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Series IV: Sermons, 1914-1963, undated.

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Job - Why is there Suffering in the World?, 1919.



LECTURE BY RABBI ABBA H. SILVER ON "JOB"--  
"WHY IS THERE SUFFERING IN THE WORLD?" ON  
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 1919, AT THE TEMPLE,  
EAST 55th STREET AND CENTRAL AVENUE,  
CLEVELAND, OHIO.

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The problem of human suffering, so passionately and dramatically propounded in the Book of Job, has obtruded itself most insistingly upon the minds of men and women during and since the great holocaust of the war.

Millions of men and women who innocently suffered bereavement, mutilation and sorrow, have silently meditated, or audibly voiced the doubts and perplexities, the resentment and bewilderment, which found so startling articulation on the lips of that leprosy-stricken Emir of Edom, Job. And it is very natural indeed that at a time when the whole of mankind was one sorrow stricken Job that men should turn to that immortal drama of pain and protest to find therein revelations of their own troubled <sup>lives</sup> ~~lives~~ and their own blind gropings.

And it is but natural, I believe, that gifted men, like the author of "The Undying Fire," <sup>"</sup> ~~gifted men~~ who felt keenly the universal sorrow, should endeavor to strengthen the drooping spirits of mankind by restating the theme of that great book, Job, in terms of modern life.



I know that many of us have sensed the problem long before the war. I believe that there isn't one within the sound of my voice that has not at some time in his or her life been brought bewildered and bruised to that eternal problem of the why and the wherefore of human suffering. I believe that there isn't one here that has not at some time experienced a loss and bereavement, a disappointment and disillusionment, that made him ask silently <sup>or</sup> vocally, "Why does man suffer?"

I know that those of you who have seen the hand of death laid upon the youngest and the best, <sup>upon the</sup> ~~amongst~~ men of high character and great promise; ~~know that~~ those of you who have stood beside the open grave with a little child, ~~pure as the new fallen snow~~, with the dew of early morning still upon its lips; ~~know that~~ those of you who have seen good men racked with disease, spending their unhappy days upon the couch of pain; ~~know that~~ those of you who have ~~known~~ experienced fine <sup>hopes</sup> ~~goals~~ blasted, beautiful dreams come to naught, laudible ambitions thwarted; ~~know that~~ those of you who in youth carried the <sup>burden</sup> ~~load~~ of hopes and in age ~~carried~~ the load of memories; ~~know that~~ those of you who have--and who of us has not--some secret sorrow, some sad memory--I know that you have asked yourselves <sup>time and again--</sup> ~~whether there is~~: "Just why must it be so?"

And some of us, brought to bay, have defied and challenged Providence even as Job <sup>of old</sup> challenged Providence.

Job ran the whole gamut of human experience. <sup>He</sup> ~~was~~



drank the dregs of the bitter cup of life. He lost not only wealth but home and children. The whole structure of his life seemed to collapse about him, and his body was torn and racked and rendered unclean and loathsome by that consuming disease, leprosy. There he was, the proud Emir of many possessions, beloved and revered of men, a poor and broken outcast, lying upon the ash heap outside of his village, a loathsome thing, a thing to be shunned and pitied.

There was not a ray of sunshine, a bit of comfort, in this misery of Job's. If his suffering were, at least, purposeful, if it served some ulterior motive, if it <sup>were</sup> ~~was~~ vicarious <sup>or</sup> ~~of~~ sacrificial, Job, at least, would have some comfort, some consolation, in this troubled hour of black despair.

Prometheus, chained to the mountain crags, torn by the eagles of Zeus, suffering, had yet some sustaining consolation. He had rebelled, and by his rebellion he had brought light among the children of man. He was suffering for a holy cause; but Job had no such holy cause. Job had not rebelled; Job had not sinned. If Job felt that his punishment and his suffering were atonement for sins and wickedness, the sting of his suffering may have disappeared.

