

Man: His Nature and Destiny

by
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Chapter X

UNIVERSAL RECONCILIATION

Our adversary, the devil, does not always appear as "a roaring lion . . . seeking whom he may devour." Sometimes he is "transformed into an angel of light," offering false hopes to Christ-rejecters and seeking, if possible, to deceive even the very elect.

If ever he has appeared as an angel of light it has been through the teachings of Universal Reconciliation. In warm, tender phraseology it is explained that God *planned* sin and introduced it into the world as "a gracious means to a glorious end," so that He might finally reconcile all to Himself--even the devil. This, it is argued, will be the glorious consummation of God's over-abounding grace.

But believe this lie and you are immediately plunged into a whirlpool of soul-destroying heresies, *for there is not one fundamental of the faith which Universalism does not in word or in fact deny.*

SIN ATTRIBUTED TO GOD

If there is any such thing as moral wrong, then Universalism has led its followers into the most horrible and wicked blasphemy, for it attributes moral wrong to God.

The very basis of Universalist philosophy is that what we call *sin*--moral wrong--originated in the heart and mind of God, that He conceived it and brought it to pass for our good and His glory.

Of course, Universalism does not merely contend that God is a wicked being. The devil could not sell such an article as that. Its philosophy is, as we have said, that God introduced sin "*for His own gracious purpose.*" Indeed, Universalism appears to *defend* the honor of God, as in the statement that God is "not all-loving, *unless* He has a purpose to accomplish which justifies the employment of evil" (*The Problem of Evil*, P.1).

Thus with honeyed and guarded phraseology it still teaches that lying, stealing, cruelty, adultery and all moral evil was originally conceived in the heart of God as part of His "gracious plan" and that its eruption among men is but the outworking of His will. Its constant insistence that "all is out of God" is really meant to convince men that *sin* is "out

of God"; its continual affirmation that God "worketh all things after the counsel of His own will" is meant to persuade men that *sin* is but the outworking of His will and that therefore in the nature of the case He must and will finally reconcile all to Himself.

That these are indeed the teachings of Universalism may be seen from the following quotations from its foremost exponent for the past many years, Mr. A. E. Knoch, of the *Concordant Publishing Concern*. Says Mr. Knoch:

"God has introduced it [sin] into the world." (*Concordant Version*, at John 9).

"His purpose demands the presence of sin. He makes a medium--the slanderer--to inject the virus into creation. He rescues His creatures and gains their affection" (*Concordant Version*, at John 8).

And this is why he says that if unbelievers are *not* finally saved: "we despair--not for the unbeliever. . . . We despair for *the character of God* . . ." (*The Salvation of the Unbeliever*, P. 11).

Some years ago, when we came across a Universalist poem to Judas Iscariot we felt we had seen everything. Entitled ISCARIOT, it read as follows:

The stars which saw that night your traitor's kiss,
Saw eons past, that you were born for this.
For this role the Creator chose you then
As part of His redemption plan for men.

The purchase price of Him whom you betrayed
You flung down at their feet, hopeless, dismayed.
Grief strangled you with strong cords of remorse
While smug clothed Pharisees your act endorse.

Shrouded were they in plutocratic hate,
Glad the Galilean had met his fate.
Now through the centuries their ilk still name
That deed on you, and to eternal flame
Assign not only you, but from the fall,
All who believe that God has planned it all.

Think of it! A poem in defense of Judas' betrayal of Christ! We quote it here to show the path down which Universalism leads. Judas could not help betraying his Master. His betrayal was but a part of God's unalterable plan! Indeed, it was the special service for which God had chosen him!

But look at the poem again. Was Judas a betrayer at all if he was but carrying out the irresistible will of God in this matter? Does not the whole poem argue that this foul deed was perpetrated (not merely permitted) by *God*, rather than Judas? And if Judas was "born" and "chosen" "for this role," was it not most unjust of our Lord to say: "*The Son of*

man goeth as it is written of Him: but WOE UNTO THAT MAN BY WHOM THE SON OF MAN IS BETRAYED!" (Matt. 26:24).

Furthermore, if Judas was born for his role, were not the Pharisees born for theirs? Why does the author of this poem condemn *them* for their "plutocratic hate" of Christ? And why condemn *us* for "naming that deed" on Judas? Were we not born for our role as well as Judas was for his?

Was the betrayal of Christ merely a drama, in which there was no actual betrayal and no one was really guilty? Ask the Son of God, who bore our load of sin. Ask Pilate, Caiaphas, the centurion, the apostles. Ask Judas himself, for he, unlike this deluded poet, was at least *not* guilty of charging God with the responsibility for his sin. Rather, driven by an accusing conscience, he returned to the rulers, bitterly confessing: "*I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood.*" And at their reply he cast down the money in the temple and went out and hanged himself.

We have dealt at length with this case because it demonstrates what comes from man's age-old effort to rid himself of his responsibility and guilt and to establish his own righteousness.

Now all this is not only contrary to the written Word of God Himself, but actually makes God *the only sinner in the universe* though, of course, Universalist leaders are careful not to say this, and thus many embrace this heresy without realizing what its teachings imply. It is natural that Universalists should systematically avoid facing this fact, for it is their crowning blasphemy, as well as the weakest link in their weak chain of arguments.

The conclusion that Universalism makes God the only sinner in the universe is inescapable, for if God conceived sin and works it through man, then *God--not man--is the sinner*. Consequently, if dishonesty is the product of His heart, how can I trust Him? If it was He who conceived cruelty, how can I love Him?

We are well aware that some Universalists seek to confuse the issue by pointing out that the organic meaning of certain Hebrew and Greek originals for "sin" is "to miss" or "to miss the mark." Hence man would be a "mark-misser" in committing moral wrong, but not God, for He had *planned* that man should "miss the mark" and so *hit* the mark by causing man to miss it. And so they seek to evade the conclusion that they have made God a sinner. But if man sinned, or *missed* the mark by committing moral *wrong* then the *mark* must be moral *right--righteousness, holiness*. Therefore, what if God did plan to have man miss the mark by committing moral wrong, does that mean that God *hit* the mark? Certainly He would have hit no *moral bull's-eye*! And is it not possible to *aim* to *miss* the bull's-eye *and miss it*? The Universalist may argue that in causing man to sin God hit where He aimed. Yes, but He still missed *the mark--holiness--and therefore sinned*, if the Universalist premise is correct. They cannot logically make Him the author of sin without making Him *the supreme sinner*.

In addition to passages of Scripture from which Universalists draw the *implication* that

God is the author of sin, they frequently cite Isa. 45:7, where God actually says: "*I make peace, and create evil,*" asserting that this includes *moral* evil. But they are wrong here, for while it is true that the Hebrew word *ro* frequently does refer to moral evil or at least includes the thought, it often refers to inflicted evil too and certainly does in this case where it is set in contrast to "peace," not righteousness.

The whole Universalist argument, of course, champions the cause of the sinner against a holy God. It logically absolves man of all responsibility and lays sin, *all* sin, to the charge of God.

It makes one shudder to think that even wicked men, let alone professed believers, could associate the holy name of God with sin, or call Him the author, the creator, the originator of it. "*Sin is a reproach to any people*"; how much more would it be a reproach to God!

WHAT DOES GOD HIMSELF SAY?

But what does God Himself say about all this? In saying that "all things are of God" and that He "worketh all things after the counsel of His own will," does *He* include sin?

