

2026-03-20

DATUM/DATE On God's Plan, Will, and Human Free Will

During the Bible study Thursday night, the discussion turned to suffering; particularly, why does God allow it? The phrase that kept coming up was that it was "according to God's plan" as if God had specifically, actively planned for this suffering. At the risk of impetuosity, I do not think this to be true. That is, God has not actively orchestrated this suffering. Rather, I argue that <sup>he</sup> accounts for this suffering in his plan.

The crux of the problem is free will. This starts with Lucifer's fall, taking with him the stellae caeli, third part of the stars of heaven. From that point, we have Satan and all these ~~evil~~ evil spirits prowling about the world seeking the ruin of souls. They find their first victim in Eve, the second human - condemning the world to suffering despite living in Paradise. God - in his perfect knowledge - knew this would happen, though his desire was for Man to live in Eden. The consequence of free will, the inherent risk of free will, was, and is, that Man will exercise it to act counter to the will of God. God's plan, then, is for Man to live in perfect harmony with heaven.

The risk of free will is where we find the beauty of free will, the goodness of free will, for if we were without it, we would be as the beasts of the field. Our opportunity to choose the will of God is precisely what yields substance to our relationship with the Divine. God's plan would see us choose the heavenly, but accounts for our repeated and regular failures to do so.

The next question is how God could allow the innocent to suffer, how could God allow the innocent to be victimized? Just as our free will would allow us to injure God through our willful sin, our free will would allow us to injure each other. A sin injures not only Christ, but injures the body and bride of Christ. This is part of why the Sacrament of Reconciliation is such a vital necessity for our life in Christ. It is necessary to make right, to reconcile, this injury. Likewise, it is all too easy for us to ~~we~~ injure each other, so much more so for those whose souls are so far lost. For free will to truly be free, it must be thus. Our actions have consequences, which is why hell is necessary. For Christ's crucifixion to reconcile us, it must be a choice made freely.