking at themselves, or thinking about what beauty-niche they occupy in this vain world. A pimple destroys them. Yes, a stupid pustule, small as a pinhead, sends them crying to their bedrooms. Thus also, sin. This is peace? It *can*

be. Let the blemish (or the sin) bring them to earth, to the realm of humanity that swarms together under God. A lot of friendly people live there.

I once saw a movie star on a talk show. Ignoring the cameras, this star looked at the studio audience and said, "You people are lucky. You people don't know how good you have it. You look up here and envy me. Yet I am a miserable person. Everyone expects perfection from me, always. Revel in your anonymity, in your uncelebrated failings. You are blessed."

Somehow, I'll never forget that.

### Little hands in the toy shop

And so marvel at the Christian today, wanting to turn his pot into a vase. Besides being hard work, it's unnecessary. Hasn't he read of God's purpose? Apparently not, for he thumps his Bible at himself and others, with the grim-faced challenge, "Quit sinning for God!" That would be fine, were it God's plan. But it isn't God's plan, so he may as well be quiet and eat a banana. I'm all for morality, but only as God imparts it. God can do this without soapboxing and the many facial contortions that accompany self-righteousness.

Who can blame a vessel for moaning? I can't. These bodies are burdensome. But God simply refuses to deliver us from everything now. Perfection would be disastrous this side of immortality. Can you imagine the Christian pray-er getting all that he prays for? I thank God for the

wisdom that slaps little hands in the toy shop, thwarting those who think: "A perfect walk is just what I need." If these could walk perfectly now, well, it's not a pretty thing to contemplate.

*A perfect walk is just  
what he needs.*



Being necessary, then, sin is not the disaster orthodox Christianity makes it out to be. Christianity is despairing of the very thing that has brought salvation to the world and grace to their lives.

### The scrambling Deity

To hear some teach it, sin and evil wrecked God's original plan, driving Him back to His laboratory. Like some wild-haired scientist whose first experiment exploded, God returned to His test tubes to re-read the formula. What if that were true? I would call it a nightmare. Yet it doesn't seem to bother some folks that God could be like that. They are gluttons for nightmares, is my conclusion.

This nightmare is likely a reaction to a worse horror, namely, the supposed eternality of sin and evil. If sin and evil are eternal, then good people must relieve God of all responsibility for them. And so all the good people of the world have assisted Him ever since, inventing such philosophies as human free will and the sovereignty of the devil. A neat fix, never mind God is demoted to the Patcher of Holes in His own chaotic universe.

How fine to discover that all this work is for naught. The false human philosophies of free will and Satanic sovereignty are but bad checks written to cover a bad check; sin and evil are *not* eternal, they are temporary. After they have accomplished their divinely-appointed task, they are banished forever from the universe.

*Are you as honest  
as these gentlemen?*



"What a terrible morning in church. First they told us evil is eternal, then they told us to go in peace."

### The purpose of sin and evil: contrast

What is the divinely-appointed task of sin and evil? Simply stated, it is the work of contrast. God made creation to depend on contrast for revelation. Creation cannot know good apart from evil. It cannot know love apart from hate. It cannot know friendship



apart from enmity. And as we saw with the prostitute at Simon's house, neither can it know grace without sin.

The plan is this: Give all creation a limited experience of evil, hate, enmity and sin. This and this alone will prepare it for an eternal appreciation of good, love, friendship and grace--all the things that are God. Temporary evil is bartered for eternal good. Fair enough?

Next, all creation is shown this good in the actions of a Man so full of love for them that He gives Himself to a degrading death He doesn't deserve, for their sakes. Bleed this Man with whips, nails and spears. *Then* when He says, "Forgive them, Father," creation trembles and falls silent. Give Him that script at the temple, under a date palm, in a boat. It doesn't work. It works only as He is pinned naked to a stake before His mother.

With the love of God thus matted and framed, the Man dies with all our mistakes tied to His back. But then God raises Him from the dead victorious, all our missteps left behind, never to condemn us.

Thus vindicated and glorified, this Man draws all creation to His feet, where they acclaim the greatness of God. The book of Philippians states that, in the name of *this* Man, "Every knee should be bowing, celestial and terrestrial and subterranean, and every tongue should be acclaiming that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father."<sup>4</sup> The book of Colossians states that the blood of this Man, Jesus Christ, will reconcile and return a groaning creation, *all* creation, to God.<sup>5</sup>

With this goal accomplished, God trashes the whips, nails and spears. All the sin and evil, gone. It is so. The last enemy God abolishes is death.<sup>6</sup> Since death is the *last* enemy abolished, all other enemies will have gone before. Please pardon the sheer logic of it.

### **Isn't this the good news of Christianity?**

The Scriptural information you just heard might surprise you. I know you don't hear about this in your average church. This is because your average church doesn't believe it. Your average church teaches that, in spite of Christ's sacrifice, most of your friends, neighbors and family members will be either eternally

tormented or annihilated. This, they call "the good news." After hearing this "good news," you're instructed to "go in peace to love and serve the Lord," Who apparently is a dismal failure. No one can honestly serve such a Lord as that, of course. But a lot of people can fake it, and do.

The Emperor, however, is naked.

*Nuts.*



Uncle Ben finally breaks "the good news" to his nephew.

It is assumed that because a great number of people believe a thing, it must be right. Never is this theory a greater hindrance to truth than in the realm of religion. Even a cursory glance into Biblical precedence will expose the falseness of it.

Search the Scriptures. The bringers of truth, always, were a rare, harried lot, sent by God into the wilderness of unbelief that was temple life. In the 23rd chapter of Matthew, Jesus reminds the contemporary clergymen that their forefathers killed the prophets. "Fill full the measure of your fathers," Jesus said. Yet they said, "If we were in the days of our fathers, we would not be participants with them in the blood of the prophets."<sup>7</sup> The coming April would expose their hypocrisy.

Jesus told His disciples, "Coming is the hour that everyone who is killing you should suppose he is offering divine service to God."<sup>8</sup> The baton is passed, and the killing continues today in so many subtle, well-dressed ways, always in the shadow of the cross.

A primary function of institutional religion, then and now, is to provide men of God the privilege of suffering evil at the hands of the clergy. There is no keener suffering. It was *His* suffering.

The apostle Paul characterized these as days of apostasy.<sup>9</sup> Apostasy engages saints, not sinners, for the world cannot fall from faith. In days *characterized* as apostate, the majority will be wrong, not right.

Think about that.

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## Chapter 2

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### No one except Christ can undo sin

Betty wears plain dresses, keeps her hair bunned and attends the *I Love Jesus Church of Holy Good Habits and Flat Shoes*. She believes that with proper application of faith, concentration, prayer, sincerity, Bible reading and vitamins, any person can come within a hairpin's breadth of a sinless life. If there were trading cards for saints, you could trade two Peters for a Betty. (Why the shocked look? Betty would have died with her Lord "before the cock crew once, even.")

But Betty has a secret sin: pride. Max, Betty's husband of thirty years, admits that his wife tries hard to keep her pride contained. "But it sometimes oozes out," Max admitted, eating a ham sandwich. "How can it not? I mean, if one of your decisions saved you from eternity in hell, I don't see how the ooze can possibly be contained. But shoot. I still love her."

Otherwise, Max is a heathen.

Max was referring to Betty's decision to accept Christ. Betty is proud because she mistakenly believes that her decision saved her from sin. Instead of believing that Jesus bore her sins on the cross, Betty "knows" her sins would have haunted her into eternity unless she "found Christ" before she died. Betty says Jesus saved her. But how so, if this "salvation" fails without Betty's assistance? If Christ *needs* Betty's decision to validate His work, His work was insufficient. Did He save Betty at the cross, or didn't He? Apparently (according to Betty's doctrine), He did not, for Betty spent most of her life "unsaved." Apparently, Jesus only made it possible for Betty to save herself by accepting Him.



So you can see how monumentally important Betty's decision is to her. Before her decision (and in spite of Christ's work), she was damned. After it, she had delivered herself from sin. As a formula it would read:

Christ + nothing = nothing.

Christ + Betty = everything.

The vital and deciding factor: Betty. It was an important day, the day Betty saved herself. It returns every year, with donuts.

Max plays poker that day.

### Stupendous things

Rather than seeing salvation from sin as a gracious gift (ignore for a moment that most Christians call it that), saints like Betty

think it's an offer they wisely accepted. To hear them talk, they exercised what is known as their "free will."



*Do you really believe this woman?*

For those not theologically inclined, "free will" is a popular

Christian doctrine which says that God controls everything on this planet except people. Free will means that some people can do stupendous things that others can't manage. Free will separates the masses into two categories: "wise" and "stupid." Free will means that those who

"It's nothing of myself." accept Christ are wiser than those who reject Him. People who believe in free will talk humble, like "my salvation is nothing of myself." But it *is* of themselves if they have free will.

I prefer two particular truths to this false tenet. The truths that "all are wanting of the glory of God"<sup>1</sup> and "not one is seeking out God"<sup>2</sup> lump mankind together. They put Betty in with Max, as much as she hates that. These truths take away religious people ("wise people") either hoisting other people to heaven or condemning them for "not making it." They flatten homemade halos. They credit whatever good there is about a person's walk, including their belief, to God and not to the person.

Only God can impart the faith to believe.<sup>3</sup>

The flip side of realizing that God alone gives faith is the realization that a sinner's disbelief isn't his fault. There's a despised teaching for you. Any teaching that dismisses the "wise-stupid" concept doesn't make it onto statements of faith. Sinners *must* be stupid and Christians *must* be wise; this seems to be an essential element of "feeling good" in Christ. If everyone eventually receives mercy (as Romans 11:32 clearly states they will), what is the point of loving Christ? Much of the Christian joy I have witnessed requires that others be missing it. Christians want good news, you see, as long as it's not *too* good. God forbid it should apply to the jackass down the road.

How can God reward a person who doesn't do the good himself? Would God reward a person for something *He* did? This is common Christian thinking, with the common Christian answers being, 1) God can't, and 2) God wouldn't. So common Christian thinkers, thinking this way, *must* blame sinners for being so sinny. That's the flip side. It has to work both ways. Again, forgive the logic of it all.

A) If Betty says, "a sinner's condemnation is the sinner's own fault," she must then believe that her own salvation is to her credit (in spite of how humble she talks).

B) If Betty says "my salvation is nothing of myself," she must then believe that a sinner's disbelief is *not* the sinner's fault (in spite of how she looks down her nose at him).

In public, many Christian men and women will say, "We are what we are by the grace of God." But *How quickly they forget.* that's a line. Because in private they'll hug their "personal" decision and draw joy from it. In public they will say, "God bless the poor sinners." But that's a line, too. Because in private they'll think, "Those foolish worldlings. Why don't they just believe, as we did?"



"For the love of Pete, Margaret. I'll never understand why the Clarks just don't believe—as we did!"

### Four-step hash

None of us wanted born into this vale of tears. I didn't sign up for it. Nobody asked me if I wanted to come here, to this earth, into this body. Had they, I would have taken one look and said, "Vales? Tears? I think not." But God is God. Clay vessels and their inhabitants are the determination of the Deity, not the human. Since God is God and since we are what we are, God must have made us this way purposely. And so He did.<sup>4</sup> Unless our vessels are cracked and lacking, we can never know the grace that will employ them in future work.

Regardless of what shoes a man or woman may wear, it is neither one's responsibility to conquer sin. God would never leave such important work to a cracked pot. Sin is too hard and too big. *A human? Against sin?* Only a fool would ever think it was a fair fight. Sin gives God something to power through, not the befuddled spiritual aspirant.

If you can rescue yourself from sin, then Christ suffered and died in vain. If you wish to dishonor the Savior, then go into a dark room and say repetitive prayers. When you emerge, promise to change for Him. Fool yourself that He banks on your promises, points you out to others, arranges His plans on the back of your ability, then throws up His hands when you fail to deliver. In short, try to rid your life of sin. You will effectually make hash of His work.

You can turn His work to hash with these four easy steps: 1) beg Him to accept you, 2) wrestle with your flesh, 3) bemoan your imperfections and 4) despise your humanity.

### We prefer football

"All avoid Him." That's Scripture,<sup>5</sup> and it applies to everyone. Everyone avoids Christ. It's universal. No one wants anything to do with anything so stupid as a man getting crucified for the sins of the world. We prefer football. Crucifixion is too weak, too ridiculous. We have helmets and cleated shoes. God purposely, however, chooses weak and stupid things, to disgrace the wise and the

strong.<sup>6</sup> This is precisely the plan. Not everyone realizes this. Most people think God is trying and failing.

*Someday, Einstein will be  
calling this man a genius*

A man once said to me:

"Look what happened to Jesus!"

as if Calvary were a colossal flop, a disappointment. I looked at his car, his degree, his fine home and said, "Yes, but look what happened to *you*." He didn't get it. He still hasn't. It delights God to use foolish and stupid things.<sup>7</sup> People make fun of the story of Noah and his ark. The joke is on them. It's not a story, it's a fact. God's stupidity is wiser than Einstein. His weakness is stronger than Ford trucks.



Noah

It is only as God lifts the veil that anyone sees wisdom in the crucifixion of Christ or a man in a boat with a zillion drooling animals. Someday we will be embarrassed that we ever drove pick-up trucks. That we actually felt smug in them will discomfit us still further.

### Holy carrots

"While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."<sup>8</sup> Christ saved us while we were still sinners; He did not save us after we had stopped sinning long enough to choose Him.

Christian "evangelists" have it backwards. They dangle the cross like a carrot and say, "This can be yours if only you can manage to quit sinning long enough to accomplish the most stupendous, unsinning, righteous thing a human being could possibly accomplish (that is, if only you can be smart enough to come down here and believe)." Then they have the gall to call this "grace." I call it "being smart enough to manage a stupendous thing."

On more wicked days, I call it McDonalds Grace: "We'll give you the 'free' fries all right, but you've got to drag your hindquarters to our restaurant before midnight on the 31st or the offer expires." And yet it's worse than this, because the fine print at the bottom of the coupon says: "And if you do not arrive here by then, for





"Accept God's grace, damn you!"

*Isn't this just about the essence of modern evangelism?*

whatever reason, not only do we *not* give you the 'free' fries, but we deliver your hindquarters up to a competing chain that specializes in char-broiling." Then there's an asterisk after the word "char-broiling."

Locate the asterisk at the

bottom of the bottom of the

coupon and it reads, \* "for eternity. Some restrictions apply. Rules may vary. See your local pastor for details."

### Christ saves, belief does not

Salvation isn't an offer, it's a fact. Is the crucifixion's outcome so poor that it flunks facthood? Am I to transmute the consequential hours of Calvary into a mere *offer*? I won't do it. Offers are for telephone solicitors. That terrible hour at Calvary produced something as heavy and real as rock. This salvation was actual, not merely possible, else Christ did nothing.

The Scriptures say God *is* the Savior of all mankind.<sup>9</sup> It is only the Christian religion that has added the word "possible" before the word "Savior." God never added that. Unless He saves all mankind, He cannot be the Savior of all mankind. He has to do it in order to be it. And so logic once again rears its lovely head.

Founded on the bedrock of salvation, true evangelism reads this way: "Christ *saved* you, atop that hill. Because of Christ's cross, you, sir (or madam), stand before me saved, the condemnation of sin put away. This is not an offer, it is a fact. Now, what is your reaction to it?"

If it's God's time for it, the reaction will be belief. And it will be God Who will have given it. Personal belief is a reaction to

salvation, not a cause of it. Otherwise salvation is of personal belief rather than of Christ. All will eventually come to acclaim this work, to which the Scriptures have already attested. And who can acclaim it without believing it?

John the Baptist looked us in the eye when he named Jesus Christ the Lamb of God "who is taking away the sins of the world."<sup>10</sup> Now, did the Man complete this work or didn't He? I say He did.

So what's the problem?

As already noted, once sin has done its work, it is banished from the universe. With sin finally eradicated, all will rise to immortality with their Savior. What else would God do, seeing that His Son removed the barrier between man and God? Yet in God's purpose it will be "every man in his own order."<sup>11</sup>

### A sane plan

It is common knowledge among students of the Bible that, following this evil-ridden existence, there will be a one-thousand year kingdom on earth.<sup>12</sup> Jesus referred to this as "the coming eon."<sup>13</sup> This gives way to a new heavens and a new earth,<sup>14</sup> which is yet *another* eon.<sup>15</sup> Those who receive faith now live during these two future eons. This is the life Paul spoke of when he said, "the gift of God is eonian life."<sup>16</sup> Jesus spoke continually of this life. This is the way that Jesus referred to as "narrow."<sup>17</sup> The narrow way had to do with Israel and the few who would enter immortal into that millennial kingdom, *not* with the eternal fate of the majority of mankind.<sup>18</sup>

The word "eon" will be strange to some. It mustn't be any longer.

