

## HAMARTIOLOGY (7)

**(Reason #4)** - Because sin promotes a knowledge for angels .

It is very clear that the angelic world carefully monitors humans, specifically in regard to their obedience to God and their sin. The idea of obeying God and submitting to what is right is clearly seen in the context of angelic observation (**I Corinthians 11:10; I Timothy 5:21; Revelation 2:1, 8, 12, 18; 3:1, 7, 14**).

There is no doubt that angels learn much from watching humans who submit themselves to the Word of God. In order for them to learn things, sin must be in existence.

**(Reason #5)** - Because sin demonstrates God's hatred for evil.

It is very evident from **Romans 9:22** that one reason God permits sin is because ultimately it will demonstrate His hatred for it. This Divine hatred will work itself out in a powerful demonstration of His wrath, the likes of which is described in the book of Revelation (**i.e. 15:1-4**). No judgment that would demonstrate God's wrath could have been possible without the existence of sin. It is apparently one of the reasons why God permitted sin (**see Proverbs 16:4**).

**(Reason #6)** - Because sin demonstrates God's grace .

This is truly one of the great mysteries of God. God permits sin and this permission enables us to understand more of His grace (**Romans 5:20-21**). The more one sees of his own sin, the more one recognizes God's grace (**Luke 7:47**). Perhaps the most famous hymn ever written - "Amazing Grace" - was written by a man, John Newton, who had been a slave trader and was saved from a terrible lifestyle of sin. He truly did have an amazing view of God's grace.

It has been my observation over the past, in nearly thirty years in ministry, that some of the most highly committed and dedicated servants of God are those who, at one time, had lives plunged deep into sin prior to the grace of God transforming them. When you hear these people discuss the grace and mercy of God, you soon realize that for them it is very personal and very real. There is a supernatural authority that rings from such a one when discussing God's grace. There is no question that this is a clear Biblical reality - "but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more" (**Romans 5:20**).

Believers who have never plunged deep into sin are in a very enviable position, but they must be on constant guard against a self-righteous Pharisaism that misses understanding the doctrine of the pure grace of God (**i.e. Luke 15:11-32**).

The creation of the universe demonstrated God's infinite wisdom, power, and glory. The creation of life also demonstrates all of these things, plus could demonstrate God's love. But in order for the angelic world and the human world to see God's grace, there must be the existence of sin. One of the richest experiences for a believer in Jesus Christ is to get to the point where one can truly begin to grasp the theological reality of a "grace that is greater than all our sin."

## HAMARTIOLOGY (8)

Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer has well-stated: "... though it is impossible for a creature to understand how a holy God could permit sin, either in heaven or on earth, it is evident that the realization of His greatest purposes necessitates its permission. The entire problem is illustrated to a limited extent in the experience of the Christian who has sinned. He first admits that God, who could have hindered the sin, did nevertheless permit it. He likewise recognizes that he has profited in the ways of understanding and experience by the sin; and, finally, he admits that God, though permitting the sin, is in no way complicated with its guilt and wickedness" (Vol. 2, p. 233).

**QUESTION #5** – What is the origin or beginning of sin?

To understand the answer to this question, we must draw a distinction between the permission of sin and the origin of sin.

There is no question, from Biblical statements, that sin was in the foreknowledge of God and was anticipated from all eternity. Sin did not surprise God, nor would it defeat His purposes.

When we read a verse like **Revelation 13:8** - "And all who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain," it is very evident that God fully anticipated both the reality of sin and the sacrifice of His own Son, long before angels or humans were even created.

When we read a verse like **Ephesians 1:4** - "just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world ...," it is again clear that sin and salvation from sin were fully anticipated before the creation of angels or humans.

Dr. Chafer, in regard to this point, well-said: "May it not be better said that, apart from the achievements of the redeeming Lamb, no cosmos would have been permitted" (Vol. 2, p. 237). In other words, according to the eternal purpose and plan of God, sin was permitted to exist. It was fully known and anticipated; and had not God's plan included a sacrifice for sin, the world, with its angels and humans, would not have been created. When God chose to create the world, angels, and humans, He did so with full knowledge that He would permit sin and would provide a sacrifice. In a very real sense, sin, as a concept, did first exist in the mind of God.

However, sin, as a concrete reality, actually began with the angels! The perpetrator of the first actual sin was Satan. Long before sin entered the human sphere through Adam and Eve, "unrighteousness was found in" Satan (**Ezekiel 28:11-15\***).

The graphic description of Satan's first sin is found in **Isaiah 14:12-17**. The first sin was originally an attitude of pride, which refused to accept and submit to the appointment of God and wanted to become like the "Most High" God.

