

THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST*

Jesus Christ, the one and only begotten Son of God, was born of a virgin into the lineage of King David of Israel. He was crucified, died and was buried, He descended into hell and was resurrected from the dead on the third day by the power of God. He ascended into heaven and is now seated at the right hand of God with all power and authority in heaven and on earth and under the earth. After ascending to heaven, He poured out the Holy Spirit into all who believe in Him so that Jesus Christ now dwells in us by faith. He is coming back to judge the living and the dead, to avenge all evil, and to restore all things to God's design.

The Gospel is more than just Good News. The Gospel changes everything. Through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God established a new people in a right-standing relationship with Him. To know how something has changed, we need to know how it began. So let's start at the beginning.

ADAM IN EDEN (GENESIS 1-2)

In the beginning, God created everything: the heavens, the earth, and every living thing. Then, God made man in His own image, like a son bears the image of his father so that man could rule over everything that He had created. In Hebrew, the word for *man* is *Adam*. God formed Adam out of dust. Adam was not born, he was formed as a grown man in the same way that a potter or an artist forms something of clay. Then, God breathed the breath of life into Adam's nostrils, and he became a living being. Adam lived in paradise, and there was only one rule. While Adam was still alone, the Lord commanded him not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. (See Genesis 2:16-17.)

But it was not good for Adam to be alone. He needed a helper for ruling over God's creation, so God put Adam into a deep sleep and made a woman from his rib. Adam's wife was not born, she was built out of Adam's rib in the same way that a building or a temple is built from raw materials. Adam could tell that this woman was made just like him – bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. (See Genesis 2:23.)

Adam and Eve were completely innocent, unashamedly naked, and shared unhindered fellowship with each other and with God. They were one flesh – male and female of the same kind of species on the earth. They lived in paradise, in perfect bodies, in a perfect creation, where everything worked exactly as God designed it. God's purpose for creating man was for him to rule over His creation as God's appointed king and queen.

Genesis 1:28: 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."

In Hebrew, the word used for *subdue* in this passage is the word *kabash*. It means *to tread with the feet, to put into subjection, to make subservient*. You may have heard the expression *put the kabash on it* pertaining to getting a situation under control, or according to Urban Dictionary, *To squash something from a position of strength*. So to paraphrase, God told the man and Eve to fill the earth with people like them and *put the kabash* on all of creation. Moreover, the word for *rule over* in this passage also means *to tread with the feet or to have dominion*. In no uncertain terms, God was telling them that He had given them all authority over everything that He had created. Because of their innocence, they wouldn't abuse this authority and because they had an unhindered relationship with God, they would rule things exactly the way God wanted them. At least this was the plan.

ADAM'S DISOBEDIENCE (GENESIS 3)

But along came the serpent, who is the Devil, and God's adversary. (See Revelation 20:2.) He was a part of God's creation which Adam and Eve had complete authority over. The serpent deceived the woman and she ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, even though she knew that God had said not to eat of this tree. She then handed some to Adam who also ate. As soon as Adam ate from the forbidden tree, everything changed. By not exerting their God-given authority over the serpent, they became subject to him. When explaining to God what they had done, the woman admitted that the serpent had deceived her. The Hebrew word for *deceived* in this passage means *to put into debt, to become a creditor, to lend with interest and usury*, stemming from a Hebrew root word for deceptive practices. Essentially, like being trapped by a loan shark with astronomical interest rates, Adam and Eve were now slaves to the devil. (See Proverbs 22:7.) There was no hope of paying their way out.

Adam sinned by disobeying the one command God had given him. The consequence was exactly what God had said from the beginning – death. However, this did not mean instantaneous death of the body as we would think of it but more an explanation of death coming about. When God said, “you will surely die,” die or death is the same expression that would be used to say that someone is *dying of thirst* except in this case, Adam and Eve are dying of sin. Through disobedience, they separated themselves from fellowship with God, who is the source of life and consequently, their bodies would eventually die because of it. This death also denotes premature death, something that was not originally intended or, like the example of dying of thirst, could be remedied if only a drink of water were available. The bottom line is that because of their sin and without a God-given remedy, physical death was going to happen to both of them and everyone who descends from them, which includes all of us.