Job was no coward. Job would have submitted to <sup>a</sup> well-deserved <sup>fate</sup> ~~lot~~; but Job was conscious of his righteousness and his integrity. He had not sinned.



And so there was no consolation in that. There was not even a consolation in the hope that he might ~~be~~ <sup>be restored to health</sup>, that his disease was <sup>but</sup> temporary and passing. Leprosy is fatal. Leprosy slowly kills its victims.

And so Job plumbed the very depth of ~~dark~~, black hopeless tragedy.

And then Job, in ~~the~~ despair, in the mounting <sup>fretted mood</sup> anger of his ~~dark~~, cries out! First of all his cry is a wild lament over his sad fate; ~~beginning with those~~ immortal words:

"Let the day perish wherein I was born,

And the night wherein it was said: 'A man-child is conceived.'

Let that day be darkness;

Let not God seek after it from above,

Neither let the light shine upon it.

Let darkness and the shadow of death claim it for their own;

Let a cloud dwell upon it;

Let all that maketh black the day terrify it. \* \* \*

Because it shut not up the doors of my mother's womb,

Nor hid trouble from mine eyes.

Why died I not from the womb?

Why did I not give up the ghost when my mother bore me?

For now should I have lain still and been quiet;



I should have slept; then had I been at rest--  
With kings and counsellors of the earth,  
Who built up waste places for themselves;  
Or with princes that had gold,  
Who filled their houses with silver; \* \* \*  
Whereof is light given to him that is in misery,  
And life unto the bitter in soul--  
Who long for death, but it cometh not;  
And dig for it more than for hidden treasures;  
Who rejoice unto ~~exultation~~ *exultation*  
And are glad, when they can find the grave?--  
To a man whose way is hid,  
And whom God hath hedged in?"

This plaintive refrain, this lament, torn from  
a tortured soul, echoes and re-echoes throughout that  
terrible drama of human suffering.

"When I lie down, I say: 'When shall I arise?'  
But the night is long, and I am full of tossings  
to and fro unto the dawning of the day.  
My flesh is clothed with worms and clods of dust;  
My skin closeth up and breaketh out afresh.  
My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle,  
And are spent without hope.

~~Oh remember that my life is a breath,  
Mine eyes shall no more see good.~~

Job is conscious of the hopelessness of his life.  
"He hath fenced up my way that I cannot pass,



And hath set darkness in my paths.

He hath stripped me of my glory,

And taken the crown from my head.

He hath broken me down on every side, and I am gone;

And my hope hath He plucked up like a tree. \* \* \*

He hath put my brethren far from me,

And mine acquaintance are wholly estranged from me.

My kinsfolk have failed,

And my familiar friends have forgotten me.

They that dwell in my house, and my maids, count  
me for a stranger;

I am become an alien in their sight.

I call unto my servant, and he giveth me no answer,

Though I entreat him with my mouth.

My breath is abhorred of my wife,

And I am loathsome to the children of my tribe.

Even young children despise me;

If I rise, they speak against me.

All my closest friends abhor me;

And they whom I love are turned against me.

My bone cleaveth to my skin and to my flesh,

And I am escaped with the skin of my teeth.

Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my  
friends;

For the hand of God hath touched me.

Why do ye persecute me?"

And the sorrow of Job makes him soon realize  
not alone his own sorrow, but the sorrow of all children



of man. How hopeless is <sup>their</sup> ~~his~~ lot ! How futile are their efforts! A <sup>short span</sup> ~~little breath~~ of life, full of strivings and strugglings and heartaches, and then a long, long night of death and oblivion.

"Man that is born of a woman  
Is few of days, and full of trouble.  
He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down.  
He fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not. \* \* \*  
For there is hope of a tree,  
If it be cut down, that it will sprout again,  
And that the tender branch thereof will not cease.  
Though the root thereof wax old in the earth. \* \* \*  
But man dieth, and lieth low;  
Yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?  
As the waters fail from the sea,  
And the river wasteth and drieth up;  
So man lieth down and riseth not;  
Till the heavens be no more, he shall not awake,  
Nor be roused out of his sleep."

