

SIN ENTERED THE WORLD

PRESENTED BY

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GREEN LAWN CHURCH OF CHRIST

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IN ROMANS 5:12 THE APOSTLE PAUL WROTE, "WHEREFORE, AS BY ONE MAN SIN ENTERED INTO THE WORLD, AND DEATH BY SIN; AND SO DEATH PASSED UPON ALL MEN, FOR THAT ALL HAVE SINNED." IN THAT ONE VERSE HE WAS SUMMARIZING WHAT WE READ IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS THE THIRD CHAPTER IN A RATHER MORE EXPANDED MANNER. "NOW THE SERPENT WAS MORE SUBTLE THAN ANY BEAST OF THE FIELD WHICH THE LORD GOD HAD MADE. AND HE SAID UNTO THE WOMAN, YEA, HATH GOD SAID, YE SHALL NOT EAT OF EVERY TREE OF THE GARDEN? AND THE WOMAN SAID UNTO THE SERPENT, WE MAY EAT OF THE FRUIT OF THE TREES OF THE GARDEN: BUT OF THE FRUIT OF THE TREE WHICH IS IN THE MIDST OF THE GARDEN, GOD HATH SAID, YE SHALL NOT EAT OF IT, NEITHER SHALL YE TOUCH IT, LEST YE DIE. AND THE SERPENT SAID UNTO THE WOMAN, YE SHALL NOT SURELY DIE: FOR GOD DOETH KNOW THAT IN THE DAY YE EAT THEREOF, THEN YOUR EYES SHALL BE OPENED, AND YE SHALL BE AS GODS, KNOWING GOOD AND EVIL. AND WHEN THE WOMAN SAW THAT THE TREE WAS GOOD FOR FOOD, AND THAT IT WAS PLEASANT TO THE EYES, AND A TREE TO BE DESIRED TO MAKE ONE WISE, SHE TOOK OF THE FRUIT THEREOF, AND DID EAT, AND GAVE ALSO UNTO HER HUSBAND WITH HER, AND HE DID EAT, AND THE EYES OF THEM BOTH WERE OPENED, AND THEY KNEW THAT THEY WERE NAKED; AND THEY SEWED FIG LEAVES TOGETHER, AND MADE THEMSELVES APRONS. AND THEY HEARD THE VOICE OF THE LORD GOD WALKING IN THE GARDEN IN THE COOL OF THE DAY: AND ADAM AND HIS WIFE HID THEMSELVES FROM THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD GOD AMONGST THE TREES OF THE GARDEN. AND THE LORD GOD CALLED UNTO ADAM, AND SAID UNTO HIM, WHERE ART THOU? AND HE SAID, I HEARD THY VOICE IN THE GARDEN, AND I WAS AFRAID, BECAUSE I WAS NAKED; AND I HID MYSELF. AND HE SAID, WHO TOLD THEE THAT THOU WAS NAKED? HAST THOU EATEN OF THE TREE, WHEREOF I COMMANDED THEE THAT THOU SHOULDEST NOT EAT? AND THE MAN SAID, THE WOMAN WHOM THOU GAVEST TO BE WITH ME, SHE GAVE ME OF THE TREE, AND I DID EAT, AND THE LORD GOD SAID UNTO THE SERPENT, BECAUSE THOU HAST DONE THIS, THOU ART CURSED ABOVE ALL CATTLE, AND ABOVE EVERY BEAST OF THE FIELD; UPON THY BELLY SHALT THOU GO, AND DUST SHALT THOU EAT ALL THE DAYS OF THY LIFE; AND I WILL PUT ENMITY BETWEEN THEE AND THE WOMAN, AND BETWEEN THY SEED AND HER SEED; IT SHALL BRUISE THY HEAD, AND THOU SHALT BRUISE HIS HEEL. UNTO THE WOMAN HE SAID, I WILL GREATLY MULTIPLY THY SORROW, AND THY CONCEPTION; IN SORROW THOU SHALT BRING FORTH CHILDREN; AND THY DESIRE SHALL BE TO THY HUSBAND, AND HE SHALL RULE OVER THEE. AND UNTO ADAM HE SAID, BECAUSE THOU HAST HEARKENED UNTO THE VOICE OF THY WIFE, AND HAS EATEN OF THE TREE OF WHICH I COMMANDED THEE, SAYING, THOU SHALT NOT EAT OF IT; CURSED IS THE GROUND FOR THY SAKE; IN SORROW SHALT THOU EAT OF IT ALL THE DAYS OF THY LIFE; THORNS ALSO AND THISTLES SHALL IT BRING FORTH TO THEE; AND THOU SHALT EAT OF THE HERB OF THE FIELD; IN THE SWEAT OF THY FACE SHALT THOU EAT BREAD, TILL THOU RETURN UNTO THE GROUND; FOR OUT OF IT WAS THOU TAKEN; FOR DUST THOU ART, AND UNTO DUST SHALT THOU RETURN. AND ADAM CALLED HIS WIFE'S NAME EVE; BECAUSE SHE WAS THE MOTHER OF ALL LIVING. UNTO ADAM ALSO, AND TO HIS WIFE, DID THE LORD GOD MAKE COATS OF SKINS, AND CLOTHED THEM. AND THE LORD GOD SAID, BEHOLD, THE MAN IS BECOME AS ONE OF US, TO KNOW GOOD AND EVIL; AND NOW, LEST HE PUT FORTH HIS HAND, AND TAKE ALSO OF THE TREE OF LIFE, AND EAT, AND LIVE FOR EVER; THEREFORE THE LORD GOD SENT HIM FORTH FROM THE GARDEN OF EDEN TO TILL THE GROUND FROM WHENCE HE WAS TAKEN, SO HE DROVE OUT THE MAN; AND HE PLACED AT THE EAST OF THE GARDEN OF EDEN, CHERUBIMS, AND A FLAMING SWORD WHICH TURNED EVERY WAY, TO KEEP THE WAY OF THE TREE OF LIFE."