To the contrary, we read in Gen. 6:5,6:

"And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

"AND IT REPENTED THE LORD THAT HE HAD MADE MAN ON THE EARTH, AND IT GRIEVED HIM AT HIS HEART."

Does this sound as though God *planned* sin and *introduced* it into the world for some gracious purpose? What can Universalists do with such a passage? Or what can they do with, say, Jer. 7:31, where God says of His people:

"They have built the high places of Tophet . . . to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; WHICH I COMMANDED THEM NOT, NEITHER CAME IT INTO MY HEART" (See also Jer. 32:35).

One Universalist bluntly asks whether sin entered the world unwanted by God. The above passages sufficiently answer this question. Another answer is found in Eph. 5:6:

"LET NO MAN DECEIVE YOU WITH VAIN WORDS FOR BECAUSE OF THESE THINGS COMETH THE WRATH OF GOD UPON THE CHILDREN OF DISOBEDIENCE."

To say that the responsibility of man and the sovereignty of God *seem* incompatible is one thing. To say that they *are* is quite another. That is exalting human reason above divine revelation.

The next question these reasoners ask is: "Why, then, did God *permit* sin to enter the world or the universe?" Our answer is, we do not fully know. God says and does many things which we cannot understand, but if we *could* fully understand Him we would be equal with Him. The proper attitude for us is to bow in faith before His holy Word and say: "I believe."

There are several things which God *says* He does not wish, yet, in His sovereign wisdom permits: "HAVE I ANY PLEASURE AT ALL THAT THE WICKED SHOULD DIE? SAITH THE LORD" (Ezek. 18:23). And yet the wicked die. Again: "FOR HE DOTHT NOT AFFLICT WILLINGLY NOR GRIEVE THE CHILDREN OF MEN" (Lam. 3:33). Yet the children of men are afflicted and grieved.

Does this indicate that we question the sovereignty of God? The remainder of this volume will, we trust, give sufficient proof that this is by no means the case.

There are many questions, doubtless, which have entered all our minds with regard to the origin of sin, but the unscriptural solutions to which Universalists have resorted raise infinitely greater ones as they make light of sin and strike at the character of God--the very basis of our trust in Him.

SIN AND HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY

The term "mark-missing" has an innocent sound, yet this, Universalists insist, is the true meaning of at least some of the originals rendered "sin" in our English Bible. But even if "mark-missing" were the organic meaning, the first derivation, of *all* the Hebrew and Greek words for "sin," that would still by no means prove that the word *as used in Scripture* denotes mere mark-missing. The derivation of a word does not necessarily decide its true meaning, for through years of usage words change their meanings.

Sir Robert Anderson wrote, with regard to this: ". . . it is the use of a word which decides its meaning: and to be guided only by its derivation is as unwise as it would be to accept a man of sixty on a character given to him when a schoolboy" (*Human Destiny*, {P. 22}).

Sin is far more than the mark-missing which Universalists like to call it. It is *moral wrong*, which the whole nature of God abhors. The Scriptures abound with testimony concerning this fact. God hates sin. His holy nature is grieved and angered by it. His justice must condemn and punish it. Christ *died* for our sins. The lake of fire rages against it. And will men now tell us that God actually conceived it in His heart and produced it in His creatures for their good and His glory? And will they try to prove this by *the Bible*?

"Correcting" the *Authorized* rendering of Rom. 5:12 to suit his teachings,¹ Mr. Knoch

¹ His *Concordant Version* renders the latter part of the verse: "And thus death came through into all mankind, on which all sinned." Thus he makes the verse teach that sin is the result of death, rather than that death is the result of sin. Of the

argues: ". . . it is not true that sin is the source of death to Adam's descendants." "*Death* it was that made [man] a confirmed sinner." (*The Transmission of Sin*, Pp. 1,2). Thus man is again relieved of the responsibility of his sin. He cannot help sinning because of his weakness, because of the "devitalizing process" of death. Yet it is common experience that men often become most presumptuous in their sin and rebellion when they are strongest and most self-confident. And who will deny the truth of God's Word to Paul: "*My strength is made perfect in weakness*," and of Paul's response: "Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities . . . for when I am weak then am I strong?" (II Cor. 12:9,10). Who of us has not experienced this? When we are strong we soon become self-confident; when we are weak we lean and pray the harder--and therein lies our true strength.

Imagine twisting Rom. 5:12 to teach that death causes sin rather than sin death; imagine teaching that sin is not the source of death to Adam's descendants, when the Scriptures so plainly teach that "*the wages of sin is death*" (Rom. 6:23); that "*sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death*" (Jas. 1:15) indeed, that "*Christ died for our sins*" (I Cor. 15:3)!

Universalism goes father than this to absolve man of his guilt and place the responsibility for sin upon God. It argues that God deliberately set the tree of knowledge of good and evil in the garden to tempt man and *cause* him to sin. The answer to this is found in James 1:13:

"Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for GOD CANNOT BE TEMPTED WITH EVIL, NEITHER TEMPTETH HE ANY MAN."

God set the forbidden tree in the garden, not to tempt man to eat of it, but to emphasize man's relationship to Him as that of a creature to his Creator, of a servant to his Lord.

One thing is certain: if Adam might be legitimately excused for his first sin, then *all* men should be excused for all their sins and the great white throne judgment is uncalled for.

But neither Adam nor we may be so lightly absolved of our responsibility. Whatever arguments men may present in their own defense, the *Bible* says that in our unsaved state we were "the children of *disobedience*" and therefore "by nature the children of *wrath*" (Eph. 2:2,3).² Now if God *meant* man to sin, and works all things according to His will in that respect, how could any one be *disobedient*? As the operator runs the loom, are not the shuttles that fly backward as obedient as those which fly forward? And why should there be any question of wrath? What reason would God have to be angry over sins He *willed* and *caused* men to commit?³

Further, if God willed and caused men to commit sin did not Adam have a perfect alibi when he blamed his sin on "*the woman whom thou gavest to be with me*";⁴ likewise Eve,

twenty-five translations at hand as we write this, *not one* supports the *Concordant* perversion.

2 The two Greek words rendered "children" here are, respectively: *huios*, a grown son, and *teknon*, a born one. Thus we were mature sons of disobedience, knowing full well what we were doing, and therefore the natural children of wrath.

3 Universalism presents God's judgments as disciplinary and remedial, but this idea is certainly not conveyed by such words as "wrath," "vengeance," etc.

4 Actually Adam's plea was worse than groundless. Had *Eve* been tempted by *Adam*, it might have been different, for God

when she explained: "*The serpent beguiled me*" (Gen. 3:12,13). And was not God then unjust in condemning them?

For the plain teachings of Scripture the Universalists have substituted human philosophies and will reap the condemnation of those whom they have led to "*turn away their ears from the truth . . . unto fables*" (II Tim. 4:4).

If there is *not* such a thing as moral wrong, then it is foolish to talk about guilt and grace, or condemnation and justification. But if there *is* such a thing as moral wrong in the world the question is, *who* is committing it? God says: *Man*; Universalism says: *God!* It does not blush to place the whole responsibility for sin upon Him.

