



**If God  
Could Save Everyone,**

**WOULD HE??**

**By Dr. Stephen E. Jones**

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**By Dr. Stephen E. Jones**

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## **What is God's Will?**

The belief that God cannot do some things, or that God is limited in His ability, is fairly common among Christians. Many think that God's ability to act is limited by man's "free will." People often think that God either cannot override man's will or that He is incapable of making man change his will to conform to the will of God.

But God would not be God at all, if He were so helpless in the face of billions of people, each restricting God in his own way by his free will. The collective restriction would be rather enormous, for each man has jurisdiction over his own piece of the earth, even if it is just his own body. Is God a mere bystander in human history? Is God merely a good counselor to men? Does God *wish* that men would follow Him, but can do little or nothing about it? Is this how we are to define the meaning of "God"?

Some years ago some religious philosophers came to the conclusion that "God is dead." What they meant was that God created all things and then left it all to fend for itself, to evolve into whatever men might make it. The bottom line is that they believed that God was indifferent and no longer

concerned Himself with human history. This kind of thinking was a natural outgrowth of the idea that God was *helpless* to do anything in the face of man's free will. But which is worse, to make God helpless or to make Him indifferent?

Those of us who have a more personal relationship with Jesus Christ and who see His hand in our lives every day do not subscribe to the idea of God's helplessness nor to His indifference. The very fact that He sent Jesus Christ to die for the sin of the world shows how intensely interested He is in man. He is anything but indifferent.

The Bible also gives many examples to show that God is anything but helpless. He constantly takes the credit for the overthrow of whole nations, as well as the positive events, such as the redemption of Israel from Egypt. Isaiah 45 is the great "sovereignty" chapter in the Old Testament. God says that even a pagan king like Cyrus the Persian would do everything that God tells him to do. In Romans 9 Paul says that God raised up His own opposition in the person of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, to show us that He was sovereign.

With the sovereignty of God in mind, then, what is it that prevents God from saving all mankind? Is He really under a self-imposed restriction that limits His ability to save all men? If so, by what law? What law makes it imperative for God to allow His children to use their free will to destroy themselves? Must I follow such a practice with my own children? Must I stand in the driveway and merely coax my child into leaving the street when a car approaches? Why do we think it is a moral imperative that God must do this with His children?

If God really is God and is all-powerful, all-wise, and all-knowing, as He claims to be, then how is it that He should lose the vast majority of humanity to the wiles of the devil or man's wicked (but free) will? Is God really the loser in this cosmic battle between good and evil, light and darkness? When we come to the end of history, will God prove to be the sore loser by torturing all those who dared to defeat Him?

We do not think so.

The Bible does not teach that God is a loser. The Bible tells us clearly that God will be the ultimate winner, and that His plan for all of creation will be

fulfilled. God's intent and plan was clearly stated in a vow to Moses, saying in Num. 14:21, "*as I live, all the earth will be filled with the glory of the Lord.*"

2 Peter 3:9 says, that He is not willing that any should be lost, or perish. Thus, if any are lost, it is not because it is the will of God.

The Apostle Paul says in 1 Tim. 2:4 that God "*will have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.*" This, too, defines the will of God for all men.

The problem is that evil men seem to thwart God's will, and God seems to be powerless to do anything about it. How powerful is God, anyway? Let us begin at the beginning.

### **The Creator Owns All Things**

The first verse in the Bible establishes that God is the Creator of all things. "*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*" Most people in the world believe this, but few people understand what this implies.

It means that God OWNS all things by right of creation. One owns what one creates.

This is why God told Moses in Lev. 25:23, “*The land shall not be sold in perpetuity, for the land is Mine.*” In other words, under Bible law, God holds the right of eminent domain. He had divided the land of Canaan among the tribes and families of Israel as their inheritance. However, they did not have the right to do as they pleased with their land. God retained sovereignty over the land. The people’s rights were limited by certain restrictions set down by law. This shows that God retained sovereignty over the land, even though He gave the people a certain level of authority.