This noun and its adjective ("eonian") appear in the New Testament over 170 times (in the original Greek) as *aion* and

*aionion*. Why haven't many recognized them in our English versions? Because "expert translators" have decided to interpret rather than translate. More on this in a moment.

*Memorize this word*

# aion.

No two words in the history of man have been so tortured as *aion* and *aionion*. No two words in the history of man, mishandled by man, have contributed more to the physical, emotional and spiritual harm of so many, than these. You think I must be exaggerating. But I am not. It is the mistranslation of *these two words* that has foisted the false and destructive doctrine of eternal torment upon the church and the world.

Eternal torment is built on the sand of mistranslation, slipped easily upon saints who would like eternal torment to be true, if only to anoint themselves "divine messengers" on a "great commission," mandated "by God" to lord fear and power over lesser men under the misnomer: "evangelism."

It is where the King James and other versions unaccountably use "eternal" and "everlasting" (for *aionion*) to describe the chastisement of the wicked that a false Scriptural veneer is lent to an otherwise insane (and inane) concept.

### What is an eon?

The following considerations are vitally important to your peace and understanding of God.

Our English word "eon" is derived from the Greek word *aion*. (Remember, the New Testament was originally written in Greek.) It even sounds like it and is nearly spelled the same. Obviously, it would be the perfect translation of *aion*. An eon is "a duration of time." So is an *aion*.<sup>19</sup> Had this word been left to speak for itself (the Concordant Version does that, putting "eon" for *aion*, always, and "eonian" for *aionion*, always), the false terror of eternal torment would never have arisen to deceive the saints and turn the world from God. Several versions do translate it consistently.<sup>20</sup>

The ineptness of the orthodox translators can be easily verified. Look up the words "ages," "world," "eternal," "everlasting" and "forever" in either a *Strong's* or a *Young's* concordance. (These reference tools list every word in the King James Version and their source word from the original languages.) You will find that these words, a veritable hodge-podge, are all interpretations of this single Greek noun (*aion*) and its adjective.

Such interpretations are not only disparate, they are asinine. The



same Greek word *cannot* mean "ages" in one place and "forever" in another. "Ages" have to do with time and plurality, while "forever" is the opposite of time and defies duplication. (If the reader wishes to imagine two forevers, he may try it. Minors attempting the feat will require adult supervision.) Can one word mean both "day" and "night?" Neither can one word mean both "time" and "no time." An orthodox bias has made fools of otherwise intelligent men.

Yet here is the rub. Even where the Scriptures speak of the life of believers as "eternal," an error is an error.

### "Eonian" a timely word

"Eonian life" is falsely reported in the King James version and elsewhere as "eternal life." It will come as a shock to many to learn that neither Jesus nor Paul ever spoke of "eternal life" but rather "eonian life," or that life which endures through the two future eons already discussed. If this disclosure spoils the meter in some beloved Christian hymns, let truth conquer cadence.

The initial knee-jerk reaction to this truth is that, since "eon" and "eonian" pertain to time, the saints must not live forever. This is faulty reasoning. The saints *do* live forever, but not because of eonian life. The saints live forever because they are made immortal.<sup>21</sup> Immortal people can't die, no matter how hard they try.

"Eonian life" defines life during the coming eons only. As not everyone has this, this term distinguishes those who do. As the eons end (and so they will<sup>22</sup>), so ends the appellation "eonian life." And yet the saints live on, for at the consummation of the eons death is abolished.<sup>23</sup> If you have enough water to make it to a well, do you die of thirst? Neither does a saint who has eonian life die when the eons yield to deathlessness.

*This believer isn't thinking clearly.*



"You think you've got it bad? I just found out I only have eonian life."

Many suppose that "eonian" *must* denote endlessness when describing God, as in Romans 16:26- "the eonian God." (King James wrongly makes this, "the everlasting God.") It's another overreaction.

This verse isn't *trying* to tell anyone that God lives forever. Everyone already knows God lives forever. Psalm 102:27 testified long ago that "His years shall have no end." It's old news. The vital question is: Does God sit on high, removed from our struggles in time, or does He care what happens during the eons? He cares. Thus, He is "the eonian God." This does not *limit* Him to the eons any more than "the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob" limits Him to those patriarchs.

What about His everlasting mercy? This, too, is limited to the eons. (And yet, verify this, the church would rather teach a lie than rewrite a hymn.) Mercy presupposes unworthies, of which someday there will be a blessed lack. Eternal mercy demands eternal imperfection. Mercy finds no object when all return to Him.

Won't the saints reign "forever and ever" as King James reports in Revelation 22:5? No. They will reign for the eons. Reign presupposes insubjection, another deficiency unworthy of Christ. Not even Christ reigns forever and ever. Scripture says that "He must be reigning *until* He should be placing all His enemies under His feet."<sup>24</sup>

The King James Version contradicts itself on this count. The KJV translation of

*A well-researched  
insult*



"Oh, yeah? Well your Savior reigns forever!  
What do you have to say about that, Freddy?"

Revelation 11:15 reads, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever." Yet their rendition of 1 Corinthians 15:25 reads, "For he must reign, *till* he hath put all enemies under his feet."

An accurate translation of Revelation 11:15 eliminates this discrepancy. The Concordant version has, "The kingdom of this world became our Lord's and His Christ's, and He shall be reigning *for the eons of the*

eons." (As the phrase "king of kings" highlights one king among others, thus also "eons of the eons" highlights two eons among others. Neither phrase carries the idea of "an endless succession," as commonly supposed.) Discrepancy disappears when God's words are respected.

It's a slap in the face, to Christ, to say that Christ reigns forever. Does He *never* perfect the universe? He does. He will one day subject everything to God, who will then be "all in all."<sup>25</sup> With no more insubjection, reign becomes impossible. Christ reigns so well during the eons that He eliminates the need for it for eternity.

While it is not my purpose to pursue this vast and interesting subject in this book, I hope to give more Scriptural evidence of Christ's success as a Savior in an upcoming work. This work will expose the false scholarship and hardened hearts that have promoted the heretical eternal torment doctrine and confused millions on the subject of sin and hell. May it suffice for now to say that Christianity, with its gross and biased handling of Scripture, has done more than any heathen religion to turn the world from God.

*Happy day.*



"Good news, honey! I just found out that your brother will be dead during the eons."

Those not blessed with belief now miss these glorious, future eons. They will be dead while the eons run their course, unaware of the passage of time. Is it their fault? No. But Christ died for them just the same. While they miss these eons, they certainly do not miss living with God for eternity, for He is "the Savior of all mankind, especially of believers."<sup>26</sup>

Note that the inspired statement does not say He is the Savior *exclusively* of believers. That would be the lie of Christianity. He indeed saves all, but only those who believe now live through the two future eons. This is the "especially" salvation of the context.

This news should relieve the troubled saint who, as he has been reading this chapter, has ruminated to himself, "You mean *they* are

going to be where *I* am?" Happy day; *they* will be dead while you live through the eons. The gift of belief grants you eonian life; *they* don't have it. Yet *they* rise to immortality later at a time known in Scripture as "the consummation,"<sup>27</sup> when God abolishes the one thing holding them back: death.<sup>28</sup> If they don't rise to immortality, then God isn't their Savior and the Scriptures lie. I prefer to believe that religion lies.

### Christianity soused

Am I drunk? Certainly not. It is Christianity that is drunk, reeling from the intoxicant of tradition, unable to rightly examine Scriptural detail. Only those under the influence of orthodoxy could content themselves with a God who damns to eternal torture those who have never heard of Him, who are born in alleyways to prostitutes, who are addicted to cocaine from the crib.

Only one high on hypocrisy could claim to forgive *his* enemies, when His very own God cannot forgive His. The liquor of hypocrites makes one profess a burden for souls and a desire that "all mankind be saved," then makes him angry and resentful when shown in Scripture that the very thing will happen. It's the religious inebriate who remarks: "whoever would embrace this goes straight-away to murder old women and cats." That's ludicrous. Believing in eternal torment makes you do *that*. Let's test my simple theory.

Has this God-defiling doctrine brought results? It has certainly had time to. Has it worked to scare the multitudes to heaven? Sober up and read a newspaper. This doctrine has driven people from God by the millions. Fear is a poor gospel.

Perhaps we should question the Pope about it. The Holy Roman Catholic Church administered this poison liberally some many years ago. Did it work? Oh, nearly. The Dark Ages were spectacular. Mary Tudor, Queen of England, used to say, when she was burning her enemies at the stake, "As the souls of heretics are hereafter to be burning eternally in hell, there can be nothing more proper than for me to imitate the divine vengeance by burning them here on earth."<sup>29</sup>



And now, my crowning argument: Would any sober person embrace this monstrous teaching and dub it a "safe doctrine?"

"If *you* are wrong, you are in serious danger," they tell me. "But if *I* am wrong, I have nothing to lose. Mine is a safe doctrine."

Safe doctrine? Nothing to lose? You mean you can pervert Christ's cross all your life, demote His work to a mere offer, mishandle Scripture until God becomes a fiend, teach conditional salvation to Sunday school children, then lose nothing when made to stand before the Savior of those very children? If ever I receive a

*Oh, really?*



"At least we're safe!"

head injury, reverse my present doctrinal course and communicate a wish to hurry and stand before His judgment seat having belittled Him my entire post-traumatic life, I beg someone to curtail my urgency. Many fine Christians will see their life's beliefs burned there, at the judgment seat (Greek, *bema*) of Christ. That seat will test doctrine and teaching.<sup>30</sup> Those teachings of wood, grass and

straw will not survive the fire. The

Christians will be saved, yes, "but as through fire."<sup>31</sup>

There is nothing "safe" about believing in eternal torment.

Christ came into the world to save sinners.<sup>32</sup> And yet, according to the popular teaching, most sinners ultimately frustrate this effort. He came to save all, but salvaged only a handful.

"Christ failed," is the unwitting core of this teaching. "Adam is greater than Christ," is the logical conclusion of the same. Through Adam, all are condemned. But through Christ, only a rare handful are justified. Conclusion: Adam did more harm than Christ did good. The eating of the fruit was a more powerful act than the death of the cross. *This is a safe doctrine?* Excuse me. Romans 5:18 directly refutes it.<sup>33</sup>

God is love. But His love is not compromised by His righteousness, as many insist. It's righteous of Him to save all, for

His Son removed sin. Can we still speak of eternal torment after His Son removed *sin*? The Son of God took away *sin*, said the Baptist. So how is it that sin yet confounds His love?

### A revolution of thinking

Many down through the ages, including some notable church fathers and Biblical scholars, have believed this great truth.<sup>34</sup> Many believe it today, in their hearts, but are afraid to say so. Most don't realize that Scripture supports it. They have received their doctrine in pre-packaged bits and swallowed it whole. But the times are changing. The Emperor is naked, a child finally says so. Instantly, others are emboldened.

Let there be a revolution of thinking. Let thinking men and women everywhere seek for themselves. Let them prowl beyond denominational walls, beyond man-made tenets of faith. They want to know what the *Scriptures* say, not what the gods of religion want

*At least he's not  
a hypocrite*



"Concerning your dearly departed mother, it is quite possible that there are cooler sectors of hell, where..."

them or distort them to say. If this truth is not in Scripture, we must reject it. But if it is there, let us believe and teach it.

If anything has turned sane, rational people from God, it's the "Christian" doctrines of eternal torment and annihilation.

Does anyone *really* believe these, deep in their heart? Not one preacher I have ever

heard has mentioned either fate, let alone preached them with conviction, at the funeral of an unbeliever. Why not? Let them preach these things if they believe them! But no. They don't *really* believe them, deep down. They couldn't and stay sane. But they give them just enough lip service elsewhere to repel a hurt and seeking world.

I wouldn't want to be a Christian either, if either eternal torment or annihilation were true. Imagine such a God! Give this book to someone who thinks Christianity is insane. Tell them that, as presently constituted, it is insane. Tell them that Christianity today is a perversion of truth, not its representative. Tell them that Jesus Himself would not be a Christian. Tell them that you found a book that speaks English, that makes sense, that cuts through the theological chaos to bring forth from Scripture a God worthy of the name.

Tell them to believe in God in spite of what the clergy say.

### Art

I wish you could watch my father-in-law. He's over on Maplewood Street right now, building a house. He erected scaffolding to help him build it. I go over and see paint cans lying all over the place. There's a ladder up against what he tells me will be the garage. There's a pile of two-by-fours somewhere else; everyone trips over them. It's a mess. But does anyone suppose that these tools, these ugly things, these various splatterings, will still be around after Art finishes the house?

I'm a construction idiot. I help Art with the grunt work, then stay out of his way. But I'm intelligent enough to know that when Art finishes the house, he will remove the scaffolding, pick up the paint cans and the lumber and plant grass. Then we will all sit on the grass and enjoy the new house.

Evil, sin and death are scaffolding. God is using these to reveal Himself, to build a revelation of Who He is. These are ugly, necessary things. These are what paint cans, scaffolds and two-by-fours are to Art. When God is revealed and a universe is brought in worship to His feet, the ugly things are removed. Art is no smarter than God; he would say so himself. He's no neater than his Author and Finisher.

When God's plan is finished, then He, too, will plant grass and the universe will admire His building. And what a genius God will have turned out to be. What were a few eons of evil, sin and death, compared with eternity? As you will see in chapter four, there is no comparison. Eternity is not a long time, as many suppose. Eternity

has nothing to do with time. Evil, sin and death belong to the realm of time, not eternity. These are the processes, not the goal. What peace and comfort attend those who distinguish God's processes from His goals, who distinguish time from eternity.

So God brings a creation to its knees in loving adoration before Him. Colossians 1:20. Ephesians 1:10. Philippians 2:10-11. These all speak of it. This is the result of the cross of Christ, and of the contrast of evil, sin and death. With the result thus reached, the very things that inspired it, the evil, the sin and the death, are set aside forever. I've already given you a verse on that. The *last* enemy abolished is death.<sup>35</sup>

How utterly sad to suppose that, after sacrificing His Beloved Son on a Roman stake, after the whips, the thorns and the holy spittle that bathed His body, the universe winds up worse after Calvary than before it. Before it, no one could "reject a Savior." After it, it's "accept Him or burn." And few, so very few, will make the "right decision."

After giving over His Beloved to the most nightmarish death imaginable, we are asked to believe that the universe ends up splattered and pock-marked, fouled with eternal cauldrons of pain, death and sin. If Christ hadn't come, I could entertain the thought. But entertaining it now is an act of blasphemy.

It doesn't amaze me so much that Jesus Christ suffered the shame of Calvary to save murderers, robbers and adulterers. What shocks me the most is that He suffered the shame of Calvary to save religious people, to save Christians, to save the robed and the pious who claim that His sacrifice on that hill was only good enough to save the wise and the "reverent," like themselves. I worship God for doing that. I wouldn't have done it for them. Not ever.

### **Diatribes over**

This ends my diatribe. Many details could be added, many objections answered--the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, the sheep and the goats, the lake of fire, the three distinct Greek words (*gehenna*, *tartarus* and *hades*), all inexplicably translated "hell" in the common versions. All can be answered and will be. But this



book concerns sin and its part in God's master plan. I must stick to that now and write of this other later. Only so much can be said at once.

God's plan is to become "all in all."<sup>36</sup> My sobriety level plays no part in this anyway, for God accomplishes His intention in spite of me.

Of course there is judgment ahead. I know about the tribulation. I know about the great white throne. I know about the lake of fire. But God's judgment is measured, temporary and remedial. It is not rabid, eternal and vengeful. God's judgment benefits the judged; it does not satisfy some bent of His for torture.

*A revelation*

God is not crazy. I know this is breakthrough revelation. If you think this is the only age of grace, you're mistaken. We won't see the riches of grace until the eons to come. That's Ephesians 2:7.



"Look, I already told you why I can't attend your church services. I no longer believe God is crazy."

Belief is a reaction to salvation, not a cause of it. Personal belief never saved anyone from sin. Jesus Christ is the One Who saves. Personal belief only acquaints people with a salvation already won. How different this is from the so-called Christian evangelical "gospel," that personal belief (rather than Christ) is one's "ticket to heaven." Christianity is a religion of the survival of the wisest. No wonder this entity oozes pride as it works to eradicate the very thing that now drives people Christward.

Don't forget my main point: sin has not ruined God's plans. Sin is a vital part of His plans. Why should this offend anyone? The Scriptures say, "All is out of Him."<sup>37</sup> Here is one of the simplest statements existent, and quite complete. "All is out of Him." Since sin is part of "all," then sin is out of Him. See how logical one can be without a diploma from the seminary?

