

Learning from our mistakes

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There was a time when man was perfect. It sounds hard to believe but the Bible indicates that Adam and Eve did not know sin in the Garden of Eden. If man was blameless in the garden then we know that sin entered in when they partook of the tree of knowledge of Good and Evil.

Over the past few years God has shared much with me about this tree and some of its purposes and reasons for being. One thing I wish to mention is the purpose of death.

Most of us see death as an enemy. Even scripture calls death an enemy. In reality if we look at death correctly we see that the real issue is not death so much as it is the pain and suffering that often lead up to death and the loss we feel for those who die.

When I think of death I have to wonder why death ever came into our world. Wasn't death some horrible nemesis set on destroying mankind? In reality death was considered to be a measurement of sleep. Jesus spoke of this several times when talking to people about death. He said "They are sleeping." We tend to laugh at such talk and find it difficult to understand. After all if they were sleeping what does that mean? After all we are humans who sleep pretty much every night and then we dream. If we dream while we sleep then this is one of the ways God speaks to us.

In this there is a mystery which I have prayed about often. How do we as humans sleep? I know myself, for example, have severe sleep apnea. According to the doctors I don't really sleep but awake something like 55 times an hour. If I wake 55 times an hour or about once a minute then how do I dream? Most people call dreams REM sleep or Rapid Eye moment. I think that if I were really sleeping then it might be different. So I think of myself as a mystery also.

Now dreams are a part of sleep but what if death were meant to be part of our sleep? And what if death were meant to carry our nightmares away so that we might sleep peacefully and have wonderful rest? If there were such a thing as nightmares then they would be the antithesis of what God desires for us. And in

fact we might even say that death would be a surcease from the nightmares of this world.

The more I delve into spiritual things the more I begin to understand that death is a real mystery.

Revelation 1:18 I [am] he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for ever more, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

Jesus had to die so that he might take the keys of hell and of death. If he took the keys from hell that meant he overcame those spirits that were in hell. If he overcame death that meant he took on death and overcame death himself. If both death and hell were to be judged then we know that some of them may have been cast into hell and repented there. Otherwise there would be no reason for a judgment. All would be guilty and all would partake of what is called the second death.

Now if there is a second death, of which scripture speaks more than once, then the first death must be a type of sleep. In the midst of this sleep men's souls are at rest in a pre-judgment state. When judgment is finished those who are liars and idolators and murders and so on will partake of the second death.

But there appears to be a period of time when Death 1 will cover the earth and many will die. Then death will be taken away. This could refer to sleep but it also might refer to the power of death to end misery. If we suffer endlessly but cannot die then we are either under the power of the second death or under some part of the spiritual curse. When all these curses are removed and thrown into hell and into the lake of fire then we will begin to understand all these things that happened to us as believers.

Now what is really the second death? I believe we have another mystery on our hands. All my life I've been taught that the second death is an eternity of suffering which goes on forever and ever and ever. But if the first death was placed there so that we might sleep then what makes the second death any different? If there is a second death we have to ask ourselves this question. "Is it God's desire for them to suffer eternal punishment or is it possible that they sleep?" Now to answer that isn't an easy one but let's make a few assumptions. First death came when man sinned. Jesus took on that death and provided a way of escape so that they might awake spiritually. But if the second death comes then we find they may sleep possibly never to awake. This would mean they chose to live in sin and God cannot allow sin to remain awake. Thus we are left with another possibility. That their sin nature will be burned up in the lake of fire but their bodies will sleep under the second death. And that which is of God will be cleansed of man/demon/angelic sin natures and burned away so nothing remains of those parts which chose sin or anything unclean. If this happens the lake of fire is a cleansing death meant to purify anything unclean or unholy.

Whatever the final outcome there does seem to be a few things that remain unanswered. What is it that happens to death, if there is a second death, and what will happen to the Lake of Fire if impurity is eventually removed from all beings? Whatever the answer we have questions that leave us wondering

what mysteries God has in store for us who partake of the first resurrection of life. I pray that I will be in that number so that I would be part of Gods kingdom for all eternity's