One restriction was that they did not have the right to sell their property for ever, that is, in perpetuity. Their inheritance was non-transferable. If they incurred a debt, they were allowed to sell land only until the Year of Jubilee, which occurred every 49 years (Lev. 25:8). This meant that a family could not lose their inheritance for more than a generation. It ensured that every citizen would have land.

The land belonged to God, so no man had the ability or the right to lose his land for all time. He was only capable, by his own will, to “lose” it temporarily, because that was the extent of his

authority. By law, under God's sovereignty, a man could only lose (or sell) his land temporarily.

Now consider the fact that God created all men, both good and bad. In fact, He formed man of the dust of the ground (Gen. 2:7). God used building material (dust of the ground) that He created—and therefore owned. This means that God owns all men as well as all material things in the universe. Man is part of the “land” that God owns by right of creation.

That means man does not have the authority, right, or even the ability to “sell his soul to the devil” for all time. His authority is limited by law. Hence, even if a man decides by his own “free will” to sell himself into bondage to sin or to the devil, he must inevitably return to his inheritance at the end of time when God decrees the Jubilee for all creation.

### **God is Responsible for All Creation**

In the divine laws of liability God lays down the principle that a man is responsible for what he owns. For example, if a farmer digs a well and neglects to cover the pit, and if a neighbor's ox falls into that pit and is killed, the owner of the pit is liable and must pay damages to his neighbor Ex. 21:33, 34 says,

**<sup>33</sup> And if a man opens a pit, or digs a pit and does not cover it over, and an ox or a donkey falls into it, <sup>34</sup> the owner of the pit shall make restitution; he shall give money to its owner, and the dead animal shall become his.**

Again, if a man lights a fire and it gets out of hand and burns the neighbor's field, the man who lit the fire is liable, because he created the fire and therefore is its owner. Ex. 22:6 says, "*he who started the fire shall surely make restitution.*" These are basic liability laws that define the will of God in areas of justice and responsibility between men.

This principle, when applied to the big picture, shows us that God is responsible for all of His creation—even for the bad things that happen. God is ultimately liable for all the evil that has occurred in the world. One cannot blame the devil, because the devil created nothing and owns nothing. One cannot ultimately blame bad men either, because the bad men did not create themselves.

In the case of the ox falling into the uncovered pit, the one who dug it cannot say in his defense, "That stupid ox fell into the pit by his own free

will.” Such an argument makes no difference in the divine court. The only relevant fact in the case is that the one who dug the pit is responsible for it.

In the case of Adam and Eve, whether these are actual people or just prototype human beings, the Bible story makes it clear that God created them. The “tree” of the knowledge of good and evil (regardless of how men interpret the story) provoked the temptation, and the “serpent” was the tempter. God created both the tree and the serpent and is therefore ultimately responsible for both of them.

That means God, in effect, “dug a pit” and left it uncovered. That is, Adam and Eve—like the stupid ox—were told to stay away from the uncovered pit. Of course, they did not obey, and thus man “fell” into the pit and died (became mortal).

So who is legally liable in the divine court? Well, God is, of course. Adam and Eve did not dig the pit, nor did they create the serpent. They were just too ignorant to stay away from the pit. They fell, and they died. God’s own law, then, demanded that the Owner of the pit pay fully for the death of the ox (Ex. 21:34).

In other words, God set up the law in such a way that He would make Himself liable for the fall of Adam and Eve. Did God know what He was doing? Of course He did. He knew from the beginning that the law would demand that He—the Creator and Owner of all—would have to pay the full penalty for sin. That is why Jesus came to earth to pay the full penalty for sin.

First of all, He loved His creation enough to do this (John 3:16). Secondly, He made it mandatory by law that He would have to do this.

In that sense, the law was prophetic, for it mandated that the Creator would have to take full responsibility for man's fall—that is, for the ox falling into the pit. In fact, it prophesied that God would have to come to earth and be born as a man in order to be capable of dying for the sin of the world.

