

MORNING WATCH

A HERALD OF CHRIST'S PRESENCE, AS BRIDEGROOM, REAPER AND KING!

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How Sin Entered the World

THERE are many evil things in the world today, and there is much suffering and unhappiness because of these things. There are all kinds of sickness and pain. After only a few years of life, a person dies, leaving behind those who sorrow for him. All about us we see corruption and immorality. Cheating and robbing are common; there is violence, cruelty and murder. Accidents kill and cripple thousands every year. Fires and floods bring great suffering to the people. It seems there is always a war, revolution, or some kind of civil disorder going on somewhere in the world. Beside this, children disobey and rebel against their parents, scorning the wisdom of the experience of many generations. Of course there is also much beauty, goodness and happiness in the world, in which we rejoice. But evil seems to predominate.

When God had completed the creation of the earth and everything upon it, he "saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good." (Genesis 1:31) Everything is certainly not "very good" - -today. What happened to change the situation? How did evil get a start in the world and develop to the extent it has?

Man Created Perfect

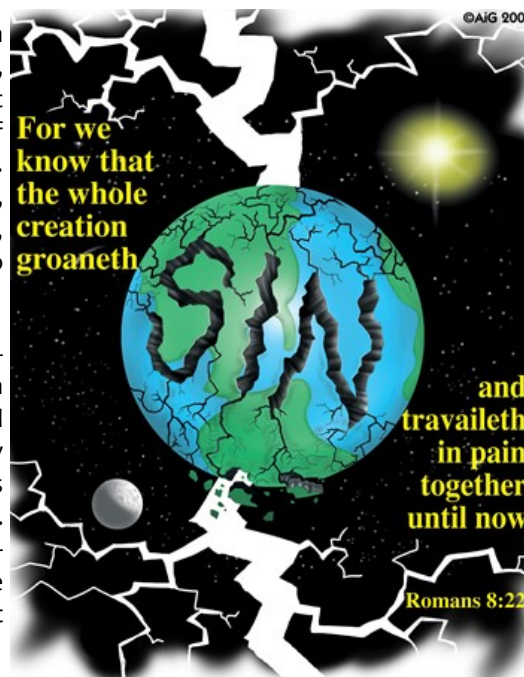
The first man, Adam, was created perfect. It is written that, "God created man in his own image; in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." (Genesis 1:27) Man was designed to live forever upon the earth. We are told in Genesis chapter two how man was placed in a beautiful garden in which grew every tree good for food and that would sustain life perfectly. Then God put man to the test of obedience. God purposely made the test simple and easy.

"And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat. But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die."-- Genesis 2:16,17

Adam was forbidden to eat of the fruit of only one of the many trees of the garden. Disobedience in such a simple matter when it would be easy to obey, makes the transgression all the more reprehensible. It indicates willfulness. If it were a difficult thing the Lord required of him, Adam might have made the excuse that obedience was beyond his capabilities. But there was no excuse for disobedience in this case.

He had plenty of food beside the fruit of the prohibited tree. It was not necessary for him to eat of it for sustenance.

Why did God have to test Adam's obedience at all? Why was obedience a matter of life or death?" By definition, sin is disobedience to God's law. God cannot tolerate sin. Genesis 3:22 states that by continuing to eat of the perfect food of the garden of Eden, Adam had the ability to live forever. So you can see why it was necessary for God to test Adam's obedience before allowing him to continue his



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life. Adam failed the test. As recorded in Genesis chapter three, Satan deceived Eve and she in turn induced Adam to knowingly disobey. So they both were expelled from the garden, away from the source of their perfect food supply,

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into the unplanted part of the earth. There they ate food that would not sustain life perfectly.

Thus the death penalty was enforced and Adam began to die. All his children were born after his expulsion from Eden. They were born dying just as we are who descended from them. We all fit the description that David gave of himself when he said: "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." (Psalms 51:5)

"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."--Romans 5:12

Why could God not have designed and created man incapable of sin? Then it would have been impossible for Adam to disobey. God would have had a perfect human race living forever upon the earth.

God could have made man without the ability to make a choice and to guide his own --conduct, but to make him that way would have been to produce a living machine, a robot. He would have been a slave, rendering blind obedience without knowing why. This was not the kind of creature God wanted as the king of earth. He created a superior being, far above the animals with their compelling instincts, a creature with moral sense and freedom of choice, able to reason, to reach decisions, and to act in harmony with them, what we call a free moral agent. "God created man in his own image." (Genesis 1:27)

Could God have shielded the first pair from Satan's temptation so that they would not have disobeyed and incurred the death penalty? Yes, but then man's experience would have been limited to only good. He would have been continually liable to suggestions of evil which would have made the everlasting future of mankind uncertain. An outbreak of disobedience and disorder might always have been a possibility.

How To Know Something

There are four ways to know things. One way is by intuition, which is a direct apprehension without the process of reasoning. Only God possesses it. Another way is by observation. If God had chosen to teach Adam the dire results of sin by this method, it would have been necessary for sin to be permitted somewhere, among some beings, for man to observe it. Another way is by information, by telling.

This method was used, but Adam did not learn by it. God

told Adam not to eat, but Adam ate just the same. He could not realize the full import of what it meant to die. At that time he had never seen anyone die. He could not possibly understand the depth of degradation and misery it would involve for himself and his entire race. He lacked experience.

Beside intuition, observation, and information, the only other way to learn is by experience. God saw this as the best way. He permitted Satan to deceive Eve by telling the first lie ever uttered: "Ye shall not surely die." (Genesis 3:4) Why did Eve believe Satan when God had plainly said: "Thou shalt surely die?" She too lacked experience.

Today we do not believe something without question. We have developed mental reservations. We consider whether the source of the information is reliable. We consider the possible motives our informant may have. We mentally compare the information with knowledge we have previously acquired. We do these things as a result of our experience and often without conscious thought. We have learned by experience that there are unreliable, prejudiced and dishonest people in the world, so we do not readily believe everything we are told by just anyone. We have learned to be discriminating.

Because of her innocent inexperience, Eve was childlike and naive. She was easily deceived by the crafty Satan, especially when he promised her that the forbidden fruit would really be beneficial. So she ate and offered it to her husband Adam. He also ate. It seems that Adam was not -- present when Eve ate the fruit. When he learned what she had done, he was appalled. He loved Eve very much.

Thinking that she would now die, he decided he would not live without her. So he ate of the fruit knowingly and deliberately, so that he might die together with his beloved wife. "Adam was not deceived; but the woman, being deceived, was in the transgression." (1 Timothy 2:14)

Adam's disobedience will be for the ultimate good of mankind because it provided an experience with sin and its terrible consequences.

By virtue of Jesus' ransom sacrifice, the entire human race will be saved from death to live again upon the earth. If obedient, they will live for ever. Having learned by experience the truth of the text "the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23), they will want no more of it.

Instead they will gladly follow righteousness.

2009 Memorial Supper Date

The proper date and time for the annual observance of the Lord's Memorial Supper will be Tuesday, April 7, 2009, after 6:00 p.m. on