

Summary of God and Evil, Episode 1

Why Do Bad Things Happen To Good People? | Is God In Control? | Does Evil Come From God?

—God is complete goodness, and can't be a source of evil.

—Evil was created by humans.

—God provided the raw materials of goodness and freewill and the design in which they were meant to be used.

—Evil is the result of blockage, reversal, separation, and misuse of those materials and that design.

Reflection questions:

What is a "raw material" in life that you recognize can be used either for good purposes or harmful purposes?

Think about some resource (natural, technical, societal or mental/emotional) that you see being used destructively, and think how that same resource could be used for good.

Related videos to check out on YouTube:

Why Bad Things Happen - Swedenborg and Life

Why Bad Things Happen to Good People - Swedenborg and Life

Spiritual Freedom - Swedenborg and Life

Is the Devil Real? - Swedenborg and Life

God Used a Specific Design to Create Heaven - Swedenborg and Life

The Pattern of God Has Been Built Into the Universe - Swedenborg and Life

Quotes from this lesson in fuller context:

True Christianity 692:7

Then someone who was holding a palm branch stood up in the middle of the Palladium and said [to the sages], "Would you be so kind as to unravel a mystery? How is it that a human being, who was created as a form of God, can be changed into a form of the Devil? I know that the angels of heaven are forms of God and the angels of hell are forms of the Devil, and these two forms are opposite to each other. The latter are forms of insanity; the former are forms of wisdom. Would you tell us, therefore, how people who have been created as forms of God could possibly cross over from the light of day into a night so dark that they deny the existence of God and eternal life?"

One after the other in sequence, the teachers gave replies to this: first the Pythagoreans, then the Socratics, and afterward the rest. Among them there was one Platonist; he spoke last, and his opinion carried the day. It was as follows.

"In the Saturnian or Golden Age, people knew and acknowledged that they were forms for receiving life from God. As a result, wisdom was engraved on their souls and hearts. They saw what was true in the light of truth. Truths also allowed them to identify a good course of action by the sense of love and delight they felt in taking it.

"In the ages that followed, however, the human race stepped back from acknowledging that all the truth of wisdom and all the goodness of love within them was flowing in continually from

God. As a result, they stopped being dwelling places for God. Their speaking with God and their association with angels came to an end, because the inner parts of their mind turned from the direction in which they had been facing. Their minds had been turned upward by God toward God, but now they bent down more and more in another direction, outward toward the world. At that stage they were turned by God toward God but through the world. Later their minds turned upside down to face in the opposite direction, downward toward themselves. Because people cannot see God when they are inwardly upside down and turned away, they separated themselves from God and became forms of hell, or forms of the Devil.