In that blackness of despair, Job at first can see nothing beyond the portals of the grave. It is only as his mind works through the darkness through which he is groping that slowly a new truth dawns upon him. Perhaps death is not the end of life... But <sup>in his first moments of agony</sup> ~~at first~~ he is conscious of no higher destiny for man than the grave.

And this lament of Job turns into bitterness and anger when his friends, in the profusion of their speech, imply that his suffering is merited and deserved,



that it is because of his sins that he is suffering,  
that God does not punish the righteous man, and that  
Job at some time must have sinned grievously against  
God that such terrible punishment has come to him.

*It is a fundamental conviction*  
That Job will not admit, ~~and that~~ forms the  
*with him, and it is the dominant idea of the drama.*  
~~crucial turning point in the drama.~~ Job con-

stantly maintains his integrity and his righteousness.

He denounces his friends for trying to justify the ways  
of God by slandering and libeling <sup>man</sup> ~~at the expense of the~~  
~~children of men.~~

He says to one of his friends who is endeavoring  
to comfort him:

"How hast thou helped him that is without power!

How hast thou saved the <sup>arm</sup> ~~man~~ that hath no strength! \*\*\*\*\*

~~How hast thou counselled him that hath no wisdom,~~

~~And plentifully declared sound knowledge!~~

~~With whose help hast thou uttered words?~~

~~And whose spirit came forth from thee?~~

Surely my lips shall not speak unrighteousness,

Neither shall my tongue utter deceit;

Far be it from me that I should give you right;

Till I die I will not put away mine integrity from

me.

My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go;

My heart shall not reproach me so long as I live."

He will not drag his soul into the mire of self-  
reproach, in order to justify Omnipotence. "If I sinned--



if I were conscious of my own sin, I would gladly and willingly submit to God's punishment," says Job.

"If my step hath turned out of the way,  
Any my heart walked after mine eyes,  
And if any spot hath cleaved to my hands; \* \* \* \* \*  
~~Then let me sow, and let another eat;~~

~~Yes, let the produce of my field be reaped out.~~

If I have withheld the poor from their desire,  
Or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail;  
Or have eaten my morsel myself alone,

And the fatherless hath not eaten thereof-- \* \* \*

If I have seen any perish for want of clothing,  
Or that the needy had no covering;

If his loins have not blessed me,  
And if he hath not been warmed with the fleece  
of my sheep;

If I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless,  
Then let my shoulder fall from the shoulder blade,  
And mine arm be broken from the bone. \* \* \*.

If I have made gold my hope,  
And have said to the fine gold:

'Thou art my confidence';

If I rejoiced because my wealth was great,  
And because my hand had gotten much; . . . .

This also were an iniquity to be punished by the  
judges; . . . .

~~For I should have lied to God that is above.~~



*Oh that I had one to hear me!—*

Lo, here is my signature, let the Almighty answer  
me--

And that I had the indictment which mine adversary  
hath written!

Surely, I would carry it upon my shoulder;

I would bind it unto me as a crown! \*\*\*

~~I would declare unto him the number of my steps;~~

~~AS a prince would I go <sup>near</sup> unto him."~~

And this anger at the implication of his friends  
turns ultimately to a frightful defiance and challenge  
of Providence, ~~itself~~.

~~"Hear diligently my speech,~~

~~And let my declaration be in your ears.~~

~~Behold now, I have ordered my cause;~~

~~I know that I shall be justified.~~

~~Who is he that will contend with me?~~

~~For then would I hold my peace and give up my  
ghost.~~

~~Only do not two things unto me,~~

~~Then will I not hide myself from Thee;~~

~~Withdraw Thy hand far from me;~~

~~And let not Thy terror make me afraid.~~

~~Then call Thou, and I will answer;~~

~~Or let me speak, and answer Thou me.~~

~~How many are mine iniquities and sins?~~

~~Make me to know my transgression and my sin.~~

~~Wherefore hidest Thou Thy face?~~



And holdest me for Thine enemy?