WE SAID A MOMENT AGO WHEN THE APOSTLE PAUL LOOKED BACK TO THIS OCCASION WHEN WRITING ROMANS 5 HE SIMPLY DESCRIBED IT WHEN HE SAID THAT "SIN ENTERED INTO THE WORLD." THERE ARE A NUMBER OF THINGS WHICH THAT VERY PLAIN AND SIMPLE STATEMENT TELLS US. LET US REMEMBER WHAT WE LEARNED IN OUR OPENING LESSON IN THIS SERIES WHEN WE ASKED THE QUESTION, "WHAT IS SIN?" THE ANSWER CAME FROM THE WRITINGS OF JOHN, "SIN IS TRANSGRESSION OF THE LAW." THEREFORE, IF IN THIS ACCOUNT WE DISCOVER THAT SIN ENTERED INTO THE WORLD THEN WE KNOW THAT THERE MUST HAVE ALSO BEEN SOME OTHER THINGS PRESENT.

IF SIN ENTERED INTO THE WORLD, THERE MUST OF NECESSITY HAVE BEEN A LAW. PAUL STATES AS MUCH IN ROMANS 5:13 WHEN HE WROTE, "FOR UNTIL THE LAW SIN WAS IN THE WORLD: BUT SIN IS NOT IMPUTED WHEN THERE IS NO LAW." LET US, THEN, LOOK BACK TO THE OPENING CHAPTERS OF GENESIS TO DISCOVER THE LAW THAT GOD HAD GIVEN AND WHICH WAS VIOLATED BY ADAM AND EVE IN THE GARDEN. WE FIND THAT LAW IN GENESIS 2:17 WHERE GOD STATED, "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."

