

# Who Is in Charge Here?



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**T**here is only one God. This God is the great Creator of the entire universe. The world did not evolve. The teaching of evolution is an attempt to eliminate the first cause and trace the existence of everything to nothingness, and thus, have a world of meaninglessness. If man can get rid of the idea of God, they can give their own meaning to this world, and to their own existence, and thus, become their own “saviors” – in short, their own gods.

This is where the world went wrong. The knowledge of God was well established after the world’s great flood, but that knowledge was corrupted into an image of corruptible man, and, it went downhill from there. Mankind professed that they were wise, and in doing that, they were fooled, and they changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of an image of a corruptible human being and flying creatures and quadrupeds and reptiles.

Many of the past civilizations had their versions of creation and the flood. These versions mix the truth of the creation and the flood with wild myths of warring gods. This was the corruption spoken of by Paul in Romans chapter 1. The gods of these civilizations are no different than man: full of envy, murder and strife. These accounts do not, and cannot explain why the universe was created, or, why the flood came. These gods had no real purpose, and they were not in control of the universe. Everything was left to chance.

The ancient Sumerian creation epic depicted the creation of the heavens and the earth as the result of a battle between the high god of the Sumerian pantheon (originally Anu, then Enlil, later Ninurta, Marduk, Asshur) and a dragon named Tiamat. This depiction appears in a later version where the god Marduk was credited as the defeater of the dragon and creator of the heavens and Earth. Marduk, a mighty warrior god, may have been a reference to the Bible’s Nimrod (Genesis 10).

## THE GOD OF HISTORY

Yet, when we come to the Bible, we have a clear concept of God and His purposes.

*In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth (Genesis 1:1).*

Creation has its origin in God, and thus, it derives its meaning from God. Creation is the place where the God of the Scriptures is going to display Who He is, and His plans for His creatures. There is nothing in creation – from the first hour of its existence, down through its entire history, until its ultimate consummation in the distant future – that is unimportant. Creation has its origin in God, and it all leads back to God.

*Then comes the end ... that God may be All in all (I Corinthians 15:20-28).*

God said through His prophet Isaiah,

*Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like Me, **Declaring the end from the beginning**, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, “My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure” (Isaiah 46:9-10).*

The God of the Scriptures has not left anything to chance. He is not at war with some enemy who can outsmart Him or wreck His plans. From the beginning of creation, until its consummation, God is “*working all things according to the counsel of His Own will.*” He is not consulting with us, nor watching the latest election polls, and neither is He on the lookout for an enemy who can wreck His plans. He is using all, the evil and the good, to bring about a wonderful conclusion at the end.

Now, this is where *you* come in! Yes, you, my reader.

## WHO AM I?

It is easy to feel lost in the crowd. With the billions of people on the earth today, and with all of the people who lived and died in the past, it is very easy to feel insignificant.

Yet each one of us was put here by God. He put us here and is carrying out each detail of His plan. The details of our birth, the date, time, the number of hairs on our head, where we would live, go to school, who our friends would be, what kind of job we would do, and more, were *all* planned by God. God did not create the universe and then leave it to run on its own. He is the Creator. He is sustaining His creation, and He will bring His creation to a successful conclusion and goal. Read that paragraph again. Seriously, read it.

Do you still feel lost in the crowd? Or, having read that last paragraph, at least twice, did you sense that God came out of some distant corner of the universe, no longer as a disinterested spectator, but as One Who is very close to you? The God Who created the entire universe, Who has arranged all of the details of history since it was created, from the smallest molecule, to the largest star cluster, has you in mind. Do not feel lost in the crowd. Do not think that your life and existence are insignificant. I know it sounds cliché, but, *God has a plan for you!*

## LET’S BACK UP

Since God *is* the Creator, and He *is* arranging all of the details of His creation, did you ever wonder why things are the way they are? We look around us, and what do we see? We see a world that is mixed with life and death, joy and sorrow, corruption, and violence; and it seems that the bad stuff

far exceeds the good. Why do we have to follow a hearse to the cemetery to bury a loved one? Why do people suffer? Why are there wars? These and a million other questions come to mind.