### **The Laws of Redemption**

The land could not be sold in perpetuity, but there were times when men incurred debts that they could not pay. Jesus told a parable about this in Matt. 18:23-35. He told of a man who owed “ten thousand talents,” which, in today's monetary terms, would be about \$150 million. Verse 25 says that

because he could not pay the debt, he and his wife and children had to be sold as bondservants in order to make payment on the debt.

Under biblical law, men were bondservants until their debts were paid or until the Year of Jubilee, whichever came first. At the Year of Jubilee all debts were cancelled purely by grace, no matter how much might still be owed. Bondservants were forced by law to work for their masters, but they also had rights. Slavery itself as practiced in most parts of the world was unlawful under biblical law.

A man and his family who had become bondservants because of debt were supposed to work for their masters until the debt was paid. Then they were set free.

But there was another way that the debt could be paid. The bondservant could be redeemed by a relative.

### **Jesus is the Redeemer**

Lev. 25:47-55 tells of the laws of redemption. It says that a relative has *the right of redemption*, as long as he has enough money to pay the debt of his relative. If a relative comes to the master of the slave

and has the money to pay the debt that is owed, he may pay the debt and purchase the slave.

The slave master might prefer to keep the slave, because he is a good worker. But he has no choice in the matter, because the redeemer is a relative. The only time the slave master has the choice is if the would-be redeemer were a mere *friend* but not a relative. In such a case, he could allow it or not, according to his own “free will.”

Why? Because the *right* of redemption is given only to a relative. A relative has lawful rights; a mere friend does not.

The Bible story shows us how this law applied to the nation of Judah. The House of Judah had fallen into sin and thereby had incurred a huge debt that they could not pay. (All sin is reckoned as a debt in the Bible.) God was the Judge who had sold them as bondservants to the nation of Babylon (604 B.C.).

The debt note was later purchased in succession by Persia (537 B.C.), then Greece (332 B.C.), and finally by Rome (63 B.C.). In the days of Jesus, Rome held the debt note of Judah, or Judea. This was why Rome ruled Judea while Jesus ministered on the earth. Jesus came as their Redeemer, not to

overthrow Rome by military conquest but by purchasing them in a lawful, peaceful manner. The nation rejected Him, however, because they wanted a great general that would obtain freedom by force.

The Bible says in Heb. 2:11-17 that Jesus Christ did not come to earth by taking the form of an angel. He came rather as a man, born of a woman, taking upon Himself the seed of Abraham in order to qualify as a *relative* to Israel and Judah. This gave Jesus the right of redemption.

But further, verse 14 tells us that Jesus Christ came in “flesh and blood,” in order to qualify as a relative to *all men*. This gave Jesus the right of redemption for all men all the way back to Adam.

This is why He was the redeemer of *all men*, not just the redeemer of Israel. He was related to all who were flesh and blood—without exception.

For this reason, the apostle John tells us in his letter, 1 John 2:2, “*He has covered our sins, and not for ours only, but also those of the whole world.*” Jesus gave His very life for the sins of the whole world. He paid the full penalty for every sin ever committed since Adam. Only His very life could pay the full debt for all mankind.

By the divine law, Jesus Christ came as a near relative to redeem all of mankind and his entire estate (the earth).

Those are lofty goals, some may say, but was He really capable of making such a huge payment?

The Bible makes it clear that His life and His blood was worth far more than the entire debt of the world from the beginning. So, yes, Jesus Christ was certainly “rich enough” to make such an expensive purchase.

So first we see that Jesus Christ had the lawful right of redemption, on the grounds that He was a near relative of all flesh and blood, including the House of Israel.

Secondly, we see that Jesus Christ was willing to pay the full price of redemption for the entire world—and He had the “cash” to do it.

The final question is this: Did Jesus Christ *want* to redeem all mankind?