Please note that this does *not* mean God is a sinner; God never sins.

### We sin, God doesn't

The word "sin" means "to miss the mark."<sup>38</sup> It's that simple. A basketball player sins every time he misses a free-throw. Whoever falls short of God's perfection, whether it's missing a free-throw or committing murder, has sinned. The standard is God's perfection. That's not such a high standard, is it? Betty doesn't think so. To her, God's perfection is a challenge. Now you can appreciate the endurance of Max.

God's perfection is supposed to cause people to give up, not try harder. If you're a rational person, you will see God's perfection, sit down and quit pursuing sainthood. Only then will you start relaxing, enjoying life and watching God work on your behalf.

The opposite of being rational is being religious.

God never misses the mark. Of course not. He is God. But look. If God *meant* for sin to enter the universe, then He didn't miss the mark when it came. He would only be a sinner if He *didn't* mean for sin to come, but it came anyway.

I will be accused of making God a sinner. Yet I have said no such thing. Yet I will say this to those who would lay such a charge against me: look at yourselves. Whoever introduces sin into the world as an accident, as an unforeseen calamity, as an incurable blot, *they* are charging God with failure, which is sin. If they introduce sin by stealth, without God's act, making Satan sovereign in sin and capable of leading most of those for whom Christ died to eternal damnation, then God's failure to control the devil is the greatest sin of all (more on Satan in chapters 5 and 6).

Christianity teaches that God didn't mean for sin to come, but it came anyway. They say sin forced God back to His laboratory. I say--and the Scriptures support me--that God meant for sin to come; God is still on Plan A. Sin *had* to enter this world, to play its part in fulfilling God's purpose. Sin is totally under God's control. It is essential, though transient. It will eventually change cold, self-sufficient creatures into those who bow in adoration before Him. None of this was a mistake.

This astonishing conclusion, then, forces itself upon the careful reader: It is the Christian religion, attempting to relieve God of

responsibility for sin, that has made Him a sinner. Everyone who tries to shield God from the consequences of His own creation by transferring the blame to one of His creatures, is in fact accomplishing the very thing he seeks to avoid. In its attempt to excuse the Deity, Christianity has instead booted Him from His throne. And, wonder at this, it is this very religion, entangled and drowning in its own net, that is trying to win the world to God.

The world can smell a rotten fish. They will have nothing to do with such idiocy. I applaud them; at least they are not hypocrites. There are enough of those claiming to honestly worship the most majestic blunderer in the history of the universe.

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**Author's interjection:** Have I, thus far, made light of sin? I have not, nor do I wish to. Speaking relatively, I realize the terribleness of opposing God. I realize the terribleness of sin. It is only when adopting the absolute viewpoint that I see a higher purpose in it, a purpose revealed to us in the Scriptures. This is the viewpoint I am assuming throughout most of the book.

Who is making light of sin? It is those who promote sin's permanence. Consider. If God should permit an eternal hell, with its wretched inhabitants to go on sinning forever and ever, what does this convey to us but God's toleration of sin? Does He think so lightly of it that He will allow it to continue interminably? It is the eternal torment doctrine, not *my* teaching, that makes light of sin.

Yet the Scriptures tell us that God will abolish sin. This is the truth I embrace. My teaching, then, makes sin so terrible that, after it has served its necessary purpose, God will *abolish* it (not tolerate it) forever.

Again, the doctrine which leaves sin lingering is that which treats it lightly. It is the doctrine which sees it forever abolished that lends sin its due weight.

Think about that.

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## *Chapter 3*

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### **Sin is a foil for grace**

"Where sin increases, grace superexceeds." The apostle Paul wrote that<sup>1</sup> and we have no record that the man ever drank.<sup>2</sup> How many of my readers even knew that this statement was in the Bible? It has been there a long time. What is its import? There can be no superexceeding grace without increasing sin. Whenever sin increases, grace rises above it. Sin is the petri dish where grace flourishes. You can't beat grace. Sin hard, grace only goes harder. Sin wild, grace goes wilder. You can't beat grace, ever. Grace will frustrate you, if you're odd enough to find it frustrating. Since the cross, grace is now champion. You *cannot* beat it.

How practical is this truth? This practical: no matter how much you sin, you can't out-sin grace. I just want to be sure we're all clear on this. Am I writing clearly enough?

I am not the deviser of this principle, so no one should look at me funny or write me insensitive letters. What you should do instead is jump out of your chair and run around the living room. Stop feeling guilty, at least. This is good news.

#### **Besides, think about it**

Besides, think about it. Sin is the only field against which grace can be manifested. Look up all the occurrences of "grace" in the New Testament, as I did, and you'll find sin in the wings. Grace is "a benefit bestowed on one who deserves the opposite." If anyone was deserving, where would be grace? In order for grace to function, there must be people "who deserve the opposite." I can't



speaking for you, but here is finally something *I* can manage. And then, grace not only functions, it overwhelms. Why? Because Jesus Christ is not merely equal to sin, He is stronger than it.

Am I a daring person to say this? No. I'm a believer of Romans 5:20.

Those who for some reason hate this truth (it amazes me how anyone could) will twist Scripture to level four objections against it. The foremost objection--that I am encouraging people to sin, and that this truth itself will incite lawlessness--will be answered last. These objections must be confronted and answered, that you may begin circling your living room in utter confidence

### What about falling out of grace?

There is a passage in Galatians (chapter 5, verse 4) that mentions "falling out of grace." Has grace the potential of failing, then? No.

Read the context. Those who fall out of grace in that passage do so, not by sinning, but by trying to impress God with their keeping of laws.<sup>3</sup> By working hard to "earn grace" (an absurd concept which parallels modern Christian teaching), these people miss the relaxation grace brings. *This* is what it means to fall out of grace. In falling out of grace, these people forgo the pleasures of grace by trying to earn them. Read the context on your own and you'll see that I'm right.

Grace is like a 24-hour public library. It exists continually on your behalf, operating for you whether you go into it or not. You can get a book free at the public library, or you can pay \$29.95 for it at *Barnes & Noble*. Likewise, you can lean back and enjoy grace, or you can sweat to earn God's favor. The library is still open while you're at the outlet, and God still favors you while you imagine He doesn't. Your library benefits are forfeited at *Barnes & Noble*--that's the thing.



This woman hasn't fallen out of grace



These women have

The library hasn't closed, you've just fallen from the sphere of getting free books. It's the same with grace. You fall from it's benefits when you try hard to earn it. Grace isn't closed, you've just missed its peace. In this way only can someone fall out of grace. They fall from the sphere of enjoying its benefits.

That these people from Galatia are falling out of an *enjoyment* of grace is the gist of the passage. You certainly can't sin your way out of grace. How can you, when more sin only causes grace to superexceed? How can you, when grace is a favor bestowed upon those who don't deserve it? If you weren't a sinner, grace couldn't apply to you. Why? Because then you would deserve it. And if you deserve it, you don't need it. Grace applies only to the *undeserving*.

### What about idolaters?

"Be not deceived. Neither paramours, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor catamites, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards; no revilers, no extortioners shall be enjoying the allotment of God's kingdom."<sup>4</sup>

How does this fit in with all I've been saying? Surely it undoes everything, and these sinners are bound for the smokehouse, or worse. No. Salvation is still of Christ, not of sobriety or saintliness.

This passage speaks of rule in God's kingdom, not of salvation; this is "the allotment of God's kingdom." The Greek word for kingdom, *basileia*, means "reign." Thus, the allotment of God's kingdom involves a part in God's reign.

It will help to note what the passage does not say. It does not say that these kinds of people "shall not be saved." It doesn't follow that if a person does not enjoy an allotment in God's reign that he won't live under its jurisdiction. Yet that is what the passage is contorted to say. The contortioners ought to be careful and pause to consider that "greed" is listed right along with adultery and sodomy. I have never met a contortioner yet who wasn't greedy.

I already showed you in chapter 2 that some will be saved "as through fire." So there is such a thing as an abundant salvation and a salvation "by the skin of one's teeth." Some folks are content to just "make it to heaven." God made them that way, to desire just this. Others look toward what Paul calls "the high calling,"<sup>5</sup> which

is ruling and reigning with Christ. This too is of God. Neither party will complain when God fulfills their desire.

There are varying degrees of glory in resurrection. "There are bodies celestial as well as bodies terrestrial. But a different glory, indeed, is that of the celestial, yet a different that of the terrestrial, another glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars, for star is excelling star in glory. *Thus also is the resurrection of the dead.*"<sup>6</sup>

Some are appointed to rule with Christ for the eons, others are not. Being selected for rule is an honor above and beyond salvation. And as the context of the passage is "in glory," ("star is excelling star *in glory*"), these differing excellencies cannot be comparing one resurrection to heaven and another to the orthodox version of hell.

If resurrection were identical for everyone, where would be reigning? Reign-ers require reign-ees. Paul listed those who will *not* be reigning. Who *will* be?

"Faithful is the saying: 'For if we died together, we shall be living together also; if we are enduring, we shall be reigning together also; if we are disowning, He also will be disowning us; if we are disbelieving, He is remaining faithful. He cannot disown Himself.'"<sup>7</sup>

Those who endure will reign. What is a mark of endurance? I assume it to be refraining from adultery, idolatry and these other mischiefs.

Notice how Paul flip-flops here in Second Timothy between general salvation and reigning. "If we died together, we shall be living together also." This is general salvation, for "One died for the sake of all, consequently all died."<sup>8</sup>

The next two statements, however, deal with the allotment of the kingdom, that is, with reigning: "If we are enduring, we shall be reigning together also; if we are disowning, He also will be disowning us." Those who endure, reign. Those who disown Him are disowned for *reigning*. That's the context.

Disowning pictures for us a believer becoming tired of "all this Christ stuff" and embarking upon a career of robbing banks at gunpoint ("thieves, greedy, extortioners"), raping the married tellers regardless of their gender ("adulterers, catamites, sodomites"),

kissing the bank safe ("idolaters"), drinking too much beer in the escape car ("drunkards") and cursing the pursuing police officers ("revilers"). It is assumed that such persons committing any or all of these things relieve themselves of any kingdom responsibilities.

However, once in Christ, always in Christ.

Thus, "if we are disbelieving, He is remaining faithful. He cannot disown Himself." No one pre-selected

to membership in Christ's body can ever lose it, not even by doubting Him. How can He deny His own body? God deals similarly with Israel: "For what if some disbelieve? Will not their unbelief nullify the faithfulness of God? May it not be coming to that!"<sup>9</sup>

Be careful with your horse and cart. It is not that adultery or sodomy disowns one for rule. It is that no one pre-designated for rule will be found enmeshed in these crimes. Those who endure to reign still owe it to a superabundance of grace,<sup>10</sup> not to a self-mastery of flesh.<sup>11</sup>

*Criminal realists*



"It's an excellent plan, Wendell. But you realize we'll be disqualified from reigning in the kingdom."

### What about the "unforgivable sin?"

What *about* the "unforgivable sin?" Did Jesus say there is a sin that will never, ever go away? Obviously He didn't, or He would deny His own mission, described by a celestial messenger as: "He shall save his people from their sins."<sup>12</sup> If but one of His people retains but one of their sins, He will have botched His mission.

What our Lord did say was that there was a sin that wouldn't be forgiven. There's a big difference between that and a sin that will never, ever go away. This is much simpler than it sounds. I'll explain what I just said in a moment. Here are the three passages that fuel the argument:



- ♦ Luke 12:10- "And everyone who shall be declaring a word against the Son of Mankind, it shall be pardoned him, yet the one who blasphemes against the holy spirit shall not be pardoned."
- ♦ Mark 3:28-29- "Verily, I am saying to you that all shall be pardoned the sons of mankind, the penalties of the sins and the blasphemies, whatsoever they should be blaspheming, yet whoever should be blaspheming against the holy spirit is having no pardon for the eon, but is liable to the eonian penalty for the sin."
- ♦ Matthew 12:32- "And whosoever may be saying a word against the Son of Mankind, it will be pardoned him, yet whoever may be saying aught against the holy spirit, it shall not be pardoned him, neither in this eon nor in that which is impending."

It is clear that the persons committing the sin of blaspheming the holy spirit will not be released from whatever penalty God has fit for it. The obvious question now should be: what is the penalty for this sin? People assume that it's eternal separation from God in a flaming pit of torture. Hmm. Am I not reading closely enough between the lines? Where does either text say that? Nowhere. Yet such an unscriptural penalty is read into these passages. I refuse to say less about these passages than what the Lord has said; I won't deny His words. But neither will I add to them.

Mark 3:28-29 contains a clue: the penalty for this sin is eonian, not eternal. That means it is limited to *time*. Let's look further, noting the progression of detail in Matthew 12:32.

This sin will not be pardoned, "neither in this eon nor in that which is impending." Which eon is impending? The thousand-year kingdom of Israel's earthly reign, the very kingdom He came proclaiming. Those committing this sin, then, will miss that kingdom. It's that simple. In rejecting the spirit, they forfeit eonian life. A stiff penalty? Yes. But not a stupid one. One sin sown does not eternal torment reap. Otherwise, the Savior who died to save His people from their sins didn't quite do it.

Let's say a man robs a grocery store and serves a two-year jail sentence. Is he forgiven? No. His sin is not pardoned. We might say, "whoever robs a grocery store will not be pardoned." And he's not. He goes to jail, does his time. Then he's released and we see him eating lunch one day at Wendy's. Are we shocked? Appalled at a travesty of justice? No. This man paid his debt to society, and now he's free.

*Good question.*



"Bugsy here wants to know why he got eternity for double parking."

Get the point? It does not follow that because this man was not pardoned, he is never released from prison. Neither does it follow that because an Israelite is not forgiven his blasphemy of the holy spirit, he will never be saved. Remember, God is the Savior of all mankind<sup>13</sup> and Jesus came to save His people from their sins.<sup>14</sup>

Besides, this threat of no forgiveness for two eons for this particular sin applies only to those Israelites who ignored

the counsels of Jesus,<sup>15</sup> and only for the time specified. This has *nothing* to do with the body of Christ, so don't wring your hands over someone else's bill. (How many have imagined that they've committed this sin and blown their salvation? Blame the clergy for the ensuing mental trauma.) Neither has it anything to do with the time subsequent to the coming eon.

Every Israelite knew about the coming eon. That would be the eon when they, with Messiah, would rule the earth for a thousand years. They all wanted in on that. But most didn't know that Jesus Christ was the Way.

What Jesus was saying to these Israelites was: "Look. You people can trash me all you want. But if you trash the spirit that empowers me, you're in a bad way. There is no forgiveness for that sin neither now, in this eon, nor in the coming eon, which you know well to be the thousand years of peace."

Those words would have twisted an Israelite's gut. Israelites ate, breathed and slept that eon, to "reign with Him a thousand years."<sup>16</sup>

I could wish some soul had raised his hand at this point and asked: "Sure, Jesus. Understood. No forgiveness for that sin now or then. Got that. No kingdom glory for spirit blasphemers. Serves them right. It's the eonian penalty for them. They'll miss all the hoopla of that great eon. I've got no problem with that, Teacher. You won't find *me* blaspheming the spirit. But Teacher. What happens *after* the kingdom? What happens to these people and their sin *after* that eon?"

That would have been a great question. Likely Jesus would have answered in accord with Matthew 1:21- "I'll be saving them from their sins, of course."

Once the thousand years conclude, there is to be a new heavens and a new earth.<sup>17</sup> This is the eon that will follow the Millennium. Paul calls it "the eon of the eons."<sup>18</sup> These spirit-blasphemers *still* won't have eonian life; they will be in the second death, unconscious,<sup>19</sup> having been judged at the great white throne.<sup>20</sup> After this, however, comes the consummation,<sup>21</sup> when God abolishes death to become "all in all."<sup>22</sup> At the abolition of death, these Israelites live again, fulfilling Paul's teaching in 1 Corinthians 15:22 that "Even as in Adam, all are dying, thus also in Christ shall all be vivified." ("Vivified" comes from the Greek *zoopoieo*. It is not mere resurrection--which would be *anastasis*--but the imparting of life beyond the reach of death.)

Blaspheming the holy spirit won't even need to be forgiven then, because at that point Israel's work will have finished and all those who missed out on eonian life (including Israelites) will have been justified.<sup>23</sup> Justification blows forgiveness to bits; justification denies guilt while forgiveness assumes it. See the cross at work?

In Romans 5:20 ("where sin increases, grace superexceeds"), Paul is simply looking ahead to this time of justification. The grace that these stubborn Israelites will one day enjoy (when they are no longer stubborn) is ours now for the basking.<sup>24</sup> It's a timing thing. It's now for us, later for them.

So stop worrying about it and enjoy it.

