



**As the Shepherd takes from  
the mouth of the Lion, two  
legs or a piece of an ear  
(Amos 3:12)**

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## **1. Life is not Good to Everyone**

Many human beings suffer hard, terrible, tragic things in their lives. Some blame their Creator, fate, circumstances, other people or themselves. Whoever gets the blame; it normally makes little difference in the person's present condition. Some people, it seems, are born into wealth and a good life, while other people are born for trouble. Job, in the midst of his misery, gives his observation of man, "Yet man is born to trouble, as sparks fly upward" (Job 5:7).

It is also true that the majority of people can better their lot in life if they recognize their own failures and learn from their mistakes. It is said of Abraham Lincoln, that he failed at everything he tried to do in life. Growing up he had less than one year of schooling. His mother died when he was 9 years old. He failed in business many times, he went bankrupt, he lost 8 elections, and he suffered a nervous breakdown. He is said to have looked into the mirror at one time and said, "If I ever run into anybody uglier than you, I will shoot him on the spot as an act of kindness." As president, he was heard crying out to God, sometimes all night, because of the weight he carried from overseeing millions of American soldiers attempting to kill each other in the civil war. However, he was one of the best presidents, if not the best president this country has ever had. Millions of black people have blessed his name. Yet his life was built on hardship after hardship and failure after failure.

Frances Jane “Fanny” Crosby (1820-1915), started out in life without her eyesight; it was lost through maltreatment at 6 months of age. Humanly, such a blow could have set her on course for a life of depression and despair. Yet, her 95 years on the earth were spent in great joy. Fanny, in her life time, wrote over 9000 hymns and over 3000 poems. Her hymns can be found in almost any Christian hymnal. She became a learner and a teacher for 35 years at the “New York Institution for the Blind.” After leaving school, she dedicated her life to serving the poorest and the neediest. The money she made frequently went to her work with the poor. Her missionary work is well known. She frequently met with presidents, generals and other dignitaries. Fanny’s life was a life of joy. In her life time, she blessed an untold amount of people. The blessing of Fanny’s life and work still goes on today and affects millions of people.

Scripture shows us that man in this world is a part of a failed human race, living in a failed world. The things and circumstances which come against a person in this world can easily become overwhelming, and despair can take over the person’s life. Yet, God did not design man for failure but designed him to live in the image and likeness of God.

## **2. The Serpent is Still at it**

Scripture shows us this world, through the woman, became prey to the devil's enticement (Genesis 3:6-7). Adam, also following the woman in her deception, has brought suffering, judgment and death upon all men (Romans 5:17-18). Through Adam's fall, the devil gained access into the hearts of all men, to bring forth the works of his kingdom into this world. The works of Satan's kingdom are darkness; it is a kingdom of darkness. Scripture shows us the Adamic nature in man responds to this darkness, "...and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (John 3:19). Satan's kingdom is seen in the human failure to live in the image and likeness of God. The fruit of Satan's kingdom is sin, suffering, affliction, despair, pain, condemnation, judgment, and death. This fruit is lived out in the lives of men and women every day the world over. The world labors under the bondage of this corruption that came upon all men through Adam, "For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. Not only that, but we also who have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body" (Romans 8:22-23). Every person born is brought into this world of groaning, sin and woe.

The fallen state and corruption is a curse for every human being, with no human answer. Men are led by their

fallen nature to receive the corruption of the world, becoming one with the world. Through their nature, all men are held in this kingdom of darkness, without God, and without hope.

Satan's kingdom is enlarged with every unrighteous act committed by men, contrary to the design of God. Satan's title and ruler-ship in this world (John 14:30; Ephesians 6:12) came through one man (Adam) and has continually been enlarged through the deeds of this man's offspring. The Apostle John confirmed to us Satan's power and influence in the world, "...The whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one" (1 John 5:19). The Apostle Paul instructs that all men are dead in trespasses and sins, as they live and walk according to the course of this world (Ephesians 2:1-2).

The preceding truths teach us that all men in their own abilities and strengths are without hope in this world.

### **3. Despair, Reality Without Faith**

There are times in almost everyone's life when circumstances bring about a consequence that leads to despair. Some people, in the midst of trouble, wished they had never been born, as Job expressed in Job 3:1-13. Some people cannot handle the pain and depression, and may take their own lives.

Despair comes from a lost vision or where all hope is lost. In the normal flow of living there are exceptions; however, most people can review their past decisions and see what brought about the undesirable circumstances in their lives.