This is really a question of how much He loves His creation. If He were an angry God that preferred to destroy most of His creation, then one might doubt that He really wanted to redeem all of

mankind. But the Bible says in John 3:16, “*For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*”

Thus, we see that the law gave Jesus Christ the right of redemption; He had enough “money” and more to pay the full redemption price; and He certainly had the motive to do so.

So, if God COULD save all men, would He, in fact, do so? That is the big question. If you had the lawful right to redeem all men, and you had the cash to do so, and you loved them as much as God loves the world, what would YOU do?

Yes, God would indeed save all mankind if He were capable of doing so. And that is why He has actually done it.

### **What is Required of us?**

There are many people today and throughout history who have not wanted to be redeemed by Jesus Christ, usually because they did not really understand their need of redemption or did not have faith that He could really set them free.

What about these people? Will they benefit from Jesus' redemption payment in spite of their unbelief? Yes, they will—but not immediately. All will be held accountable for their actions, and every judgment will fit the crime.

Here is how it works. The law of redemption says that those who agree to be redeemed by their relative must serve their redeemer (Lev. 25:53). The difference is that he will be treated better with Jesus as his master than he was treated by the previous master, sin.

Those who accept Him as their Redeemer are obligated to declare Jesus Christ as their Master and to serve Him. Paul puts it this way in Rom. 6,

**<sup>15</sup> What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the law but under grace? May it never be! <sup>16</sup> Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness? <sup>17</sup> But thanks be to God that though you were [or used to be] slaves of sin, you became obedient to that form**

**of teaching to which you were committed,  
<sup>18</sup> and having been freed from sin, you  
became slaves of righteousness.**

In other words, those who are redeemed are not set free to do as they please. The redeemer has purchased their debt note, and therefore, they are still bondservants—but now they are bondservants of One who loves them and will treat them right. They are no longer slaves to sin. They are now slaves of righteousness and servants of God.

A person set free from sin does not mean that he suddenly becomes perfectly sinless. Paul is referring to sin as the old slave master. When we worked for the old slave master, who told us to sin, we were free from God and His righteousness. Conversely, when God purchased us through Jesus Christ, we are no longer bound to do what sin tells us to do, and we are free to do what is right in God's eyes.

Paul calls himself “*a bondservant of Jesus Christ*” (Rom. 1:1), because he understood the laws of redemption. That is why he told the Christians in Rome that Christ's redemption did not mean they were free to continue in sin. They were only free

from the old slave master who, in the past, had commanded them to sin.

But what about those who refuse to accept the provision God has made for us to be redeemed? Such people have the lawful right to refuse to be redeemed by their near relative, Jesus Christ. They may continue obeying the demands of the sin nature rather than be obedient to the law of God.

This is their right—for a while. The law says in Lev. 25:54 that “*even if he is not redeemed in these years, he is still to go free in the year of Jubilee, both he and his children with him.*”

In other words, the year of Jubilee will set all men free in the end, whether they were redeemed or not during those years.

To understand this, we need to explain a little about the old Hebrew calendar. God divided time into periods of seven days and seven years. Every seventh day was a Sabbath, a day of rest. But also, every seventh year they were to let the land lie fallow, for it was a land-rest year. In this land-rest year, no one had to make payments on their debts, because their main source of income was suspended.

After seven land-rest years was a Jubilee at the end of 49 years. Then ten days into the 50<sup>th</sup> year a trumpet was blown to signal the day of Jubilee. This was the specific day that all debts were cancelled, and every man was to return to his inheritance if he had lost it any time during the previous 49 years. Lev. 25:10 says,

**<sup>10</sup> You shall thus consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim a release through the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you, and each of you shall return to his own property, and each of you shall return to his family.**

Of course, this was only applicable to those who had been unable to work long enough to pay off their debt. They could have been released earlier if they had earned enough money to pay their debt and thus purchase their freedom.

It was also applicable only to those who did not have a redeemer—or if people had not accepted the redemption of a willing relative. Perhaps they did not trust him or know him well enough to trust his motives. Or perhaps they just thought that his commands would be too rigorous.

