

**More important than  
reaching the Moon...**



The Higher  
Perspective:

*Affliction &  
Distress  
On Earth*

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**More important than  
reaching Mars...**



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... Why would God ever allow such  
*WIDESPREAD AFFLICTION* and  
*SUFFERING* in Human Life?

... Why must the *ENTIRE EARTH*  
suffer and endure such *ENDLESS*  
*TROUBLE* and *TORMENT*?

WHAT MIGHT BE GOD'S **RATIONALE** for SUSTAINING a world of such pain and misery?

The people of Earth have been asking this kind of hard question for centuries... and have rarely gotten any sort of convincing answer that seems really adequate!

**There are several VALID EXPLANATIONS which can help us FATHOM THE PROBLEM of Universal Affliction and Suffering. Today we'll take a look at some of the most reasonable explanations that are currently revealed by the Bible and its authorities. READ ON!**

THE PROBLEM OF AFFLICTION is one that is strongly related to other enigmas that also perplex humankind: the problems of DEATH, DISEASE, AND DECAY... of EVIL FLOURISHING... of PARADOXES... of the DEVASTATION OF EARTH... and of the FUTURE OF EARTH. In this tract, we will focus first on *the problem of affliction*.

We will deal with those related questions at a later time in separate tracts devoted to those subjects. We can summarize only one area of explanation at a time in the limited space that is available for a tiny tract!

"What's GOD'S JUSTIFICATION for SUSTAINING a world of UNIVERSAL AFFLICTION?" . . . Take a look at GOD'S ANSWER-KEY and it may help you to achieve a Godlike COMPREHENSION of His answer to this ancient and perplexing question.

**\*\*\* From God's own omniscient viewpoint, THIS HUMAN SUFFERING IS PRESENTLY GOOD FOR US, AND THE NECESSARY AFFLICTIONS SERVE A VERY VALUABLE LONG-TERM PURPOSE. \*\*\*\*\***

**\*\* From God's omniscient viewpoint, SUFFERING IS GOOD FOR US AND THE AFFLICTIONS HAVE A VERY VALUABLE LONG-TERM PURPOSE. \*\*\***

1. Afflictions and suffering are **DESIGNED TO RESTRAIN US FROM EVIL** that we might be more inclined to perpetrate if life were very easy.

*Without the existence of the poverty, hard work, afflictions, and troubles which can sometimes crush (or lessen) our arrogance, we might have an even greater excess of time and pleasures available to us and thus be even more easily corrupted than we are when in the midst of deprivation and many trials.*

2. Afflictions surmounted— when we humans can ascend beyond them with our faith intact— are **DESIGNED TO BE A PROOF** that Satan's wicked accusations against us were wrong and mostly a pack of lies.

3. Afflictions and suffering are **DESIGNED TO HUMBLE US**, to remind us of our own human weaknesses and the need to depend on God for all things.

4. Afflictions are **DESIGNED TO ALERT US AS A WARNING SIGN, FORCING US TO SLOW DOWN SO WE RECOGNIZE THE POTENTIALLY DESTRUCTIVE PROBLEMS** existing in our lives and in our world.

*These serious problems could be physical, financial, biological, emotional, or spiritual— social injustices or personal behavior matters.*

5. Afflictions in this present life are **DESIGNED TO SHOW US THAT THIS WORLD IS NOT WHAT IT SHOULD BE**, and that it must be transformed by God into what He wishes it to be.

6. Afflictions and suffering are **DESIGNED TO FORCE US TO PRACTICE THE VIRTUES OF ENDURANCE AND PERSEVERANCE.**

*This sort of trial forces us to learn patience, in order that our lives may be more admirable and even bear witness to the angels that God's plan is right and proper.*

7. Afflictions are **DESIGNED TO FORCE US TO LEARN ABOUT OURSELVES, OUR INADEQUACY, AND OUR OWN PERSONAL VALUES,** SO THAT WE will then GROW TOWARD THE SPIRITUAL MATURITY THAT GOD REQUIRES OF US.