BUT NOT ONLY MUST THERE HAVE BEEN A LAW FOR THERE TO HAVE BEEN SIN, BUT FOR THE LAW TO HAVE ANY MEANING, THERE MUST ALSO HAVE BEEN A PENALTY. YOU SEE, LAW DOESN'T CARRY MUCH WEIGHT IF THERE IS NO PENALTY STATED IN CONNECTION WITH THAT LAW. WHAT WAS THE PENALTY? IT WAS STATED IN THIS LANGUAGE IN THE SAME 17TH VERSE, "FOR IN THE DAY THAT THOU EATEST THEREOF THOU SHALT SURELY DIE." THERE HAS BEEN SOME QUESTION AS TO WHAT THE PENALTY WAS, FOR YOU SEE THERE ARE TWO KINDS OF DEATH. THERE IS SPIRITUAL DEATH AND THERE IS PHYSICAL DEATH. NOW WHICH OF THESE TWO DEATHS WAS THE PENALTY WHICH WAS INFLICTED FOR THE DISOBEDIENCE OF MAN? SOME HAVE SAID IT WAS PHYSICAL DEATH AND THAT WHAT GOD WAS SAYING IN ESSENCE WAS THAT IN THE DAY THOU EATEST THEREOF, THOU SHALT BEGIN TO DIE. AND THEY SUGGEST THAT FROM THAT DAY FORWARD, MAN DID BEGIN TO DIE PHYSICALLY, AND THAT IS PERFECTLY TRUE. BUT YOU SEE, THOUGH MAN DID BEGIN IN THAT DAY TO DIE PHYSICALLY, GOD DID NOT SAY AND NO AMOUNT OF READING IN THE LINES OR BETWEEN THE LINES CAN MAKE GOD SAY THAT "IN THE DAY THOU EATEST THEREOF, THOU SHALT BEGIN TO DIE." GOD SAID, "IN THAT DAY THOU SHALT SURELY DIE." HE STATED THE DEATH AND HE STATED THE TIME. IT WAS IN THE DAY. THE ONLY DEATH THAT MAN DIED THAT DAY WAS SPIRITUAL DEATH. WE NEED TO UNDERSTAND THAT THE TERM DEATH SIMPLY MEANS SEPARATION AND THAT IT WAS IN THAT DAY THAT MAN WAS SEPARATED FROM GOD. HE HAD LIVED A SPECIAL KIND OF LIFE. HE HAD LIVED IN A SPECIAL KIND OF WORLD. HE HAD LIVED IN A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD, AND IN THE DAY THAT HE ATE OF THAT FORBIDDEN FRUIT THAT RELATIONSHIP WAS BROKEN, THAT WORLD WAS DESTROYED, AND IN THAT MOMENT THAT LIFE WAS ENDED--HE DID SURELY DIE.

BUT NOW THE FACT THAT THERE WAS A LAW AND THE FACT THAT THERE WAS A PENALTY TELLS US SEVERAL THINGS THAT WE NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GOD AND MAN. ONE OF THE THINGS THAT THIS TELLS US IS THAT GOD DOES HAVE THE RIGHT TO COMMAND MAN. GOD HAS THE SOVEREIGN RIGHT. GOD HAS THAT SOVEREIGN RIGHT BECAUSE GOD IS THE CREATOR AND MAN IS THE CREATED. IT TELLS US LIKEWISE THAT MAN IS OBLIGATED TO OBEY BECAUSE MAN IS THE CREATED AND GOD IS THE CREATOR. IT SAYS THAT MAN IS SUBJECT TO THE LAW OF GOD. THAT MAN IS SUBJECT TO THE LAW OF GOD CAN BE SEEN FROM THE FACT THAT THE PENALTY WAS INFLICTED FOR DISOBEDIENCE OF THE LAW OF GOD. I AM NOT PENALIZED, I AM NOT PUNISHED FOR VIOLATING LAWS TO WHICH I AM NOT SUBJECT. FOR INSTANCE, AS LONG AS I AM AN AMERICAN CITIZEN AND IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, I AM NOT SUBJECT TO THE LAWS OF THE COUNTRY OF ENGLAND. I AM NOT VERY FAMILIAR WITH THEIR LAW, I DON'T KNOW WHAT LAWS THEY MAY HAVE, BUT I MAY HAVE DONE SOMETHING WHICH WOULD BE IN VIOLATION OF THE LAW IN ENGLAND. BUT BECAUSE I DID IT IN TEXAS, THE ENGLISH CONSTABLE IS NOT GOING TO COME OVER HERE AND SAY, "WELL, I'M SORRY BUT YOU VIOLATED MY LAW. YOU ARE GOING TO HAVE TO GO TO JAIL OVER HERE IN LONDON." WHY? BECAUSE I AM NOT SUBJECT TO HIS LAW AND HE CAN'T PENALIZE ME FOR IT. SO WHEN GOD PENALIZED MAN FOR DISOBEDIENCE, IT SAID THAT MAN WAS SUBJECT TO THE LAW OF GOD AND WHEN WE

PUT THESE TWO THINGS TOGETHER IT SAYS THAT MAN IS RESPONSIBLE TO GOD AND THAT MAN WILL BE CALLED INTO ACCOUNT BEFORE GOD. INDEED IN THIS VERY SETTING, WE FIND THE VERY FIRST TIME WHEN MAN WAS CALLED INTO ACCOUNT BEFORE GOD—WHEN GOD SAID TO ADAM, "WHAT IS THIS THOU HAST DONE?"