Before leaving this section, I'd like to say something about the translations. I quoted the three pertinent passages from the



Concordant Literal New Testament, which, in Mark 3:28-29 and Matthew 12:32, rightly puts "eon" for the corresponding *aion* and "eonian" for *aionion*. Yet how did the King James translators translate Matthew 12:32? Here is one of the many places they unaccountably put "world" for *aion*. The KJV reads concerning that sin: "it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come."

If I may address these King James translators for a moment: this translation of yours in Matthew 12:32 demonstrates to us your untrustworthiness. I have consulted my concordance, to check up on you. You already used "world" 187 times in the New Testament to translate the Greek word *kosmos*. Once you figured "world" worked for *kosmos* (which it does), why didn't you leave it there? Why did you use it for *aion*, too? When we read "world" in your version, are we reading *kosmos* or *aion*? Thanks to you, we don't know without a concordance. Yours is a classic case of inconsistent translating. Even a boob knows that an *aion* is different from a *kosmos*. Please note:

**Jeff:** Do you know that an *aion* is different from a *kosmos*?

**Boob:** Why, certainly.

Say them aloud. "A-i-o-n." Good. Now, "k-o-s-m-o-s." Now say, "d-i-f-f-e-r-e-n-t." I'm sorry to have to speak to you like this, but you have it coming.

A *kosmos* is a world, an *aion* is a duration of time. Is a world different from a duration of time? I hope so. Do I look at my watch to find a *world*? Do I buy a globe to discern the *time*? God employs different words on purpose to reveal different truths. Why didn't you respect this? Why didn't you respect God's vocabulary? Why didn't you put "world" for *kosmos* and "eon" for *aion*, then keep it that way throughout? Why didn't you give God credit for knowing what He wanted to say? How could you think you could help God by interpreting for Him rather than simply translating His words? Then we could have distinguished God's thoughts without a three-hundred pound reference tool. Instead, you cross-wired the divine vocabulary and short-circuited our understanding.

Why do I broach this here? Because of the confusing ways you translate *aion* and *aionion* elsewhere. Maybe the difference here isn't so huge. Lack of forgiveness in this or that *world* still doesn't



allow for eternal damnation. But elsewhere, where you put "forever" (instead of "eon") for *aion* and "eternal" or "everlasting" (instead of "eonian") for *aionion*, you darken God's counsels for humanity.

Mark 3:29, for instance.

Here, you translate:

"But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation." A dandy, that. Is God so irrational? Does one mistake get a man damned for eternity? Not only did you translate *aionion* "eternal," (which it cannot be), you failed to translate *aion* at all in the previous clause. Where the Greek has "no forgiveness for the eon," you ignore *aion* completely and say, "hath never forgiveness." Tell me: how does "no forgiveness for the eon" suddenly become "never?" What

exactly were you men drinking besides tea? If you thought "world" was such a good translation for *aion* in Matthew 12:32, why didn't you use it here? Why not, "But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath no forgiveness for the world, but is in danger of worldly damnation?" That would be senseless, yes. But at least it would be consistent. Yet you lacked the nerve even for foolish consistency. Emerson could commend you, maybe. Bible students cannot.

Fiendish and impossible doctrines seep from your blunders. The false doctrine of eternal torment spreads like gangrene, because of you. People read "everlasting punishment" in Matthew 25:46, because of you.<sup>25</sup> Millions writhe over the fate of loved ones, because of you. The world laughs at God--because of you. Yet you sipped your evil beverages. And you hypothesized your way through the "translation" process, spurning all method. Your

*One has to wonder.*



"I'll figger out this *aion* word yet!"

superior, King James, should have met your indiscretions with a horsewhip. Pain for an hour? Nothing, compared to the lifelong anguish given those who, at the hands of your carelessness, hear the cracking of whips into eternity.

To close: the immature reasoning that concludes, "those who are never forgiven will never be saved" is a good example of why immature reasoners shouldn't teach Scripture. What emotional havoc they have wreaked on unsuspecting saints! As for those who use these verses to "prove" that Jesus does *not* save His people from their sins, and that God *isn't* the Savior of all mankind, they have committed the worse crime of all by pitting one passage of God's Word against another to make God out a liar.

### Here it comes

Finally, argument four. I've been waiting for it with riot gear. Someone in the audience has elbowed past security and is now shouting at the podium: "Sir! Assuming your earlier statement



"Kill people and animals!"

concerning sin to be correct--"where sin increases, grace superexceeds"--are you telling us we're supposed to go out and sin, so that grace can increase?"

Yes, ma'am. Sin like mad, that's exactly what I'm telling you. It's the true purpose of my book. Kill people and animals. Throw food. Burn the post office.

Of course not, ma'am. I'm answering you according to your folly. Why would you jump to such an illogical conclusion? All I have said so far is that sin has a profitable purpose, that it is necessary. It appears to me that you still haven't distinguished between beautiful and useful. Please return to your seat and begin this book again.

### Joy snatchers

Besides, this is not *my* "earlier statement," it is Paul's. All my readers should consider this verse again. Romans 5:20: "Where sin increases, grace superexceeds." That's as true as can be. But does it mean anyone should start a sin binge to test the principle? No. If

you have an insurance policy that promises to pay you one million dollars should you lose a leg, are you going to cut off your leg so you can collect the money? You could. But you would have a hard time walking to the mailbox to get your check. And who would recommend that course? The prosthesis company, maybe. But not me. I am *not* recommending that you go out and sin.

The apostle Paul must have had detractors, also. Read what he writes two verses after 5:20, in Romans 6:1-2. There Paul writes: "What, then, shall we declare? That we may be persisting in sin that grace should be increasing? May it not be coming to that!" But the fact remains that we *could* do it, and it would work. Did you hear me? I said we *could* do it, and it would work. Did you hear me? I said we *could* do it, and it would work.

I'm tired of so-called theologians using Romans 6:1-2 to cancel Romans 5:20. People feel so good after reading and believing 5:20. Here comes one now: "I am so joyous. I'm beside myself with happiness. No matter how much I sin, grace not only covers it but demolishes it. This, truly, is grace. Finally, here is a definition of grace worthy of the name. I knew it had to be like this. It had to be this good. But nobody ever highlighted Romans 5:20 for me. What took you so long? Now I can finally relax and enjoy this believing business."

I love it when people say things like that. I love it when people understand grace for the first time in their lives. This revelation makes people want to sing, praise God and do something nice for their moms. I haven't met anyone yet who wanted to decapitate a dog or break a window.

But I so dislike it when a theologian or pastor comes onto the scene and steals the joy. Apparently, there is too much pleasure here to suit some of them, too much peace. I can't figure out why else, unless they don't trust people with grace. So enter the practical man with the long needle, the lab coat and the theology degree who deflates Romans 5:20 with a sterile pop and directs the red beam of his laser pen to Romans 6:1-2, "Shall we be persisting in sin that grace should be increasing? May it not be coming to that!"

**BUT WHAT HAS THAT GOT TO DO WITH THE JOY WE FOUND IN ROMANS 5:20? LET US BE HAPPY FOR THREE MINUTES--MAY WE?**



Don't misunderstand. I *agree* with Romans 6:1. But I don't agree with it at the expense of Romans 5:20. Let them both be true. Let it be true that we can't out-sin grace. Let the joy, happiness and security of that statement be true and let it spring us from our chairs. *Then* let it be true that no one, especially not an apostle, should recommend testing the principle. **BUT DON'T MAKE IT CANCEL THE PRINCIPLE. DON'T MAKE IT DISRUPT OUR CHAIR-SPRINGING.**

Now that I think about it, if I had to emphasize one verse or the other, I would emphasize Romans 5:20.

Once Romans 5:20 is apprehended, 6:1 could go unsaid. No one who understands Romans 5:20 starts firebombing toilets.

Actually, they start sinning less. Grace has that effect on people. Upon further reflection, I don't think Paul

wrote Romans 6:1-2 for you and me anyway. I think he wrote it for the theologians whom he knew would trip over 5:20.



### The profitability of *sin*?

The woman who got her folly answered did restart the book. But she quickly found some other distasteful thing and is now rushing the podium yet again: "You seem to be saying, Sir, that sin has a profitable purpose. But where does the *Bible* say that?"

Romans 3:5, ma'am. Here, Paul says that "...our unrighteousness commends the righteousness of God..."<sup>26</sup> Isn't the commending of God's righteousness a profitable thing? All right, then. If we're the foils for that, so be it. The context of Romans 3 is that, if some Israelites don't believe God's promises (which obviously many did not) God's faithfulness rolls on anyway. In fact, their disbelief only makes God's faithfulness more defined and amazing.



Look up Romans 3:5 in any version. The J.B. Phillips paraphrase brings this nicely to life, saying that "...our wickedness advertises the goodness of God..." The New International Version says, "...our unrighteousness brings out God's righteousness more clearly..."

What about verse seven? Phillips again: "...my lying throws into sharp relief the truth of God and increases his glory..."

I'm sorry, ma'am, but this is a principle you will hear repeated: "our unrighteousness is commending God's righteousness." But why should I apologize? I enjoy the blossoming of God's righteousness, however it happens.

I will dare put it to you this way: our unrighteousness, which is sin, provides God a canvas on which to paint a righteous masterpiece, which is salvation. His masterpiece is white: Christ. So what better background for the whiteness of Christ than a black canvas? That's you, ma'am. And that's me. To God be the glory.

### Do me a favor

To the rest of you, please grasp this major point. Paul was so plain in his teaching that no one can out-sin grace, and that human unrighteousness ultimately glorifies God, that some folks, understanding very well what Paul was teaching, hated his message and slandered him, reporting that he taught people to go out and do evil so that good would result. Witness:

"Why not say, as we are being slanderously reported as saying and as some claim that we say, 'Let us do evil that good may result'?"<sup>27</sup>

Please listen carefully now, because this is important. That Paul's enemies could even concoct this slander proves that Paul's teaching was precisely what he said it was. Otherwise, he could not be slandered. Are you following me? A teacher who says, "Sin has no good purpose in your life. If you keep sinning, you'll lose your salvation and go to hell forever," this teacher *cannot* be slandered as saying, "go out and do evil so that good may result." His teaching doesn't invite that. How could it, when he says evil wrecks everything, including your salvation? That Paul *could* be slandered, and that his teaching *could* be twisted to mean, "go out and do evil

so that good may result" proves that Paul really did teach that 1) no one can sin his or her way out of grace, and 2) good does, eventually, result from even our vilest sins.

### Now I would like to ask *you* a question

At this point *my* question would be, why aren't there any so-called teachers of grace today who are slandered as saying this? Why? It's simple, really. It's because they're not teaching what Paul taught. Were they teaching what Paul taught, they would be slandered as saying, "let us do evil, so that good may result." That *I* will be slandered as saying this will only prove that I *am* teaching what Paul taught. So my slanderers will ultimately be doing me a favor. They will prove, by their slander, that my teaching follows that of Paul. So let them slander away.<sup>28</sup>

Like Paul, I do not recommend that you go out and sin. I'll even tell you: don't do it. Nevertheless, I believe and teach, like Paul, that if you do sin, grace will not only cover it, it will swamp it. If you do sin, even on purpose, God will use it as a black canvas, paint a masterpiece of righteousness on it, and the outcome will be ultimately better after the failure than before it.

As for the notion that this good news will actually incite lawlessness, the effect will be just the opposite.

Many Christian teachers today still promote the Ten Commandments as a viable means to godliness. If I were their

parents and had financed their way through seminary, I would ask for a refund. Did these

*They'll do it every time*



Thou shalt not smoke.

people learn nothing there? These blind guides are still somehow ignorant of the true purpose of the law, which came to cause transgressions to *increase*, not decrease. Read the first part of Romans 5:20 in the version of your choice (I've been quoting the second) to verify this amazing fact. Or, check out this footnote.<sup>29</sup> I believe that much of the lawlessness in the world today is caused by clergymen (and women) who still throw rocks from Sinai. To explain the

*It figures.*



"Now that I'm free to swing naked from the church rafters,  
I don't feel like doing it anymore."

whys of this little-known news will require yet another book. And I intend to write that book, contingent on my surviving this one.

What is the difference between law and grace? Merely this: condemnation and deliverance, misery and peace, sin and right behavior. The law said, "Accursed is everyone who is not remaining in all things written in the Scroll of the Law, to do them."<sup>30</sup> Grace says, "Blessed are you, whatever you may do, for Christ has justified you apart from your works and nothing in God's creation can now condemn you."<sup>31</sup>

The clergyperson immediately concludes: "If my people are truly free to do *anything*, they will. I simply can't preach such grace." A pity; note the worldliness of the modern church. Congregations are rebelling under the curse of the law. Nothing new there. Haven't the clergypeople studied Israel? This nation is a fine and terrible example of the effects of law on human flesh. Read about this nation in your Bible. But please, send your kids to bed first.

What is grace to these clergypeople? It is a word that rhymes with "face" in many of their songs. It is a Hollywood word, gilded and propped on a mountainside, with nothing behind it. Who among the clergy today actually believe grace to be a power? Who among them forsake law completely to trust God's favor? Few, if any. Yet grace, though invisible, *is* a power. *It is grace, not law, that has the power to deter people from sinning.*

No one who finally tastes grace (and I mean *real* grace, not the string-laden schemes of the clergy) reasons that, because he's immune from condemnation, he should become a criminal. In fact,

when all strings are finally removed from salvation, a person tends to relax and sin less. It's a paradox, I know. But it's so true. Should a believer sin in the face of such grace, he keenly feels it. The offender against law, however, flies in the face of law. Rather than hinder him, its austere threats enrage him and stir his rebellion.

Practical experience teaches better than a seminary course any day.

### My prayer

Is there room for a prayer here? I think there is. My prayer is that this nearly incredible information, hidden, twisted, lied about and ignored by orthodox ministers (who are, the great majority of them, clueless as to what grace even is) will deliver you from fear, condemnation and guilt. Are you feeling better already? I hope so. Think how much improved your worship life will be without these imaginary burdens.

As for those who have never worshipped this Savior before, don't give up on Him. His character has been defaced by the religiously self-righteous, by hypocrites who have told you God has saved you in grace, but then expects you to be wise and strong enough to grasp it. God is not like that. He dabbles not in hypocrisy. His grace is better than that invented by the clergy.

When you see Who God *really* is, and what grace *really* means, you will be drawn to the One Who walked a lonely way and secured you to Himself years before you were born and could blow it. As the quote at the beginning of this book says: "You must believe in God, in spite of what the clergy say."

To all: only when you realize that sin has a profitable purpose will you be able to calmly gauge its presence in your life. This is the opposite of panicking and feeling guilty. And by understanding the rarely-appreciated truth that the "cure" (Christ) predates the disease (sin),<sup>32</sup> you will be one of the few people in this mixed-up world who will know what God is up to.

This, you will enjoy.

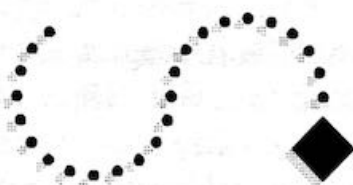


## Chapter 4

### The early universe

Before we can understand specifically why evil and sin had to enter the universe, we'll need to uncover some background information on the early days there.

God is the only Being without beginning or end. Remember, "all is out of God."<sup>1</sup> This means that



everything had a beginning except Him. Since all that exists came out of Him, it follows that He never came out of anything. And if He never came out of anything, He's timeless. Therefore,

because God predates everything, there was once a "time" when He occupied the universe alone.

Is He strictly a father figure, or does He nurture like the mother? He is Father as well as Nurturer. With His fatherhood qualities He reaches out, seeking fellowship. With the qualities of motherhood, He stays in and pulls homeward.<sup>2</sup> So He continually throbs like this. He permeates everything, then pulls it in. No human word captures it. The nearest word we have, embarrassing in its shallowness is: love.

And yet, at this early stage in the universe:

- ✧ God has no other beings to share His glory with
- ▲ God is invisible<sup>3</sup>
- ⊕ There is no foil for the display of His character

God's all-sufficiency burdens Him. He contains wells. Light is here. Heat, salt, green waves, everything you like about a tree--here. The stuff of water. Your grandmother smiling and

smoothing your hand. Blue hand veins. Immortality. Popcorn. Trill notes. Hovering birds that crave sugar. Bass too deep for whales. Sex. Wind. Deoxyribose. A river flowing westward on the new earth; world-healing rivulets without fish; a miracle substance, millions of miles long, biding its time.

Galaxies. Beings on stars and a new atmosphere. Friendship with man. *Deep* friendship, the word for it still cloaked. An immortal grandmother with no more blood to burden her. Notice the hands; they have touched God. She has a new name fashioned of strange, pleasant letters. Happiness surrounds her. Never again will she cry.

Yet here in the early universe, all this goes undetected.