*Trials and troubles are often used by God for very practical results: It is sometimes necessary that our human egotism be assaulted in order that we humans should turn away from a familiar pattern of selfishness, foolishness, arrogance, or wickedness.*



*Trials are often used by God to bring about some extremely pragmatic goals: **TO BRING UNBELIEVERS TO A POINT OF WEAKNESS THAT BRINGS ABOUT TRUE REPENTANCE and SPIRITUAL SALVATION**, or perhaps **TO CHASTISE BELIEVERS** who are guilty of wrong-thinking and wrong-behavior, or else **TO FORCE BELIEVERS TO RELY ON THEIR GOD IN A CONTINUING (EVEN LIFELONG) STATE OF TOTAL MEEKNESS AND COMPLETE DEPENDENCY.***

8. Afflictions and suffering have been deliberately **DESIGNED TO FORCE US TO SHOW GOD THE HARD CHOICES WE WILL MAKE** when we are under great stress and confronting grave difficulties.

*Trials of this sort help God to make His own final determinations as He proceeds with a very careful and lengthy developmental process of **SELECTING** and **REJECTING** from among the people of the Earth.*

**9. Afflictions will one day come to an end.** In the new world that God will then provide for us, there will be **no more pain, nor tears, nor suffering of any kind.**

*God has a special project planned for those who make it through His training program to the final list... It's called "THE NEW EARTH."*

**10. Afflictions on this present Earth** serve as a **preliminary counterpoint of** unpleasantness, yet these will make **the new world** of peace and safety much **more fully honored** and **appreciated** when God someday provides it for us.

*The torments experienced on the Old Earth will make the heavenly raptures of God's next world all the more memorable and will increase our gratitude for God's reign when He rules at last.*

11. Afflictions surmounted by humans living on this present Earth — when we have ascended beyond them with our faith intact — are **DESIGNED TO VALIDATE US** humans before the watchful eyes of all the angels in Heaven.

*When we have passed through all these trials safely and successfully, without the destruction of our faith, it is only done by the grace of God and the power of His Holy Spirit within us.*

*Yet it is also true that the many astounding examples of the trials and afflictions which we have survived on Earth are designed to be evidence for the angels. These serve as proof that God is right in His decisions concerning our fate in this universe — that some should be given special status and privilege in a future time, while others shall be cast down and excluded.*

## **FIVE KEYS TO ACHIEVING A GODLIKE COMPREHENSION OF UNIVERSAL SUFFERING:**

**1. From God's own omniscient viewpoint, THIS HUMAN SUFFERING IS PRESENTLY GOOD FOR US, AND THE NECESSARY AFFLICTIONS SERVE A VERY VALUABLE LONG-TERM PURPOSE.**

**AFFLICTIONS HAVE BEEN DELIBERATELY DESIGNED TO FORCE US TO SHOW GOD THE HARD CHOICES WE WILL MAKE WHEN WE ARE UNDER GREAT STRESS AND CONFRONTING GRAVE DIFFICULTIES. TRIALS OF THIS SORT CAUSE PAIN, BUT CAN HELP GOD TO MAKE HIS OWN FINAL DETERMINATIONS AS HE PROCEEDS WITH A VERY CAREFUL AND LENGTHY PROGRAM — AN OLD DEVELOPMENTAL PROCESS OF SELECTING AND REJECTING FROM AMONG THE PEOPLE OF THE EARTH.**

*This first key has been elucidated within the present tract re: the problem of universal affliction.*

2. From God's omniscient viewpoint, **THERE ARE VALID REASONS FOR THE PRESENT EXISTENCE OF DISEASES AND PHYSICAL DEATH. . . AND EVEN WHEN THESE SERVE AS PRESENT-DAY TEMPTATIONS AND ASSAULTS OF SATAN, THEY HAVE A VALID AND USEFUL FUNCTION.**

THESE ARE USED BY GOD TO BENEFIT US HUMANS IN OUR EARTHLY PROGRESS AS WE ARE PUT THROUGH A CAREFUL PROCESS OF **DIVINE SELECTION** IN THIS ONE STAGE OF GOD'S LENGTHY **DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAM** FOR EARTH.