Whatever their reasons, even if they have not availed themselves of Jesus' redemption in this age, they will still go free in the year of Jubilee. There is a limit on *how much* judgment and discipline that God dispenses upon His children. They may have a choice whether or not to be redeemed by their near relative, but the year of Jubilee is by God's will.

The time of redemption was between Jubilees. Once the year of Jubilee arrived, redemption was irrelevant. In the case of all mankind, NOW is the day of redemption. Jesus has made the full payment for sin and asks that all men come under His lordship. But many do not submit to Jesus Christ. Such people will not be redeemed, but yet they will be set free from the enslavement of sin in the final Jubilee, when God sets all men free by His own will.

### **Endless Punishment is against the Law**

With God, there is no such thing as never-ending punishment. The Bible verses that are usually quoted to prove never-ending punishment are actually mistranslations of the original text.

The word for "eternal" and "everlasting" in the New Testament is the Greek word, eonian, which means "pertaining to an EON (age)." In other words,

God's final judgments pertain to a specific age in the future. It is an age to come, where God will "sell" all unbelievers to the servants of Jesus Christ, so that they will be compelled by law to learn obedience to the divine law.

In this way the servants of Christ will "*reign with Him*" (Rev. 20:6). Rev. 5:10 says, "*they will reign on the earth,*" not in heaven. This would be meaningless, of course, unless they had people to reign over. The believers will be given various measures of authority, according to Jesus' parable in Luke 19:12-27. Yet the purpose of this authority is to teach the unbelievers how to live in subjection to Jesus Christ and His Kingdom.

That age will eventually end at the final Jubilee, when all judgment ceases, and all men are brought fully into the glory of God, even as He promised by covenant.

Biblical law treats all sin as a debt, but it also treats all debt as temporary. All debt is limited by the law of Jubilee. With God there is no such thing as a perpetual debt. In fact, no man even has the authority to put himself under a perpetual debt. This goes back to the law where God says He owns all

the land. No man can sell his land and lose it for all time. Since man is made of the land (dust of the ground) that God created, no man owns himself. God owns all men and has never given any man the ability to sell his soul forever.

Man is also God's inheritance. God created the law of Jubilee to safeguard His own inheritance. God will never lose His inheritance, because He decreed this law from the beginning.

Another law also shows this principle of limited judgment. Deut. 25:1-3 is a law that deals with misdemeanors, where there is no restitution:

**<sup>1</sup> If there is a dispute between men, and they go to court, and the judges decide their case, and they justify the righteous and condemn the wicked [guilty party], <sup>2</sup> then it shall be if the wicked man deserves to be beaten, the judge shall then make him lie down and be beaten in his presence with the number of stripes according to his guilt. <sup>3</sup> He may beat him forty times but no more, lest he beat him with many more stripes than these, and your brother be degraded in your eyes.**

Here we see that the judgment is limited to a maximum of forty stripes. Thus, we see that divine judgment is merciful in that it limits judgment for both felonies and misdemeanors. Judgment for felonies are limited by the Jubilee; judgment for misdemeanors are limited by forty stripes.

In either case, there is no provision for torture such as we find in the modern idea of eternal torment in a literal fire. Such ideas came not from the Bible, but from other religions. The “fire” in the Bible is a symbol of divine law and was never meant to be taken in a literal sense.

Those who reject Jesus Christ will indeed be brought to judgment in the great resurrection. However, there is no reason to think that they will be lost forever. It would be unjust to punish men beyond the measure of their sin. And it would be unlawful to punish men beyond the prescribed penalties of divine law. God will judge the world, not by man’s law but by His own law, which is His perfect standard of measure.

So what will happen to the sinners in that day?

## **The Day of Judgment**

The Bible speaks of a final day of judgment where all men will stand before the Great White Throne (Rev. 15:11-15). Here is where God will foreclose on all debts from the beginning. Here is where all men will be held accountable for their actions that they did in their life on earth.

The Bible speaks of this judgment in terms of “fire.” Some think this “fire” is a literal torture pit. It is not. The divine law never once dispenses torture as a judgment for any sin.

