

Nothing Will Be Lost

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*“When they were filled, He said unto His disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, **that nothing be lost**” (John 6:12).*

After our Lord Jesus Christ miraculously had fed the “five thousand,”¹ there was still food remaining. He had made provision beyond the present time; and instructed His disciples to collect the leftovers so “*that nothing be lost.*”

Albert Barnes (1798–1870), in his commentary of Scripture, wrote regarding this account:

“It shows the care of Jesus that there should be no waste. Though He had power to provide any quantity of food, yet He has here taught us that the bounties of Providence are not to be squandered. In all things the Savior set us an example ... If *He* was thus saving, it becomes us dependent creatures not to waste the bounties of a beneficent Providence ... The loaves and fishes created by the Savior were His gift ... not given them to waste ... Everything should be applied to its appropriate end, and nothing should be squandered or lost.”²

What rich lessons we learn from the earthly life and ministry of our precious Savior. He was here revealing the true nature and character of our Father; and what a simple and yet far-reaching principle we learn here: the heart of the Father is “*that nothing be lost.*”

Indeed, this “*that nothing be lost*” truth was the very theme of the parables of lost things in Luke chapter 15: the Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin, and the Lost Son (the “Prodigal”).

Notice the result of Jesus’ instruction to His disciples to gather the remains:

*“Therefore they gathered them together, and **filled twelve baskets with the fragments** of the five barley loaves, which remained **over and above** unto them that had eaten. Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world” (John 6:13-14).*

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1. 5,000 men, not counting the women and children (Matthew 14:21).
 2. *Barnes’ Notes on the Old and New Testaments* (Gospel of John).

It is amazing just what remained – “*twelve baskets*” full – “*over and above.*” This “*remainder*” was a vital part of the miracle! For the Scripture states that after they had gathered up the remains, “**Then** ... *when they had seen the miracle.*”

The darkened human mind, wayward society and culture, and the influence of religious systems of this world have kept the genuine charter and nature of the Father from us. The Lord Jesus Christ came to correct this by revealing the Father Himself to us. Everything about the Son of God was an unveiling of the true God. For indeed,

“... *God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself ...*” (II Corinthians 5:19).

The Lord Jesus Christ’s very words, life, death, resurrection and ascension were but a manifestation of the Father. The “*Feeding of the Five Thousand*” was no exception.

The greatest miracle of the universe is not that God has only made provision to meet the currently perceived need of salvation of mankind – now, but that all that “*remains*” at the end will be “*gathered up*” unto God for His glory, so “**that NOTHING be lost.**”

The salvation that we presently experience and enjoy is just the *first* part of God’s great plan of redemption. We are but the “*first-trusters;*”³ the “*first-fruit*”⁴ of His full harvest. There will be no waste of any of God’s creation. He created *nothing* in vain, thus ultimately none of His bounty will be squandered or lost. The “*remainder*” will be “*gathered up*” unto the Father, in His culmination of “*all things*”!

THE RECONCILIATION OF **ALL THINGS**

“*And, having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile ALL THINGS unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven*” (Colossians 1:20).

Even though the Bible is specifically a book about the details of human redemption – Paul’s unequivocal testimony is to the reconciliation of “**all things**” that have been alienated from God – not just man. To this Peter is called, by divine revelation, to confirm – “*the restitution of all things*” (Acts 13:21).

According to Paul, “*all things*” will be reconciled to God – “*all things ... in earth*” and “*all things ... in heaven.*” We know what is *alienated* in the earth that needs to be reconciled to

3. “*That we should be to the praise of His glory, who first trusted in Christ*” (Ephesians 1:12).

4. In every harvest there is that small portion of the crop that matures early, before the vast majority of the rest. The *firstfruits* are a token of that which is to come – the full harvest. Under the Old Testament economy the *firstfruits* belonged to God, and were holy unto Him. In every generation, and in every place, God has had His *firstfruits*; those that come to harvest earlier than the rest. What a blessed privilege to be the *firstfruits* of the Lord. Thus just as God has brought us to faith, so He too will bring all the rest of His creation.

“... *My wellbeloved Epaphroditus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ*” (Romans 16:5).