Think of Shakespeare, alone, with the drama and passion of his plays still in his head. They pound for release. But there are no pens in the world! There is no paper! There is no stage! No audience! There are no people good, none bad. There is no human flesh to portray life's intricacies.

My illustration approaches God's "dilemma," yet runs aground too soon. Shakespeare was a man, selfish like the rest of us. He wrote to exorcise his demons. He wrote for fame, money and praise. God is not like that. He doesn't write to purge Himself or to satisfy some frustrated need. God writes, He creates, to bless others. He could have gloried alone in His God-things, rolling in them, bounding about, Self-absorbed. But no. That is not God. He longs to share His glory, *for our sakes*. He wants faces to brighten when He says, "Look!" He wants eyes that can receive sunshine. He wants arms, graspable arms. He wants lips able to imbibe.

### God creates an Image

To remedy ♠, God determines to create other beings. We'll consider this in a moment. But first, God will deal with ▲.

God will make His creatures dependent upon contrast for revelation. This means that their understanding of the universe will hinge on opposites. They won't be able to know love without experiencing hate. They won't be able to know warmth without experiencing cold. They'll have no concept of "feeling wonderful" without the occasional headache or gastric disturbance (don't

despise these as trivial, or think I'm being cute). And how will any know honesty without the contrast of politicians? (Again, I'm serious.) They won't. To return to my original premise, how will any revel in salvation without first knowing sin?

So you can see that invisibility will hardly help those who will one day turn to God for comfort, for contrast. So the first thing God will do is create a visible, audible, touchable Image of Himself. This will be Someone men can see, follow down the road, tap on the shoulder and write letters about. It will be Someone Zacchaeus can point to and say, "*There* is what God is like. He invites Himself to lunch so He can bless you."

This Image will be His own Son.

Revelation 3:14 calls Jesus Christ, "God's creative Original."<sup>4</sup> In other words, Christ was the very first being God created. This truth carries heavy implications, not the least of which is that Jesus Christ did not begin in Bethlehem. I hope this disclosure doesn't affect tourism there. But it does affect our concept of Christ. He existed long before God attached Him to Mary's uterus. Bethlehem merely initiated His trials in flesh. The important thing to know is that 2 Corinthians 4:4 aptly calls Christ, "the Image of the invisible God."



### More on our need for this Image

"God no one has ever seen. The only-begotten God, Who is in the bosom of the Father, He unfolds Him."<sup>5</sup>

Because we now watch *Addams Family* reruns and eat potato chips from a can, the full glory of God would kill us. As presently constituted, we couldn't bear God full-strength. So the Son of God, being considerate of us, slowly "unfolds Him." I quote this passage from the Concordant Literal New Testament because of its beauty and accuracy. I love the richness of that word "unfolds." It's a good translation of the Greek word *exegeomai*. Jesus Christ unfolds God like a road map, a little bit at a time: A river here, an airport there, a time zone running this way. Look at the key: that blue picnic table

means you can pull off the road and eat. Got that? Now here's Chicago. And there's Nova Scotia. Big? You haven't seen anything.

So God, through His Son, gives us as much as we can bear. Easy, easy. Fold by fold.

### Let the creation begin

Now that God has a visible Image, He has solved ▲. But remember, He solves ▲ first. He still doesn't have any other creatures. That's ◇. He's got one Creation, His Son, but still no teeming mass full of eyes, lips and arms. So He directs His Son to create them. God delegates this tremendous work to His Son, Jesus Christ.

I've got an inspired statement for you here: Colossians 1:15-17. This statement describes the Son of God, Christ, "Who is the Image of the invisible God, Firstborn of every creature, for in Him is all created, that in the heavens and that on the earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones, or lordships, or sovereignties, or authorities, all is created through Him and for Him, and He is before all, and all has its cohesion in Him."

God created an Image, Christ, then commissioned this Son to create all else. And not just the earth. Far more. The earth is visible. Yet we just read that He also created that which is now invisible to us. This includes celestial beings, creatures of heaven who swarm in an unseen myriad above our heads. "That in the heavens." Before Adam walked the earth, before there even was an earth, there were billions and billions of beings among, around and beyond the stars, created for the purpose of enjoying and worshipping God.

And they're still there.

So much for ◇.



As impressed as these spirit beings were with God's power, as demonstrated through the creative prowess of His Son, they could not yet perceive God's deeper qualities, His goodness, righteousness, love and mercy. They were yet unaware of His



conciliatory heart. What's holding things up? Here in the early universe, there's still nothing to contrast God with.

Imagine that God is a white, lace snowflake. Now imagine that there is only white in the universe. This white, imagine, is a universe devoid of contrast. What's so bad about that? The universe is full of contrast-dependent creatures. These creatures cannot prize white because they've never seen its opposite. Show them something beautiful (a star, for instance) and they'll stare dumbly at it and shrug. Tell them, "God is good!" and they'll wonder why the exclamation point. They've never seen evil. They can't appreciate the white snowflake because it's set against a white background. The snowflake needs backdropped by an opposite color for it to be revealed. Only this will contrast, and thus display, its beauty.



An opposite color? Yes. How about black? Yes, how about it.

You should now begin to look for the entrance of a black background.

### A certain lack of enemies

God knew it was necessary to create Satan. How could He save people who were not first lost? How could He reconcile people who were not first estranged? And where would be the sweet, eternal sense of release without the temporary terrors of bondage? What I'm telling you is this: the "cure" existed before the disease. I already told you that. 1 Peter 1:20 told you that. Revelation 13:8 told you that, if you've been reading the footnotes. Here are the verses:

- ♦ 1 Peter 1:19-20, "Christ...a flawless and unspotted lamb, foreknown, indeed, before the disruption of the world."
- ♦ Revelation 13:8, "...the Lambkin, slain from the disruption of the world."

And so, sin has not wrecked God's plan of salvation. Rather, sin reveals salvation. The salvation came first, *then* the sin. God had

saving warmth within Him, always, yet nothing to reveal it. God *is* saving warmth. He always has been. He did not see the sin and say, "What shall I do to fix this?" This is what the Christian religion has told you. And this is why the God of Christianity is ever on the run, trying to "catch up" with evil. This is why the Christian religion can't teach with confidence on the outcome of the universe. They've got the whole program backwards. Their poor horse is wondering why their cart isn't moving.

No, God didn't see the sin and say, "What shall I do to fix this?" He saw the salvation and said, "What shall I do to reveal this?" What a difference. Sin is not the occasion for salvation, it is its foil. Salvation is not the balm for our many misses. Our misses prepare us for a revelation of God's heart.

*Sin is an essential preparation for endless happiness.*

### **Auld acquaintance never forgot**

The great purpose of God during this long period of the eons is to provide a background for the display of His love. How to do it? Give each of His creatures their own experience of evil, just enough to enable them to appreciate the good which God will lavish upon them for eternity, after the eons are past.

People wonder if, when God commences our eternal joy, we will remember what we went through here. The answer is: My, yes. There is no eternal joy *without* remembrance of the pain, suffering and shame. It's the contrast that buys us our understanding of joy.

Have you ever been soaked in a cold, hard rain, then stripped off your clothes to take a hot shower? It feels so good. Then you look out the shower curtain at your wet clothes. How loathsome they are. The sight of them does enhance your enjoyment of the shower, however. Then you put on dry clothes and make some coffee. It's still pouring outside. Why do people sit on porches and drink coffee during rainstorms? It's the contrast. It's the sheer joy of being warm, dry and cozy so near the remembrance of wetness.

We're going through this dark valley now to prepare us for future happiness. Do you think God is wasting these trials? Do you think this is some evil game, with no purpose? No. With every trial, you're investing in your future. And when you see the large return

on your comparatively measly investment, you'll wish you had gone through more. Mark my words.

### Buy low, sell high

Paul wrote to the Corinthians: "The momentary lightness of our affliction is producing for us a transcendently transcendent eonian burden of glory."<sup>6</sup> And this, from a man routinely beaten, shipwrecked, stoned, blasphemed and jailed. And yet he calls his afflictions "light." A man of vision, that Paul. His afflictions were light, but only when contrasted with the glory. That's the return on your investment: glory. And it's all out of proportion to the trial. It's "transcendently transcendent" above the trial, Paul says. Actually, it's the glory that's a burden, Paul says, and the afflictions light.

If a broker told you about a stock that could earn you a million dollars for every dollar invested, wouldn't you gladly pay the dollar, and more? And I doubt you would gripe or sue the broker, even if the dollar were lost. The *right* amount to receive for a dollar is maybe three or four dollars, depending on the stock. So anything above that would be more than right.

Money examples like this send our hearts racing. Why don't they race when we learn about this great spiritual "deal?" Because we don't think it's a deal. We think it's a rip off. We think our suffering is "too much" and "too long." We think God could never compensate us or be justified for dealing out "so much pain." Paul just told us that the glory is "far more exceeding" than the pain. But we don't believe Paul. Paul is not talking our currency. We know what a million dollars can do. But what's with this glory? We know hardly anything about it. Granted. Maybe this is where faith comes in. Can we just *believe* that we're in on the most incredible bargain ever known? How that apprehension would change our lives.



### 50,000 nothing

What is 50,000 years compared with eternity? Compared with eternity, 50,000 years is literally next to nothing. So if God decided that we should live and suffer for 50,000 years as a prelude to

eternal bliss, it would be more than right. It would be the bargain of the universe. This would be the equivalent of the million dollar return on the dollar, the "dollar" being the 50,000 years. In light of eternity, no period of suffering can ever be deemed excessive.

But no. No sinner suffers for 50,000 years. Assuming that he sleeps at least six hours a night, it's unlikely that the average sinner will suffer for fifty years, perhaps even including his period of judgment at the great white throne. So the period which I have just reduced to "next to nothing" is, in comparison with infinity, at least a thousand times too long. So how much is one dollar divided by a thousand? You figure it out. Then tell me if it's a good deal.



So instead of being excessive, the time of our suffering is absurdly short. God is more than just in His dealings with His creatures. With eternal joy as the return, God could give us 50,000 years of suffering without impairing His justice. So how just is He when He gives us only fifty?

One day, when we feel the weight of the glory, we're going to thank God over and over again for the evil. And then we'll laud Him for not listening to us when we begged Him to "make life easier." He'll look to be quite the genius then, and I think we'll have learned something.

### God and Walt

And so God, in His wisdom, decided to create an enemy. This enemy would drive creation from Him, that He could return it better for the experience. "For God locks up all together in stubbornness, that He should be merciful to all."<sup>7</sup> It would be a long, drawn-out affair, of course. Thousands of years. No one is patient like God is patient. We wish He'd get on with it. Well, He is. But He's using His own calendar.

God had to create His own enemy. Why? Because God was once alone in the universe. He had no enemies then, obviously. So since God has enemies *now*, and since all is out of God (Romans 11:36 again) it follows that enemies came out of Him. It's really this simple. Only man's theology has tangled it.



In this and in this only (in having to create His own enemies), God is no different from Walt Disney. Every drama requires antagonists. And if these aren't self-existent, they must be created. When God was alone in the universe, who or what could oppose Him? No one. Nothing. Yet apart from opposition, God's character lies undiscovered. So does Prince Charming's and Robin Hood's.

Creatures dependent upon contrast for revelation will need to see, hear and touch what is God. A revelation of what is God, for contrast-dependent creatures, requires a revelation of what is not God. But since "not God" did not yet exist, God had to create it.

And so God created His own adversity, His own Adversary. But this doesn't mean that He had to enjoy it. In fact, He didn't.

### His hand forms the crooked serpent

"By His spirit He hath garnished the heavens; His hand hath formed the crooked serpent."

That's Job 26:13.<sup>8</sup>

In Scripture, the serpent often represents Satan. I believe that to be the case here. Note the difference between the garnishing of the heavens by God's spirit and the forming of the Serpent, Satan, by His hand. The word "garnishing" suggests flair. By God's spirit, He *garnished* the heavens. This was enjoyable to Him. We can picture the flourish of an artist as God sprinkles stardust into space.

But now look for the word "garnish" in the account of the serpent's creation. It isn't there. Instead, we read that He "hath formed" the crooked serpent.

"Forming" is a much colder word. A chef *garnishes* a salad. A potter *forms* a pot. One suggests flair, fun, enjoyment. The other, mere function. And so it was with the heavens and the crooked serpent. God enjoyed the one. The other, well, He just did it.

Now contrast "spirit" and "hand." He garnished the heavens "by His spirit." This suggests intimacy and fellowship. God got into this. The heavens, Scripture tells us, "declare the glory of God." The crooked serpent, however, emerged from His hand. This was an "arm's-length" work. It demonstrated power and skill rather than communion. It was a necessary work, but one which God distanced from His bosom.

God knew what Satan would do. He made him to do it, as we will see. But He doesn't jitterbug over it. The world has a phrase for God creating the devil to be sinning from the beginning. The phrase is "necessary evil."

What's the matter? From the look on some of your faces, you're having a hard time believing that God would purposely make something crooked. Isn't all his work perfect? Yes. All His work is perfect. And if He set out to make a crooked serpent, and the serpent turned out exactly as He planned it, then the creation of the crooked serpent was perfect.

Maybe I should just let Scripture speak.



"Consider the work of God: for who can make that straight, which He hath made crooked?"

Ecclesiastes 7:13.<sup>9</sup>

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## *Chapter 5*

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### **God's PR People**

- ♦ **John 8:44-** "He (Satan) was a murderer from the beginning."<sup>1</sup>
- ♦ **1 John 3:8-** "The devil has sinned from the beginning."
- ♦ **Proverbs 16:4-** "Yahweh has made everything for its own pertinent end, yea even the wicked for the day of evil."
- ♦ **Isaiah 54:16-** "I created the ruiner to harm."
- ♦ **Isaiah 45:6-7-** "I am Yahweh Elohim, and there is none else. Former of light and Creator of darkness, Maker of good and Creator of evil. I, Yahweh Elohim made all of these things."

#### **God not very adept at winning friends**

Well-meaning people are always anxious to bail God out of His troubles, to lend Him a helping hand. If God says He does something, but then people either don't like or don't understand that thing, then the people, in their ignorance, will work hard to get God off the hook. They will toil overtime to rescue Him from His own stupidity.

God is not very adept at winning friends and influencing people. The above verses are evidence enough of that. God doesn't help His cause by saying that He makes the wicked for the day of evil. Or that He created the ruiner to harm. Or that He made Satan crooked on purpose. Or that He created evil itself. And so these verses must be covered up, ignored or explained away by God's "friends." What will be the harm? The help should be considerable. Besides, isn't it the church's job to present the Deity in the best possible light?

(Actually, it's the church's job to get the #@!★ out of the Deity's way so the Deity can present *Himself*. I'm sorry I had to use eyeglasses there, but I'm upset. And now, just as quickly, I've turned reflective. How can I make so coarse a statement in the midst of so fine a book? I can't. Being a respected author who has written, thus far, in so refined a manner, I ought to swallow my indignation. I know the indignation is righteous, but I should swallow it anyway. So...gug. There. It tasted terrible, yes. But no harm done. So let us now rejoin our regularly-scheduled text in progress.)

### God's PR men (and women)

What God needs are PR men. Women, too. How about public relations *people*? Sure. These will help rescue God from the bad image He has made for Himself by His many careless confessions.

Here's an ingenious strategy. If these PR people can find a scapegoat--someone to blame all the bad things on--they can refine God's image, give Him a healthy spin. What is needed is a transfer of blame.

Remember how I just said that if God purposely puts Himself on a hook, there will always be those, smarter than God, who will attempt to unhook Him? Right. At the center of this tangled web of hookery is the devil, matted and framed as the source of all ill.

*God's spin warriors*



"So basically, we're blaming the whole wad on Satan."

### The Other God

Unable to believe the simple statement that both good and evil proceed from God, God's PR people have collared a scapegoat to relieve God of responsibility for evil. That scapegoat is Satan.

A guy off the street, coming into the average Christian church today, would get the idea that there are two great powers in the



world struggling for supremacy: God and Satan. If God were winning, the guy might be encouraged. But according to the churches (and CNN), Satan is winning. Of the billions of people alive today, only a tiny fraction will "get saved." Only a small percentage of those will ever come to church. The rest are doomed to eternal, fiery torment, or annihilation.

But this is not the worst news of the "good news." The worst news is that, not only is Satan winning at present, but he will eternally rule a kingdom far away from God, marring the universe with a never-ending cauldron of doom, which we also assume will smell bad.

Please don't misunderstand me here. I know that Satan is real. I know he doesn't use deodorant. I just don't credit him with creative powers that belong only to God. I see him as God's servant, purposely created to effect whatever evil God brings to earth, for whatever grand purpose.