SIN ENTERED INTO THE WORLD. NOW THAT WORD "ENTERED" IS A VERY IMPORTANT WORD FOR THAT STATEMENT. "SIN ENTERED INTO THE WORLD," SAYS THAT SIN WAS NOT HERE BEFORE. IT TELLS US SOMETHING ABOUT THE NATURE OF SIN AND IT TELLS US SOMETHING ABOUT THE ORIGIN OF SIN. SIN WAS NOT IN THE WORLD UNTIL IT ENTERED INTO THE WORLD, TILL IT CAME INTO THE WORLD LIKE A FOE WOULD COME INTO A CITY TO OVERTAKE IT, UNTIL IT CAME INTO THE WORLD LIKE A WOLF MIGHT COME INTO A FOLD TO DESTROY IT, UNTIL IT CAME INTO THE WORLD LIKE A PLAGUE WOULD COME INTO A HOUSE TO CONQUER IT.

BUT HOW DID IT COME? HOW DID SIN COME? THERE ARE THOSE WHO WOULD SAY THAT SIN CAME FROM GOD, THAT GOD IS JUST ONE OF MANY GODS AND HE DIDN'T HAVE THE POWER TO CREATE A WORLD WHERE EVIL WAS NOT PRESENT. THERE ARE THOSE WHO WOULD SAY THAT GOD IS EVER ENGAGED IN A STRUGGLE AND THAT HE WAS OVERCOME IN THE STRUGGLE AND EVIL CAME INTO THE WORLD. BUT THAT IS NOT WHAT THE WORD SAYS. THE WORD SAYS THAT THE ACT OF SIN, THE PRESENCE OF SIN, THE REALITY OF EVIL DID NOT COME INTO THE WORLD AS A RESULT OF GOD'S CREATION. IT SAYS THAT SIN IS NOT IN US BECAUSE OF THE NATURE THAT GOD GAVE TO US, THEREFORE MAKING GOD ULTIMATELY RESPONSIBLE, BUT IT SAYS THAT SIN ENTERED INTO THE WORLD "BY MAN," MAN WAS THE AGENT, MAN WAS THE CAUSE. MAN COMMITTED THE SIN AND BROUGHT SIN INTO THE REALM OF HIS EXISTENCE, MAN WAS ABLE TO STAND. THERE IS NO QUESTION OF THAT. BUT AS MAN WAS ABLE TO STAND HE WAS ALSO ABLE TO FALL AND GOD ALLOWED HIM TO FALL WHEN MAN MADE THAT CHOICE.