I say again, as soon as Adam ate from the forbidden tree, everything changed. Their eyes were opened, and their entire consciousness was changed from innocence to shame. They immediately knew that they were naked, and they tried to hide from each other and from God. There was no remedy for what had happened, there was no drink of water for this thirst, and there was no way for them to pay their way out of debt to the evil one or the consequence of death. They were stripped of their authority in the earth because they had now become the subjects of a new master. They lost their position of unhindered fellowship in the presence of God, and they and all of their descendants were now under a curse. Instead of freedom, authority and life, there was fear, subjection, and death. Through his choice, Adam went from innocent to guilty. His nature or his “internal operating system” so to speak, proved not to be good but evil, not righteous but sinful, and not blameless but rebellious against God.

Adam was now cursed to die and return to the dust out of which God had formed him. In fact, because of Adam's error, all of creation was placed under a curse. However, in spite of all this, we do see the first glimmer of some good news to come. Because the serpent had deceived the woman, God cursed the serpent and promised that someday the offspring of the woman would crush the adversary forever.

*Genesis 3:15: And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; **he will crush your head**, and you will strike his heel."*

JESUS' OBEDIENCE

Fast forward to the days of Jesus. Jesus was not formed by God like Adam, and He was not built by God like Adam's wife. Rather, He was born of a woman, a descendant of Eve, just like you and me. After Jesus was born, He grew from infancy, to boyhood, to manhood in the same way that you and I grow up. Later, in the days of His ministry, Jesus' favorite way to refer to Himself was the Son of Man. Since the word for man in Hebrew is Adam, Jesus called Himself the son of Adam.

However, Jesus was not conceived by a man of natural descent or in the natural way. Jesus was born to a young woman named Mary who was a virgin. Moreover, He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit of God. Therefore, Jesus' nature from conception in His mother's womb was the perfect nature of God Himself. His “operating system” was the same as God's because He was the Son of God. By the miracle working power of God, Jesus was both the Son of Man and the Son of God in one package.

*Luke 1:30-35: But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him **Jesus**. He will be great and will be called the **Son of the Most High**. The Lord God will give him the **throne of his father David**, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; **his kingdom will never end**." "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "**since I am a virgin?**" The angel answered, "The **Holy Spirit will come on you**, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. **So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God**."*

Mary was engaged to marry a man named Joseph. Both Mary and Joseph could trace their family lineage directly back to King David of Israel, the one whom God had promised a descendant to sit on the throne for eternity. (See 2 Samuel 7:11-16.) This also means that Jesus was Jewish, born into the people of Israel, the only people on earth in covenant with the God who is the Creator of heaven and earth.

The Jewish people all have one common ancestor, a man named Abraham. God promised Abraham that He would make a special nation out of Abraham's descendants and that they would own a special land – the land we know of today as the land of Israel. Abraham believed God in spite of the fact that even one descendant was totally unlikely because his wife was barren. Then, God did exactly what He promised, and Abraham's wife gave birth to a son named Isaac. Isaac was the only son of Abraham who inherited God's special promise. In due course, Isaac had a son named Jacob, and Jacob inherited God's promise of a nation made of his descendants. Jacob proceeded to have twelve sons, and after that, God changed Jacob's name to Israel. Jacob's sons had families which became tribes and were collectively known as the twelve tribes of Israel. After a while, there was famine in the land, so they moved to Egypt. (see Genesis 12–50) Over the course of time, all the people of Israel became subjected to harsh and oppressive slavery by the Egyptians and this went on for about four hundred years. But God appointed a man named Moses, an Israelite from the tribe of Levi, to confront the king of Egypt and lead the people of Israel to freedom. After they were freed from the Egyptians, Israel had become a nation of people descended from Abraham, just as God had promised. (see Exodus 1–15) At that time, God gave Moses and the nation of Israel His Law; the perfect standard of conduct, obedience, and sacrifice which He required for maintaining a right relationship with Him. Israel was the only nation on earth with God's Law and commands which, if obeyed, resulted in God's abundant blessing. In fact, the promises obtained through obedience to these laws are righteousness, blessing, and life from God. (See Deuteronomy 6:25, 11:26-28, 30:19, 32:47.)

Read in your Bible, from the Book of Deuteronomy, Chapter 28, verses 1-14, which describes the blessings promised by God for obedience to His commands.

Unfortunately, no one in history has ever been able to live up to God's perfect standard. Why? Because, regrettably, ever since Adam rebelled against God, his rebellious nature has been inherited by all of his descendants, meaning all of mankind, including Abraham and his descendants. This inherited internal operating system of Adam is completely opposed to the Law of God with its underlying pride, selfishness, and evil desires which lures each and every one of us into sin. Nobody has ever been able to obey God's Law perfectly, and everyone has fallen short of God's standard. (See James 1:14; Romans 3:23.)

