

The Unveiled Glory

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How could the Bible possibly speak of the perfect victory of God our Creator, Who loves righteousness and cannot bear evil, if that victory really means that He cannot bring His own creatures at last to hate evil as He hates it, but must confirm multitudes, indeed the majority of them, in their choice of evil for ever and ever?

What sort of victory is it to be able only to subdue evil and prevent it harming any but those who choose it, and to be unable to bring human souls to abominate it and desire to forsake it, so that the evil itself ceases to exist?

The clearer these things presented themselves to my mind, the more plainly I saw that any supposed interpretation of the teaching of the Holy Scriptures which taught otherwise must be mistaken interpretations, because they are totally at variance to the revelation of a Holy God who loves righteousness and hates evil, and who only permits its existence temporarily that all creatures may hate it and turn from it for ever.

The more I prayed over Romans 9, the more surprised I became! Isaiah 45:9-12 – What does all this mean? I had always supposed that this passage meant there would be a forced submission to God in the end. But what sort of victory could that be to the Father heart of God?

As all those questions came surging into my mind I was continually oppressed with the fear that all this was dreadful heresy and that these were questions which cast suspicion on the verity of the inspired Scriptures. But still, honesty, and love to the Lord and intense longing to know Him better and to be freed from any false distortions of His character, impelled me to go on praying and seeking for light, and asking questions! For does not the Creator, Who gave us minds, want us to ask questions when once we really begin to see what we are committing ourselves to, when we believe things about God which must be a distortion both of His justice and His love?

I found that this was the heart of the problem. All the questions really boiled down to one question: Do the inspired Scriptures really teach what I have for so long supposed I must believe? Or had I been believing “traditions of men” which were not true interpretations of the Scriptures themselves? Oh the joy, and relief and inexpressible thankfulness it would be to be free to believe about God the things which alone seemed worthy of Him and in harmony with the lovely revelation of Him given by Jesus Christ.

I am now fully persuaded that as God is Love there can be in Him no wrath such as we conceive of wrath, or any possibility that He will condemn His Own creatures to unending destruction, but I must still ask, “What am I to do with all the passages of Scripture which seem to assert the very contrary?”

The Scriptures, of course, did teach that there is a hell, yet there are many other passages which most emphatically state that, in the end, God will completely triumph over evil.

What astonishing questioning this discovery led to. I discovered that there is not one single verse in the Scriptures which uses the words “everlasting,” “eternal,” or “for ever and ever” in connection with hell. That is to say, in no single verse translated in English by the word hell, referring to Gehenna, Sheol, Hades, the Pit or the grave, is any word used which even hints that these places or conditions are endless, but there are several which definitely speak of being delivered out of hell. Therefore hell cannot even be assumed to be endless; it must be *TEMPORARY*.

If it is clearly stated that in the end, “death and hell” are actually cast into the Lake of Fire for complete destruction, then it is obvious that they must play some vital and important role in preparing for God’s final victory and for the “*restitution of all things.*”

It was then, at last, that a veil seemed drawn away completely from my understanding and I beheld the glory which has been revealed to us by the Lord Jesus Christ in His resurrection from the dead, by which He demonstrated His complete and perfect victory over sin, death and hell and all the works of the Devil. I also began to see what this glorious victory means for the whole body of mankind. As a result all my earlier conceptions of the nature and character of God and His purposes for Mankind have been swallowed up. It feels almost as though I have seen a new God altogether; but I know, of course, that the real fact is I have seen the True God in a new way – in the face of the Risen Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. As a result, “*old things have passed away and all things have become new.*”

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