Wilt Thou harass a driven leaf?

And wilt Thou pursue the dry stubble? \* \* \* \*

~~That Thou shouldest write bitter things against me,~~

And make me to inherit the iniquities of my youth.

Thou puttest my feet also in the stocks,

And lookest narrowly unto all my paths;

Thou drawest Thee a line about the soles of my feet;

Though I am like a wine-skin that consumeth,

~~Like a garment that is moth-eaten."~~

*And again*

~~In another place~~ Job says:

"My soul is weary of my life;

I will give free course to my complaint;

I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.

I will say unto God: Do not condemn me;

Make me know wherefore Thou contendest with me.

Is it good unto Thee that Thou shouldest oppress,

That Thou shouldest despise the work of Thy hands,

And shine upon the counsel of the wicked? . . .

Hast Thou eyes of flesh,

Or seest Thou as man seeth?

Are Thy days as the days of man,

Or Thy years as a man's days,

That Thou inquirest after mine iniquity,

And searchest after my sin,

Although Thou knowest that I shall not be condemned;

And there is none that can deliver out of Thy hand?



Thy hands have framed me and fashioned me  
Together round about; yet Thou dost destroy me!  
Remember, I beseech Thee, that Thou hast fashioned  
me as clay;

And wilt Thou bring me into dust again?"

And so Job, fully conscious of his own <sup>weakness</sup> ~~wisdom~~  
and his inability to challenge Omnipotence, yet, in the  
bitterness of his soul, hurls that great denunciation  
and that challenge.

And further, Job says, "You say," <sup>says Job to his friends</sup> "the world is  
governed in justice. You say the just are rewarded  
and the wicked are punished. Why, then, do the wicked  
prosper?"

"Wherefore do the wicked live,  
Become old, yea, wax mighty in power?  
Their seed is established in their sight with them,  
And their offspring before their eyes.  
Their houses are safe, without fear,  
Neither is the rod of God upon them. \* \* \*  
They send forth their little ones like a flock,  
And their children dance. \* \* \*  
~~They sing to the timbrel and harp,~~  
~~And rejoice at the sound of the pipe.~~  
They spend their days in prosperity,  
And peacefully they go down to the grave.  
Yet they said unto God: 'Depart from us;  
For we desire not the knowledge of Thy ways.



What is the Almighty, that we should serve Him?

And what profit should we have, if we pay unto Him?"

~~Job~~ Job cannot see the justice of the world,  
and ~~thereby~~ he ends his terrible meditations in the  
despair of absolute hopelessness. God does not care;  
God is indifferent to our acts and our conduct; God is  
unmorally neutral to ~~the~~ *them all*.

~~"If it be a matter of strength, lo, He is mighty!  
And if of justice, who will appoint me a time?  
Though I be righteous, mine own mouth shall condemn  
me;~~

Though I be innocent, He shall prove me perverse.

I am innocent--I regard not myself,

I despise my life.

It is all one--therefore I say:

He destroyeth the innocent and the wicked.

If pestilence slay suddenly,

He will mock at the calamity of the guiltless.

The earth is given into the hand of the wicked;

He covereth the faces of the judges thereof;

If it ~~is~~ <sup>be</sup> not He, who then is it?"

But in that direction, madness lies. To say that  
there is no plan or purpose in the universe is to say  
that there is no God in the universe; and to say that  
there is no God in the universe is to surrender one's  
self to absolute despair and hopelessness.

Job clings to his God. In all his complaints and



lamentations he does not deny his God. It is the apparent removedness of God, ~~the far distance~~, <sup>His</sup> ~~the~~ unconcernedness ~~of God~~, ~~this frightful~~ <sup>his</sup> neutrality ~~of God~~, <sup>his awful</sup> ~~this~~ transcendence, ~~of God~~, ~~this~~ <sup>his</sup> disregard of the <sup>mortal</sup> ~~mortal~~ standards of men, that baffle Job, that anger him, that make him cry out in the affliction of his heart and soul.