Is God seeing all of this? I will answer, yes, and much more. We said that God is the originator of this universe and all that is in it, and that He is not like the gods of mythology who are busy fighting enemies and trying to gain control of their universe. So then, why do we see all of these terrible things in the world? If God is in control, why is there suffering?

The answer to that question is very simple, and may not, at first, satisfy you. However, let me ask for your patience and your ability to reflect on what I am about to say before you pass judgment. The reason that there is sin and death in the world is so that we can know what it is like to be without God, so that we can truly appreciate what it will be like to be with Him. Please read that last sentence again.

A reunion of a mother and daughter may prove my point. The separation produced a longing and intensified the reunion.

There are really only two options of belief. The first is to believe that there is no God, and that everything in the world is meaningless. The years of suffering and war have no meaning and all we can do is to hope for the best. That is one belief. Or, we can believe that there *is* a God, and that all of these horrible things have a purpose and, one day, God is going to undo all of this suffering, and we will look back and see how necessary it was.

Please pause here. Reflect on what I just said to you. Seriously reflect. Then come back.

## A GARDEN

Welcome back.

When God created man, He put Him into a beautiful garden and provided him with everything he needed. He also provided him with a gorgeous complement, Eve. God, having put Adam in the garden, gave Him one simple command. The command consisted of not eating from one tree. If he ate from it, he would surely bring death into the world and all of the other evils that come with it – fighting, suffering, starvation, mass murders, bills, hospital beds and rush hour traffic. Now, I do not know about you, but I ask, why? Why do that, God? Why not just let Adam and Eve live in the garden, happy, with no disease, arguments, rush hour traffic or death? What in the world is wrong with eating from a tree? It's just fruit!

As I think about my questions, I realize something. Adam had no history. I can easily look back at the Garden of Eden and say, "Let's go back there. – but I can only say this because I am here, outside of the Garden, and experiencing disease, pain, funerals and rush hour traffic. I have a history! I can appreciate what Adam had, but Adam *couldn't*. Adam could not look back and ever recall a sense of lack. When Adam was created, God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and then Adam opened his eyes to a beautiful creation. He was born full grown and intelligent. He had such great reasoning powers that he could name every animal in creation. I can imagine the moment he became conscious. He opened his eyes, he heard his Creator's voice, and was shown around the Garden by God. You and I can't really understand that experience. We can't understand what it's like to have our first conscious

thought as an adult in a perfect world; but neither could Adam know about our experience when he was in the Garden. Adam did not have a history of suffering to appreciate what he had. I have read Genesis 2-3 probably over 100 times, and I never recall Adam ever singing praises to God, thanking God for such a great carefree life, appreciating God, or praying to God. Why? Because Adam never knew what it was like to be without God.

Adam's first outburst of praise was when God brought Eve to him. Adam had walked around the garden with the animals, but he had no complement. God said that it was not good for the man to be alone. Then once Adam saw that beautiful, naked woman stand before him, he knew that it was better now! His lack of a complement in the past heightened the joy of receiving a complement. God could have created the woman at the same time as the man, but He didn't. He purposely made man in a state that was not good, so that He could provide a solution that the man would appreciate, and the end result would be praise to the Creator. Love delights in responsive love! The background of lack was needed for this mutual love. This is true of all human relationships as well. In human relationships absence makes the heart grow fonder. Our closest friends are the ones with whom we've had to go through some trial, with whom we have sweat, cried and shared our troubles. We love and appreciate them.

We can never know love, unless we know hatred. We can't know peace, unless we know war. We can't know life, unless we know death. We can't experience reconciliation, unless we know alienation. Consequently, we can never know the love of God unless we, as sinners, see God sending His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, to die for our sins. In other words, we can't know God as our Savior, unless we are sinners. We have a history.

This is why Adam never uttered a word of praise or appreciation. He did not know anything else! This is why we are born sinners and live in a world of corruption and violence: so that we can have evil in our history, with the purpose that, when it is all over, we can have real fellowship with God and with each other! History is the most important ingredient in God's purpose.

## A FAMILY FACES DEATH

There is one example in the Scriptures that I want to tell you about to illustrate what we have been saying. In the gospel of John, chapter 11, there is a story about a man named Lazarus. Lazarus had two sisters, Mary and Martha. One day Lazarus became very sick. His two sisters sent for the Lord Jesus to come to them. They knew that He could heal Lazarus.