Thus, as we have intimated, Universalism is already guilty of a twofold heresy, for in placing the whole responsibility for sin upon God, it defends and exonerates the sinner. Says Mr. Knoch in a note on John 12:39 (C.V.):

"Outside the Scriptures we hear much of human responsibility and that those who reject the light deserve the judgment they have invited. This passage makes us pause. These men had heard the most powerful of all preachers and seen the most marvelous of all miracle workers, yet we are distinctly told that *they could not* believe. The reason is that *the Scriptures must be fulfilled*. God's purpose demands a measure of unbelief as well as of faith. . . . To damn these men who could not believe with irretrievable and irrevocable ruin is unthinkable of God."

Here is an example of how Universalists bend and twist the Scriptures to make them conform to their own teachings.

We dare say that not a single ordinary reader would conclude from the above passage that God was *causing* these Jews to reject Christ in order that He might fulfill Isaiah's prophecy. The thought is rather that God's Word, being in the nature of the case, perfectly accurate in its predictions, the matter could not have turned out otherwise. This passage from John 12 certainly affords no support for charging God with man's rejection of Christ--and if it did it would contradict a whole volume of Scriptures like John 3:36, which says: "*He that believeth not the Son . . . the wrath of God abideth on him.*"

What amazes us most is that the Universalists can continue to argue for man's innocence when the Law, which held sway for fifteen hundred years, was given with the specific purpose:

"THAT EVERY MOUTH MAY BE STOPPED, AND ALL THE WORLD MAY BECOME GUILTY BEFORE GOD" (Rom. 3:19).

In this connection let no reader blame *us* for the double talk of the Universalists, for it is

had made her subject to him. But as it was, his guilt was increased, for he was responsible to guide and protect her. Hence God's sentence upon him begins with the words: "*Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife*" (Gen. 3:17).

acknowledged that the same writer who argues that death causes sin, rather than sin death, and ascribes the responsibility for *all* sin to God--this *same* writer *also* declares:

"Transgression is sin against a known law, entailing not only the usual penalties, but the added displeasure of God against the one who defies His precepts" (*Concordant Version*, at Gal. 3).

Why there should be displeasure or any penalties for sins which men were meant to commit we do not know. We only know that by such concessions, made doubtless because of Scriptures too plain to pervert, Mr. Knoch confuses the issue and gives superficial readers the impression that perhaps he is not so unsound after all.

But the great weight of Universalist argument lays sin directly at the door of God. It speaks of "the blessed results when grace grows in the fertile field of sin" and says: "Sin is . . . indirectly essential to the satisfaction of His love. Love cannot be lavished on those who are deserving" (*Concordant Version*, at John 4).

But, we ask, does not God love His Son? He never sinned.

The Universalist answer is: "The Father's fondness for the Son . . . is not the love which flows out to those least deserving of it. . . . It is liking rather than love" (*Concordant Version*, at John 5:20).

So God *loves* sinners but *likes* His Son! What blasphemy! And this when *both* the principal words for *love* (*agape* and *phileo*) are used to tell us that "*the Father loveth the Son*" (John 3:35; 5:20). This when the Scriptures emphasize in every possible way the fact that the Son is more precious than all else to the Father's heart.

Let Universalists try to rid mankind and themselves of the onus of sin and place the responsibility for its presence upon God, but *He* makes it crystal clear that He does not accept the charge. He hates sin and blames men for committing it (Eph. 2:1-3). He pronounces them *guilty* (Rom. 3:19). He exacts a *penalty* and declares they are "worthy of death" (Rom. 1:32; 6:23).

It is true, thank God, that in infinite grace He took the sinner's place in Christ so that we might be "*justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus*" (Rom. 3:24). But this priceless gift may be accepted by faith only after we have first acknowledged ourselves to be the guilty sinners He died to save.

THE UNIVERSALIST CHALLENGE as to **THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR SIN**

We have seen that in their attempt to escape the guilt of sin the Universalists do not hesitate to charge *One Person* with the sole responsibility for all that takes place in the

universe. God alone, they insist, is responsible.

One passage to which they keep returning for proof of this assertion is Eph. 1:11, where we read that God "*worketh all things after the counsel of His own will.*"

From *their* interpretation of this passage it would appear that God manipulates the affairs of men as one might run a machine, turning out saints, sinners, heroes, villains, preachers, drunkards, as it pleases Him, all to be reconciled later on.

This, of course, is far from the truth. Those who are so one-sided in their emphasis on the will of God, should remember that God made man in His own image and after His own likeness (Gen. 1:26). He created one who, like Himself, was possessed of a will; one with whom He might have *fellowship*, or, who could break that fellowship by disobedience and sin.

This image, to be sure, has been defaced, but not *effaced*, for in I Cor. 11:7 we still read that man is "*the image and glory of God.*" Compare him with the highest form of animal life and this will be seen to be true.

Thus we read that our Lord and His mighty angels will come "*in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved,*" while on the other hand He will be glorified in His saints, as He says: "*because our testimony among you was believed*" (II Thes. 1:7,8,10; 2:10).

Texts taken out of their contexts are frequently used as pretexts and this is certainly so with the Universalists' use of Eph. 1:11; for, taken *in* its context Eph. 1:11 proves a boomerang to Universalist theories.

The preceding context informs us that God's "chosen" ones have been "PREDESTINATED . . . unto the adoption of children [Lit., placing as sons] . . . ACCORDING TO THE GOOD PLEASURE OF HIS WILL" (Vers. 4,5); that He has "made known . . . THE MYSTERY [SECRET] OF HIS WILL" that all in heaven and in earth (not "under the earth" as in Phil. 2:10) will be gathered together in Him (Vers. 9,10) and that we, the "chosen" ones "have obtained an inheritance, BEING PREDESTINATED ACCORDING TO THE PURPOSE OF HIM WHO WORKETH ALL THINGS AFTER THE COUNSEL OF HIS OWN WILL" (Ver. 11).

Now, in its context, does Verse 11 sound like an argument that God is the author of all--even sin? Does it not rather emphasize His sovereign *control* over all for the carrying out of His own purposes? He does not bring all things to pass, but overrules, miraculously causing all to work out for the furtherance of His plans.

Thus we read in Rom. 8:28:

"And we know that all things WORK TOGETHER for good to them that love

God, to them who are the called according to His purpose."

All things are not *in themselves* good for those who love God, but He overrules so that they *work together* for their good.

God's sovereignty, as distinguished from His alleged direct responsibility for all things, is set forth in many Old Testament passages--among them the following:

Job 5:13: "HE TAKETH THE WISE IN THEIR OWN CRAFTINESS: AND THE COUNSEL OF THE FROWARD IS CARRIED HEADLONG."

Psa. 76:10: "SURELY THE WRATH OF MAN SHALL PRAISE THEE: THE REMAINDER OF WRATH SHALT THOU RESTRAIN."

But are there not concrete proofs that God brings all things--even sin--to pass? Did He not, for example, create the devil and harden Pharaoh's heart?

DID GOD CREATE THE DEVIL?

Universalism teaches that God created a wicked being especially to introduce sin into the world, so that He might rescue the victims and gain their affection. This is supposed to be a display of His grace. We have already cited several passages by leading Universalists to this effect.

As proof they advance such passages as John 8:44, where we read of "the devil" that "he was a murderer from the beginning." But who denies that *the devil* was a murderer from the beginning? Surely the beginning of Satan's career as the "devil" or "slanderer" was not the beginning of his personal existence. This would seem to be self-evident.

