

Peace be with you, listening friends. We greet you in the name of God, the Lord of peace, who wants everyone to understand and submit to the way of righteousness that He has established, and have true peace with Him forever. We are happy to be able to return to present your program *The Way of Righteousness*.

We are continuing our study about what happened in the beginning. In this lesson we will meet **Adam and Eve**, and learn about their first day on earth.

We already read in the Torah: "*In six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them.*" We also observed how God created the first man on the sixth day. God created man with **a body and a soul**. God formed the body of man from the dust of the earth, and then He placed in it an eternal soul. God created the soul of man in His own image. This means that God placed in man's soul a special **mind**, so that man could **know God**. God also gave man a **heart** with which he could **love God**. And He entrusted man with a **will**, so that he would have to choose for himself whether to **obey God** or to disobey Him.

After God finished creating the first man, He had other things to do before He could rest from His work of creation. These works are what we want to learn about today. Let us continue in the Torah, in the second chapter of the book of Genesis. We begin with verse seven. The Scripture says:

"The Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being. Now the Lord God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed."

The Scriptures tell to us how God prepared a delightful garden for the man whom He had created. The garden was called *Eden* meaning *delight* or *the Garden of Paradise*. Some think that this garden, in which God placed the first man, was in heaven. However, the Scriptures show us that it was **located here on earth**, in the Middle East, in Eden,

probably where the country of Iraq is today. The Writings of God's prophets **never confuse the Garden of Paradise** which was on the earth, **and the heavenly Paradise** which is above, in the presence of God.

In the verses that follow, the Scripture says:

*"The Lord God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground, trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. A river watering the garden flowed from Eden; from there it was separated into four headwaters.... The Lord God took the man that is **Adam** and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it."*

Thus we see that God made for the first man, Adam, a lovely place where he could live in true prosperity. God placed him in a luscious garden full of trees that produced fruit beautiful to behold and delicious to eat. In this enchanting place, **everything was perfect and wonderful**. Adam's senses were alive; his eyes took in the beauty, his ears took in the melody of birds singing in the trees, and his senses absorbed the fragrance of the flowers that permeated the garden. God gave Adam everything for his enjoyment. We also read how God, in His goodness, entrusted Adam with **a satisfying task**: to take care of the garden, so that he would be happily occupied.

The most wonderful thing that took place in Eden, was that **God Himself would come to the garden** in the cool of the evening so that He might talk with the man whom He had created in His own image. We read about this in the Torah in chapter 3 of Genesis. Why did God come to visit Adam? He visited Adam, because, as we have already learned, **God created man for fellowship**. God's intention was that He and humans might fellowship together, talk together, rejoice together, and spend eternity together with unified minds and hearts. Yes, God wanted man, humans, to grow in a deep and wonderful relationship with Him forever.

Now there is something else we need to know about the garden into which God placed the first man. In the middle of the garden, God planted two very important trees. One was called *the tree of life*, and the other *the tree of the knowledge of good and evil*. God placed **the tree of life** in the garden to remind Adam that He intended for man to share His eternal life. As for **the tree of the knowledge of good and evil**, God placed it in the middle of the garden to test Adam. Listen to what the Scriptures say: *"And the Lord God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for in the day that you eat of it you will surely die."*

Why did God forbid Adam to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil? Is God stingy? No, He is not stingy! In fact, one of His names means *"the Generous One!"* God told Adam, "You can eat of every tree ...except one." Was that a difficult command? No, it was not. God, in His grace, gave Adam everything he needed to be happy. He did not withhold any good thing from him. However, God, in His perfect plan, placed before Adam **a simple test**, so that Adam might have the opportunity to show God that he loved Him enough to obey His command. As the Lord God says in His Word: *"If anyone loves me, he will obey my [word] ...He who does not love me will not obey my word."* God wanted to test Adam's love and loyalty, *to see whether his heart was for Him or against Him*. That is why He gave him this simple command. God did not create a mechanical man or a robot. God created a man with a mind, a heart, and a free will so that he could choose for himself to love and obey God.