*Therefore his sisters sent unto Him, saying, "Lord, behold, he whom Thou lovest is sick."*

The Lord loved Lazarus. It must have been common knowledge that Lazarus had a special place in the Lord's heart. The sisters did not say, "Lazarus is sick," but, "*He whom Thou lovest is sick.*"

*When Jesus heard that, He said, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby."*

Here the Lord shows the real reason for the sickness. The sickness was going to lead to God's glory. This is true of all sickness and death. This is the needed background for God to display His glory and the glory of His Son.

We would think that since the Lord loved Lazarus so much, He was going to run to his side and take care of him – but what does He do?

*When He had heard therefore that he was sick, He abode two days still in the same place where He was.*

The Lord stayed away! This must have been very painful for these two sisters, not to mention Lazarus who was suffering. I can see Martha looking out the window in nervous anxiety, wondering where her Lord was. “Where is He? He knows that Lazarus is sick! What is taking Him so long? We are really hurting; we need Him to help us.” Yet, He didn’t come, and Lazarus breathed his last and died.

We have all experienced this kind of pain. “Where is our Lord? We know that He loves us. So why do we have to wait so long? Is the Lord indifferent?” No, He is not. Rather, He delays because the glory of God and of His Son is at stake, and this is for our highest good. I know it does not feel that way when we go through it. I am sure Martha, Mary and Lazarus did not think that the delay was for their highest good while they were suffering.

The Lord Jesus finally showed up on the scene after Lazarus had been dead for four days! Not only did the Lord not show up when Lazarus was sick, He did not even attend the funeral of the one He loved. Can you imagine what went through the mind of those sisters and their friends?

So, finally, here comes the friend of the family, days late, and Martha sees Him and says,

*Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.*

Do you think she was angry? Do we get angry when the Lord does not do what we ask in situations like this? What about Mary? What did she say?

*Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying unto Him, “Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.”*

What about the crowd that was gathered to mourn with Martha and Mary? What did they say?

*And some of them said, “Could not this Man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?”*

There it is again. “Where were you? You could have prevented this. Lord, why, oh why?” We all have the very same questions. You, I, Mary, Martha and the crowd are all alike.

*When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, **He groaned in the spirit, and was troubled**, and said, “Where have ye laid him?” They said unto Him, “Lord, come and see.” **Jesus wept**. Then said the Jews, “Behold how He loved him!” And some of them said, “Could not this Man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?” Jesus therefore again groaning in Himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it. Jesus said, “Take ye away the stone.” Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto Him, “Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been*

dead four days.” Jesus saith unto her, “Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldst believe, thou shouldst see **the glory of God?**” Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up His eyes, and said, “Father, I thank Thee that Thou hast heard Me. And I knew that Thou hearest Me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, **that they may believe that Thou hast sent Me.**” And when He thus had spoken, He cried with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come forth!” And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, “Loose him, and let him go.”

If Lazarus did not die, we would have never seen the Lord weep. The shortest verse in the Bible is, “*Jesus wept.*” He was not indifferent. If the Lord had healed sick Lazarus, He would have demonstrated pure power; but allowing death to take its course, He demonstrated His love and sympathy. Death brought out His love even more. God hates sin, He hates death; but these are part of the necessary background to display His love. The Lord could have prevented all of the problems in the world, but He didn’t. He is not indifferent, but He weeps.

Imagine the emotions and joy that took place when Lazarus got up! Imagine the hugs and kisses. This brought glory to God. This scene in John 11 will take place on a wider scale in the future, for

*as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.*

Imagine the reunion we will have one day. It will be said, “Look how much He loved us!”

## IN CONCLUSION

In conclusion, there is only one God. He is in total control of *every* detail of His universe. Every detail, the evil and the good, have meaning and purpose. Then, in the end, when evil has served its purpose, God will eliminate it. We, His creatures, will be alive and happy, and will have a greater joy than Adam ever had. We will all one day wake up in the end. Just like Adam, when he had his first conscious moment, and was shown around the garden by God, even so we, we will all be made alive at the consummation, and be shown around our eternal home. Yes, we will be happier than Adam ever was. When we see our final home in the end, we will appreciate it, we will praise Him! For we had a history.

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