John 8:44 does not refer to the beginning of Satan's personal existence any more than Luke 1:2 or John 15:27 refer to the beginning spoken of in Gen. 1:1. The sense is simply that the devil was a murderer from the start, i.e., of his career *as such*.

That the devil was not created as such is clear from many passages of Scripture.

Isa. 14:12-20 opens with an exclamation which could fit only Satan: "*How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!*" The passage then goes on to show how Lucifer's fall and judgment were the result of his ambition to exalt his throne "above the stars of God" and to "be like the most High."

This is doubtless what Paul, by the Spirit, refers to when he warns against appointing a novice as a bishop, "*lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation⁵ of the devil*" (I Tim. 3:6).

⁵ Gr., *krima, judgment*, i.e., the judgment pronounced *upon him*, not *his* "condemnation" of the believer. He can *accuse* but cannot judge.

Ezek. 28:11-19, too, can finally apply only to Satan. Of what other created being could it be said: *"Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Thou has been in Eden, the garden of God. . . . Thou are the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God . . . THOU WAST PERFECT IN THY WAYS FROM THE DAY THAT THOU WAST CREATED, TILL INIQUITY WAS FOUND IN THEE."*

The original fall of Satan may well be what our Lord referred to in Luke 10:18, when He said: *"I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven."* Certain it is that Satan is presented in Scripture as a *fallen* being, not one who was *created* evil. Indeed, if Satan was created an evil being, how could there be any justice in his *"judgment"* (John 16:11) or in our Lord's *"triumphing over"* him and his hosts at Calvary? (Col. 2:15).

Thus "the devil" was originally created as "Lucifer" and was perfect until his fall, but when we remind Universalists that in the nature of the case any creation of God must be perfect, they reply: "Of course! In creating Satan God created a perfect devil!" Thus the evil one moves men to excuse him--and themselves--and lay the responsibility for sin at the feet of God Himself.

Certainly the devil is presented in Scripture as God's *enemy*--and *our* enemy. Were it not so it would be idle and dishonest of God to warn His people:

"BE SOBER, BE VIGILANT; BECAUSE YOUR ADVERSARY THE DEVIL, AS A ROARING LION, WALKETH ABOUT, SEEKING WHOM HE MAY DEVOUR" (I Pet. 5:8).

To issue such a warning after specially creating Satan to lead men into sin and trouble, would be as false as if I should unleash a vicious dog, signal him to charge at you and then cry: *"Look out for the dog!"*

Of course the Universalists are sure that God had only a good purpose in creating Satan to induce men to sin, but then why warn us against him? God does not indulge in double talk.

THE HARDENING OF PHARAOH'S HEART

But do not the Scriptures *say* that God hardened Pharaoh's heart? Did not God tell Moses in *advance* that He would do so?

Yes, but do not conclude from this that "poor, dear Pharaoh" had a tender, trusting heart, which was then hardened by God.

The Universalist interpretation of Pharaoh's hardening implicates God in double dealing, for He is supposed to have sent Moses and Aaron to Pharaoh to say: *"Let My people go"*; then whispered in Pharaoh's ear, as it were: *"Don't you do it!"* Indeed it involves God in

both dishonesty and injustice, for, according to this theory God sent Moses and Aaron to say to Pharaoh: "Let My people go"; then influenced Pharaoh *not* to let them go and then judged him for not letting them go!

The truth is that God hardened Pharaoh's heart only *indirectly* and *instrumentally*. He knew the haughty pride of the one who would say: "*Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go?*" (Ex. 5:2) and He was now to force him to a showdown. He knew that plague and respite, judgment and mercy, would but harden Pharaoh's arrogant heart, but He sent these (1.) to vindicate Himself (more could hardly have been done to *persuade* Pharaoh), (2.) to show to the world what happens to those who resist Him and (3.) to demonstrate His power to deliver His own.

As a note on Page 75 of the *Scofield Reference Bible* well puts it: "*Instrumentally* God hardened Pharaoh's heart by forcing him to an issue against which he hardened his own heart in refusal." The hearts of many criminals have been similarly hardened by both judgment and mercy. Shall we then charge those who have used these measures with directly hardening the criminals' hearts?

Nor does Ex. 9:16 or Rom. 9:17 teach that God *brought Pharaoh into being* simply to harden him and thus to show His power to the world. He "*raised him up*" to show His power to the world, which is quite a different matter.

Three forms of speech are used with regard to the hardening of Pharaoh's heart: *God* hardened Pharaoh's heart, *Pharaoh* hardened his own heart and Pharaoh's heart *was hardened*. We take it that all three describe the same operation, for while Pharaoh hardened his own heart against God's demand, it was God who made the demand, thus bringing about the circumstances in which He knew Pharaoh's self-will would be asserted, and thus indirectly hardening Pharaoh's heart.

What, then, is the great lesson in the story of Pharaoh: that God hardens some people for their own eventual good? The record will be searched in vain for such a thought. Is it then that God hardens some people for the sake of others, in His over-all plan, and that *both* are alike in His will? This is just as far from what the Bible teaches. It does not even teach what extreme Calvinism implies: that we are merely *fortunate* if God does not harden us. The great moral is that God is sovereign; that He wins in any contest, almighty both in judging His enemies and in delivering His own.

And there is the other lesson, that God can never be charged with injustice. Whereas the Universalist uses the case of Pharaoh to *incriminate* God, *He* uses it to *vindicate* Himself. Suppose God had *not* sent judgments upon Pharaoh in increasing severity. Suppose he had *not* shown mercy after each but the last of these judgments. Pharaoh would never have been so wholly without excuse.

We have a similar case in the hardening of Israel. God knew that the apostate generation would be hardened by the proofs and pleas of Pentecost and thus He hardened them indirectly by continuing to deal with them after their crucifixion of Christ. But suppose

He had instead cut them off immediately. They would never have been so wholly without excuse for their rejection of Christ. *Now* their guilt was complete, for by judgment and mercy, by overwhelming proofs and impassioned pleas, He had stretched forth His hands all day long to a disobedient and gainsaying people (Rom. 10:21).

In the light of all this how unsound and slanderous is the Universalist argument as to the hardening of Pharaoh and its further argument regarding the unsaved, that: "They are not saved *because God has not saved them*, and for no other reason whatsoever" (*The Salvation of the Unbeliever*, by A. E. Knoch, P. 11).

We believe in divine and sovereign election, but not in arbitrary and unreasoned election, much less in universal reconciliation. In addition to, and consistent with, the sovereign will of God, there *is* another very important reason why men remain unsaved. Of those who will one day worship Antichrist we are told that "*BECAUSE they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved . . . FOR THIS CAUSE God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness*" (II Thes. 2:10-12).

THE HOLINESS OF GOD IMPUGNED

We agree, of course, that God *willed to permit* sin to enter the universe and for that He takes the sole and full responsibility, but the Universalist argument that He conceived sin and brought it into the world through Satan in order to show grace is a slander against His holiness.

We read that in His presence the seraphim cry: "*Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts*" (Isa. 6:3). Habakkuk said: "*Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity*" (Hab. 1:13).

In I Pet. 1:15 we read: "*But as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.*"

Paul, by the Spirit, exhorts us not to keep company with professing Christians who live in sin; "*with such . . . no not to eat*" (I Cor. 5:11). He exhorts us: "*Withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly*" and continues: "*Note that man, and have no company with him*" (II Thes. 3:6,14).