Deut. 4:12 tells us that God manifests Himself as a fire. In the New Testament, we read in Heb. 12:29 that God Himself is a consuming fire. This simply means that the presence of God will consume whatever is not good. Further, His judgments are designed to correct men, not to destroy them. They are designed to restore the lawful order, so that whatever men have done to violate the rights of others will be righted.

The law’s purpose is to obtain justice for the wronged and forgiveness for the sinner who wronged those other people. The purpose of divine law is first to bring justice to those who have been

wronged, and secondly to bring correction, forgiveness, and restoration to the sinners. Hence, in Isaiah 26:9 the prophet speaks to God saying,

**<sup>9</sup> For when the earth experiences Thy judgments, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.**

The divine law itself is the “lake of fire” mentioned in Rev. 20:14, 15. Moses tells us in Deut. 33:2 that the law is a “fiery law” in His hand.

Daniel 7:9 also pictures that final judgment, where God judges the world, holding every man accountable for their actions committed during their life time. He says that the throne itself is a fire, out of which comes a “fiery stream” that judges all men. In ancient times, a throne symbolized the law, much like a modern judge now is said to “sit at the bench” when he presides over a trial. Hence, the throne is the fire—the law. It is simply a metaphoric way of saying that God’s fiery law will judge all men. But to know the nature of that fire, one must study the divine law itself. And not once does the divine law prescribe torture for any sin.

Thus, the “lake of fire” in the Bible was never meant to be taken as literally as some have done.

God does not torture men for any sin. This is plainly evident to anyone who studies the divine law. In fact, this is in striking contrast to the laws of men and of other religions.

### **Death is the Penalty for Sin**

Eternal torment is NOT the penalty for sin. Paul writes in Rom. 6:23,

**<sup>23</sup> For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

From the beginning, Moses wrote that the penalty for the worst sins was death. Such was the penalty for open idolatry, witchcraft, murder, adultery, bestiality, kidnapping, and rape of a married or engaged woman.

There was no judgment of God's law that even implied torture in a literal fire for any sin. The penalty was merely death. And positively the worst judgment for sin was for the sinner's dead body to be burned (cremated) in order to prevent them from receiving an honorable burial (Lev. 21:9).

Jesus Christ came to pay the full penalty for our sin and for the sin of the whole world. This did not

mean that Jesus would have to burn in the pit of hell. Not even for a moment—much less for eternity! He paid the full penalty for sin by dying on the cross, not by burning for eternity. If never-ending torture in hell were really the penalty for sin, then Jesus would still be there, burning for eternity! Yet we find that Jesus was only required to be dead for three days.

God is not so unjust as to torture people for disobeying Him. The nature of the “fire” is defined by the divine law itself, and the duration of the judgment is limited by the law of Jubilee.

Those who come into judgment at the Great White Throne will be judged according to their works (Rev. 20:13-15). Their judgment will fit their crimes committed during their life time.

There is no way, of course, that any man will be able to actually pay the penalty for his own sins. For this reason, they will also be “sold” into bondage according to the law (Ex. 22:3). They will be put under the authority of the believers, the servants of Christ, in order that they may serve their sentence until the Jubilee sets all men free.

In the final analysis, the law says that if a man cannot pay a debt (which is incurred by sin), he is to

work as a bondservant to pay the debt. If the debt is too great to be paid, he must work until the year of Jubilee sets him free.

The unbelievers at the Great White Throne will be sentenced to work as bondservants until the final Jubilee sets them free. The purpose of this is not so that their masters can act like tyrants over a bunch of slaves.

In other words, the purpose of putting bondservants under masters is so that the sinners of the earth may learn the will of God and learn to follow Christ. Their “masters” will teach them and train them in the laws of God. What a happy time!