This, then, is the problem of human suffering stated as completely as man has ever stated it.

And a solution is given to that problem, a solution that satisfied Job, that has satisfied the ~~world~~, suffering men and women ~~for~~ <sup>of</sup> many generations, and it is, to my mind, the only possible solution of the problem.

To say that evil does not exist, to say that suffering is an illusion of our <sup>mortal</sup> minds, is to fool ourselves into a paradise which ~~does not exist~~. It is a kind of self-hypnotism <sup>a sort of mental auto-intoxication</sup> that some can readily submit to, but <sup>to which</sup> ~~the~~ more critical, the more pragmatic, in life, cannot.

We know that suffering is, that suffering is real, and when it comes near unto us, we know how terrible it may be. And merely by shutting our eyes to it, we are not satisfying the aching void of our souls. ~~It does not~~ <sup>It does not</sup> ~~it~~ answer the questions that crowd to our lips.

Why, then, do men suffer? Why, then, does God permit suffering? Is suffering punishment for sin? The answer which the Book of Job gives is categorical. Suffering is not always punishment for sin! Death is not always atonement for wickedness. The good suffer



as well as the wicked.

But why? ~~We do not know.~~ It is true that nature appears to ~~us, to our mortal vision,~~ <sup>our mortal ken at first</sup> cold, ~~as~~ cruel, and

~~unconcerned, of our lot, of our destiny.~~

<sup>Could read nature with clearer eyes</sup>  
But if we, ~~too, note with a keener perception,~~

<sup>would</sup> we ~~can~~ see ~~in it~~ the wonderful beauty of it, the harmony

of it, the organization of it, ~~the plan of it,~~ and we

<sup>would be</sup> forced to the conclusion that back of it all there

~~is~~ some great Wisdom, some All-knowing Architect,

<sup>who</sup> creates, <sup>who</sup> plans, <sup>who</sup> controls, <sup>who</sup> guides, <sup>it all.</sup>

~~universe.~~ His ways may be unknown to us, small and

<sup>mortals.</sup> insignificant. His acts may be incomprehensible to us.

<sup>appear</sup> They may ~~be~~ out of relation, out of contact with ~~our~~ <sup>our</sup>

standards and our ideas, but <sup>we must</sup> ~~must not be humble and~~

~~man must~~ have faith that He Who planned this majestic universe, controlled and regulated in wisdom, has also

an ultimate goal in view, <sup>that</sup> ~~and~~ all our suffering serves

some ultimate purpose unknown to us, but planned in

harmony, and <sup>part of the process</sup> ~~in the growth~~ and evolution of the universe.

This was the solution the author puts in the mouth of God Himself, Who says unto Job:

"Who is this that darkeneth counsel

By words without knowledge?

Gird up now thy loins like a man;

For I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto

Me.

Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the



earth?

Declare, if thou has the understanding.

Who determined the measures thereof, if thou  
knowest?

Or who stretched the line upon it? . . .

~~Whereupon were the foundations thereof fastened?~~

~~Or who laid the corner-stone thereof,~~

~~When the morning stars sang together,~~

~~And all the sons of God shouted for joy?~~

Or who shut up the sea with doors,

When it broke forth, and issued out of the womb;

When I made the cloud the garment thereof,

And thick darkness a swaddling band for it,

And prescribed for it My decree,

And set bars and doors,

And said: 'Thus far shalt thou come, but no  
further;

And here shall thy proud waves be stayed'?

Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days began,

And caused the dayspring to know its place; \* \* \* \*

~~That it might take hold of the ends of the earth,~~  
~~And the wicked be shaken out of it?~~

~~It is changed as clay under the seal,~~

~~And thou standest as a garment.~~

~~But because the wicked their light is withholden,~~

~~And thy high sun is broken.~~

Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea?



