

## God's Answer to Your Problem

We live in an abnormal world. We have had no world peace since the end of the second World War. Numerous small and even major wars are fought at this very moment. We witness the decline of family life and disruptions in society. We hear about murder, lying, adultery, robberies and so on. A sense that some things are either right or wrong appears in all cultures in all times.

What happened to our world? The root cause is described in the Bible. "Therefore, as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed (spread) unto all men, for that all sinned: for until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression, who is a figure of him that was to come ... For if by the trespass of the one, death reigned through the one ... So then as through one trespass the judgment came unto all men to condemnation . . . For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners." (Romans 5:12-19)

What happened? Our first ancestors desired to be as God. By this action sin entered into the world. This is not just a theory that explains how the world can be evil and God good. It is a reality. God's Word says about the human situation: "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jeremiah 17:9)

What is sin? It is rebellion. In his rebellion man defies God. He wants to free himself from Him. Sin is unbelief. Man rejects God and creates his own gods. He chooses a lie rather than following the Truth. Sin is transgressing the law of God. It is disobedience to the Word of God.

What is the result of sin? Sin causes separation between God and man. Sin also separates man from himself. So many people are in the bondage of fear. Fear has many manifestations. In folklore you have the evil spirit aswang. It is supposed to be the spirit of a deceased person who turns himself into an animal, usually a dog and goes around at night seeking victims. This fear for the aswang is caused by lack of knowledge of God. Sin separates man from man. Adam and Eve, before their fall into sin, were in beautiful harmony. After their fall they tried to pass off the blame. Brothers became separated from brothers. Cain killed Abel. Individuals sin against each other in many ways. The depth of sin is also seen in social injustice, oppression, lack of concern for the poverty stricken, the unemployed and the disabled.

Man wanted to become like God. He desired to determine his own life, be captain of his soul and chart his own destiny. But man has discovered that he is not free but bound. A stamp is put upon his personality. Man is in bondage even from birth. He is "brought forth in iniquity;" "And in sin did my mother conceive me," David says in Psalm 51. Nevertheless each individual is responsible for his own behaviour. He can never run away from his responsibilities. In some countries a criminal is often seen as the victim of circumstances. For example, he had no opportunity to get ahead in life;

his parents were poor; he had no chance to get a proper education. A judge may take into account all the considerations that excuse the crime, but ultimately he must be held responsible for his deeds. The criminal deserves punishment as he made, somewhere in his life, a choice and he must be judged according to that choice. The Bible treats people not as things, but as responsible human beings. Therefore they deserve to be treated seriously.

Is there a solution to the problem of sin? There is no human solution. Only by God's direct intervention through His Son Jesus Christ can man be saved. The Bible says: "Christ died for our sin according to the Scriptures and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures." (1 Corinthians 15:3,4.) This Gospel message points to the total liberation of man from his bondage.

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