Decisions made from self interest without regard of conscience or the good of others are the basis of many sorrows. These sorrows usually hit hardest, on those closest to the one acting in self interest.

The person living after self causes much pain and damage to his own soul and to the hearts of family, friends and others. This condition, common to man, is played out every day in the lives of multitudes of people, without regard to their Creator or the Word of God.

Jesus puts forth the question concerning the condition of people on earth when He returns, “Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes will He find faith on the earth?” (Luke 18:8). Jesus said this in view of the certain judgment to come where man’s deeds prevail, and faith is not in evidence (Matthew 25:31-46).

God did not create man for despair or judgment, but for His blessing. Jesus did not come to condemn (John 3:17), He came to heal the broken hearted, break the chains of the enemy, and give liberty to those in despair (Isaiah 61:1; Luke 4:16-21).

## **4. Repentance, the Pathway of Hope**

God's method of bringing blessing and enrichment into a person's life is through the person's faith to believe what God has said is the truth. To believe God is to follow Jesus and His words. In following Jesus, a new and living way of life is found. This life in Jesus is not natural life, but a life lived after the Spirit of God; it is spiritual life. Spiritual life starts with repentance toward God.

“Truly these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent” (Acts 17:30). Repentance is turning away from a past life without faith, to a new life through faith in God. This new life happens as a person becomes a disciple or follower of Jesus. Without repentance there can be no new life or new way of living. Scripture shows us that faith produces a transformed life through repentance. “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new” (2 Corinthians 5:17).

These old things are found in a life not lived in faith to Christ Jesus. These new things are spiritual and are planted by the Holy Spirit in the person's heart, who in faith believes God. This Scripture shows us what the old things are built on, “For whatsoever is not of faith is sin” (Romans 14:23).

## **5. The Lion is Always Hungry**

“Thus says the Lord as the shepherd takes from the mouth of the lion, two legs or a piece of an ear” (Amos 3:12).

Scripture teaches us that the enemy of our soul is out to destroy all who will listen to and follow him; “...because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8). The devil seeks out men and women who will act on his instigations and ideas. Those not aware or paying no heed to this danger are the one’s who are at risk to be devoured. This devouring by the Lion can be seen in the consequences of the following human events. A husband and father, giving no thought to his responsibility to function in headship, fails to care for, protect and lead his wife and family. A man who has been enticed into unfaithfulness to his wife, or a wife who has been deceived into unfaithfulness to her husband, subject each other, their marriage, and their children to being ravaged by the lion. The final outcome of any of these actions usually results in their family unit being destroyed through violence in the family, and ultimately divorce. The children then lose the protection of their father or mother, or both. Thus the lion has a much easier prey in the children.

Believing and following a false religious spirit is bondage of high degree. The results are seen in the spirit and soul of

the person's life, as he or she is held in chains by spiritual darkness through religious demonic persuasions. Such a person has been spiritually inoculated against receiving the truth in Christ and the gift of God.

A person enticed through natural desires into reading and viewing pornography has come into the lion's cunning ensnarement, whose intent is to capture the person's mind and heart. The sheep who has not seen the danger of grazing in this pasture where the lion roams, becomes food for the lion. This results in the person's mind no longer being able to get free of or throw off this yoke. This innocent looking lair leads some people into immorality, child molestation, incest, rape, and in some cases kidnapping for sexual bondage, and murder. Few escape from the lion's den who are held by the claws of this dark power.

A person may have been enticed into a life of alcohol or drug abuse (the Greek word for drugs is *pharmakia* meaning, witchcraft or sorcery, Galatians 5:20), resulting in the person's will and life being held in slavery to them. This slavery may lead to contracting incurable diseases, a lifestyle of deception, stealing and robbery to support their addiction. A single addicted person may harm only themselves by losing their vision for life and failing to achieve their goals. An addicted husband finds his wife or child in the family unit, of less value than the pursuit of the

addiction. The remaining members of the family unit suffer the pain of alienation, separation, depression, loss of vision for life, and oppression, because the addicted person is ensnared in this demonic trap.

Another may be deceived in his or her heart by following self will, without regard to God or man's authority. Pursuit of self, like the love of money is the open door that the devil uses to bring pride and self elevation into a person's life. Such ones are at the devils service, damaging family and friend alike, for, "a man's pride will bring him low" (Proverbs 29:23). The Creator's words have little effect on such a person, except when they play at the game of religion and further deceive their own soul.