BUT THEN SOME ASK, "WHY DID GOD ALLOW HIM TO FALL?" "WHY DIDN'T GOD PREVENT IT?" SURELY GOD COULD LOOK DOWN THROUGH THE AGES AND SEE ALL OF THE SUFFERING AND ALL OF THE ANGUISH AND ALL OF THE AGONIES THAT EVIL, BOTH MORAL AND PHYSICAL, WOULD INFLICT UPON HIS CREATION. WHY DIDN'T GOD INTERVENE AND STOP IT? I AM CERTAIN THAT I MUST NOT EVEN PRETEND TO LOOK INTO THE MIND OF GOD TO KNOW WHY HE DOES OR DOES NOT DO A THING. I THINK WE COULD SPEND A GREAT DEAL OF TIME IN SPECULATING AS TO THE REASONS THAT MUST HAVE GONE THROUGH THE MIND OF GOD, BUT STILL WE WOULD BE NO NEARER TRUTH THAN WE WERE BEFORE. BUT THIS MUCH WE DO KNOW BECAUSE GOD HAS TOLD US—THAT GOD HAS CREATED MAN AS A FREE MORAL AGENT, THAT GOD HAS GIVEN MAN THE CAPACITY TO THINK, THAT GOD HAS BLESSED MAN WITH THE ABILITY TO REASON, AND HE SETS BEFORE MAN THE RIGHT AND THE WRONG AND REQUIRES HIM TO CHOOSE. IT IS TRUE THAT GOD WANTS MAN TO GLORIFY HIM. IT IS TRUE THAT GOD WANTS MAN TO BOW IN HIS PRESENCE. BUT YOU SEE BEFORE MAN BOWING IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD CAN MEAN ANYTHING. BEFORE MAN'S BOWING IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD CAN EVEN GLORIFY GOD, THAT MAN MUST ALSO HAVE THE CAPACITY TO REBEL. I HAVE NOT BEEN GLORIFIED WHEN AS A CREATURE OF SUPERIOR STRENGTH I TAKE MY FIVE YEAR OLD SON AND BEND HIS ARM AND FORCE HIM TO BOW IN MY PRESENCE. BUT WHEN MY SON THROUGH TRAINING AND UPBRINGING MAKES THE CHOICE TO BE OBEDIENT TO HIS FATHER, THEN I AM GLORIFIED AND THERE WOULD BE NO GLORY TO GOD IF GOD WITH HIS OMNIPOTENCE CAME DOWN UPON MAN AND WITH HIS SUPERIOR CAPACITY LITERALLY FORCED MAN AGAINST HIS WILL TO BOW IN HIS PRESENCE. GOD WOULD NOT BE GLORIFIED. BUT WHEN GOD SETS BEFORE MAN RIGHT AND WRONG, WHEN GOD SETS BEFORE MAN, IN THE LANGUAGE OF MOSES OF THE LONG AGO, A BLESSING AND A CURSE AND SAYS, "CHOOSE YE," AND WHEN MAN CHOOSES THAT PATH THAT IS RIGHT, THEN GOD IS GLORIFIED, FOR MAN HAS CHOSEN GOD AS A FREE MORAL AGENT AND MAN HAS CHOSEN GOD BECAUSE HE SEES THAT THIS IS THE PATH OF RECTITUDE, THIS IS THE PATH OF RIGHT, AND THIS IS THE PATH OF BLESSING.

SIN ENTERED INTO THE WORLD. HOW DID SIN COME? OH, SO VERY SIMPLE. HERE AGAIN VERSES SIX AND SEVEN OF GENESIS CHAPTER 3. "AND WHEN THE WOMAN SAW THAT THE TREE WAS GOOD FOR FOOD, AND THAT IT WAS PLEASANT TO THE EYES, AND A TREE TO BE DESIRED TO MAKE