How can such exhortations bear any weight if God Himself actually *conceived* sin in His heart, yes, and *commits* it day after day through men and angels whom He manipulates, until even the ungodly are nauseated by it? And how does it change basic facts to argue that He does this all as "a gracious means to a glorious end"? This would be the farthest thing from the grace which the Scriptures proclaim.

No, sin can never be justly attributed to God, and it is just this that so enhances the message of grace. It is grace, pure grace, that caused a holy God, in Christ, to *assume* the

responsibility for sin by paying its penalty Himself, *"the just for the unjust."* We should never cease to wonder that to the *guilty*, the *blameworthy*, far and wide, a thrice holy God offers "THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS, ACCORDING TO THE RICHES OF HIS GRACE" (Eph. 1:7) and that we may now whisper into the ears of the vilest sinner that those who believe are "JUSTIFIED FREELY BY HIS GRACE THROUGH THE REDEMPTION THAT IS IN CHRIST JESUS" (Rom. 3:24).

THE UNIVERSALIST CHALLENGE
as to
THE JUSTICE OF GOD
IN EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT

One of the chief arguments of Universalists against everlasting punishment is that which is taken from their view of the justice of God.

A "God" who would punish unsaved sinners in the lake of fire eternally, when He Himself willed and planned sin--such a "God" would be a monster worse than the devil. So runs the blasphemous argument.

But this argument is by no means as strong as it may appear at first glance.

In the first place, both Scripture and reason tell us that it is untrue that a just God willed and planned sin.

Second, who are the fallen, depraved and condemned sons of Adam to pass upon the verdicts and sentences of a holy and infinite God? And shall one whose heart is *"deceitful above all things and desperately corrupt"* be called upon to appraise God's character?

Shall the condemned criminal be asked for an opinion of the justice of the judgments pronounced upon him? F. W. Grant, in his *Man And the Future State*, rightly answers: "Grant . . . that [man] has a will that perverts his judgment, lusts that seduce his intellect: grant that sin indulged dulls the conscience and depraves still further the hearts (and these are lessons of every day experience); grant that an offender is not an unprejudiced judge in his own cause and you have abundant, over-abundant reason for distrusting the mere rational estimate of man's possible future" (P. 221).

But the Universalist even answers himself in this matter, for, if it is unjust for God to cause unsaved sinners to suffer eternally on the ground that He Himself willed and planned sin, then, on that same ground it is unjust to punish them *at all*. Why should they be punished or even chastened for fulfilling the irresistible will of God?⁶

⁶ The Universalists themselves were forced to translate II Thes. 1:8 so that it presents the Lord Jesus *"in flaming fire dealing out vengeance to those who are not acquainted with God and those who are not obeying the evangel of our Lord Jesus Christ"* (II Thes. 1:8, C.V.).

THE UNIVERSALIST CHALLENGE
as to
THE LOVE OF GOD
IN EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT

But surely a God of *infinite love* would not punish any of His creatures forever, argues the Universalist, forgetting that it is the very fact that God's love *is infinite* that causes it to burn in outraged wrath against those who spurn it, and that even apart from considerations of love God must still be just.

"Do not such arguments," says Sir Robert Anderson, "remind us of a king's baby children in the royal nursery discussing the fate of some notorious criminal, and deciding that they knew their father so well as to be assured he could not and would not sign a death-warrant?" (*Human Destiny*, P. 42).

And again: "The dogma of Universalism," says the same writer, "depends solely on the assumption that the love of God is incompatible with the perdition of ungodly men--an assumption which may rest entirely on our own ignorance . . ." (*Human Destiny*, P. 61).

Anderson's statements here are nearly, but not quite, correct, for the Universalist assumption does not rest *entirely* upon human ignorance but also upon human *depravity*, for we are not exactly innocent children! Indeed, even the most devout saint, with a perfect standing in Christ, is yet in his present state wholly unfit to pass upon the justice or love of God in punishing the ungodly.

One fact is clear: the Scriptures do teach the everlasting punishment of the ungodly. We have already cited many Scripture passages that affirm this emphatically. But God has forever closed the mouths of those who would object to this, either on the grounds of justice or of love, by coming into the world to become *one of us*, to taste of our testings, sufferings and sorrows--and then to be tried and executed as a criminal *in our stead*.

Thus believers are "*justified freely by His grace, THROUGH THE REDEMPTION THAT IS IN CHRIST JESUS*" (Rom. 3:24).

Christ's blood and righteousness are now proclaimed "*THAT GOD MIGHT BE JUST, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus*" (Rom. 3:26).

And as to His love: "*Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends,*" but "*GOD commendeth His love toward us, in that WHILE WE WERE YET SINNERS, CHRIST DIED FOR US*" (Rom. 5:8). Indeed, "*WHEN WE WERE ENEMIES, WE WERE RECONCILED TO GOD BY THE DEATH OF HIS SON*" (Rom. 5:10).

Of course, Universalists in general do not believe that Christ *is* God--a more grievous heresy, even, than their teaching that all will finally be saved. But the Scriptures prove that Christ is God even where his death on Calvary is in question, for Acts 20:28 refers to "*the church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood.*"

THE UNIVERSALIST CHALLENGE
as to
THE EFFICACY OF CALVARY

The Cross of Christ, argues the Universalist, will yet redeem all. Do not the Scriptures say: "*He died for all*" (II Cor. 5:15) and "*He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world*"? (I John 2:2).

Yes, they do, but this does not prove that all will be saved, for *after* declaring in II Cor. 5 that Christ died for all and that God made Him to be sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him, Paul, by the Spirit, goes on to say:

"WE THEN, AS WORKERS TOGETHER WITH HIM, BESEECH YOU ALSO THAT YE RECEIVE NOT THE GRACE OF GOD IN VAIN.

". . . BEHOLD, NOW IS THE ACCEPTED TIME; BEHOLD, NOW IS THE DAY OF SALVATION" (II Cor. 6:1,2).

But, it is further argued that if the majority, or even some of Adam's race, are lost, this would be a victory for Satan.

But does Christ's victory over Satan depend upon which has the larger following? The comparative fewness of the saved (among adults) far from constituting a victory for Satan, is his *defeat*. It was not his purpose that men should be cast into the lake of fire, much less that he himself should be cast there. He desired to occupy God's place, with men and angels under his sway.

Thus Paul, to whom was committed "the preaching of the cross," could say:

"Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savor of His knowledge by us in every place.

"For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish:

"To the one we are the savor of death unto death; and to the other the savor of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things?" (II Cor. 2:14-16).

If the everlasting condemnation of some constituted a defeat for Christ, it would, of course, also constitute a defeat for Paul, who proclaimed Christ's death for all. Yet Paul, by the Spirit, distinctly affirms here that in preaching Christ he *always triumphed* and that in so doing he was unto God "a sweet savor of Christ," *both* "in them that are saved, and in them that perish," in *both* cases fully vindicating the justice and love of God.

Let the reader of these lines remember that much as we, in our fallen state, might yearn to find warrant for accepting some of the arguments of Universalism, it is only *what God says* that matters; and His Word declares, repeatedly and plainly, the great alternative:

"HE THAT BELIEVETH ON THE SON HATH EVERLASTING LIFE: AND HE THAT BELIEVETH NOT THE SON SHALL NOT SEE LIFE: BUT THE WRATH OF GOD ABIDETH ON HIM" (John 3:36).

