

# Truth and Spirit Ministries

## ***Jesus, Hope for Humanity***

*By Denise Bostic*

Did you ever ask yourself, why do we exist? Our origin and purpose has been revealed to us by our Creator through the Holy Bible. The story of the creation of humanity has been recorded for us in its first book so aptly named Genesis. Before God created the first man and woman we learn that the earth was in existence but it was an uninhabitable planet. It was without form and void, which means that it was an empty, desolate or waste place. (Genesis 1:1-2) [*Hebrew, form 8414; void 922; Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*]

As Creator of the Universe the Lord God moved upon this earth by his Spirit in order to bring his light and life to it. He created the night and day and made a visible firmament or sky in which to separate heaven and earth. He added oxygen so that the life he was about to create could not only survive but also continue to thrive. Next he separated the water in order to form dry land, created the grass of the field, herbs and all kinds of fruit trees to which he had given the capability of self-bearing seed. After that he created the fish in the sea, the birds of the air and abundant livestock. (Genesis 1) As amazing and wonderful as all of this creation was however, God saved his greatest and most crowning achievement for last. It is written in Genesis 1:26-27:

**Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.**

After creating mankind, the Lord then pronounced his divine blessing over them. In Genesis 1:28 we read:

**God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground."**

God didn't just create us to rule in the earth and to multiply in numbers though. The greatest reason why he put us on this earth was so that we could become his very own children, be a part of his own royal family and have a close personal relationship with him for all eternity. Since the Lord God created us and he is omniscient, he already knows everything about us but his most passionate longing and hearts desire *is for us to know him*. He has conveyed this message to us clearly through the pages of the Bible beginning with the first man and woman.

The book of Genesis teaches us that God had a personal relationship with Adam and Eve. He walked and talked with both of them in the paradise that he had created for them called the Garden of Eden. He taught them his ways and withheld nothing good from them. Although he taught his newly formed children his ways we also ascertain from scripture that he had given mankind the power of *choice*. There were many trees within their garden home and God gave them permission to eat the fruit from all of them with the exception of one. (Genesis 2:15-17)

Among the many trees present, there were two trees in particular that God specifically spoke to them about. One was called the tree of life and of course they were allowed to eat freely from this tree all that they wanted. The other tree was called the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and God commanded them not to eat of this tree and for good reason. He told them that the day that they ate of it that they would surely die. Man's death would not be like the animals however. God had given man something special that he had not given animals. He gave them a part of himself. When he formed man out of the dust of the ground he also breathed into his nostrils and man became a living *soul*. (Genesis 2:7) In time both Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit and this caused eternal death to begin to work in them. Not only would it impact their physical bodies in a devastating way but their souls as well. This teaches us that there is more behind the meaning of these two trees than meets the eye.

### **The Symbolism of the Two Trees**

The Bible is a divine book that contains much symbolism which pertains to the spiritual realm. Therefore only those who have the Spirit of God and are spiritually minded will be able to understand it. Those who interpret it with a carnal mind however will be unable to perceive, understand or receive the spiritual truths behind the symbolic mysteries. (1 Cor. 2:9-14) The story about the two trees in the Garden of Eden and the fruit that they bore has often been interpreted in literal terms by those who do not understand the spiritual meaning behind them.

Today when many think of Adam and Eve eating the fruit in the Garden of Eden, they think in terms of them eating a natural fruit (such as an apple) from a natural tree. However, these two trees and the fruit that they bore were not natural but spiritual. They are symbolic of two different spiritual beings that rule over two different spiritual kingdoms and bear two entirely different types of fruit. These trees are still in existence today in the *unseen realm*. We are eating from either one or the other whether we are aware of it or not. The tree that we eat from determines the kingdom that we are in. The good news is that if you are eating from the tree of life you are blessed because you already have eternal salvation. If you are eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you can still cross over from darkness to light.

One kingdom is a kingdom of *light* and the other a kingdom of *darkness*. The ruler or King of the first is the Lord Jesus Christ and the ruler of the latter is Satan. The tree of life represents the life of the Lord and the fruit of his Spirit while the tree of the knowledge of good and evil represents Satan and his fruit of evil. The Lord's tree represents everything that he is. He is light, life and everything that's good, holy and righteous. He imparts eternal life to all those who receive him, he becomes our Holy Father and we take on his character and nature and as a result bear godly fruit. In contrast, Satan's tree represents everything he is. He is darkness, death and everything that's evil, unholy and unrighteous. He leads others into eternal death, he is the father of all who do evil and he causes those who follow him to bear ungodly or bad fruit. (Matthew 7:18-20)