“*Of His own will begat He us with the Word of Truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures*” (James 1:18).

“... *These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb*” (Revelation 14:4).

God; but what about “in heaven”? What is alienated there that is in need of reconciliation? Why, Satan and the fallen celestial powers, of course!

Satan⁵ and the fallen celestial powers are exactly what the backdrop of Colossians 1:20 includes. Listen to Paul, just a few verses earlier – “**all things created**, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or **principalities**, or **powers**” (:16). Again, it is clear revelation given to Paul that there will be a reconciliation of “all things” – all things that have been alienated. And the context is abundantly clear – the “all things **created**” ARE the “all things” RECONCILED.

Specifically included here in the “all things” are the *exact same* adversaries – the “principalities” and “powers” – against which we currently wrestle according to Ephesians 6:11-12. God says that they, too, will be reconciled. God will leave no corner of His vast and wonderful universe outside of His unfailing love.

Therefore, the context of the reconciliation of Colossians chapter one plainly includes Satan and the fallen celestial powers. Oh, the great grace, love and mercy of God that are abundantly demonstrated and magnified in the full extent of their reach – even to the reconciliation of Satan and fallen celestial powers.

Paul repeats these gloriously triumphant truths in Ephesians 1:10:

*“That in the dispensation of the fulness of times He might gather together in one **all things** in Christ, both which are **in heaven**, and which are **on earth**; even in Him”*

Again you will notice the context of “heaven” and “earth.” This dual sphere is also repeated in Philippians 2:10-11:

*“That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things **in heaven**, and things **in earth**, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”*

This reconciliation is truly *universal!* No creature will be left out. Nothing will be left alienated or unreconciled to God. There will be an entire, universal “restoration of all things.”

*“For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are **all things** ...”* (Romans 11:36).

*“And when **all things** shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put **all things** under Him, **that God may be All in all**”* (I Corinthians 15:21-28).

5. *i.e.*, “the Adversary.” The Hebrew word “Satan,” *Strong’s Hebrew Lexicon* #7854, means “an opponent” and is also translated “adversary” in the Hebrew Scriptures. The Greek “Satanas” is of Chaldee origin, *Strong’s Greek Lexicon* #4567, meaning “the accuser.”

THE OVERCOMING OF *EVIL WITH GOOD*

“Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good” (Romans 12:21).

This reconciliation of “*all things*” alienated, is but the disclosure and expression of the genuine nature and character of God – the overcoming of evil with good.

God’s plan and purpose for His universe ultimately will be to overcome *all evil* – all of His adversaries – with good. In God’s plan to “*reconcile all things unto Himself,*” He will not accomplish His work in Satan, the fallen celestial powers, and the greater part of mankind until the final judgment (the divine turning point)⁶ of the “*Lake of Fire.*”⁷ They then will all be finally and gloriously under the righteous dominion of the Church (*ecclesia*), the Body of Christ, as we shall judge the world and angels (I Corinthians 6:1-3), with Satan under our dominion.

“*And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.*” (Romans 16:20).

This is an enlightening verse indeed. The word “*bruise*” is *Strong’s Greek Lexicon* #4937, *suntribo*, which, interestingly enough, is rendered by the *King James Version* translators in Luke 4:18 as “*brokenhearted.*” The word “*feet*” is *Strong’s Greek Lexicon* #4228, *pous*, which is rendered by the *King James Version* translators in Matthew 5:35 as “*footstool,*” denoting dominion. Even more interesting is that *pous* is also translated right here in the book of Romans as the phrase “*are the feet of them*”:

6. The primary word translated “*judgment*” in the Greek Scriptures is *Strong’s Greek Lexicon* #2920, *krisis*. This word “*krisis*” means, “a critical period of time, decisive moment, *turning point* or deciding time” (Arthur P. Adams, *Judgment*, 1885; Jack E. Jacobson, *The Concept of Circularity*, page 36), and is where we get our English word *crisis*. The *American Heritage Dictionary* defines “*crisis*” as “a crucial or decisive point or situation; a *turning point.*” Thus *divine judgment* is the *divine crisis* in the creation. It is the divinely appointed “*turning point.*”