God is wrestling with Satan, yes. But this wrestling is relative, not absolute. God *made* Satan to wrestle with Him. Satan is doing exactly what God created him for. God created Satan for the sake of opposition, that God might demonstrate His power against an adversary. Absolutely speaking, God is in control of all this<sup>2</sup> and a good outcome is assured. This is not a suspenseful matter, thank God. It's not a matter of God saying, "I hope I can win this thing." No. This is a drama that is sure to benefit all creation for eternity, including Satan himself.<sup>3</sup> It's a truly ingenious plan, appreciated only by those who will believe God in spite of what the clergy say.

### The missing link

You will notice one thing about those who try to let God "off the hook:" they never attempt to explain how Satan could have originated evil (originated it, mind you) "all by himself." The weird thing is that the same people who give Satan this power, at the same time admit that all power comes from God. Is it just me, or is this hypocritical? If all power comes from God, then Satan's power is relative, not absolute. If the power that originated evil is ultimately from God (Isaiah 45:7 clearly says God created evil),

then why stop at the intermediary, Satan, even if he does have a hand in the pot? Why not trace evil to its source?<sup>4</sup>

### Be a tracer to the sourcer

A stubborn friend of mine once saw a label at the grocery store that had a picture of the label itself on it. On the picture of the label, of course, there had to be a picture of the label, and on the picture of the picture there had to be a....and on it goes.

Being such a stubborn friend, he was interested to see how the artist escaped the difficulty. He couldn't tell this with his naked eye, so he bought the product (I think it was a bottle of ketchup), took it home, soaked off the label and put the label under his microscope.

Ha! When the artist got down to where he couldn't handle it, he just made a little blot for the picture of the picture. My friend balled up the label, threw it away and called the artist "a wimp."

But isn't this how theology tries to settle the origin of sin and evil? First it tries to trace these backward past several so-called falls (the fall of Adam, the fall of Satan, to name two), hoping to reduce the origin of sin and evil to a size so small that people quit the trail. Heaven forbid they should follow it to God's desk. And if



"Who created evil?! Mrs. Simpson, don't you have a nursery to run?"

a stubborn, inquisitive-type person with a microscope does keep looking backward toward an ultimate source? *Then make a blot! A blot on God's character! Squash! There! We don't know where it started, okay, buddy? Just box up your microscope, go back to your pew and stop asking questions!*

Theologians bash evolutionists, but their principles are the same. First, reduce everything to a blob of protoplasm (the theologians make

this the devil) and then--nothing!

But we are wiser than this. We believe the Scripture that says God created evil. Besides, if God has a desk, there are two signs on it. One says: **THE BUCK STOPS HERE.** The other says: **I'M SORRY TO HAVE TO MENTION THIS, BUT IT APPEARS**

## TO ME THAT MANY OF YOU PEOPLE HAVE FORGOTTEN WHOM YOU'RE DEALING WITH.

God has not demanded that we cloak the source of sin, or run it into a blind alley. He does not solicit human attempts to shift the responsibility of sin to the shoulders of His creatures. Religion has taken this task upon herself, to the end that fear and uncertainty haunt a great portion of humanity.

I am writing this book in the hope that thousands, maybe millions of people are tired of foggy religious notions and long for truth. Once they see that God's desire to reveal His affections demands a foil, a contradistinction, a contrast, and that sin is an essential though temporary part of this, they will finally understand that the creation of a being to carry out this part of His purpose was no mistake, hence no sin. In fact, if this creature, Satan, had failed in his function, *that* would have been a failure on the part of God. Only a mature, Scriptural understanding of the necessity and transitory nature of sin will carry us with comfort toward God's goal.

To be blunt about it, either God is God, or Satan threw Him for a loop. Either God is God, or He was out of town on some distant, celestial detail when His universe went to hell.

### You call this comfort?

Orthodox theology, of course, tells us that God created Satan good and that Satan went bad. That is, he fell. The idea is: God tried His best, but Satan broke the leash. God gave it the old "what for." But how was God to have anticipated Satan's stubbornness? The resultant "comfort" is, don't blame God for the trouble Satan has caused. It isn't God's fault.

This is comfort? Then give me trouble. What is to stop Satan from rebelling again? From undoing the work of the cross? From ruining yet another universe? From ripping yet another good intention from God's celestial notebook? If it happened once, it could happen again. And again. And again. And again. Don't blame God? Then just who is responsible for the universe? Am I to sleep tonight, wondering what havoc will next send Him sprinting for His laboratory? I feel another surge of righteous indignation coming on. Gug. Wow. That one tasted horrible.

But I think you are beginning to see the creation of Satan as a credit, not a blame. I pray that God enable you to continue to hear and believe what the Scriptures have to report on this.



**It comes back  
to free will**

"I feel so much better, realizing God  
doesn't control everything."

"He was a murderer from the beginning." In the gospel of John, chapter 8 and verse 44, this is what Jesus said about the devil. If there are no questions, I'll quote the apostle John from his first letter, chapter 3, verse 8: "The devil has sinned from the beginning."<sup>5</sup>

Here are two very simple, very understandable verses. Read them again. Have your kids read them. Take them to the grocery store and show them to the clerks there. Then ask them if Satan started good and went bad. "Not according to these verses," they all will say. Heretics! No, not at all. It's just that kids and grocery clerks don't nurse theological biases. Only theologians and their extended families do that. Could anyone doubt, from reading these verses, that God created Satan the way he has always been?

If any are still stuck in this theological bog, here are two more verses that will help pull you out. I already listed these, but read them again.

**Proverbs 16:4:** "Yahweh has made everything for its own pertinent end, yea even the wicked for the day of evil."

**Isaiah 54:16:** "I created the ruiner to harm."

These verses have been in the Bible a long time. Why haven't you seen them? Because they shatter the two most beloved theological biases in existence: free will and eternal torment. A lot of proud people want to keep these biases going. Why? To preserve their pride. And one of their strategies is to hide truth.

If Satan somehow escaped God's control and has his own sovereign little corporation, then God can't help those ensnared by him. You know what the church says: "God won't force Himself on



anyone." It's something like God shrugging, pointing to Satan and saying, "Hey! Don't look at me; *he* started it! What do you want *me* to do about it?" This dethrones God, but who really cares? Free will is preserved, eternal torment ensured and proud people stay that way.

But if these verses mean exactly what they say, that God *is* responsible for the way Satan is now, and for all the trouble that has ensued, then Satan's free will is the first to go, followed by everyone else's. At this point, if anyone *still* wants to keep eternal torment on the mantel, they've got to make God directly responsible for people being tortured in hell for eternity, a gag-inducing concept only a Calvinist could love.

I realize how hard it is to see God behind everything. It only becomes palatable when we finally see His purpose. I credit God with evil and people say, "How can you *think* that way?!" It's tough some days, it really is. But it's easier than believing that the universe is in chaos, and that evil is eternal. I can't ask these people, "How can you think *that* way?" because the people who believe this way rarely, if ever, think about it.

### Pour me one

*Author's comment, with a cup of coffee* : Why have I dipped into a section on the origin of Satan? Isn't this a book about the necessity of sin? Yes. But if you make sin the free bludgeon of Satan, how is it *necessary*? Necessary for what? For chaos? Chaos is the Adversary's agendum. Yet the concept of chaos defies necessity. In chaos, nothing can be necessary, for "necessity" implies that a thing *must* exist for a given event to occur. This entails care and premeditation. Bricks are necessary for buildings. But what is necessary for bedlam? Nothing but innecessity itself.

My ultimate goal is to deliver you from fear. Error engenders fear, truth dispels it. I'm unconvinced many have heard truth, for fear grips the world. Sin, it is said, will ensure one's eternal misery. Does this bring peace? I can't see how. Maybe if we could stop sinning. But who can do that? Only idiots try it.

How can you find peace *while* being a sinner? It's impossible, if you think Satan is monarch of sin. Only when you grasp sin's

necessity (and impermanence) will you find peace as a sinner. Only when you see sin's part in a master plan will you rest. Only when you realize God controls Satan will you look toward a grand consummation with assurance.

So I need to cover this subject for the sake of those haunted since childhood by the specter of Satanic sovereignty. It must be a nightmare for those brave enough to have thought it through, that Satan could have a free will and that evil is running amok. I pity the despair of those who are mentally equal to such a belief. These people need answers, and quickly.

In their attempts to prove that creation is in chaos, orthodox theologians generally resurrect two chapters from Scripture, Ezekiel 28 and Isaiah 14, to teach the sovereignty of the devil. These theologians have worked overtime dethroning God as Creator of all, and as One Who, for wise ends, made Satan crooked on purpose. Of course, they don't realize they're doing this. They think they're teaching truth. But when they twist Scripture to "prove" satanic sovereignty, they outdo Stephen King in the horror department. I'll deal with these two chapters shortly.

My purpose, again, is to show you the necessity of sin and give you peace. So I'm digging to the bottom of sin. But sin *isn't* the bottom. It stems from evil. So I keep digging. I want to set the foundation straight now, pulling any weeds along the way. This will help. Unless you know where the buck stops, unless you know Whom you're dealing with, you'll wobble through life. But if I found you on God's absolute sovereignty *now*, you'll live on in confidence.

That Satan could be sovereign (that is, untouchable) in the realm of evil is horrifying. Mercifully, few think it through. That it is false doctrine will greatly relieve men and women who have dared to meditate upon it.

This ends the author's comments, along with his coffee. Now, let's silence the gainsayers before you have another nightmare.

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## *Chapter 6*

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### **Satan didn't fall**

**I suppose if you squint and look at it upside-down....**

And now, from the dark halls of orthodoxy (and the inner offices of God's public relations corps), come two chapters in the Word of God twisted to teach the fall of Satan, a doctrine otherwise known in my book as, "Drats!"

I already showed you three very plain verses from God's Word proving that God created Satan the way he is now. These verses, again, are:

- "He was a murderer from the beginning." **John 8:44**
- "The devil has sinned from the beginning." **1 John 3:8**
- "I have created the ruiner to harm." **Isaiah 54:16**

As these verses are so easily understood by anyone old enough to carry his or her own lunch box, how is it that controversy could arise? Wouldn't such easy assertions halt all question at the gate? Unfortunately, no. Orthodox theologians are so anxious to transfer the creation of evil to Satan (they are God's self-appointed spin warriors, remember, and they're too short-sighted to see a bigger plan here), that they've resorted to twisting God's Word.

### They're reaching

It took them a long time to do it, but the theologians finally found two chapters in Scripture that seem to them to be referring to Satan and his so-called fall. Does it matter to them that these chapters chronicle the toppling from glory of two human beings, namely 1) the prince of Tyrus and 2) the king of Babylon? No. They have decided that "prince of Tyrus" and "king of Babylon" are secret names for Satan. As for me, I have decided that "theologian" is a secret name for "unbeliever."

Search Scripture for yourself to discover that the prophesy in Ezekiel, chapter 28 concerns "the prince of Tyrus." Call me crazy, but I think this is telling us that: the prophecy in Ezekiel, chapter 28 concerns the prince of Tyrus. I know I'm playing the edge, but I'm comfortable here. That the prince of Tyrus was an actual, historical personage, and that the destruction of his magnificence (a description of which follows in the narrative) is a matter of public record, comforts me on my mad little precipice. At worst, I may be accused of believing that the Scriptures mean what they say. To that, I admit my guilt.

If this isn't enough, the narrative states plainly (in verse 2) that the prince of Tyrus is a man. "Yet thou art a man." As Satan is not a man, this chapter cannot be referring to him. Period.

And yet, a two-page chapter seems so silly. Besides, there may be a theologian on board who wants to fondle the hardware. Let us have the details then, and shelve this nonsense once and for all.

### The prince of Tyrus is a man

The first twelve verses of Ezekiel, chapter 28, read like this in the King James Version:

"The word of the Lord came again unto me, saying, Son of man, say unto the prince of Tyrus, Thus saith the Lord God; Because thine head is lifted up, and thou hast said, I am a God, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas; yet thou art a man, and not God, thou set thine heart as the heart of God.

"Behold, thou art wiser than Daniel; there is no secret that they can hide from thee: with thy wisdom and with thine understanding



thou hast gotten thee riches, and hast gotten gold and silver into thy treasures: by thy great wisdom and by thy traffick hast thou increased thy riches, and thine heart is lifted up because of thy riches: therefore thus saith the Lord God; because thou hast set thine heart as the heart of God; behold, therefore I will bring strangers upon thee, the terrible of the nations: and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of thy wisdom, and they shall defile thy brightness.



"I can't explain it, Carol. I just have this weird feeling that my brightness is about to be defiled."

"They shall bring thee down to the pit, and thou shalt die the deaths of them that are slain in the midst of the seas. Wilt thou yet say before him that slayeth thee, I am God? But thou shalt be a man, and no God, in the hand of him that slayeth thee.

"Thou shalt die the deaths of the uncircumcised by the hand of strangers: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God.

"Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus,<sup>1</sup> and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord God; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty."

First, to my younger readers: don't let these "thou" and "thine" words in the King James account bother you. I don't care for them, myself, but one can't avoid them in this version. These aren't holy words. You don't have to use them when you pray. God will think just as much of you if you call Him "You" instead of "Thou." Just retain the capital letters. This is the way the English translators in 1611 talked. In fact, all English people in 1611 talked this way. They also had peculiar accents and drank tea.

To all my readers: If you thinketh that the King James Version is inerrant, you may as well forgetteth this section on Ezekiel. The *Scriptures* are inerrant, yes, but the KJV, a translation, is not. The KJV has been convicted of containing over 20,000 translation inconsistencies. Anyone with either a *Strong's* or *Young's* concordance can find these. They're no big secret. We now have

nearly 700 Greek manuscripts, some (such as Codex Sinaiticus) dating to the 4th century. The KJV translators had access to only eight manuscripts, none earlier than the tenth century; recent stuff. Seeking God's original thoughts requires monitoring the translators with concordances and Greek and Hebrew lexicons. I believe diligent application in the Scriptures is what Paul had in mind when he wrote to Timothy: "Present yourself to God qualified, an unashamed worker, correctly cutting the word of truth."<sup>2</sup>

In a nutshell, this prophesy concerns a rich king who becomes so conceited that he thinks he's God. Only divine judgment will relieve him of this burden. Verses six through ten foretell the man's attitude adjustment, which was duly accomplished, as any archaeologist can tell you.

### "Perfect," but not sinless

Now starts the "trouble." In verse 12, the prince of Tyrus is said to be "full of wisdom and perfect in beauty." Doesn't this prove Satan's primordial perfection? No. It proves that the prince of Tyrus was considered "perfect" in his day.

Noah was also said to be "perfect" in his generation.<sup>3</sup> And David used the same Hebrew word (*tahmeem*) to describe himself in Psalm 18:23. (Hmm. Had David forgotten that little incident with Bathsheba?) *Tahmeem* obviously does not denote sinlessness. When describing men, *tahmeem* is a relative term, limited to apparent flaws. Compared to his generation of man-haters, Noah was perfect. Compared to the steely hearts in his kingdom, David sought God's own heart. As for God, He is absolutely *tahmeem*. This is because His perfection is incomparable.

Verse 15 of this chapter also limits the perfection of the prince of Tyrus to apparent flaws. I quote: "Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou was created, till



"Let's just say... my perfection is *relative*."

iniquity was found in thee." There you have it. Iniquity was *found* in the prince of Tyrus. This proves that the iniquity existed (though undetected) at the prince's creation, even while the prince was "perfect." Otherwise, it couldn't be found.

Don't let the word "created" mislead you, as if the prince of Tyrus came directly off God's finger, rather than from his mother's womb. In chapter 21, verse 30 of this same book, the Ammonite is also said to have been created. So creation is not confined to that aspect Adam experienced in Eden. A creation is simply something new, whether the rise of a nation or the making of a king.

Let's assume for a moment that this chapter *is* talking about Satan. It was the iniquity found in him, rather than a sudden rebellion, that invited his judgment. This would prove that the iniquity existed before the so-called fall. Using their own verse against them, this should show the theologians that, even if Satan did fall, it was a result of inherent, rather than self-generated, iniquity. But the question still remains: where did the inherent iniquity come from? To prove their theory, the theologians must produce a verse establishing Satan the originator of his own malevolence. Yet they can produce no such verse. Why? No such verse exists. So they make a blot.

So the question *still* remains: if the Adversary's iniquity was latent, who put it there? Ah, but we have already read (and, it is to be hoped, believed) Isaiah, 45:7. And John 8:44. And 1 John 3:8. And Isaiah 54:16. And Job 26:13. This latter verse, recall, describes God forming the serpent crooked.

And so, even if Ezekiel, chapter 28 were speaking of Satan, it *still* would not prove him the creator of evil. God is that.