What did God tell Adam would happen to him if he ate of the forbidden tree? Let us reread the Scriptures. God said, *"You must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for in the day that you eat of it you will surely die!"* Thus, God informed Adam that disobedience to His command would produce **death**. God loved the man He had created; thus He warned him in unmistakable words, saying: Adam, if you disobey me, you will die

because my holy law requires *"the death of the soul that sins."*

Perhaps someone is asking: **What is sin?** The Scriptures say: *"Sin is lawlessness."*

"All wrongdoing is sin." "Anyone...who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do

it, sins." Sin is going your *"own way."* Sin is anything that does not agree with God. **What**

will happen to those who sin against God? The Word of God says, *"The soul that sins must die!"*. And in another verse, it says, *"the wages of sin is death."* **What is death?**

Some think that to die is to cease existing; everything is finished and you no longer know anything. But if we rely on the Writings of the Prophets, we will see that this is not what death is. In the Holy Scriptures, in the Hebrew language in which it was written, death signifies *separation*. Death is separation from life.

When God said to Adam: "If you eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you will surely die," this is what He was saying: Adam, if you eat of the tree which I have prohibited, in that day you will die, that is: you will be **separated from Me**. If you disobey me you can no longer have a close relationship with me. I am holy and I cannot tolerate sin or those who reject my way. I expelled Lucifer and his angels when they sinned, and I will expel you too if you sin. Also, if you eat of the fruit of the forbidden tree, **your body** will begin to grow old and, eventually, it will die, that is: your soul will leave your body. And that is not all. If you disobey me, not only will your body die, but **your soul** will go to the place created for Satan and his angels. And there you will be separated from me forever and ever!

Thus, we see that **sin produces three horrible separations**. **First**, your soul is **separated from God here on earth**. That is, you have no relationship with God the Holy One because of the sin in your heart. **Second**, your soul will be **separated from your body** on the day you die. That is, your body will die and your soul will meet God for judgement. **Third**, your **soul and body will be separated from God forever** in the lake of fire.

Based on the authority of the Word of God, what is death? In short, **death is separation from the God of Life**. Sin separates man from God, the source of true life. God is holy and cannot coexist with sin. The soul that sins is **like a branch** of a tree that is cut off and cast away. What happens when a branch is no longer part of the tree? A branch that is cut off, is it alive? No, it is dead! The leaves do not become instantly dry, but they have begun to die. Similarly, if you have not received the way of forgiveness of sin which God has provided, you may think that you are alive, but the Scriptures of the Prophets say that, before God, you are *"dead in your transgressions and sins."* *"Your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden His face from you."* You are **"like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned."**

The branch that is no longer connected to the tree cannot produce fruit. That is how a sinner is before God. He cannot produce anything pleasing to God, because he has **no relationship with God**, who is the "True Tree," **the Source of true life**. Sinners can only expect God's righteous judgement. However, in the Writings of the Prophets, God has declared how we can be made righteous before Him and know for sure that our sins are removed. It is this that we will be considering in coming lessons.

Before we close, we would like to read what is found in the remainder of this chapter. The Scriptures tell us how God created **the first woman**. Listen:

"The Lord God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.' So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh. Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. The man said, 'This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman', for she was taken out of man.' For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. The man and his

wife were both naked, and they felt no shame."

Thus, we discover that **marriage** was designed by God. God created one man and one woman so that they could love each other, share their lives together, and have a happy family that glorifies God. God, who loved Adam and wanted him to be perfectly happy, gave him a very wonderful gift: **a wife!** God wanted Adam to cherish his wife, provide for her, and love her as he loved himself. Even more important, God wanted the man and the woman to enjoy a deep relationship with Himself-to know Him, love Him and obey Him forever.

Thus, God finished His work of creation. The Scriptures says:

*"God saw all that he had made, and it was **very good**. And there was evening, and there was morning, the sixth day. Thus, the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array. By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so **on the seventh day he rested from all his work**. And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done."*

Why did God rest on the seventh day? Was it because He was tired? No, God is never tired! The Scriptures say that God rested because He had "**finished the work!**" Everything was **perfect**. That is why God rested from His work on the seventh day. That is also why there are seven days in a week.

Friends, thank you for listening. Next time, God willing, we will learn how sin entered the world....

God bless you as you ponder this declaration from His Word:

"The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life...!"

Please tell us now what you think of this program. Our mailing address is:

"The Way of Righteousness" PO Box 4766, Greenville, SC 29608, USA