7. Many see God’s judgments as an end within themselves, rather than a means to an end. There are coming some wonderful days in the future, days of divine judgment, when God shall apply the refiner’s fire to His creation. As in the due process of gold’s and silver’s refinement, these days will forever remove all the stains, disgraces and sins of the “*former things.*”

Refinement’s purging fire is indeed a most gracious act, producing a gloriously positive loss. It will remove all that wishes to be forgotten. As God in His forgiveness remembers them no more, so “*the former things are passed away.*”

Fire is such a wonderful blessing to our daily lives. We make profitable use of it every day. The only *dangerous* fire – one that is to be feared – is a fire that is *out of control*. Be assured that the God who “*is Love*” (I John 4:8, 16), and whose love is a “*consuming fire*” (Hebrews 12:29) – is *not* out of control. As Fanny Crosby wrote in her hymn, He “*doeth all things well.*”

In the Bible fire is presented as having a *purging* effect. It does so many things: it cleanses, frees, reduces, refines. It is interesting how we recognize this fact when “*fire*” is applied to the believer’s judgment in I Corinthians 3:13, 15. Yet we forget this when it is applied to the unbeliever. Just as the “*fire*” of the believer’s judgment is a purging, purifying act of God’s love, so it is with the “*fire*” of the unbeliever’s judgment.

The “*lake of fire*” is but the further manifestation of the love of God – of the love of His consuming fire – and it is defined by John as “*the second death*” (Revelation 21:8). Paul teaches us that, “*the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death*” (I Corinthians 15:26). That’s what the “*lake of fire*” is – it is “*death.*” So it shall be destroyed; and the only way to “*destroy*” death is by “*resurrection!*” The “*lake of fire*” is just a transition from death to life.

“... How beautiful **are the feet of them** that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! (Romans 10:15).

Satan will be “*brokenhearted*” under the “*footstool*” (i.e., the righteous dominion of Christ’s Body) – under the “*feet of them that preach the **gospel** [good news] **of peace.***”

Little wonder, then, that Paul begins Romans 16:20, “*And the **God of peace** shall ...*”

Paul did not say “*And the God of *wrath* shall ...*” for Satan (“the Adversary”) and the fallen celestial powers will no longer be alienated enemies. Having been used of God to fulfill His elementary purpose, they will be restored to the willing, humble service of thanksgiving to God. Then, because “*Satan*” will be at peace with God, his title of “Adversary” (“*Satan*”) will no longer apply.

As C.S. Lewis wrote,

The greatest surprise for Satan will occur when he learns that he has been perfectly doing the will of God all along.

Just as God used Pharaoh in his defiance for His own purpose, so He has used Satan.

“*For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew My power in thee, and that My name might be declared throughout all the earth*” (Romans 9:17).

God declared Nebuchadrezzar, the king of Babylon, to be “*My servant*” (Jeremiah 25:9), for,

“*I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things*” (Isaiah 45:7).

He is the grand and glorious God,

“*Who worketh **all things** after the counsel of His own will*” (Ephesians 1:11).

Do not be discouraged as you look around you. What you see is not the end of God’s plan and purpose. Granted, the world is filled with sin and unbelief, but God is not yet done. Don’t judge the final outcome by the current state of things. This is not the finished product of God.

Those of us who now trust the Lord Jesus Christ are but the beginning of God’s glorious work. We are but the *first-trusters* in His glorious design. We are only the *first* part of God’s great redemptive plan; there will be no waste of any of God’s creation. Nothing was created by Him in vain; nothing will be squandered or lost by Him.

Wonderfully, Ray Prinzing (1927-2005) has written,

The spirit of love and mercy will fully conquer all negative forces of destruction and loss, then restore *all* that which was blighted, marred, ruined; to lift the whole of creation back into harmony and peace again (*Daily Overcoming*).

God's purpose of the ages will not be complete until His full creative bounty is restored so that He is "*All **in** all*" (I Corinthians 15:28).

"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!" (Romans 11:33).

Truly, God will "*Gather up the fragments that remain, **that nothing be lost***" (John 6:12).

Taken from the *Bible Student's Notebook*[™], a weekly Bible study publication available in two formats (electronic and printed)

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