THE MAIN STRING ON THE UNIVERSALIST HARP

There is one argument which the Universalists use more than any other. It runs like this:

God *says* that all will finally be reconciled to Himself, and all means *all*, not *some*, so why reason about it any further? Why not just accept it by faith?

Now, a glance at an unabridged English dictionary will prove that at least in our language *all* does not always mean all *without exception*. It *may* mean all without exception, as in the sentence "They were all present." But it may also mean all without *distinction*, as in "rich or poor, educated or illiterate, they all like him." Or, it may mean *the greatest possible*, as in "Come with all haste." It may mean *so much*, as in "Why all the fuss?" It may be used in a figurative sense, as in "He was all nerves." Or, again, it may be used in a *general* way of any aggregate number, as in "All the ladies are out shopping today." In none but the first of the above sentences does *all* mean all *without exception*, and even then it is qualified by the word "they."

And what of those words which are translated *all* in our English Bibles? Shall we go to the Universalist for his definitions of them? Shall we thoughtlessly accept his explanation that "all means all"? We shall not. We shall be Bereans and go straight to the Scriptures to see whether these things are so. There, as we examine contexts and compare Scripture with Scripture, we learn the Spirit's own meaning in each case.

Let us turn, then, to those Scripture passages which are involved here and most of which Universalists themselves quote to prove that all will finally be saved.

Matthew 17:11

"And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things."

While this passage was used by the advocates of Universal Restorationism years ago, it is no longer generally used by Universalists. Why not?

In Col. 1:20 we read that God will reconcile "all things" to Himself. The *Concordant*

Version renders this "the universe," commenting in the notes that this passage teaches universal reconciliation. Yet in Matt. 17:11, where we read that Elias will come and restore "all things," the same version renders it simply "all" and connects it with Acts 3:21, where we find the explanation: "It has no reference to individual destiny. . . ." But why not? If the reconciliation of "all things" in Col. 1:20 teaches universal reconciliation, why does not the restoration of "all things" in Matt. 17:11 teach universal restoration?

The editors of the *Concordant Version* were forced to this inconsistency since otherwise Matt. 17:11 would teach the restoration of all things, without exception, *through Elias*, and that *before* the return of Christ, the millennium and the great rebellion which is to follow!

John 12:32

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me."

First, this passage does not teach that our Lord will draw all men unto Him in *salvation*. Those who depart this life unsaved will stand before Him at the great white throne.

However, we believe that it is *all, without distinction* that is meant here. Christ, lifted up, was to draw all *kinds* of men to Himself.

Certainly it cannot mean that all *without exception* will be drawn to Him in salvation, for John 6:35, 37 clearly implies a distinction between those who would come to Him and those who would not.

Acts 3:21

"Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things."

This is another passage which was used by the advocates of universal restoration, but the verse goes on to read: "*restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.*"

How many of the prophets had predicted the restoration or reconciliation of all? Not one! How, then, could *this* restitution or restoration, spoken of by *all* the prophets, refer to a universal restoration of men to God? Indeed, *this* "restitution" is to be marked by the *destruction* of those who rebel (Ver. 23). How then could it refer to the *salvation of all*.

This passage refers to the "restitution" or setting right, of those things which had gone wrong through Israel's unbelief and apostasy--and this is the *theme* of prophecy.

Romans 11:26

"And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob."

This passage is also used by some Universalists. The "all" here, they say, clearly teaches that not one who has ever been a member of the chosen race will be lost.

It should be observed here that this salvation of "all Israel" will take place when "there shall come out of Sion the Deliverer." This is closely related to what we read in Acts 3:20-23 with regard to the "restitution of all things" at Christ's return. And there it is explicitly stated that *"every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people."*

How then could Rom. 11:26 teach the salvation or reconciliation of all Israelites who have ever lived? What it does teach is the salvation of Israel, as a nation, all Israel at the time when Christ appears out of Sion to "turn away ungodliness from Jacob."

Our Lord on earth warned His rejectors: *"He that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness"* (Mark 3:29) and the record of Acts shows how many did commit that unpardonable sin. Again, of Judas our Lord said: *"It had been good for that man if he had not been born"* (Matt. 26:24), on another occasion calling him *"THE SON OF PERDITION"* (John 17:12). How then could Rom. 11:26 teach the salvation of all Israelites who have ever lived?

I Corinthians 15:22,28

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

". . . that God may be all in all."

Verse 22 seems to Universalists to clinch their teachings completely. The notes in the *Concordant Version* read: "The universality of death, through Adam, is beyond question. 'Thus' we are told, 'in Christ shall all be made alive.' "

But their problem is that while the Scriptures clearly teach that all men were "in Adam" and came from him, they do not at all teach that all come to be "in Christ."

If I Cor. 15:22 refers merely to physical resurrection, then the word "in" has the instrumental sense. All died on account of Adam: all will be raised on account of Christ. This neither the Universalists nor we deny.

But I Cor. 15:22 too clearly concerns the resurrection as it affects *those in Christ*, for Verse 23 goes on to say: *"But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward THEY THAT ARE CHRIST'S at His coming."* Mark well, the passage does not go on to speak of the resurrection of those who are not Christ's. It deals only with the resurrection of those

"that are Christ's." They were "in Christ," they "sleep in Jesus" and will be "made alive" *in Him*.

Thus the sense of Verse 22 is as follows: "As in Adam all [who are in him] die, so in Christ all [who are in Him] shall be made alive." We are not thus adding words to the Scriptures, but explaining the sense, for if anything is clear it is that while on the one hand we have the death of those who are in Adam, on the other we have the making alive of those who "are Christ's," who are *in Him*. This latter cannot be said of those who are raised to stand before the great white throne.

It is "then" (Vers. 24-28) *after* the making alive of those who are Christ's, that God is made "all in all," and this by judgment, not reconciliation. God is made "all in all" only after "all things shall be SUBDUED unto Him [Christ]."

Philippians 2:9-11

"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name:

"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."

The word "every" in each of the above verses is from the same Greek word so often rendered "all" elsewhere. The Universalists are sure it teaches that all will finally be saved.

Does not Rom. 10:9 teach, they argue, that "*if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord . . . thou shalt be saved*"? And does not Phil. 2:11 teach that "*every tongue*" will one day "*confess that Jesus Christ is Lord*"?

The answer is, *No*. In Rom. 10:9, 10 confession is coupled with *heart faith*. In Phil. 2:9-11 this is not so. Here it is rather coupled with the bowing of all, including even infernal beings, to Christ. When this is brought to pass believing with the heart that God has raised Christ from the dead will no longer be a factor, for His resurrection will then be a self-evident fact.

Rom. 10:9, 10 is clearly a *proposition*. Phil. 2:9-11 is a *prediction*. Confess Christ as Lord in true faith *now*, and according to Rom. 10:9, 10 you will be saved. Decline to do so, and according to Phil. 2:9-11 you will some day be *forced* to do so.

Thus Phil. 2:9-11 teaches universal *subjugation*, not universal reconciliation.

Ephesians 1:9, 10

"Having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself:

"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."

This passage, like the preceding ones, fails to prove universal reconciliation, for the phrase "gather together in one" simply means *to head up*. In Rom. 13:9, where several of the commandments are summed up in one sentence, this same phrase (really one word in the original) is rendered "briefly comprehended" and even the *Concordant Version* renders it "head up" in Eph. 1:10.

