

Many people, actually most people, are very puzzled by the nature of the establishment of the Kingdom of God, and in conjunction with it the very nature of Good and Evil. So much so, in fact, that they fail to respond to God in a positive way. The storyteller developed a story that he thought would help those people to think more deeply about this:

*One day the angels [sons of God] came to present themselves before the LORD<sup>1</sup>, and the LORD said them, “I wish to create beings in our image and for them a place in which they can dwell<sup>2</sup>. How can we best magnify Goodness in this activity?”*

*One of them, who craved power and saw a way to absorb some significant portion of it, answered the LORD, “Let us have a contest, and let each of us write a plan or a story which represents the path to fulfill this desire.” For he could see himself winning this contest and being chosen to be the master of this universe.*

*God said that it was good<sup>3</sup>, and he set a mark for them to meet again to review their offerings.*

*On the scheduled day all of the angels came to present themselves before the Lord. And the Lord said to them, “Are you all ready to present your stories?”<sup>4</sup>*

*The first contestant stepped up to describe a world of created beings that would respond perfectly to their creator. There would be no chance of error or waywardness – no temptation. The Kingdom would behave perfectly as dictated by the laws imposed upon them. There would not be issues with relationships, because these didn’t actually exist. Good would be evidenced by the actions of the “people”.*

*The second angel presented a similar setup where the created beings were allowed to have distinct personalities, but the Kingdom as a whole would be let run its own course without any interference – indeed without the King paying any further attention to it at all. The great part of this concept is that God in His Greatness would be free to move on to other projects.*

*The third entry in the competition raised the level a bit, allowing for God to interact with His people, but not requiring them to have a personal relationship with Him. Just having some type of faith in a general overarching being would be enough to please the Creator and receive His benefits in response. God would be shown to be a great benevolent ruler in this scenario.*

*The angel who suggested the idea for the contest entered with a story about a Kingdom where the great power of the Creator was incorporated in such a way that He demanded complete servitude of the people. They would simply jump when told to jump in their fear of Him. This angel’s idea of Good was founded on the promotion of a spiritual ego, and he was very proud and confident with his concept. He was very sure that his plan would win.*

*But the final contestant was yet to be heard. Jesus arose and entered a story of sacrificial love, where a loving Creator would give Himself up to save His troubled creation. The highest level of beings would have free will, and in considering a relationship with their Creator they would respond in love. After all, they would be in the very spiritual and relational image of the Creator. Of course, this scenario would depend on a choice between Good and Evil to be made available. But in the end as the “people” were drawn by the love of the Creator to him, they thus magnified and glorified the Goodness of God.*

*After this reading there were approving murmurs through most of the crowd. When that had died down, God spoke.*

*“What more powerful way could there be to draw a distressed creation to its Creator than the personal self-sacrifice to save them into the Eternal Goodness! I declare that this be the path that we take! Let us make man in our own image!<sup>5</sup>”*

*The angel who thought that sheer power was the best path was incensed at losing the contest. He voiced his outrage and stormed out of the council<sup>6</sup>, declaring opposition to the whole plan. He thus became the chief adversary in the story, and became better known by his name “Satan”.*

*Jesus indeed had the best story. As the “prize” for winning the contest, he became the very sacrifice that brings mankind to God for an eternal life in His Kingdom. His story indeed becomes the real story, in which we all now play a part.*

The theme of the storyteller was the tremendous value (and power) of True (that is, sacrificial) Love. We must all realize that there is absolutely no greater theme than this in all of creation and beyond.

1. see Job 1:6ff
2. Genesis 1:26
3. see Genesis 1 (several instances)
4. see Job 2:1-2
5. Genesis 1:26-27
6. Job 1:12

© Copyright 2020, Heard Lowry