### **Was the prince of Tyrus in Eden?**

The next potential stumbling block occurs in verse 13. Here it is said of the prince of Tyrus, "thou hast been in Eden the garden of God." Doesn't this prove that "the prince of Tyrus" is really Satan? There's no record of the prince of Tyrus being in Eden. But everyone knows Satan was there.



Right. That the prince of Tyrus never was in Eden ought to alert us to a possible translation problem. Better this than to make God a liar Who, when He meant to say "Satan," said "prince of Tyrus."

This seems to be a real difficulty until we realize that the Hebrew word "*odn*," usually translated as the proper name, *Eden*, needn't always be. When the French speak of a red stick, they say "*baton rouge*." With small letters, this is something a boy might use to poke a frog. But when capitalized, *Baton Rouge* becomes a city in Louisiana.

The word *odn* means "delight."<sup>4</sup> Simply make it what it means, "delight" (rather than turn it into a proper name), and the problem of the prince of Tyrus meeting our progenitors in Eden disappears. This adjustment is different than the one employed by those who turn "prince of Tyrus" into "Satan." These are completely different words. All we are doing with *odn* is making the first letter of the same word lower instead of upper case. Don't resent this liberty, as there were no small or capital letters in the original languages of Scripture.

The Septuagint, which is the Greek translation of the Old Testament that Jesus read, has taken this liberty. It translates: "thou wast in the *delight* of the paradise of God." Another literal translation, the Concordant Version of the Old Testament, translates along a similar line: "In the *luxury* of the garden of Elohim (God), you come to be." All this means is that the prince of Tyrus was well-situated by God, as detailed in verses three through five.

The real difficulty, in my opinion, would be the prince of Tyrus actually *being* in Eden. Assuming God means "prince of Tyrus" when He says "prince of Tyrus" (and who dares to assume He doesn't?), this would be our only alternative, that is if we stubbornly insist on making *odn*, "Eden." I apologize in advance for the following:

"Good day, man. Adam, is it? Welcome to Eden. I believe you'll like it here. I've not seen weather like this in the whole Chaldean empire. Me? I'm prince over thousands of people in the village of Tyrus. Oh no, man. Don't look for it in your atlas. The founding of Tyrus is still several millennia into the future--hello, is this your lovely wife?--and I'm not actually born yet. *These?* Why, of course,



they're...er, *clothes*. This is a tweed jacket, these are commonly termed shoes, 'oxfords,' if you will, and this upon my head comes to be a...well....I see that I'm troubling you more than anything.

"Tell me, have you got the time? You see, I'm planning a major, celestial rebellion at midnight. Then I must return here by dawn and transform myself into a...well....why should I trouble you with that now? And then, confound *my* luck, I'm scheduled to address the Mayor's Club in Tyrus. Alas! Do commiserate with me, friends, for I have come to be the busiest man, *slash*, prince, *slash*, spirit being, *slash*, devil, *slash*, snake, *slash*, misunderstood personage in all the Bible."

Again, forgive me. But it's either 1) God can't say what He means, 2) my absurd paragraph suggests the truth, or 3) make the "o" in *odn* small case.



"I've not seen weather like this in the whole Chaldean empire."

### The prince of Tyrus was not a cherub

What about verse 14, where it's said of the prince of Tyrus, "thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so." How could the prince of Tyrus have been a cherub? Aren't cherubim those fat little winged babies who look so cute on postage stamps? Doesn't this prove that Satan used to be an adorable, fat little winged cherub before he became a trim, well-muscled hot head? Couldn't you just want to pinch a cherub's cheek? Was the prince of Tyrus in reality a fat little baby with wings? What did his mother say when she first saw his wings? Did the school children taunt him? Did his father have a contract with the Postmaster General?

Allow me to repent of these ridiculous questions. First of all, the Postal Service is not to be relied upon for timely Wal-Mart ads, let alone accurately-portrayed cherubim. Secondly, I believe that the prince of Tyrus was home-educated. Thirdly, you do not want to



"Everybody sit down and I'll show you my Postal Service Contract."

pinch a cherub's cheek. Fourthly, if you want to know what a cherub looks like, read the first chapter of Ezekiel. I dare someone to put that on a postage stamp. I dare someone to pinch its cheek.

### What are cherubim?

We first read of cherubim in Genesis 3:24. Here, God employs two of them to guard the way to the tree of life. In the holy of holies, golden images of cherubim overshadowed the lid of the ark of the covenant. In Ezekiel's vision, they wait on God to accomplish His purpose.

Here is what cherubim do: they guard and overshadow God's earthly operations. Cherubim are jealous and very protective of God's business. In visions throughout Scripture, the presence of cherubim means God is near.

Essentially, cherubim are celestial beings. Though we cannot ordinarily see them (Ezekiel was the exception), they rule over and above humans. Even humans in the White House. The cherubim participate in God's government, which is implemented by men on earth. In this capacity, they promote good and judge evil. Because earthly matters are generally evil (for now, anyway), the cherubim generally judge. This is not cute.

If you do happen to see a cherub, duck.

So how could the prince of Tyrus, clearly stated in the context to be a man, possibly be a cherub? He can't.

Is this another translation problem? Yes.

If you look in your King James version, you'll notice that the word "art," as in "thou *art* the anointed cherub," is in lightface type. At least the KJV translators were honest here. This lightface type means that the word is not in the original Hebrew text; the translators put it there to satisfy English idiom and help the passage make sense. If a passage is correctly translated, these supplied words do help. If the passage is mistranslated, however, these added words can mislead. In this case, the passage is incorrectly

translated. Therefore, instead of helping us, the supplied word, "art," suggests the absurd: that a historical personage, a man, is a cherub.

### Some grammatical considerations

Please consider the following grammatical concerns, ugly yet necessary business.

The Hebrew word translated "thou" in the KJV, as in "*thou* art the anointed cherub," is "*ath*." This Hebrew word is flexible. It can either be a pronoun, as the KJV translators have made it<sup>5</sup>, or it can indicate the object of a verb. Do I hear a collective groan from disgruntled grammarians? The object of a verb is the thing that a verb acts upon. In the sentence "Ryan ate the mulberry bush," *mulberry bush* is the object of the verb "ate." Ryan ate *what*? He ate object of the verb, of course. Which is? Mulberry bush.

In Ezekiel 28:14, "*ath*" can't be a pronoun. It can't. Why? Because it disagrees in gender with both "king" and "cherub." We don't have this concern in English, but in most complicated languages that require four years diligent study to forget, each noun is either masculine, feminine or neuter in gender. I don't understand it either, but that's just the way it is. In this case, "king" and "cherub" are both masculine.

There is also a rule, worthy of its own paragraph, that whenever a pronoun is substituted for a noun, (as in "thou" being substituted for "king" and "cherub,") the pronoun *must* agree in gender with the noun it's filling in for. So if "*ath*" was a pronoun doing duty for "king" and "cherub," as the KJV has it, then "*ath*" would have to be masculine. Why? Because both "king" and "cherub" are masculine. The thing is, "*ath*" is feminine. I know. This was a whale of a shock to me, too.

*Little Freddy is  
foiled again*



"Ha! I told ya '*ath*' wasn't a pronoun!"

But this proves that "*ath*" is an indicator of the object of a verb, rather than a pronoun.

So what? For one thing, we can get rid of that supplied word "art." Since "thou" shouldn't even appear in the text (remember, "*ath*" is a pointer here, not a pronoun), the KJV translators supplied "art" needlessly. These things being so, the four questions you're dying to ask now are, 1) what is the object of the verb "*ath*" is pointing to? 2) since "art" isn't the verb of the sentence, what is? 3) who or what is the subject of the sentence? and 4) will you reach a conclusion in our lifetime?

The answers to these intelligent questions are 1) the object of the verb is "the anointed cherub that covereth," 2) the verb of the sentence is "prepared," from the previous verse, 3) the subject of the sentence is "they," which in Hebrew is part of the verb "prepared" and 4) yes, I will reach a conclusion in your lifetime as long as you exercise and eat right.

Get out your KJV. Instead of "in the day that thou wast created," being the end of the previous sentence (verse 13), it's the beginning of the next one (verse 14). Don't resent this change, as punctuation is uninspired. The Septuagint follows these lines, as does the Concordant Version of the Old Testament.

**Author's note:** At this point some may be saying, "Jeff, this is ridiculous. You are changing the Scripture to suit your doctrine." I know it must look that way. But I'm not. I'm showing you how this passage actually reads. It's the King James translators who have changed Scripture, altering the sentence structure to accommodate *their* beliefs. I'm not asking you to blindly swallow that. I'm taking the trouble to lay out the facts. I know the facts are complicated. None of this struggle would be necessary had the King James men noted these grammatical concerns. But they didn't, and millions have been misled and lost their peace because of it. Now I will show you two other versions of Scripture, not the least of which is the version Jesus read, that support what I'm telling you.

### Let's compare three versions

Compare the end of verse 13 and the beginning of verse 14 in the three versions that follow. I want you to at least be aware that there are other readings of this passage besides the King James.



**KJV** : "the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth."

**Septuagint** (*Jesus read this version*) : "and thou hast filled thy treasures and thy stores in thee with gold. From the day that thou wast created thou wast with the cherub."

**Concordant** : "and with gold have you filled your flanks and your alcoves which are in you. In the day of your creation they established the anointed cherub's booth."

Note that the KJV is the only version to make "the day that thou was created" the end of the previous sentence rather than the beginning of the next one. And where is the word "gold" in the KJV? They left it at the end of the previous sentence, where it clearly doesn't belong. (Gold cannot be part of the preceding sentence, for that sentence lists "precious jewels." Gold is an element, not a precious jewel.) "Gold" belongs in the sentence where our other two versions have placed it.

And just what are "thy tabrets" and "thy pipes?" You got me. I can't even find "tabrets" in my dictionary.

Depending on how you link the Hebrew letters, "tabrets" can either be taken from *thphik* or *kthph*. The latter word is favored by the Septuagint and the Concordant version. This word literally means, "the side of a building." The Septuagint translates this "treasures" while the Concordant version (more accurate here, I think) has "flanks."

*Maybe....?*



**TABRETS & PIPES**

"Pipes," in the KJV, is indeed a mystery. It's the Hebrew *nqb*. The KJV renders the feminine form of this word (*qbbe*) as "tent" in Numbers 25:8. That's much closer to the truth. (Perhaps "pipes" are what the KJV translators were smoking when they translated Ezekiel, chapter 28.) The word has the significance of "store." The Septuagint makes it "stores," while the Concordant version has "alcoves." (Used as a proper

name elsewhere, the lexicons give "cavern" as the meaning. Perhaps this is where the Concordant version gets "alcoves.")

Next, how do the Septuagint and the Concordant version both get "fill" where the KJV has "workmanship?" It's a toss-up in the Hebrew whether the word appearing here is *mlakth* ("workmanship") or *mlath* ("to fill"). Workmanship being prepared is absolute nonsense. Note:

"Oh, Prince! I just love how the workmanship of these tabrets and pipes has been prepared in thee."

"Huh?"

But "to fill" makes perfect sense in relation to gold decking the king's walls and rooms. Note:

"Oh, my handsome little Tyrusian! I just love how you've filled these walls and rooms with gold."

"Thanks, Turnip."

Both the Septuagint and the Concordant version end the previous sentence after telling us about the gold. *And that's where the sentence should end.* But the English boys ran roughshod over it, apparently at a loss for periods. Thus, they give us the nonsensical: "the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee." These other two versions, however, tell us something intelligent, namely that a cherub was prepared ahead of time to "cover" (camp over, check up on) the king of Tyros from the day he set up shop.<sup>6</sup>

This makes perfect sense. And it agrees with what we already know about cherubim, that they cover, or oversee, the affairs of men. Besides, the verse *has* to read this way, because "*ath*" can't be a pronoun.

### Conclusion simpler than explanation

The conclusion is simpler than the explanation: on the day the prince of Tyros was created, God set an anointed cherub to cover him, to oversee his would-be kingdom. Again, this fits. Cherubim, recall, are divinely appointed delegates of earth, promoting good and judging evil. This sentence, cleanly translated, shows the mechanics of this. God set a cherub to watch over the prince of Tyros' kingdom, much as He set two cherubim to guard the way to

the tree of life in Eden, and two to guard the ark in the holy of holies. When the prince of Tyrus got too big for his britches, God sent the anointed cherub to destroy his kingdom.

I believe God has set cherubim over every divinely-instituted government on earth today. This would include all governments, for every superior authority has been set by God.<sup>7</sup> Who oversees the dumping of the bowls when God commences to judge evil nations? Read the book of Revelation, chapters four through ten. It's the beings around God's throne with all the eyes. It's the beings Ezekiel described at the opening of his book. It's the cherubim.

Now we can better understand verse 16. Where the KJV has "and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub," the Concordant version (making the verb third person rather than first; it can be either) reads, "and destroying you is the cherub." The Septuagint has: "and the cherub has brought thee out." These translations agree with what we already know from Scripture about cherubim, that they are destroy-ers, not destroy-ees. The KJV intimates that God destroys celestial beings he creates to be destroyers. My, no. Why didn't this sound strange to us before? Because the traditional rendering had hoodwinked us.

### Never shalt thou be any more

Besides, if this chapter is describing the historic fall of Satan, how does the description of that fall in verses 17 through 19 agree with what we know of Satan today? It doesn't. It *can't*, because Satan still exists. I know he still exists because he's still messing with my car.

These three verses, 17 through 19, read this way:

"Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness; I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.

"Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee.

"All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee: thou shalt be a terror, *and never shalt thou be any more.*"

Theologians claiming that "the prince of Tyrus" is Satan tell us that these verses predict his primordial ouster, which was duly accomplished. If this is so, then, using their own text against them, *Satan doesn't exist anymore* ("...never shalt thou be any more").

Hello?

Besides, to use their own faulty translations against them, Revelation 20:10 says that the devil shall be "tormented day and night for ever and ever." At this point I would be tempted to ask: which is it, gentlemen? Is he never to be any more, or is he to be tormented for ever and ever? Or have you no idea what you're talking about?



"We have no idea what we're talking about!"

The fact that a passage like Ezekiel 28 should be so pressed from its place should tell us that the underlying motive is suspect: maintain the orthodox viewpoint at all cost. If Satan was sinless from the beginning, then a plain passage could surely be found, and a false one need not be distorted. But the plain verse assures us that "Satan is sinning from the beginning."

**Oh, what a tangled web? Try this.**

Investigating Ezekiel, chapter 28 took a lot of time. So let me make but these brief comments on Isaiah, chapter 14: it's more of the same. The person in question is "the king of Babylon."<sup>8</sup> Does anyone read "Satan" here? If so, they must have an off-brand reading glass. And, as in Ezekiel, the king of Babylon is plainly stated, in verse 16, to be a man.

As for the reference to "Lucifer" in verse 12, it is precisely the same Hebrew word that the KJV translators rendered "howl" in Zechariah 11:2. In the feminine form, it occurs again in this very chapter, at the beginning of verse 31. In slightly different forms it's found in Isaiah ten times, and it's always rendered *howl*. There's no reason why Isaiah 14:12 shouldn't be translated, "Howl, son of the morning," instead of "Lucifer, son of the morning." The name "Lucifer" is a human invention and has no place in the Scriptures. I know. There goes a great *Rolling Stones* song.



As for the thoughts of the arrogant heart of the king of Babylon, described in verse 13, they are highly allegoric. I have no doubt the man *said*: "I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God." But this does not put the action literally in that sphere.

As for the "hell" of verse 15, "Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell," it's the Hebrew word *sheol*, (meaning "unseen"<sup>9</sup>) translated "grave" in the KJV in thirty-one other places.<sup>10</sup> In other words, "King of Babylon, you're going to the grave." That's just where he went, and no one has seen him since.

### On to the beer glass

These two chapters of Scripture, Ezekiel 28 and Isaiah 14, have sent many a Hebrew scholar to his beer glass. The scholars have tried for centuries to "untangle" these so-called mysterious chapters. They've even fought one another. Some scholars agree these chapters speak *only* of the prince of Tyrus and the king of Babylon. Others champion the "secret meaning" cause. (This is the Hebrew scholars' equivalent of the "tastes great"/"less filling" controversy that occupies those of meaner lingual accomplishment.) These scholars have even been known to call one another names. Such maledictions as "*Aboth!*"<sup>11</sup> and "*Achar!*"<sup>12</sup> have been known to reverberate through even the most marble-laden dens of learning.