The fact that even now our Lord is Head over all principality and power (Col. 2:10) including those principalities and powers in the heavenlies against which believers now wrestle (Eph. 6:12) should be proof enough that the future heading up of all things in Christ does not entail the reconciliation of all.

Eph. 1:10, then, teaches simply that one day God will head up all things in Christ. In any case, only things "in heaven" and "on earth" are included, as in the next passage we are to consider.

Colossians 1:19, 20

"For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell;

"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."

Here the *emphasis* in the passage must be carefully observed. From Universalist interpretations one would almost suppose that the words "all things" were twice repeated, while in fact this is so of the words "*by Him*."

This passage does not state that the Father will reconcile all to Christ, but rather that it *pleased the Father*, having made peace through the blood of His Cross, to reconcile all to Himself "*by Him*," and to emphasize His point He repeats the words "*by Him*."

In other words, there is but one way of reconciliation for all: *by Christ*. There is no other way, for it is through the blood of His cross that the Father has made peace.

It is true that Verse 16, twice using the term *ta panta*, insists that "all things" were

created by Him, but the term *ta panta* in itself does not necessarily means *all* as e.g., in I Cor. 15:27, for there the passage itself states that it is perfectly obvious that God *is* excepted. Indeed, the definite article, in this term, "*the* all" bears this out again and again. Nor is the emphasis in Col. 1:20 on the universality of reconciliation, but rather on the Father's pleasure as to the *only way* of reconciliation: "*by Him . . . by Him, I say.*"

I Timothy 2:4-6

"Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;

"Who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time."

The Universalist argument here is that if God desires⁷ the salvation of all, but *cannot* achieve it, He is not omnipotent, and that if Christ gave Himself a ransom for all but all are not saved, He is defeated.

This argument may sound convincing until we realize that salvation here is *from sin*, not from some mere misfortune. Thus the "cannot" takes on new significance. He cannot *morally* save unbelievers and, though His heart's desire is to save them, He *will not*.

Conversely there are things which God says He does *not* desire, yet which do indeed take place, as we have seen. "*Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God*" (Ezek. 18:23). And yet the wicked die. Again: "*For He doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men*" (Lam. 3:33). Yet the children of men are afflicted and grieved.

Special attention should be given to the *position* of I Tim. 2:4-6 in its context. An exhortation to prayer for all men is followed by the assertion that God would have all to be saved and that Christ gave Himself a ransom for all. Since God desires the salvation of all and since Christ gave Himself a ransom for all, we, His people, should surely have a like desire and should *pray* for all.

I Timothy 4:10

". . . God, who is the Savior of all men, specially of those that believe."

It is always difficult for us to understand how Universalists can use the Spirit's words here to try to prove that all will eventually be saved. If God is *specially* the Savior of

⁷ The word *thelo* here means *to wish, to desire*, as in Matt. 19:21; 20:21, 26, 27, 32 and many other passages.

those who believe, then He is *not* the Savior of believers and unbelievers in the same sense.

If He were specially the Savior of those who do *not* believe, the Universalist argument from this passage might hold, for it might indeed seem a greater marvel that He should some day save even unbelievers. But it is distinctly stated that He is specially the Savior of those *who believe*. The meaning, then, is obviously that while He is *potentially* the Savior of all, He is *actually* the Savior of those who believe, much as the life guard at the shore is potentially the savior of all who are there, but actually and specially of that man who almost drowned.

ALL WILL NOT BE SAVED BUT YOU MAY STILL BE SAVED

In the light of all this the contention that "all means all" appears worse than trifling.

God offers abundant grace to all who will accept it, but let none presume that He will eventually save all regardless of their attitude toward His Son and His finished work. Let men reason as they will, the solemn Word of God still stands that there *are* those--and alas, too many--"*whose end is destruction,*" (Phil. 3:19), yea, "*what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?*" I Pet. 4:17).

To our unsaved friends, then, we say:

"WE THEN AS WORKERS TOGETHER WITH HIM, BESEECH YOU ALSO THAT YE RECEIVE NOT THE GRACE OF GOD IN VAIN.

". . . BEHOLD, NOW IS THE ACCEPTED TIME; BEHOLD, NOW IS THE DAY OF SALVATION" (II Cor. 6:1,2).

"BELIEVE ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, AND THOU SHALT BE SAVED" (Acts 16:31).

WHOLESALE HERESY

We believe that we have already demonstrated that modern Universalism is not merely unsound on one or two points of doctrine; it is *wholesale heresy*. It denies practically every fundamental of the faith either by definite statement or direct implication. Among the great doctrines of Scripture which, actually or in effect, it repudiates are the following:

The Holiness of God. One of the foremost exponents of Universalism today does not hesitate to declare that *God alone* is ultimately responsible for sin since He originated it. In his notes on John 8 and 9 in the *Concordant Version* he says: "God has introduced it into the world." "His purpose demands the presence of sin. He makes a medium--the

Slanderer--to inject the virus into creation. He rescues His creatures and gains their affection."

Thus oppression, greed, hate, lust, etc., were originally conceived, not in Satan's heart but in *God's*; and God, rather than Satan, becomes "the father of lies." Could there be a viler thrust at the holiness of God? Yet *we* are charged with "blasphemy" for denying that "all," in the absolute, "is of God" (See *Unsearchable Riches*, Jan., 1956).

The Defection of Satan. This too is denied. A phrase in I John 3:8 which states that "the devil sinneth from the beginning" is used to prove that God deliberately created a wicked being in order to introduce sin into the world.

Human Responsibility. The denial of this fact follows logically. In a note on John 12:39 the *Concordant Version* argues that "Outside the Scriptures we hear much of human responsibility," but that there were at least some who "*could not believe*," since "God's purpose demands a measure of unbelief." "To damn these men who *could not believe*," we are told, "is unthinkable of God."

The passage in question, as we have shown, by no means teaches that God *caused* these Jews to reject Christ, but rather that His inspired predictions about them *could not be wrong*.

Human Guilt. This too is in effect denied. If sin originated in the heart and mind of God and He created a wicked being especially to "inject the virus" into the human race, and He only is ultimately responsible for its presence, how can man be held guilty? Why, then, was Adam wrong for pleading that it was "the woman whom Thou gavest to be with me"? or Eve, for answering: "The serpent beguiled me"? And why might not Satan have replied: "*Thou has created me thus*"? And would not God, in such a case, have been utterly unjust for pronouncing curses upon all three?

In Mr. Knoch's *Transmission of Sin* there is further implied denial of human guilt as he argues: ". . . it is not true that sin is the source of death to Adam's descendants . . . *death* it was that made [man] a sinner" (Pp. 1,2). Referring to the "devitalizing process" of *death*, not sin, he contends: "They are born to die, and this it is which debars them from acts of righteousness." "Sin is a by-product of mortality" (*Ibid.* Pp. 2,3).

To such attempts to escape the guilt of sin God's Word replies that the Law was especially given to *stop* every mouth and bring all the world in *guilty before God* (Rom. 3:19). Rom. 8:33 reads: "Who shall lay anything to the charge of *God's elect*?" If the Universalist argument were correct, it should read: "Who shall lay anything to the charge of *anybody*?"