ONE WISE, SHE TOOK OF THE FRUIT THEREOF, AND DID EAT, AND GAVE ALSO UNTO HER HUSBAND WITH HER; AND HE DID EAT. AND THE EYES OF THEM BOTH WERE OPENED, AND THEY KNEW THAT THEY WERE NAKED; AND THEY SEWED FIG LEAVES TOGETHER, AND MADE THEMSELVES APRONS." THERE IN JUST A FEW WORDS IT IS ALL DESCRIBED. THE WOMAN LOOKED, SHE DESIRED, AND SHE PARTOOK. SHE TOOK UNTO HER HUSBAND AND HE DID EAT. A VERY SIMPLE THING, BUT YET A VERY TRAGIC ONE. IT WAS A DEED WHICH COULD BE PERFORMED IN JUST A MOMENT, BUT YET ONE THAT WAS ETERNAL IN ITS CONSEQUENCES. AND YOU AND I STAND THIS SIDE OF THAT EVENT AND WE HAVE NO KIND WORDS FOR THE PARTICIPANTS. WE LOOK AT OURSELVES, WE LOOK AT OUR WORLD, AND WE SEE THE KIND OF WORLD OF WHICH WE ARE A PART AND WE BEGIN TO THINK, "WELL, IF IT HADN'T BEEN FOR ADAM AND EVE, THIS WOULD NEVER HAVE HAPPENED." BUT IF IT HADN'T BEEN FOR THEM, I IMAGINE SOMEONE ELSE WOULD HAVE DONE IT AND IF IT HADN'T BEEN DONE BEFORE I WAS BORN I WOULD PROBABLY HAVE DONE IT. SOMEONE WOULD HAVE, BECAUSE YOU SEE WE HAVE ALL SINNED IN THIS WAY SO VERY MANY TIMES. WE HAVE ALL STOOD BEFORE THAT BEAUTIFUL GATE WHICH OPENS ON TO RUINS. WE HAVE ALL SEEN THE BEAUTIFUL GATE THAT IS WELL SHAPED, WELL PAINTED, AND WITH THE WELCOME SIGN ILLUMINATED AND WE THINK THAT THERE COULD BE NOTHING BUT PLEASANT EXPERIENCES TO BE HAD BEHIND IT AND WE HAVE WALKED THROUGH TO OUR DETRIMENT. WE CONDEMN ADAM AND EVE FOR HAVING EATEN OF THE TREE, BUT WE HAVE ALL EATEN OF THAT TREE AT ONE TIME OR ANOTHER. WE LISTEN TO IT AND IT IS PLEASANT TO THE EAR, WE LOOK AT IT AND IT IS PLEASANT TO THE EYE, AND SO WE TAKE IT. IT IS ALONG THESE LINES THAT THE TEMPTATIONS OF MAN ARE TO BE FOUND. WHICH OF US IS THERE WHO HAS EVER DONE ANYTHING BECAUSE IT LOOKED HARD AND UN-INVITING AND UNPLEASANT. OUR TEMPTATIONS JUST DON'T LIE ALONG THAT LINE. BUT WHEN SOMETHING CAN BE PLACED BEFORE US THAT APPEARS TO BE PLEASANT, WE WILL GO AFTER IT WITH AN ALMOST SUICIDAL FRENZY. SHOW A MAN THAT SOMETHING IS PLEASANT AND YOU CAN LEAD HIM AS A LAMB INTO THE SLAUGHTER AND THAT IS JUST EXACTLY WHAT SATAN DID WITH ADAM AND EVE OF LONG AGO. AND SATAN HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL WITH EVERYONE WHO HAS EVER WALKED UPON THIS EARTH SAVE ONE AND THAT WAS CHRIST--GOD CLOTHED IN HUMAN FLESH.

WHAT WAS THE RESULT? WHAT WAS THE RESULT OF THIS ACT WHICH WAS COMMITTED? THE FIRST THING THAT SCRIPTURE TELLS US IS THAT THEIR EYES WERE OPENED, AND THAT IS A SIGNIFICANT STATEMENT FOR YOU SEE THEIR EYES HAD JUST BEEN CLOSED. TEMPTATION BLINDS US, YOU SEE, BUT GUILT OPENS OUR EYES. IT WAS BECAUSE THEY WERE BLINDED TO THE REALITY OF THE TRUTHFULNESS OF GOD THAT THEY COMMITTED THE DEED THEY DID, BUT HAVING COMMITTED THAT DEED THEIR EYES WERE OPENED AND THIS IS THE WAY WE ALWAYS ARE. GUILT OPENS OUR EYES AND WE SEE THAT WE HAVE BEEN DECEIVED BY THE TEMPTATION. IN GUILT WE SEE OURSELVES AS WE HAVEN'T SEEN OURSELVES BEFORE. IN GUILT WE SEE OUR HIDEOUSNESS, IN GUILT WE SEE OUR EASENESS. THEY CLOSED THEIR EYES IN TEMPTATION, THEY OPENED THEIR EYES IN SIN. THEY CLOSED THEIR EYES IN INNOCENCE AND THEY OPENED THEIR EYES AND THEIR CHARACTER WAS GONE.