Or hast thou walked in the recesses of the deep?  
Have the gates of death been revealed unto thee? ...  
~~Or hast thou seen the gates of the shadow of death?~~  
~~Hast thou surveyed unto the breathe of the earth?~~  
~~Declare, if thou knowest it all.~~

Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts?  
Or who hath given understanding to the mind?  
Who can number the clouds by wisdom?  
Or who can pour out the bottles of heaven,  
When the dust runneth into a mass,  
And the clods cleave fast together?  
Wilt thou hunt the prey for the lioness?  
Or satisfy the appetite of the young lions, \* \* \*  
~~When they couch in their dens,~~  
~~And abide in covert to be in wait?~~  
Who provideth for the raven his prey,  
When his young ones cry unto God,  
And wander for lack of food?"

And so, throughout that wonderful soliloquy, Job  
*majestic array, the discipline and economy, the order*  
is impressed with the *majesty, the greatness of nature,*  
*and symmetry of nature*  
and, through nature, Job comes to a realization of God's wisdom  
*and* kindness; and he ends by saying:

"Behold, I am of small account; what shall I  
answer Thee?

I lay my hand upon my mouth.

Once have I spoken, but I will not answer again;  
Yea, twice, but I will proceed no further \* \* \*.

Therefore have I uttered that which I understood not,



Things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. . .

~~Hear, I beseech Thee, and I will speak;~~

~~I will demand of Thee, and declare Thou unto me.~~

I had heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear;

But now mine eye seeth Thee;

Wherefore I abhor my words, and repent,

Seeing I am dust and ashes."

That, then, is the first solution. Through *faith in the wise arrangement of the Universe, of*  
nature to God. The world implies a wide purpose, and, *which human suffering is a part - an essential*  
though we know it not, *we have faith.*  
*part!*

But the second solution, to my mind, is even more  
~~magnificent and~~ satisfying. ~~It is~~ While it is

true that our conduct does not affect the world about  
us, ~~and~~ while the physical world may be indifferent

to our suffering and our sorrow, to our goodness ~~or~~ *and*  
our wickedness, the moral world--the world within us--~~the~~

~~and~~ the domain of the human spirit, is ~~directly~~ *powerfully*  
and directly affected by our goodness or our wickedness,

by our righteousness or our sin; ~~and~~ It is there where  
reward and punishment ~~is to~~ *must* be sought for; not in the

physical world, not in things, not in prosperity, ~~not~~ *or adversity*  
in long life, ~~not in~~ *or in* good health; but in the soul, in

the enrichment and the ennobling ~~ment~~ of the spirit of man

through goodness, or in the starving of it and the shriv-  
eling of it through wickedness and sin. That is where

man is regnant, *where* man is master, ~~where man is supreme,~~

in his own moral life, in his own soul.



~~We have faith that it hostility is only  
apparent; that it serves the ultimate  
wise and good purpose of God~~

We have faith that the hostility is  
only apparent; that it serves the  
ultimate wise and good purpose of God





*physical*

And it matters not whether the world be hostile or cruel or indifferent. That, we ~~will~~ leave to God. *But as far as our moral world is concerned*  
~~We cannot comprehend it. But within us, we know that~~  
the righteous is always rewarded, even though he physically suffer, and that the wicked is always punished, even though he physically prosper.

That solution, Job himself evolves in the midst of his meditations. ~~He says:~~

"I will take my flesh in my teeth,  
And put my life in my hand.  
Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him;  
I will maintain my ways before Him.  
Even this shall be my security,  
That a hypocrite cannot come unto him."

That is the security of man. That is his confidence, that is his strength, that is his reward--a hypocrite cannot come in the presence of God! The sinful man, the treacherous man, the wicked man, in spite of all the happiness--apparent happiness--success, prosperity, wealth, that may come to him, his punishment is constantly with him, for he is estranged from God.

*He, too, asks:*  
That is the same solution ~~of~~ *that found.* Jeremiah, ~~who asks~~  
*the question:* "Why is the way of the wicked prosperous?"  
*finds the answer!*  
And he ~~answers himself:~~ "Thou art near unto them in their mouth, but Thou art far from their inward parts."