Sin. Even the force of the word *sin* itself is neutralized by the Universalists. Pointing only to its organic meaning rather than to what is said about it, sin is supposed to be simply missing the mark. While insisting that so-called "moral evil" should be given its true name, "sin" (*Evil*, P. 7), Mr. Knoch soon shows what his conception of moral evil is, for he goes on to say: "Failure to conform to any standard," even that of a natural law, "is

sin" (*Ibid.* P. 9). Calling sin "a miss, an error, a failure" (*Ibid.* Pp. 10,11) he describes an occasion on which he sought to throw a line over a tree branch, and concludes: "We confess that we *sinned* many times before the task was accomplished" (*Ibid.* P. 10). "Mature reflection," he says, "does not deny that some sins are much more than a mere mistake . . . but these are only aggravated forms of the central thought. When God charges all with sin, He does not insist that all are guilty of heinous offenses . . . but that all are mistaken" (*Ibid.* P. 10).

This is his conception of sin. Little wonder he wants the term "moral" to be "discarded in this discussion" (*Evil*, P. 7) and is offended at us for insisting upon its use (*Unsearchable Riches*, Jan., 1956).

Disobedience. In Eph. 2:2 unbelievers are called "the children of *disobedience*," but Universalism waters this down by explaining that "all is out of God," that God is "operating the universe in accord with the counsel of His will," and by asking: "Has anyone withstood His intention?" But if these passages bear the Universalist interpretation how can there be such a thing as *disobedience* or how can anyone be out of the will of God, for is not the murderer, as well as the man of God, fulfilling both the intention and the will of God? Indeed, was not the *act* of murder itself of God?

Grace. Universalists have much, very much, to say about grace, but, as with them sin is not the sin which the Bible condemns, so grace is not the grace which the Bible offers. As we have seen from Eph. 2:2-5, grace is God's great mercy and love to the *guilty*, the *blameworthy*. If God *meant* and *caused* us to sin it is only *just* that He deliver us from its effects. There is not one drop of grace in this.

Forgiveness. Eph. 1:7 assures believers that they have "*the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace.*" But if Universalist theories are true, the unbeliever might well exclaim: "Forgiveness! For what? God *intended* I should sin; He *caused* me to sin. He is working sin through me to bring about His plans. And now He should offer me forgiveness?!"

Justification is another Bible doctrine which, though in word proclaimed, is in effect denied by Universalism. If God *intended* that man should sin and now works sin through him, why does *man* need to be justified? Might he not then rather reply to God: "How can I justify *Thee* for dragging me down to sin and iniquity so as to be able to save me from it?"

Salvation by Grace through Faith. "After the eons," says Knoch, "faith will not be essential to Salvation" (*Eternal Torment or Universal Reconciliation*, P. 13). "Those who believe are saved by His grace . . . those who do not believe are saved through His judgments . . ." (*The Salvation of the Unbeliever*, P. 1). "The salvation of the unbeliever will be by *sight*, not by faith" (*Ibid.* P. 5).

This, though Heb. 11:6 declares that "without faith it is *impossible* to please God" and though John 3:36 warns that he who does not believe "*shall not see life, but the wrath of*

God abideth on him."

The Essential Distinction Between the Saved and the Lost. To the Universalists all are potentially saved. It may take some a bit longer than others to come into the possession of salvation, but God is leading them inevitably toward it.

But then why does not Rom. 8:28 say that God is working all things together for good "*to all men*"? And why does Rom. 8:30 tell us that "*whom He predestinated . . . them He also glorified*"? Why does it not say He will glorify *all*?

Prayer. What point, under Universalist philosophy, would there be to prayer? What would one pray for? Should he pray for that unconverted drunkard? Why, when *God* has him in that condition for His own gracious purpose? Shall he pray that he will be saved before he dies? Why, when he will be saved anyway and enjoy salvation the more if he remains longer in sin? This philosophy must, in the nature of the case, undermine one's prayer life and leave him scarcely any reason to pray.

Evangelism. The Apostle Paul gave himself to a life of suffering, toil and tears to win men to Christ, but why? Why send missionaries to the heathen if more sin and sorrow will eventually and inevitably bring greater blessing and joy? Seriously, we ask, why not rather let them go to Christless graves and to the great white throne so that their salvation at last will be the more glorious?

The Wrath of God. Again and again we read in Scripture of God's wrath upon sin and sinners, but why? If He *intended* and *caused* man to sin, would it not be unreasonable of Him to be angry about it?

The Judgments of God. These, the Universalists tell us, are mostly *disciplinary* and *remedial*. But why any *judgment* at all, then, for discipline is a family matter? "*Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth,*" but no court session is called for in such cases.

It is significant that Universalists generally also deny those fundamentals of the faith which relate to the Holy Spirit and the person and work of Christ. Mr. Knoch and those associated with him deny that the Holy Spirit is a distinct member of the Godhead, they deny the deity of Christ and speak of a "mythical Trinity." They do not deny Christ's virgin birth, His vicarious death or His bodily resurrection, but their philosophy denies the *significance* of all this, for of what significance, for example, is His death for sin if He is not God? How could a man or even an angel pay for the sins of the world?

In closing this section on Universalism we plead with the saved and the unsaved alike, not to be deceived. The great question of human destiny cannot be resolved by determining the organic meanings of a few words like *all*, *eon*, and *hell*. Sentences and paragraphs have meanings too and in Scripture heaven and the lake of fire are presented as *alternatives* and the destinies of the saved and the unsaved are set the one over against the other. "*God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever*

*believeth in Him SHOULD NOT PERISH, BUT HAVE EVERLASTING LIFE" (John 3:16).
"He that believeth on the Son HATH EVERLASTING LIFE; and he that believeth not the
Son SHALL NOT SEE LIFE, but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:36).*

But since the very words of Scripture do have their importance, let us heed how God uses the word *telos*, or *end*, in connection with unbelievers:

" . . . WHOSE END SHALL BE ACCORDING TO THEIR WORKS" (II Cor. 11:15).

"WHOSE END IS DESTRUCTION . . ." (Phil. 3:19).

". . . WHOSE END IS TO BE BURNED" (Heb. 6:8).

**". . . WHAT SHALL THE END BE OF THEM THAT OBEY NOT THE GOSPEL OF
GOD?" (I Pet. 4:17).**

If Universalist arguments were sound one would expect the Scriptures to close with a glorious scene in which all are saved, but this is far from the case. It closes rather with a warning and an urgent plea:

**". . . BEHOLD, I MAKE ALL THINGS NEW. . . BUT THE FEARFUL [COWARDS]
AND UNBELIEVING . . . SHALL HAVE THEIR PART IN THE LAKE WHICH
BURNETH WITH FIRE AND BRIMSTONE" (Rev. 21:5-8).**

**"BLESSED ARE THEY THAT DO HIS COMMANDMENTS. . . FOR WITHOUT
ARE DOGS . . ." (22:14,15).**

**"AND THE SPIRIT AND THE BRIDE SAY, COME. AND LET HIM THAT
HEARETH SAY, COME. AND LET HIM THAT IS ATHIRST COME. AND
WHOSOEVER WILL, LET HIM TAKE THE WATER OF LIFE FREELY" (22:17).**

The Apostle Paul, also, clearly implying that there will come a day which will *not* be accepted as a time to be saved, pleads:

**"BEHOLD, NOW IS THE ACCEPTED TIME: BEHOLD, NOW IS THE DAY OF
SALVATION" (II Cor. 6:2).**