What this act reveals to us is that sin is not specifically only a concrete act, but may also be a rebellious attitude.

## HAMARTIOLOGY (9)

A brief synopsis of the satanic “I will” sin is as follows:

“I will ascend to heaven” (14:13a) - Satan wanted to sit on God’s throne.

“I will raise my throne above the stars of God” (14:13b) - Satan wanted total control above and over all creation, including the angelic host.

“I will sit on the mount of assembly in the recesses of the north” (14:13c) - Satan wanted total Messianic authority which included authority over Israel.

“I will ascend above the heights of the clouds” (14:14a) - Satan wanted glory and status that only belonged to God.

“I will make myself like the Most High” (14:14b) - Satan wanted to be the same as God.

Satan had a proud, sinful desire that was not content with what God had made him, and as a result he swayed one third of the angelic forces to think in the same way (i.e. **Revelation 12:4**). It is very important to observe that when an individual does not want to submit to or accept the will of God and chooses to act independently of that will, it is a reenactment of the exact sin of Satan.

Dr. Chafer writes: “Too much importance cannot be attached to the truth that Lucifer’s first sin - a willful ambition against God - is the norm or pattern for all sin. All human beings acting independently who are not concerned to fulfill the divine purpose for them are reenacting the same sin ...” (Vol. 2, p. 248).

This is precisely why God so detests Pharisaism. A Pharisee is a self-righteous person who elevates himself or herself to some higher level or status than what God has given (i.e. **Matthew 23:2**). In reality, a Pharisee loves to play God and God detests such a mindset for it comes directly from Satan (**John 8:13, 44**).

**QUESTION #6** – Where and when did human sin begin?

The record of the first sin of a human being is the sin of Adam and Eve. The account is found in **Genesis 3:1-19**. The location of the first sin was in the Garden of Eden. The chronology of the first sin is that first Eve sinned and then Adam sinned (**Genesis 3:6 / I Timothy 2:14**).

We have already discussed this in Anthropology. One key point which needs to be expressed is that Satan lured Adam and Eve to sin by tempting them to pursue his own proud rebellion, specifically his desire to be like God (**Genesis 3:5**). This thought was so enticing to Eve, and ultimately Adam, that both were willing to disobey God’s commands and “exchange the perfection of estate and destiny which the infinite love, wisdom and power of the Creator had designed, for the wretched warfare of a self-centered life with its eternal agonizing experience in death” (p. 249).

The matter of being as good as God or being like God is the reason the majority of people will end up in hell. They have actually convinced themselves that their works can equal the holy character of God that will merit them living in eternity with God forever. This is nothing more than a rebellious pride that will not admit nor submit to the truth of God. This began in Eden.

## HAMARTIOLOGY (10)

**QUESTION #7** – What are some basic observations we may make concerning good and evil?

**(Observation #1)** - Good does need good to establish good .

God is often seen in contrast to evil, but good is good whether evil exists or not. For example, it is possible to love someone without having hatred present.

**(Observation #2)** - Evil does need good to establish evil .

Evil is seen when contrasted with good. Unless there is a standard that is good, it is not possible to determine evil. An accurate conclusion is good is totally independent of evil, but evil is totally dependent on good. A good example of this is God's law - given to show our sin (**Galatians 3:19, 24**).

**(Observation #3)** - Evil, to a certain extent, must submit to good .

This reality is seen in the fact that even those who do evil continually still are restrained by good from doing evil completely. For example, a bank robber does evil in robbing a bank, but something restrains him from killing everyone in the bank and in all the stores surrounding the bank. God always forces evil to submit to good in one way or another.

**(Observation #4)** - Evil will always try to hid itself under some umbrella of good .

**John 3:20** says, "For everyone who does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed." People who do evil and are evil are not truthful people. They are people who lie, who hide, and who cover. In the very next verse John writes, "But he who practices the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God" (**John 3:21**).

People who are doing good, tell the truth; people who are doing evil, don't. Evil will always try to hide; it will try to cover its trail through a series of "white lies" and distortions. When a person lies, he is really admitting what he is and that he is not good.

**(Observation #5)** - Evil will always have inner turmoil .

One practicing evil is inwardly a wreck. He lives with a heavy weight of guilt or depression that sooner or later catches up with the person.

**(Observation #6)** - Good will always have inner peace .

Isaiah said, "The steadfast of mind Thou will keep in perfect peace, because he trusts in Thee" (**Isaiah 26:3**).

Goodness will always be at peace with itself, and evil will never be at peace with itself.