However, recall that Jesus was born by the power of the Holy Spirit. Because of this, Jesus had the nature of God within Him. Therefore, everything Jesus thought and did was a perfect demonstration of God's thoughts and actions. Because of this, Jesus lived a perfect life and fulfilled the requirement of God's Law. Jesus was never lured into sin because He did not have the nature of Adam. Although His divine nature was tested in every possible way, Jesus never sinned. He did everything the way that God wanted it done.

*Matthew 4:1: Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be **tempted** by the devil. (See also Mark 1:13; Luke 4:2.)*

*Hebrews 4:15: For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been **tempted in every way, just as we are--yet he did not sin**. (See also 1 Peter 2:22; 1 John 3:5.)*

During His years of ministry, Jesus did many things which proved that He was sent by God and the Son of God living in human flesh. He performed many miracles that no one on earth had ever performed. He healed the sick, opened the eyes of the blind and the ears of the deaf, caused the lame to leap, cast demons out of people, and every funeral that He attended, He raised the dead. He had authority over all creation including the weather, the seas, and multiplication of food. Everything about Him brought life, peace, wholeness, and restoration. He taught the Word and ways God with authority and demonstrated the power of God through miracles. Jesus revealed the life and authority which God had intended for all of mankind to have when He created Adam way back in the beginning. It was like heaven on earth.

JESUS' SUFFERING AND DEATH

In spite of this, the religious leaders of Israel and the rulers of the world rejected Jesus. They planned and plotted and arrested Jesus because of false accusations, and sentenced Him to death through an illegitimate trial for a crime that He did not commit. They crucified Him.

Jesus knew in advance that this would happen, and He told His followers several times that He would have to suffer and die. In fact, this had been God's design since the earth was even formed. (See Revelation 13:8.) This means that Jesus' life was not taken from Him because neither man nor the devil has any power or authority over Him. (See John 14:29-31, 19:11.) Jesus laid His life down willingly to do the will of God and in order to fulfill the Scriptures concerning the Messiah of Israel. (See Matthew 21:42, 26:53-54; Mark 12:10; Luke 20:17; Psalm 118:22.) This was the only way to remedy the problem that Adam had created at the beginning. Jesus, the only one who had earned through His obedience the right to righteousness, blessing, and life, would instead willingly suffer exile, curse, and death.

*Matthew 16:21: From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that **he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things** at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that **he must be killed** and on the third day be raised to life. (See also Mark 8:31-9:1; Luke 9:21-27.)*

*Matthew 20:18-19: "We are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the teachers of the law. **They will condemn him to death** and will hand him over to the Gentiles **to be mocked and flogged and crucified**. On the third day he will be raised to life!" (See also Mark 10:32-34; Luke 18:31-34.)*

*John 10:17-18: The reason my Father loves me is that **I lay down my life**--only to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but **I lay it down of my own accord**. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father."*

God's Law requires a blood sacrifice to atone, forgive, and cleanse from sin. This sacrifice must be unblemished without any defects as a substitute for the defects of the person who had fallen short of God's standard. Without going into too much detail, the Law required an animal sacrifice of a bull, a lamb, or birds, depending on what the person could afford. Through the shedding of the animal's blood, the sin of the human offender was forgiven. The sacrifice of an innocent life restored an individual person or the whole community of Israel to right standing with God.

Because of Jesus' perfect, unblemished life, He was completely without defect by God's standard. As such, He offered Himself as a sacrifice to pay for all of our sin. He offered a sacrifice of the highest value, far beyond the value of any animal. Jesus sacrificed human life, the life of a Son of Man, which has more value than a bull or a goat. He also sacrificed the life of the Son of God which has infinite inexplicable worth. This makes the value of His sacrifice incalculable. Through this, He paid our debt and created a way for the whole world to be restored to right standing with God.

*John 1:29: The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the **Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!** (See also Hebrews 10:5-10.)*

*Hebrews 9:22: In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and **without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness [of sin.]** (See also Leviticus 17:11.)*

But that's not all. By hanging on a tree, according to God's Law, Jesus also became a curse. The curse of God's Law is written out in great detail in Deuteronomy 28:15-68 and Leviticus 26:14-46. The curse includes every form of sickness and disease, every kind of lack and hunger, all relational problems between people and nations, all forms of oppression by every kind of enemy, and separation or exile from God. On the cross, Jesus received the full punishment and consequence for every disobedient act of all of mankind throughout the course of history.