*This second key is discussed in more detail within a separate tract re: the problem of universal death, disease, and decay.*

3. From God's omniscient viewpoint, it is clear that **THERE IS A VALID JUSTIFICATION EVEN FOR HIS PERMITTING THE ASSAULTS OF SATAN UPON THE FOLLOWERS OF GOD. . . AND THE STRANGE PROSPERITY OF THE WICKED IN THE PRESENT TIME.**

THESE DIFFICULTIES MAKE THE WORLD SEEM BADLY UNBALANCED, BUT THEY ARE STILL USED BY GOD TO BENEFIT HIS LENGTHY DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAM FOR EARTH.

*This third key is discussed in more detail within a separate tract re: the problem of evil flourishing.*

4. From God's omniscient viewpoint, **THERE IS A VALID JUSTIFICATION EVEN FOR HIS PERMITTING THE EXISTENCE OF HELL AND THE POWER OF SATAN. . . AND ALL THE STRANGE PARADOXES OF EXISTENCE IN THIS PRESENT TIME.**

**THESE THINGS LIKEWISE ARE MANIPULATED BY GOD, AND THEY HAVE BEEN INCORPORATED INTO GOD'S GREAT PLAN IN SUCH A WAY THAT IT WILL ALL WORK TO BENEFIT HIS LENGTHY DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAM FOR EARTH.**

*This fourth key is discussed in more detail within a separate tract re: the problem of paradoxes.*

5. From God's point-of-view, *which is an omniscient perception of the Universe*, **OUR HUMAN SUFFERINGS ON THIS PRESENT EARTH SHOULD NOT BE OF EXCESSIVE CONCERN TO US**, due to the fact that there will eventually be a **transformed Earth** where there is no more affliction, nor death, nor evil.

**GOD'S GREAT PLAN CALLS FOR THE CREATION OF AN ENTIRELY NEW AND TOTALLY RESTRUCTURED EARTH IN FULFILLMENT OF A PROCESS OF DIVINE SELECTION.**

*This fifth key is discussed in more detail within separate tracts re: the problem of devastation and the future of Earth.*



## THE CRITERION FOR DIVINE SELECTION...

1. Rather than the Darwinian concept of a very long process of "natural selection" and "survival of the fittest" (*meaning the strongest*) in a scheme of evolution, God's system of development is quite different!

**God's plan is that there will be "DIVINE ELECTION" of all those who have chosen to accept His system of grace and mercy through Jesus Christ, and His plan calls for a "SURVIVAL OF THE LOYAL" instead.**

2.

In this scheme which God Himself has formulated, it is *not* the **STRONGEST** who survive, but rather the **SUBMISSIVE!**

*(In this regard, it is certainly true that God can make the weak person become strong. But a person who is too strong and egotistical God may choose to crush, in order that he — or she — will be humbled and will become submissive to the will of God!)*

3.

God is continuously harvesting the Earth as His ever-progressing plan of **DIVINE SELECTION** goes forward, through a wise and millennia-long program of evaluation—through interminable *testing* of people and a very lengthy developmental process of **SELECTING** and **REJECTING**.

4. *Any soul can be spared on the basis of God's own painful sacrifice, by a belief in the salvation God offers through His chosen Messiah, His only-begotten Son Jesus Christ. Jesus was slain as the unblemished Lamb of God, as God's self-sacrifice for the sins of the world.*

**Those souls that are spared will be the ones that have opened the door of the heart and have allowed Jesus Christ to come inside, through the Holy Spirit, to take up residence inside as the NEW CENTER of the Universe . . . as A BRILLIANT LIGHT AT THE CENTER OF THE SPIRITUAL "SOLAR SYSTEM."**

5.