That is the same solution that the author of The Undying Fire, or of The Great Hunger or the thinkers of all ages have found for the problem of suffering, and



that solution gives us a theory of life that is comforting and sustaining. We can then look upon physical suffering <sup>not upon</sup> as <sup>to</sup> something sent to break us, or punish us, but <sup>upon</sup> we can then look upon suffering as a great discipline to help <sup>us</sup> ~~all men and the righteousness of our souls.~~

And that is what the wise man of all ages <sup>has done</sup> ~~does~~. He doesn't give way to bitterness in his soul. He does not break down when sorrows and trials and tribulations come to him. He says unto himself: "The spirit of God is within me. My soul is pure and righteous. True happiness is mine, because I can come in the presence of God. I will utilize all these vicissitudes, these cruel vicissitudes of <sup>my</sup> life, to develop myself, ~~to refine my~~ self, to purify myself, to ennoble my soul, to gain greater insight and greater sympathy with suffering and sorrow everywhere."

That is the true value of suffering. We grow through our sorrows. We climb heavenward upon the rungs of pain. The finest things that have come to humanity have come through suffering and through sacrifice. The choicest lyrics have come from the lips that have tasted the dregs of life. The most inspiring thoughts have come from minds that have <sup>dwelt in</sup> ~~known~~ the shadow of death. <sup>Suffering</sup> ~~That~~ is evolution; <sup>Suffering</sup> ~~that~~ is progress. We rise from the lower to the higher, from the less perfect to the more perfect, from the evil <sup>through suffering</sup> to the good. Without pain and without suffering and without sorrow life itself would



be impossible. It would stagnate in a pool of absolute perfection. It is this urge, this inner force, this "Undying Fire," this "Great Hunger," that <sup>carries us</sup> rises on in spite of all obstacles and calamities, suffering, war, death and disease, on and on to achieve, to create, to evolve ever finer and ever higher values of life.

~~That is what gives the aroma and the fragrance, the beauty, to human life. And that, then, is the solution of the problem, and the answer that the genius of the Jew has evolved.~~

Suffering is not punishment. Suffering is of the very warp and woof of life. Without it life were impossible. Sweetness and bitterness, light and darkness, are the obverse and reverse of the same coin; ~~and~~ ~~related~~. One is impossible without the other. We submit to it because we have faith in the ultimate good of life; ~~because there is a wise Architect that is back of it all;~~ and we utilize that very suffering to increase our spiritual values and to grow by <sup>it</sup> ~~them~~.

And when we suffer, we say unto ourselves: "God is not punishing us. We have not sinned. God ~~is~~ <sup>always</sup> rewarding <sup>the good we do</sup> us for ~~good~~, but the reward is in our soul. There we must look for it, and there we shall find it.

And so, we shall never ask ourselves again: "Why do the wicked prosper?" For the wicked do not prosper, in spite of all the apparent physical prosperity that is



*scattered*

theirs. Their lives remain hollow, meaningless, Godless; and that is the ~~greatest~~ and most terrible punishment that can come to the children of men.

And so Job ~~was~~, groveling upon that ash heap, torn by the leprosy--~~he~~ was able because of that great insight which he gained through his suffering--<sup>to exclaim</sup> "I know that my Redeemer liveth." "In mine own self will I see God." ~~\*\*\*\*\*~~ "

~~That is the solution of the problem of evil.~~

And the author of The Undying Fire sums it up most beautifully: "The darkness and ungraciousness, the evil and the cruelty, are no more than a challenge to you. In you lies the power to rule all these things. Through the tumbled clouds of his mind broke the sunlight of this phrase: 'The power to rule all these things. The power to rule--.' You have dwelt over-much upon pain. Pain is a swift distress; it ends and is forgotten. Without memory and fear, pain is nothing, a contradiction to be heeded, a warning to be taken. Without pain, what would life become? Pain is the master only of craven men. It is in man's power to rule it. It is in man's power to rule all things."

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