*Galatians 3:13: Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law **by becoming a curse** for us, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a pole." (Quoting Deuteronomy 21:23.)*

But that's not all. When Jesus died, we also died with Him. In another passage Jesus said:

*John 12:32-33 NASB: "And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will **draw all men to Myself.**" But He was saying this to indicate the kind of death by which He was to die.*

Let's consider what Jesus, who was a Hebrew, was really saying. Remember that *man* in Hebrew translates as *Adam*, so when Jesus said *I will draw all men unto me*, He meant that He drew all of Adam, meaning every single one of Adam's descendants, the whole of mankind onto Himself on the cross. This includes me, you, and everyone we know who has been afflicted by our inherited sinful nature. He was the Son of Adam, embodying each and every one of us in His death. Like a giant magnet, Jesus drew the soul of every person ever born into His death with Him. Like pin-the-tail on the donkey, every descendant of Adam was pinned up with Jesus in this miraculous working of God's power.

*Romans 6:6: For we know that our **old self was crucified with him** so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin--*

*Galatians 2:20: **I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live**, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.*

*Colossians 3:3: **For you died**, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. (Also Colossians 2:20; 2Corinthians 5:14.)*

Read in your Bible from the Book of Isaiah, chapter 52, verses 13-15, and all of Isaiah chapter 53. You will see in this passage Isaiah's description of God's Suffering Servant. This Isaiah passage begins with the very phrasing Jesus used to describe to His followers the way He would suffer and die. Jesus' words were:

*John 8:28: So Jesus said, "When you have **lifted up** the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me. (See also John 3:14-15, 12:32-33.)*

Read in your Bible, all of Psalm 22. You will see that the first and last verse of Psalm 22 are the "bookends" of what Jesus uttered when His time on the cross began and finished.

*Matthew 27:46: About three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" (which means "**My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?**"). (*

*John 19:30: When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "**It is finished.**" With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.*

But that's not all. Here is the best part! In both Isaiah 53 and Psalm 22, there is a shift from suffering to praise. Why? Because this has all been God's plan from the beginning and in spite of the most upside down looking circumstances, the will of the Lord is being put into effect! Jesus knew that God had accepted His sacrificial offering and had heard His cry for help. It was FINISHED!

RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION

Jesus died on the cross and at His death, His soul descended into the pit of Hell while His body went into the grave. But God had indeed accepted Jesus' sacrifice. Therefore, God raised Jesus from the dead.

Acts 2:24: But **God raised him from the dead**, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.

Acts 13:32-34: "We tell you the good news: What God promised our ancestors he has fulfilled for us, their children, by raising up Jesus. As it is written in the second Psalm: 'You are my son; today I have become your father.' **God raised him from the dead** so that he will never be subject to decay. As God has said, 'I will give you the holy and sure blessings promised to David.' (See also Romans 1:4.)

In resurrection, Jesus was not formed out of dust like Adam, and He was not born of a woman as He had been before. When God raised Jesus from the dead, Jesus was begotten again by God, as His Son. In the genealogies of Scripture, you will read things like "Abraham begot Isaac," meaning Isaac was Abraham's son, produced by Abraham's seed. Jesus had already been born by the seed of God into human flesh and God had already acknowledged Him as His begotten Son. (See Matthew 3:17, 17:5; Mark 1:11, 9:7; Luke 3:22, 9:35.) However, this time, instead of being born by God through a virgin, Jesus was begotten again by God out of the pit of Hell and by God's absolute miracle working power. Jesus' soul returned to His body, and the life giving power of the Spirit of holiness transformed His perishable body to an incorruptible body which will never perish.

But that's not all. Through His death and resurrection, Jesus crushed the head of the serpent. Recall the promise God made to Eve back in the beginning. The resurrection proves that mankind's cruel oppressor could not keep Jesus captive in death. Jesus conquered the evil one, stomped on the serpent's head, trampled him with His feet, and *put the kabash* on him. Jesus is now alive eternally, never to die again. Death has been overcome and the enemy has been defeated. Hallelujah!

After the resurrection, Jesus revealed to hundreds of people that He was indeed alive. Then, clouds lifted Jesus into heaven where He is seated at the right hand of God. Jesus now has all power and authority to rule, reign, *put the kabash* on all of God's creation, and to be its King forever.