God asks for a **MAJOR SHIFT IN WORLD-VIEW**, for it truly requires a **COPERNICAN REVOLUTION IN THE MIND-SET** of a human being.

You must comprehend with an entirely new way of looking at the Universe — for to be among the redeemed, to be among the survivors who are granted eternal life with God, you must place **JESUS CHRIST AT THE CENTER OF YOUR UNIVERSE**, in the very place where once *YOUR OWN EGO* had ruled supreme!

6. All those souls who are not to be spared on this basis (those who have rejected God's words, His truth, and His sacrifice) will suffer eternal separation from God and from God's final achievement — *the recreated Paradise that will one day be revealed as His ultimate objective.*

This will be a **NEW EARTH** produced by God for those persons whom He has rescued (or harvested) from the present world. **God will populate the reconstructed Earth with all those whom He has chosen through His millennia-long DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAM of DIVINE SELECTION.**

7.

This is **God's final goal**— His **objective** is to produce an entirely different world, a new and totally restructured world that will be vastly superior to this present world of distress and disorder, of countless evils and sin-produced chaos.

It is very certain that the **NEW EARTH** will be **IMMENSELY MORE PLEASANT** than this present Earth which will eventually be rejected and replaced!

8.

You can see it by placing Jesus Christ, **Who in the Trinity of God created our Universe**, upon a throne at the center of your heart! *He deserves that position and that kind of respect.* He was first **God The Son**, but when born in human flesh He became the only sinless and righteous person who ever lived. Yet He sacrificed Himself on a cross for your sake, taking all guilt and sins upon Himself, in order that you and I — that all people — **that whoever wishes for salvation might be rescued from the due punishment of sins.**



9.

All it really takes is a simple but sincere little prayer— one that you should make up in your own words. The prayer for deliverance and for God's leadership should come from your own heart!

**Some important elements** that you might include are:

- 1) your desire to turn away from the wrongness or evil of your past life, and your remorse over the sins of your previous life,
- 2) your desire for God's forgiveness and mercy through the act of sacrifice of His Only Begotten Son (Jesus Christ),
- 3) your desire to know God's leadership in your life,
- 4) your desire to learn more of God's truth through Bible study,
- 5) your desire to find fellowship with genuine believers.

If you will do this, you'll have a new contentment and peace as you accept **God's organizational plan for the Universe**. . . because you'll be letting **God be the Ruler of All Things in this world**. . . and in **your own life**.

*God wants to bless you for all your long efforts to understand this very confusing and difficult Universe in which we live— so let Him reward your search with the grace of His forgiveness and enlightenment!*

**Jesus spoke of the people of God as being like a seed that is growing secretly**, saying, "As for the Kingdom of God, it is as if a person should cast seed into the ground; and then he sleeps, and he rises up night and day to see that the seed is springing forth and always growing up, although he knows not exactly how. The Earth is bringing forth fruit from itself; first the blade, then the ears of corn, and after that the fullness of the ears of corn. And when all the **fruit of the Earth** has come forth, immediately God will use the sickle to reap the fields, because the **harvest-time** has come."

*Excerpt from the book of Mark [4:26-29].*

**Jesus said of the people of God** that "The Kingdom of Heaven is like a **net** that God has cast into the sea, and it gathers of every kind: When it is full, it will be pulled up on the shore, where they will sit down to sort the catch, and they will **collect the good fish in baskets, but the bad things will be thrown away. This is the way it will be at the end of the world: The angels shall come forth, and they will separate the unrighteous persons from among those justified by God . . .**"

*Excerpt from the book of Matthew, who was a constant companion of Jesus and his devoted disciple [13:47-50].*

## A Letter From The Author

One of my favorite heros is an adventurer named Colonel James B. Irwin. He is a Christian astronaut who became a Moonwalker (and a driver of the first Moon Jeep) during the Apollo 15 mission. That was in 1971. His team contained the only pair of astronauts to ever explore the mountains of the Moon. So I'm pretty sure they had one of the most exciting missions of all those provided to Earth's twelve Moonwalkers.