For this reason Psalm 130:4 says,

**<sup>4</sup> There is forgiveness with Thee [God], in order that You may be respected.**

We respect those who have the ability to forgive, not those who perpetually refuse to forgive others. God has often been presented as One who either will not or cannot forgive sin, once a man has completed his life on earth. It is no wonder so many have no respect for God.

I believe that God has been misrepresented.

## **The Second Death**

The sentence of the law upon the unbelievers is in itself the second death. The second death is not like the first death. The first death is mortality that ends with men being placed in a grave. The second death comes at a time when the first death itself is destroyed, as we read in Rev. 20:14,

**<sup>14</sup> And death and Hades [the grave] were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire.**

He was telling the people that to violate God's laws was the way of death. Ultimately, he was speaking of the "second death" that is mentioned in Rev. 20:14. There the "second death" is equated with the "lake of fire." This "death" is different from the first kind of death (mortality and literal death), because in that day death itself will be destroyed. Men will no longer die after they have been raised from the dead, but they will have to remain separated from God until the great Jubilee.

Because of Adam's sin, all men have become mortal. That in itself is a judgment for sin. But the final judgment is the "*lake of fire, which is the second death*" (Rev. 20:14). This type of death is of

a different sort. It speaks of the future age when the unbelievers who did not avail themselves of Jesus' offer of redemption will remain mortal and will have to learn right and wrong as servants of God.

They will not die, but will remain as servants of God, learning the ways of God in much the same manner as believers today are learning obedience. That age may last for thousands of years, with everyone experiencing a sort of immortality. Our bodies are designed to last forever, with old cells being replaced by new cells, so long as we have the proper nutrition and environment. This will be an age in which all men will experience that bodily renewal, and if anyone should happen to die by some accident, they could easily be raised from the dead immediately.

During this time that God rules the earth through Jesus Christ and the "Sons of God," the nations will rejoice. Finally, there will be true justice and mercy in the courts. Psalm 67:4 says,

**<sup>4</sup> O let the nations be glad and sing for joy; for You will judge the nations upon earth.**

Psalm 72:11 says,

**<sup>11</sup> Yes, all kings shall bow down before Him; all nations shall serve Him.**

Psalm 86:9, 10 says,

**<sup>9</sup> All nations that Thou hast made shall come and worship before Thee, O Lord; and they shall glorify Thy name. <sup>10</sup> For Thou art great and doest wondrous deeds; Thou alone art God.**

### **The Final Outcome of God's Will**

In Gen. 9:9-17 God made a covenant (or contract) with the whole earth. It was a covenant that said He would never again destroy the earth. Many today mistakenly think that the earth is soon going to be destroyed, either by men or by God. This is not true. It may *look like* disaster is coming, and it is certain that man *would* destroy the earth if it were left to him. But God has promised to prevent it.

This is the first covenant that God made with anyone. The first time that the word “covenant” is used in the Bible is found here in Gen. 9:9. At earlier times, God made promises, not covenants.

Years later, in the story of how God brought Israel out of Egypt, we find that the Israelites were

rather stubborn and disobedient to God, and they came near to stoning Moses more than once. Finally, after ten examples of direct disobedience, God told Moses in Num. 14:12, “I’m just going to destroy the whole nation and start over with you and your children.”

This was, of course, just a test, for God knew He would not do this. So did Moses. That is why Moses reminded God of His promise to Israel. He also said in Num. 14:15 and 16 that if He were to destroy the people, it would be admitting that He was not powerful enough to do what He had said He would do. The people of the other nations would say that it was because He “was not able to bring this people into the land which He promised them by oath.”

Here is the crux of the matter. Was God really able to fulfill His intent? Could His will be thwarted by man’s will? Is man’s free will more powerful than God’s sovereign will?

Nowadays, many people would say that God could not be blamed for the refusal of the people to be obedient to Him. But that is not the issue. The fact is, *if God were unable to make Israel obedient*, then God would be perceived as a failure. It is much

like a disobedient child. If the parent is unable to turn the child into a productive citizen, then it is ultimately the failure of the parent, not of the child. The child is not the one in authority. Whoever is in the position of authority is responsible for those under him or her.