Mark 16:19: After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, **he was taken up into heaven** and he sat at the right hand of God. (See also Luke 24:51; Acts 1:9.)

Philippians 2:9-11: Therefore **God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name**, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

A NEW ADAM

Undoubtedly, Jesus is King. But yet, it is equally true that evil still exists in the world. This is because even though the benefits of Jesus' sacrifice are available to everyone, only those who know that Jesus is Lord and believe in their hearts that God raised Jesus from the dead are included in relationship with God. When we believe Jesus, we become part of a new people, a new generation, a new Adam. This means that on the earth today, there are only two kinds of people: First Adam's and Second Adam's.

All of us were born the first time by our natural mother and biological father, descendants of the First Adam. For those of you who do not yet believe that Jesus Christ is Lord, you are still part of the First Adam. You are still spiritually separated from God, in darkness, and dead. Whether you believe it or not, apart from faith in Jesus, there is no form of religious observance or spirituality that can give you access to the Most High God, and no amount of good deeds can give you right standing with God.

But when you believe that Jesus is Lord and that God raised Him from the dead, you are born again, begotten again by God who is now your Father. The seed of God (the Holy Spirit) comes to dwell in your heart. When you believe, you are spiritually transferred from death to life, from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light, and from separation from God to restored fellowship with Him. You become part of the Second Adam and one of God's beloved children.

John 1:12-13: Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to **become children of God**-- children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but **born of God**. (See also 1 John 5:1.)

John 3:3-6: Jesus replied, Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are **born again**. ... no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are **born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.**

1Peter 1:3, 23: Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he **has given us new birth** into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ... For **you have been born again**, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.

When we are baptized, we demonstrate what we believe in our hearts, and we are symbolically entering into the death and resurrection and ascension of Christ, being begotten again by God.

Colossians 2:12-13: having been **buried with him in baptism**, in which you were also **raised with him through your faith in the working of God**, who raised him from the dead. When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, **God made you alive with Christ**. He forgave us all our sins, (See also Romans 6:4.)

Colossians 3:1: Since, then, **you have been raised with Christ**, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

Ephesians 1:3, 13: Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has **blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ**... For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and **brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves**,

But that's not all. There are some obvious realities that haven't been addressed yet. Even people who believe Jesus still live in bodies that die, on earth and not in heaven, and still make mistakes and fall short of God's perfect standard.

When Jesus was on earth, He functioned in flesh like ours but with the operating system of God's nature. After Jesus ascended into heaven, He poured out the Holy Spirit. (See Acts 2:33.) When we believe Jesus, the Holy Spirit dwells in our hearts and becomes our new nature. We now have the Holy Spirit in us as our new operating system even though we are still in our earthly bodies. When we allow the Holy Spirit to direct our lives, we live the way that Jesus did when He was in flesh. Through faith and obedience to the Holy Spirit within us as our new operating system, we can live in constant and unbroken communion and communication with God, and we can demonstrate the perfect will of God.

2Peter 1:4: Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them **you may participate in the divine nature**, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

Think of it this way: God formed the first man out of dust and breathed life into him – a natural Adam – and his wife was in him when he was formed. Then, God built Adam's wife out of his rib to be just like him, to be one flesh with him, and to help him fulfill God's purpose in the earth. When Jesus was born again in resurrection, God breathed again the Holy Spirit into Him, forming a whole new type of Adam – a spiritual Adam – and his Bride was in Him when He was born again. Now, God is building Jesus' Bride, which is us who believe, aka the Church. God is building Jesus' Bride out of His own spiritual substance, His Body, to be just like Him, to be one flesh with Him, so that God will have made male and female of the same kind of species, to fulfill God's purposes in the earth. Everyone who believes that Jesus is Lord is a new species, a born again species, a spiritual species, a heavenly species even though we still live in earthly bodies. God formed the first Adam like a potter or artist forms a vessel of clay, and the first Adam's wife was taken out of him. God made the second Adam like an artist or a poet creating a masterpiece, and we who believe are part of this new creation. (See Ephesians 2:4-10.)

2Corinthians 5:17: Therefore, **if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!**

But, let's be real. We all still sin and make mistakes and fall short of perfection. Yes, this is true, but this is where the news gets really good! Through faith in what Jesus did on our behalf, we receive His perfect record as if we had never sinned. By faith, the blood of Jesus purifies us and we are perfect in God's sight.