THE SECOND THING THAT HAPPENED AS A RESULT OF THEIR SIN IS THAT THEY WERE AFRAID. THEY HID THEMSELVES. HOW OFTEN HAD THEY WALKED WITH GOD? HOW OFTEN HAD THEY BEEN WITH HIM IN THE COOL OF THE EVENING? YET ON THIS PARTICULAR DAY WHEN THEY HEARD GOD, THEY WENT AND HID THEMSELVES FROM HIS PRESENCE. AND JUST HERE YOU AND I NEED TO LEARN ONE MOST IMPORTANT LESSON IF WE LEARN NO OTHER, AND THAT IS THE FACT THAT SIN IS THE ONLY SEPARATING POWER FROM GOD. THERE WAS NOTHING THAT COULD SEPARATE ADAM AND EVE FROM GOD UNTIL SIN ENTERED INTO THE WORLD AND WHEN IT CAME THEY WERE SEPARATED FROM GOD. THEY WERE AFRAID AND THEY HID THEMSELVES. HOW REALLY INCONGRUOUS IT WAS THAT THEY SHOULD HIDE THEMSELVES FROM HIM WHO MADE THE BEAUTIFUL GARDEN, THAT THEY SHOULD HIDE THEMSELVES FROM HIM WHO HAD MADE THE WONDERFUL RIVERS. HOW UNNATURAL THAT THEY SHOULD HIDE FROM HIM WHO HAD GIVEN THEM THE BEAUTY OF THE MOON AND THE STARS. BUT INSTEAD OF RUNNING TO HIM IN AGONY AND PAIN AND ANGUISH OF SOUL, THEY HID THEMSELVES AND SHRANK FROM HIS PRESENCE IN FEAR AND SHAME. BUT THEY COULD NOT HIDE FROM GOD AND GOD

CAME UNTO THEM, UNTO THE THREE--THE SERPENT, THE WOMAN, AND THE MAN--AND PRONOUNCED SENTENCE UPON THEM IN THIS LANGUAGE. "AND THE LORD GOD SAID UNTO THE SERPENT, BECAUSE THOU HAST DONE THIS, THOU ART CURSED ABOVE ALL CATTLE, AND ABOVE EVERY BEAST OF THE FIELD; UPON THY BELLY SHALT THOU GO, AND DUST SHALT THOU EAT ALL THE DAYS OF THY LIFE; AND I WILL PUT ENMITY BETWEEN THEE AND THE WOMAN, AND BETWEEN THY SEED AND HER SEED; IT SHALL BRUISE THY HEAD, AND THOU SHALT BRUISE HIS HEEL." OF COURSE, THE SERPENT HERE WAS STILL REPRESENTATIVE OF SATAN AND IT WAS SATAN WHO WAS BRUISED BY THE SEED OF WOMAN. "UNTO THE WOMAN HE SAID, I WILL GREATLY MULTIPLY THY SORROW, AND THY CONCEPTION; IN SORROW THOU SHALT BRING FORTH CHILDREN; AND THY DESIRE SHALL BE TO THY HUSBAND, AND HE SHALL RULE OVER THEE. AND UNTO ADAM HE SAID, BECAUSE THOU HAST HEARKENED UNTO THE VOICE OF THY WIFE, AND HAST EATEN OF THE TREE OF WHICH I COMMANDED THEE, SAYING, THOU SHALT NOT EAT OF IT; CURSED IS THE GROUND FOR THY SAKE; IN SORROW SHALT THOU EAT OF IT ALL THE DAYS OF THY LIFE; THORNS ALSO AND THISTLES SHALL IT BRING FORTH TO THEE; AND THOU SHALT EAT THE HERB OF THE FIELD; IN THE SWEAT OF THY FACE SHALT THOU EAT BREAD, TILL THOU RETURN UNTO THE GROUND; FOR OUT OF IT WAST THOU TAKEN: FOR DUST THOU ART, AND UNTO DUST SHALT THOU RETURN." YOU AND I NEED NO ENLARGED COMMENTARY UPON THESE VERSES FOR OUR DAILY EXISTENCE AND OUR DAILY PERPLEXITIES ARE ENOUGH TO CONVINCE US THAT THEY ARE TRUE. BUT THEN GOD LOOKED DOWN AND SAID, "BEHOLD, THE MAN IS BECOME AS ONE OF US, TO KNOW GOOD AND EVIL; AND NOW, LEST HE PUT FORTH HIS HAND, AND TAKE ALSO OF THE TREE OF LIFE, AND EAT, AND LIVE FOR EVER; THEREFORE THE LORD GOD SENT HIM FORTH FROM THE GARDEN OF EDEN TO TILL THE GROUND FROM WHENCE HE WAS TAKEN. SO HE DROVE OUT THE MAN; AND HE PLACED AT THE EAST OF THE GARDEN OF EDEN, CHERUBIMS, AND A FLAMING SWORD WHICH TURNED EVERY WAY, TO KEEP THE WAY OF THE TREE OF LIFE." MAN DIED. MAN WAS SEPARATED FROM HIS MAKER, AND NOTICE HOW IN THIS CONTEXT AND IN THESE EXPERIENCES THAT THE WORD "DIED" IS PLAYED UPON. IT IS USED BY THE SERPENT IN THE SENSE OF SIMPLY DROPPING DEAD PHYSICALLY. IT IS USED BY THE SERPENT IN THE SENSE OF VIOLENTLY DEPARTING OUT OF THIS WORLD, WHEREAS THE REAL MEANING AS GOD USED IT, WHEREAS THE REAL MEANING, AS WE ALL KNOW BY BITTER EXPERIENCES IS FAR DEEPER THAN THAT. IT REFERRED NOT TO A PHYSICAL DEATH BUT TO A SPIRITUAL DEATH.