Of course I believe that the answers are right in the text. That both persons are clearly called men satisfies the real scholars. But others, operating with a theological bias (especially with the false doctrine of eternal torment, which forces them to the false doctrine of free will), want very badly to relieve God of responsibility for evil. And so they make these two historical personages, clearly stated to be the prince of Tyrus and the king of Babylon, into "Satan." It's a creative way to read God's Word, for sure. And what a clash it creates with the real scholars, who believe God says what He means. And besides, aren't all these contorted efforts to find a foundation for Satan's primeval perfection an unspoken admission that no actual evidence exists?

This clash does wonders for my position. Even the confusion supports my conclusion that God created Satan a sinner from the

beginning. How? There are at least two passages of Scripture all real scholars agree on. There are at least two passages of Scripture about which every real scholar cheers, "Mishpachah!"<sup>13</sup> There are at least two passages of Scripture that cause real scholars to drink socially, laugh aloud and pat one another on their bald spots. These two passages are the ones already considered:

- "He was a murderer from the beginning." John 8:44
- "The devil has sinned from the beginning." 1 John 3:8

I have one more thing to say before I stop talking about this. This may be the most intelligent thing I have said so far on the subject: "Truth does not yield itself to the superficial considerations which seek to ignore or explain away the plain scriptural statement that the Adversary is sinning from the beginning."

I always sound smart when I quote my paperboy.

### Contrast, yet again...

Don't leave this book until you're founded on the contrast principle. When God deals with man, He always uses contrast. Understand this, and Satan's creation becomes fathomable. Understand this, and you'll always look ahead. Patience will replace panic at the dawn of understanding, and you'll see what God is up to.

Consider God's use of contrast, and the divine order of it:

- ♦ Sin comes first, then grace (Romans 5:20-21).
- ♦ Lostness comes first, then salvation (Luke 19:10).
- ♦ Death comes first, then life (1 Corinthians 15:36).
- ♦ Darkness comes first, then light (1 Peter 2:9).
- ♦ Disobedience comes first, then obedience (Romans 5:19).
- ♦ The soulish comes first, then the spiritual (1 Corinthians 15:44).
- ♦ Corruption comes first, then incorruption (1 Corinthians 15:42).
- ♦ Dishonor comes first, then glory (1 Corinthians 15:43).
- ♦ Infirmary comes first, then power (1 Corinthians 15:43).

Note that the shame of the former frames the glory of the latter. Never forget it. And this: without the former, there *is* no latter. We've all experienced it.

**Reader:** Grace boggles my mind.

**Jeff:** Only because of all the bad things you've done.

**Reader:** I love Spring sunshine. Spring sunshine makes my heart dance.

**Jeff:** You can thank the long winter for that, and God's use of clouds.

**Reader:** I just love the smell of those garlic rolls at Red Lobster restaurant!

**Jeff:** How would you know, unless you've smelled used diapers?

**Reader:** Can you imagine the thrill for Mary and Martha, when their brother Lazarus walked out of his tomb?

**Jeff:** It certainly makes a case for decomposition.

**Reader:** My mother died last year and I miss her still.

**Jeff:** This temporary pain is preparing you for endless joy, when you see her again.

**Reader:** I bet your freedom in Christ just thrills you.

**Jeff:** Yes, and there are so many priests I would like to thank, who made that possible.

**Reader:** Adam sure made a mess of things in the Garden of Eden

**Jeff:** He set the stage for what Christ did at Calvary.

**Reader:** I'm so tired some mornings I can hardly get out of bed.

**Jeff:** Think how good you will feel in your new body, when there's no more gravity.

**Reader:** Are you telling me that even *gravity* is priming me for endless bliss?

**Jeff:** Yes. It's another temporary hassle.

**Reader:** Is there an IRS in heaven?

**Jeff:** No.

**Reader:** Say no more!

How much sense does it make, then, to curse the corruption? To despise the darkness, the death, the toil, trouble and shame? To

despair of sin? To condemn what buys our future joy and happiness?

Long-dead philosophers with smart-sounding names have wrestled with the purpose of sin and evil, and here you have it in a 100-page booklet by a guy named "Jeff." It's contrast. I didn't invent this, believe me. I'm just passing along the information. You can't know grace and good without sin and evil. You *can't*.

So now you know.

### Strike three

It will help you to remember what we discussed earlier, that God will one day discard the dark side of these contrasts. The sickness, the death, the sin and the evil will do their duty, then depart. This is the opposite of what religion has told you. This is where religion strikes out at the plate and returns to the bench. According to religion, the Christian religion included, there will always be a cauldron of evil, sin, and death to mar God's universe. If not for those of their camp, then for someone.

Again, this concept is the result of faulty translations of Scripture embraced by hardened hearts. But this is why sane people reject God's responsibility for sin and evil. This is why Christianity lays an apparently battered universe at the feet of the devil; they think sin and evil are eternal. Thus deluded, they've brazenly tried to help God by removing bad things from His résumé. God doesn't need the help. By "cutting God a break," they've cut into His throne instead. Rather than seeing sin and evil as Scene I of a masterpiece, they've drawn the curtain too soon, putting a universe in chaos beyond His reach.

No. To think of evil, sin and death as endless is to rob these of their purpose in revealing God. Without "not God," we don't know God. But "not God" will last only until all know Him. For what purpose? I don't mind repeating it: that God may be "all in all."<sup>14</sup>

This is the grand purpose toward which God is marching.



## *Notes*

### **Chapter 1: It needs to be here**

1. Philippians 4:6
2. Acts 4:27-28. At Pentecost, Peter announces, "For of a truth, in this city were gathered against Thy holy Boy Jesus, Whom Thou dost anoint, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, together with the nations and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever Thy hand and Thy counsel designates beforehand to occur."
3. Colossians 1:20
4. Chapter 2, verses 10-11
5. Chapter 1, verse 20
6. 1 Corinthians 15:26
7. Verse 30
8. John 16:2
9. 2 Timothy 4:3-4

### **Chapter 2: No one except Christ can undo sin**

1. Romans 3:23
2. Romans 3:11
3. Romans 12:3 says, "God parts to each the measure of faith."
4. Romans 8:20- "For to vanity was the creation subjected, not voluntarily, but because of Him Who subjects it." The J.B Phillips translation is good here, also: "The world of creation cannot as yet see reality, not because it chooses to be blind, but because in God's purpose it has been so limited..."
5. Romans 3:12- "All avoid Him: at the same time they were useless."
6. 1 Corinthians 1:27
7. 1 Corinthians 1:21
8. Romans 5:8
9. 1 Timothy 4:10
10. John 1:29
11. 1 Corinthians 15:22-23
12. Revelation 5:10, Revelation 20:4
13. Mark 10:30. The King James version and others mistakenly translates the Greek word here, *aion*, as "world." And yet *kosmos* is the Greek word for "world." They should have made this "eon," as the Concordant Literal New Testament and others.
14. Revelation 21:1
15. Ephesians 2:7 speaks of "oncoming eons," plural. By this we know that there is at least one eon that follows the eon of the earthly kingdom referred to

by Jesus in Mark 10:30. This eon we know to be the new heavens and the new earth, described by John in Revelation 21:1.

16. Romans 6:23

17. Matthew 7:14

18. Matthew 15:24 reads, "I was not commissioned except for the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Romans 15:8 reads, "For I am saying that Christ has become the Servant of the Circumcision, for the sake of the truth of God, to confirm the patriarchal promises."

19. According to W.E. Vine in *An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, an *aion* is, "an age, era, signifies a period of indefinite duration, or time viewed in relation to what takes place in the period." And the word "time," according to my Random House Collegiate Dictionary, is "finite duration, contrasted with eternity" --pg. 1375. A second witness: *aion* is pluralized elsewhere in Scripture; there can be no pluralization of eternity. Note: the Hebrew (Old Testament) equivalent of *aion* is *olam*. As contexts show, these words mean virtually the same thing.

20. *The Concordant Literal New Testament*, Rotherham's *Emphasized Bible*, Young's *Literal Translation*, to name three.

21. 1 Corinthians 15:54

22. 1 Corinthians 10:11, Hebrews 9:26

23. 1 Corinthians 15:24-26

24. 1 Corinthians 15:25

25. 1 Corinthians 15:27-28

26. 1 Timothy 4:10

27. 1 Corinthians 15:24

28. 1 Corinthians 15:26

29. Quoted by Thomas Allin in *Christ Triumphant*, published by the Concordant Publishing Concern.

30. 1 Corinthians 3:10-12. Paul and Apollos, the men of the context, were *teachers*. The "toil" of verse 8 is teaching. Therefore, what is built on the foundation of Christ concerns doctrine rather than deportment.

31. 1 Corinthians 3:15

32. 1 Timothy 1:15

33. "Consequently, then, as it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one just award for all mankind for life's justifying." Romans 5:19 is good here also, "For even as, through the disobedience of the one man, the many were constituted sinners, thus also, through the obedience of the One, the many shall be constituted just." Note that as "the many" of the first clause includes all mankind (for "all sinned"—Romans 3:23), *thus also* "the many" of the second.

34. Among whom may be listed Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen, Gregory Thaumaturgus, Titus of Bostra, Basil, Gregory Nyssen, Didymus, Jerome, Diodorus of Tarsus, and others. Luther came very near it. In a letter to Hansen von Rechenberg in 1522, Luther wrote: "God forbid that I should limit the time for acquiring faith to the present life. In the depths of the divine mercy there

may be opportunity to win it in the future state." Would that Luther had based salvation fully on the cross of Christ, rather than "opportunity."

35. 1 Corinthians 15:26

36. 1 Corinthians 15:28

37. Romans 11:36

38. *"An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words."* W.E. Vine. Vol. IV, pg. 32.

### Chapter 3: Sin is a foil for grace

1. Romans 5:20. Some versions mistakenly put the two verbs of this verse into the past tense, such as the "increased"/"abounded" of the New American Standard Bible. The CLNT however, recognizing the "aorist," or indefinite tense of the verbs, translates it as a timeless fact. ("Aorist" is Greek for "no horizon.") The indefinite tense is easy to spot in the Greek. Whenever the writers wanted to put a verb into the aorist tense, they would prefix the verb with the Greek letter Epsilon, which is the sign of the past, then insert the letter Sigma, the sign of the future, before the verb's ending. This would unmistakably make the tense a unique combination of the past *and* the future: the aorist, or indefinite--something that works all the time. And, according to the oldest manuscripts, that's exactly what Paul did here.

2. See? There is nothing in this footnote.

3. In the context, the laws of Moses

4. 1 Corinthians 6:9-10

5. Philippians 3:12-15

6. 1 Corinthians 15:40-42

7. 2 Timothy 2:11-13

8. 2 Corinthians 5:14

9. Romans 3:3-4

10. Romans 5:17

11. Romans 8:7

12. Matthew 1:21

13. 1 Timothy 4:10

14. Matthew 1:21

15. Jesus said in Matthew 15:24, "I was not commissioned except for the lost sheep of the house of Israel." During His earthly ministry, Jesus did *not* preach to all mankind. He inspired Paul to do that after His resurrection.

16. Revelation 20:6

17. Revelation 21:1

18. Ephesians 3:21

19. Revelation 20:14-15

20. Revelation 20:12

21. 1 Corinthians 15:24

22. 1 Corinthians 15:24-28

23. Romans 5:18- "Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came

upon all men unto justification of life." Not even the King James translators were able to ruin this verse.

24. Romans 5:1- "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

25. A proper translation of Matthew 25:46 is "eonian chastening."

26. The "ifs" that precede verses 5 and 7, as "if our injustice is commending God's righteousness," and "if the truth of God superabounds in my lie," carry the sense of "since," rather than of an uncertain possibility. This becomes obvious in 3:10, when Paul writes, "not one is just." Paul has already outlined Israel's faithlessness in chapter 2. The question of this context, then, is not whether or not Israel is unfaithful, but whether their inadvertent highlighting of God's faithfulness makes God's judgment of them unjust. The answer (verse 6) is clearly "no." Give the "if" of these passages the same sense it carries here: "If God says He loves, me, why does He keep disciplining me?" To highlight the pearl in the shell, then, I have retracted part of the shell.

27. Romans 3:8, New International Version.

28. Speaking of "what Paul taught," you may notice that some of the things Paul teaches in his letters clash with the teachings of John, James, Peter, even the four gospel accounts. You may be reading parts of this book and be thinking, "But James says this," or "John says that." Paul's gospel is radically different from these. The glorified Christ gave Paul something so different to teach to the nations that Paul's own countrymen—even those who believed in Jesus—hated him for spreading it. Paul brought a message of grace and peace to the nations that eclipsed in glory even the gospel brought to Israel. It will take another book to explore this grand subject. And this we will do, God willing.

29. From the Concordant Literal New Testament, the first part of Romans 5:20 reads, "Yet law came in by the way, that the offense should be increasing." The King James Version has: "Moreover the law entered, that the offense might abound." Here it is from the New American Standard Bible: "And the Law came in that the transgression might increase." The NIV reads, "The law was added so that the trespass might increase." Strange that so few know this verse is even in the Bible.

30. Galatians 3:10

31. Romans 3:28, "For we are reckoning a man to be justified by faith apart from works of law." And Romans 8:1, "Nothing, consequently, is now condemnation to those in Christ Jesus."

32. 1 Peter 1:20 says that Christ was "foreknown, indeed, before the disruption of the world, yet manifested in the last times because of you." Revelation 13:8 portrays Him as "the Lambkin slain from the disruption of the world."



## Chapter 4: The early universe

1. Romans 11:36
2. One of God's many Scriptural titles is "El-Shaddai." The root word here is *shad*, Hebrew for "a woman's breast." This title portrays God as the all-sufficient One.
3. 1 Timothy 1:17
4. The KJV has "the beginning of the creation of God."
5. John 1:18
6. 2 Corinthians 4:17
7. Romans 11:32
8. King James Version
9. King James Version

## Chapter 5: God's PR people

1. John 8:44 and 1 John 3:8 quoted from the New American Standard Bible.
2. Ephesians 1:11 assures us that God is "the One Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will."
3. According to Colossians 1:20, God has made peace through the blood of Christ's cross. Through this cross, it is the purpose of God to "reconcile all to Him...whether those on the earth or those in the heavens." As Satan is in the heavens, he will be reconciled to God. Some will object to this conclusion, claiming that the "all" of the context doesn't mean "all." But verse 16 of this passage defines the "all" of the context: "for in Him is all created." What He creates, He reconciles. This truth fully agrees with Romans 11:36, which states that, "out of Him and through Him and into Him is all." What comes out of Him, returns to Him. What a simple, satisfying and glorious truth. Enjoy it.
4. Like many, you may have the mistaken idea that evil is sin. Since you know God never sins, this misconception has kept you from believing Isaiah 45:7. But evil is *not* necessarily sin. I will give Scriptural proof of this in a future work. Once acquainted with the facts, you'll be able to believe Isaiah 45:7 exactly as it stands and be glad for it.
5. One of the theologians' favorite escapes from the plain sense of these passages, that Satan is a murderer and sinner from the beginning, is the suggestion that these flaws date from the beginning of man rather than Satan himself. (Isn't that interesting. So if you tell a theologian, "my rabbit has been brown from the beginning," he will likely say, "So that means he was white up until the time you owned him?") That such a statement could never carry such a sense when applied to any other situation shows how desperate this argument is.

## Chapter 6: Satan didn't fall

1. Many scholars have wondered why the leader of Tyros is referred to as a "prince" in verse 2 and a "king" in verse 12. (Literal versions, by the way, have

"governor" where the KJV has "prince.") Some have jumped to the conclusion that "governor" refers to the actual man, the leader of Tyros, while "king" begins the secret meaning voo-doo. This is not a problem. In 1 Chronicles 29:22, Solomon is said to be both governor and king. So we have a precedent. In our passage, we are simply looking at two aspects of the same matter. Using the more general title, "governor," God makes it clear to the Tyrusian that it is *He* (the ultimate Governor) Who is watching and ordering the rise and fall of his territory. Addressing the same person with the more specific title, "king," God assures him that it was *He* who appointed him to rule this particular section of earth, and that it is *He* Who will judge him for his specific failures on this count.

2. 2 Timothy 2:15

3. Genesis 6:9, King James Version

4. *Young's Analytical Concordance*, pg. 287

5. A pronoun is a word that fills in for a noun. Some pronouns are "you, he, she, it, they."

6. The Septuagint unaccountably omits the verb "prepared," making it "with." The Concordant version keeps the verb, making it "established." The Septuagint at least acknowledges that the king of Tyros was *not* the anointed cherub, apparently well aware that "ath" could not be a pronoun.

7. Romans 13:1

8. Verse 4

9. *Young's Analytical Concordance*, pg. 474.

10. *Young's Analytical Concordance*, Index-Lexicon to the Old Testament, pg. 46.

11. "Thick bough!"

12. "Hinder end!"

13. Sorry. Don't know what it means.

14. 1 Corinthians 15:28.

## *About the author*

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