1John 1:7 AMP: But if we [really] walk in the Light [that is, live each and every day in conformity with the precepts of God], as He Himself is in the Light, we have [true, unbroken] fellowship with one another [He with us, and we with Him], and **the blood of Jesus, his Son, cleanses us from all sin [by erasing the stain of sin, keeping us cleansed from sin in all its forms and manifestations].**

Therefore, no matter what we may have done in our past, no matter what we may have done an hour ago, no matter what we may do tomorrow or next week or five years from now, Jesus' blood and death has already paid for it. There is no reason for us to ever hide from God as Adam and Eve did, there is no reason for shame, and there is nothing which can keep us from having unbroken fellowship with God who is our Creator and our Heavenly Father.

Think of it this way: when God made the rule about eating from the wrong tree, it was a rule between Him and Adam when Adam was alone. Adam's wife had not been built yet. Eve was the first one who ate from the wrong tree, but nothing actually changed for them until Adam ate it because God had made the rule with Adam. It was Adam's disobedience which caused the change in their position before God. In the same way, but reversing this error, Jesus re-established our right standing with God through His perfect obedience to God's Law. Therefore, in the same way that Eve eating from the wrong tree did not change their status with God, our errors against the Law of God do not change our status with God. We stay in right relationship with God no matter how much we mess up because the rule was established between God and Jesus who never sinned.

That's really good news!

JESUS IS COMING BACK

Jesus died to save us from death. He became sin to save us from sin. He became a curse to save us from the curse. He became man to save us from ourselves. He's coming back to save us from God's wrath.

Hebrews 9:27-28: *Just as people are destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many; and **he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.***

When Jesus comes back, everyone who believes in Him will be clothed with an imperishable resurrection body just like His. Those whose bodies have already died will be raised from the grave, and those who are still alive when He returns will be instantly transformed. We will all be taken up into the air to meet Him and be with Him forever. (See 1 Corinthians 15:52; 1 Thessalonians 4:17.) But those who do not believe Jesus is Lord will be subject to eternal judgment, condemnation, and hell. The wrath of God will be poured out on the earth to avenge all evil. We don't want anyone we know to be subject to this. Importantly, we don't know when He is coming back. Therefore, we do everything that we can to share Jesus and the hope of salvation with everyone we know. (See 2 Peter 3:9-10; 2 Corinthians 5:10-11.)

Think of it this way: God told the first Adam and Eve to be fruitful and multiply in the natural way, through giving birth to natural children. Now, God through Jesus tells us to be fruitful and multiply in a spiritual way, by making disciples of Christ.

Matthew 28:18-20: *Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. **Therefore go and make disciples** of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and **teaching them** to obey*

everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

In fact, to complete our assignment, Jesus gave us authority in the same way that Jesus had authority when He was on the earth. The Holy Spirit gives us power to do miracles, heal the sick, cast out demons, raise the dead, and command creation the same way that Jesus did when He was on the earth.

*John 14:12: Very truly I tell you, **whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things** than these, because I am going to the Father.*

But that's not all. Jesus came in the flesh the first time to make reparation for the First Adam's error. Jesus is coming back to fulfill man's assignment to *put the kabash* on all evil for the rest of eternity. After that, all of creation will be restored to God's design. It will be like Eden all over again and we will live with God in our perfect bodies for all eternity. (See 1 Corinthians 15:25-26.)

*Revelation 21:1-8: Then I saw "a new heaven and a new earth," for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. **'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.**" He who was seated on the throne said, "**I am making everything new!**" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." He said to me: "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life. **Those who are victorious will inherit all this, and I will be their God and they will be my children.**"*

We want everyone we know and love to be with us in heaven and on the new earth in the age to come. Therefore, until Christ returns, we have an assignment. We take the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the ends of the earth with signs and wonders following so that everyone may come to know Jesus is Lord and receive their eternal inheritance.

Ok, that's all... for now.

INVITATION

If you have not yet placed your faith in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior and you desire to be included in the salvation you've just learned about, then all that you need to do is believe. If you are ready for the Gospel to change your life and make you new, then pray this prayer out loud and from your heart.

Prayer: *God, I am by nature a sinner and I believe that you sent Your Son, Jesus, to die for my sins. I believe that You raised Jesus from the dead to everlasting life. I repent of my sins and I make Jesus Christ my Lord. Send the Holy Spirit into my heart and make me a new creation. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

Hallelujah! Jesus is King! Welcome to the family and the salvation of God!