So God tempted Moses to see if he would take the bait. But Moses had no such ambitions to make his own family the chosen people. Moses then challenged God in an extraordinary manner, telling Him that the nations would think God is *not able* to perform His will—that man's will was stronger than God's will.

God's response was to tell Moses in Num. 14:21,

**<sup>21</sup> but indeed, as I live, all the earth will be filled with the glory of the Lord.**

Not only was God able to bring this one nation into the land God had promised, but He was also able to fill the whole earth with His glory. In other words, man may temporarily remain in bondage as a slave to sin and outside of His will, but ultimately, God's will is that the whole earth would be filled with His glory. God's will is to save all men (1 Tim.

2:4). There is nothing and no one on earth that can prevent this from taking place. Either men will consent to be redeemed in this age, or they will do so after the final judgment at the Great White Throne.

One may do this the easy way or the hard way. But either way, God is God, and His will shall ultimately prevail. By the time of the final Jubilee, when He sets all men free, they will be filled with His glory. The prophet echoes this verse in Hab. 2:14, saying,

**<sup>14</sup> For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.**

How much of the sea is covered by water? One hundred percent of it.

How much of the earth will be covered by the knowledge of the Lord? One hundred percent.

That is how the prophet interpreted what God said to Moses. It means that all men will be saved, and God's presence will fill the entire earth. Keep in mind that men were made with the dust of the ground. God intends to fill the whole earth, which includes every man's body (dust).

### **God's Promise to All**

In Isaiah 45:23 God says,

<sup>23</sup> **I have sworn by Myself [by my own name] . . . that unto Me *every knee* will bow and *every tongue* will swear allegiance to Me.**

This is no idle boast. It is a statement of intent that God has the ability to fulfill. This verse is quoted by the apostle Paul in Phil. 2:10, 11, saying,

<sup>10</sup> **at the name of Jesus *every knee* should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; <sup>11</sup> and that *every tongue* should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.**

The question is this: Is God able to fulfill this oath, or is it an idle boast? Col. 1:16 tells us that

<sup>16</sup> **by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible . . . all things were created by Him and for Him.**

Then a few verses later in verse 20, we read that Jesus Christ, by His death on the cross, “*has reconciled all things unto Himself . . . whether they are things in earth or things in heaven.*”

In other words, Paul’s use of the term “all things” really does mean all things. He not only *created* all things, but He also has *reconciled* all things to Himself. His death on the cross was not merely effective for a few, but for the whole of creation. It is not slated for destruction, but to house the glory of God.

Paul speaks again in 1 Cor. 15:22-28 of the time when all men will be raised from the dead for judgment and to receive the rewards due them. Paul says that Jesus Christ must reign over the earth until all enemies have been subdued—that is, until no one disagrees with Him and His divine law. Everyone will ultimately come into agreement that God really is a good and a just God. To know Him is to love Him.

Then Paul says that the final enemy to be destroyed is death. Only then will mankind be able to enjoy fully the presence of God. Only then will all the earth be full of His glory.

Paul says in verse 28 that “*God will be all in all.*” His full presence will not be in just a few people, nor will He dispense just a little of His glory in all men. Rather, His full glory will radiate out of all men.

That is the plan. And God is indeed able to perform His will. Many are now unwilling to go along with the plan, because of ignorance, for if they knew the glory that God had prepared for them, they would not hesitate to avail themselves of the redemption that Jesus has provided by His death on the cross.

We close with John’s vision in Rev. 5:13,

**<sup>13</sup> and every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth, and all that are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying, “Blessing and honor, and glory, and power be unto Him that sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb [Jesus] for the ages of the ages”.**

This is a picture of the goal of history and the divine plan for His creation. No one will be grumbling that a tyrant has come to power and ought to be overthrown. All will know the love that God

has for them and for all mankind. It is a happy scene. There are no tortured screams coming from an imagined pit of hell. God really is able to save all mankind—and He intends to do it.