When he returned to Earth, Jim Irwin felt compelled to evangelize his home planet. He had sensed the Spirit of God with him as he walked about on the Moon, and he was more convinced than ever that Jesus Christ is the Lord of Creation, the ever-holy Son of God, an intimate part of the Divine Trinity.

The first Russian cosmonaut, Yuri Gagarin, was an atheist who had once declared, after the completion of his space jaunt, that "I did not see God up there." He maintained that he had not seen God in outer space. A little girl who was a Christian, a 12-year-old in Sweden, was troubled by the implications of that remark, so she then undertook to write him a letter. In it she responded, "Dear Cosmonaut Gagarin: I understand that you have flown in space and that you did not see God. Sir, I just want to ask you if you are pure in your heart?"

She was repeating the words of Jesus, who told us, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God."

Cosmonaut Gagarin could not see God in space, but James Irwin did just that. He came back to Earth with a new mission— a strong desire to evangelize his native planet. This Baptist believer thereafter traveled to speaking engagements in many foreign nations, telling people he met everywhere about the reality of God's existence. He went likewise to speaking engagements at many colleges and universities, both in the US and abroad, telling the students at these institutions that they needed to wise up, get real, and accept the Truth.

He frequently told people that "The entire space achievement is put in proper perspective when one realizes that God walking on the Earth is more important than Man walking on the Moon."

God walked the Earth as Jesus Christ, and humanity is now the beneficiary of a Holy One who possessed the wisdom and knowledge of God Almighty. The Son of God is a Divine Person of the Holy Trinity, and so He shares the knowledge of His Father in Heaven. He makes known to humanity, in His own words, "secrets that were not revealed since the Creation of the world."

James Irwin saw the mountains of the Moon and realized that his help comes from God, "the Lord Who made Heaven and Earth." Col. Irwin had "seen" God in outer space, because his heart was a lot more pure than that of Yuri Gagarin.

You can start to see God if you have your heart purified by the blood of Jesus Christ. He offers you a means of salvation in an evil world, and He offers to take you to a New Earth that will be better by far than this one in which we currently reside. He is the Gateway to Enlightenment and the Door of Truth. He's willing and even eager to give you something of immense value, something that you couldn't buy with all the wealth in the world.

It's free, and it's an offer you shouldn't refuse. But it's your choice.

James Irwin made the right choice, and when he finally died, he was assured a place in Heaven with Jesus Christ, his Lord and Savior. He is now in Heaven's Hall of Heros, and he continues his adventures in another world.

There are more things in Heaven and Earth than are dreamt of in your philosophy, O Mortal Man. Come on over to the side of the Light.

Yours In Christ,  
Ken Street

**More important than Man reaching the Moon...**

**More important than Man reaching Mars...**

**God's Earthward Outreach.**

**God reaches out to all the people of the Earth.**

**God walked on planet Earth in the human body of Jesus Christ.**

**As the Moonwalker James B. Irwin so often said, "God walking on the Earth is more important than Man walking on the Moon."**

**His Light has lived among us.**

This tract is distributed through **Earthward Outreach**, a Christian ministry. It is part of a commemorative edition that we are calling the James B. Irwin Memorial version.

It has been built upon material originally found in the Street Tract **A Godlike Overview Of Affliction**, and it is retitled for this edition.

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Ken Street, a baptized follower of the Way.

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**DESIGNED FOR THE EARTHWARD OUTREACH TRACTS PROJECT AND WCTN**

*... Why must the entire Earth endure  
such endless trouble and torment?*

*... Why would God allow widespread  
affliction and suffering on Earth?*

**WHY SUCH AFFLICTION?**