OUR EXPERIENCE TELLS US THIS IS TRUE FOR WE KNOW THAT WE WILL LOSE OUR LIFE WHEN WE LOSE OUR INNOCENCE. WE KNOW THAT WE ARE DEAD WHEN WE ARE GUILTY. WE KNOW THAT WE ARE IN HELL WHEN WE ARE IN SHAME. WE KNOW THAT DEATH DOES NOT TAKE VERY LONG TO COME UPON US, THAT IT COMES IN THE DAY, THE VERY DAY, THAT WE SIN AGAINST GOD. AND WE SAY, WHY? THE ONLY REASON THAT WE CAN ASK THE QUESTION "WHY?" IS BECAUSE WE DO NOT UNDERSTAND THE NATURE OF THAT SIN. THE ONLY REASON WE CAN ASK "WHY?" IS BECAUSE WE WE DON'T UNDERSTAND THAT SIN IS REBELLION AGAINST GOD, THAT ALL SIN IS THE CASTING DOWN OF GOD AND THE SETTING UP OF MAN AS HIS OWN SAVIOR.

THERE WERE A NUMBER OF THINGS INVOLVED IN THIS SIN. THERE WAS UNBELIEF. THEY DID NOT BELIEVE THAT GOD HAD THE RIGHT TO COMMAND. THEY DID NOT BELIEVE THAT THE PENALTY GOD HAD PROMISED WOULD COME, OR THAT IT EVEN EXISTED. THEY COMMITTED THE SIN OF INORDINATE AMBITION FOR THEY WISHED TO BE AS GODS. THEY COMMITTED THE SIN OF SEXUALITY BECAUSE THEY WANTED TO GRATIFY THE APPETITES OF THE FLESH. THEY COMMITTED THE SIN OF INGRATITUDE, BEING UNGRATEFUL TO GOD WHO HAD CREATED THEIR WORLD AND WHO HAD PLACED THEM IN THE SPLENDOR THEREOF. THEY COULD THINK ONLY OF THEMSELVES AND COULD THINK NO LONGER OF GOD. HOW OFTEN HAVE WE STOOD BACK AND SAID, "WELL, WE ARE NOT GUILTY OF THAT SIN THAT THEY COMMITTED." BUT WHEN YOU THINK OF THAT SIN AS WE BREAK IT DOWN INTO THE KIND OF SIN IT WAS, AS UNBELIEF, AS INORDINATE AMBITIONS, AS SENSUALITY, AS INGRATITUDE, THEN WHICH OF US IS THERE WHO IS NOT GUILTY? AND WHICH OF US IS THERE WHO

HAD BETTER NOT FLEE TO THE SAVIOR FOR REFUGE WHEN WE HEAR THE RINGING WORDS OF GOD THROUGH PAUL "THAT SIN ENTERED INTO THE WORLD AND DEATH (SPIRITUAL DEATH) BY SIN CAME UPON ALL MEN FOR THAT ALL HAVE SINNED?"

YOU NEED A SAVIOR. YOU NEED HIM NOW BECAUSE EVEN AT THIS MOMENT YOU ARE A SINNER AND YOU ARE IN SIN. SURELY WHEN YOU HEAR THAT WORD "DEATH," KNOWING THAT WHICH AWAITS THOSE WHO DO NOT LIVE IN JESUS CHRIST, YOU WILL HESITATE NO LONGER, YOU WILL LINGER IN SIN NO MORE, BUT YOU WILL COME EVEN NOW WHILE WE STAND AND WHILE WE SING.