The Lord God has eternally existed and so has his Kingdom. He has no beginning of days and no end. As our Creator and eternal King over his universal Kingdom, he is worthy of our worship. The devil, on the other hand, was originally created by God as a holy angel. At his creation God had given him the name Lucifer which meant "bringer of light". Although God had only given Lucifer the knowledge of good when he was created, over time, pride entered his heart and instead of worshipping God as the Most High, he wanted to *be* the Most High. When he chose to rebel against God and his Kingdom, he also influenced a third of the angels to do the same. This act however got him expelled from the kingdom of heaven and plunged into outer darkness. (Isaiah 14:12-15; Revelation 12:3-4, 7-9)

This is how the kingdom of darkness came into being. After his expulsion from heaven Lucifer's name was changed to Satan. His name in the Greek is Apollyon which means "destroyer". Instead of bringing light he became the "prince of darkness" over that kingdom. Because of what happened, he is now full of hatred, bitterness and jealousy and seeks to take revenge on God and all of those that he has created in his image. He now spitefully blinds the minds of those within his kingdom so they will not see the glorious light of the Gospel of Christ and his Kingdom. (II Corinthians 4:1-4)

## **The Fall of Man**

When the first man and woman were created by the Lord God, they were citizens of his kingdom of light. After the serpent (Satan) tempted and deceived Eve and she and Adam chose to eat from the fruit of his evil tree though, they crossed over from the kingdom of light to the kingdom of darkness. That's where the "fall" of man began. Due to Adam and Eve's choice, they fell and as a result, so did all their descendents that made up the entire human race. From that point on all the children of Adam and Eve had continued in sin. (Romans 3:23)

What exactly did man fall from though? All mankind fell from their God-given destinies of being sons of God. We fell from receiving truth and guidance from God. We fell from having the nature and character of God and instead acquired a sinful nature that could be easily influenced by the devil. We also fell from being able to have a personal relationship with a righteous God and could no longer even come into his presence due to sin. Man fell from ruling in the love, submission and righteousness that God intended and instead began to rule in hate, dominance and evil over one another. Thankfully, God has provided a way to help humanity in spite of our great fall. Just as he has told us in his Holy Bible of our creation and demise, he also brings us a message of hope and redemption. In his word we learn of his how he has reversed the devastating effect of that fall and his plan of salvation that delivers us from the sentence of eternal death.

## **God's Hope for Humanity**

Due to fall of our first parents, the rest of mankind lost the way to the eternal life. Most, if not all of us, have been lost on a road trip at one or more times in our life. If you were wise though you eventually stopped and asked somebody for directions so that you could go on to reach your intended destination. The person you asked directions from most likely pulled out a map or personally gave you directions *to show you the way*. God knows of our lost condition and has shown us the way back to eternal life. He has given us a map to help us chart our course called the Holy Bible and within its pages we are told the way to eternal life.

God didn't just send us a message in writing however. He also sent his only Son into the world to personally show us the way to eternal life. God's message through his Son is this, "**For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16)** God doesn't want us to perish through eternal death. This is why he sent his Son into the world to pay the price for our sins and ransom our souls from Satan's kingdom of darkness and bring us back into his Kingdom of light. He did this by substituting his perfect and sinless life for yours and mine by dying on a Cross nearly two thousand years ago.

Jesus became the second Adam in order to restore all those things that we lost due to the fall. (Romans 5:12-19) He came to restore all things back to the way that God had originally created them to be before the fall of the first Adam in the Garden of Eden. To those that receive his Son he has given them the right to be sons of God. (John 1:12-13) According to the Bible this work of restoration began when Jesus came into the earth the first time and will continue until he returns. (Acts 3:19-21) That restoration begins in our lives when we receive Jesus Christ as our Lord and

Savior. The Lord's servant the Apostle Paul declared this good news in the Holy Scriptures. He wrote,

**As God's co-workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain. For he says, "In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you." I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation. (II Corinthians 6:1-2)**

Jesus is the only hope for all humanity. All who want to be reconciled to their Creator and receive eternal salvation must come through him. This is the way that God has made for us. Jesus said, **"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. (John 14:6)** The scriptures also boldly declare, **"Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved."** (Acts 4:12) When we receive the Lord, we are also partaking of the tree of life. When this happens a divine reversal takes place from what happened in the Garden of Eden. We cross over from death to life and are translated out of Satan's kingdom of darkness and into God's kingdom of light. (John 5:24; Acts 26:17-18)

Which tree are you eating from? Are you eating good fruit or bad fruit? Are you headed toward eternal life or eternal death? If you still haven't chosen a way please know that Satan's kingdom will fall but God's kingdom will never fall. (Revelation 20:7-10; Hebrews 12:28) It is God's will and deepest, heartfelt desire that we each choose to eat from his tree of eternal life. If you haven't done so yet, this Christmas season won't you receive God's free gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ? He is our everlasting hope and the way back to the heavenly Father. He is the door to the Kingdom of God. He is the way to eternal life. (John 10:9)