When the lion devours, all that may be left are "two legs or a piece of an ear," nothing of much value in human terms is left, only shambles. These deceptions and many more such devices of the enemy are his methods of deceiving a person into giving up his life and soul to the lion. The person receiving and following these schemes, bring that person whom God made in His own image, down to, "two legs or a piece of an ear."

## **6. The Shepherd That Died for the Sheep**

Contrasting the devil's purpose and work in this world is the good shepherd, who came into this world to give His life, for the one taken and held by the enemy. Jesus said, "...I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it abundantly. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep" (John 10:10-11).

The good shepherd came into this world for the purpose of dying (John 6:51) for the person who has suffered under Satan's power and has been held in sin's grip. To accomplish redemption, Jesus took upon Himself the judgment of God, with His life's blood poured out for that person's sin (Isaiah 53:10-12; Romans 5:6, 8-11).

Jesus died, and went into the grave for three days and nights, fulfilling His prophecy stated in Matthew 12:40. He was raised up from the grave by the power of God, alive forevermore. "I AM He who lives and was dead, and behold, I AM alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and death" (Revelation 1:18).

For you who will believe God, the body of Jesus was hung on the cross of Calvary in place of your body. The life's blood of Jesus was poured out and its effectiveness made full payment to cover your sin. Putting your faith in Jesus and the blood He shed on that cross, justifies you before God. The Apostle Paul made this truth known in Antioch in Pisidia, "Therefore let it be known to you

brethren, that through this man is preached to you the forgiveness of sins; and by Him everyone who believes is justified from all things from which you could not be justified by the Law of Moses” (Acts 13:38-39). The meaning of the Law of Moses is: man attempting to find favor with God by keeping laws or right conduct. Scripture reveals to us that anyone trying to please God by their own works, abilities or keeping of laws, is under a curse (Galatians 3:10).

For the one who believes God, Jesus made your peace with God, “Through the blood of His cross” (Colossians 1:20). Furthermore, Jesus reconciled you to God, “And you who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight” (Colossians 1:21-22). This means that you are justified before God (Romans 5:9), free of condemnation (Romans 8:1), reconciled to God fully and completely (Romans 5:11) and have been given the hope of Jesus coming to take those that are His, to Himself (Titus 2:13), in order that you may be with God for eternity (1 Thessalonians 4:17).

## **7. The Resurrected Life**

How do we know all this is true? The bodily resurrection of Jesus from the grave is the proof. As all other Old Testament prophecies were fulfilled by Jesus, so the prophecy of His resurrection from Sheol (the grave) was fulfilled, as seen in Psalms 16:9-10, “Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; my flesh also will rest in hope. For you will not leave my soul in Sheol, nor will You allow your Holy One to see corruption.” Death is the wages of sin (Romans 6:23), but death could not hold Jesus because He had no sin of His own (1 Peter 2:22).

Jesus was and is victorious over death and Hades. Hades is the holding place of the unbelieving dead. Jesus, after the resurrection of His body came among His apostles and ate with them (Luke chapter 24); He appeared to over 500 brethren at once (1 Corinthians 15:6). After that time He was seen of others, including His appearance to the apostle Paul on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:1-16).

Life was taken from the body of Jesus through death, but the power of God raised Him to life again. That power is resurrection life. This resurrection life is the power of God; it can and will raise up a person who is dead in trespasses and sins. “And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins” (Ephesians 2:1). This resurrection life is what enables the believer to live and walk after the Lord Jesus. “For it is God who works in you both

to will and to do for His good pleasure” (Philippians 2:13). This resurrection life can take our life even if only ‘two legs or a piece of an ear’ are left, and bring life to them. Christ Jesus is a life giving Spirit (1 Corinthians 15:45).

This life giving Spirit is the power of God working in the believer which enables him to follow Jesus in faith. In this power everyone who believes God becomes a new person as seen in 2 Corinthians 5:17, quoted in chapter 4 of this booklet. Jesus said, “For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to them, even so the Son gives life to whom He will” (John 5:21). Jesus declares to those who receive this life, “Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live” (John 5:25). Jesus said now is the time; it is the time when those who hear His voice (spiritually) and receive Him will be brought from death unto life and given the gift of God. “Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift” (2 Corinthians 9:15).

This gift of God is given without cost and without price, to the one who believes. “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9). In this gift, the love of God is made known in Jesus Christ. In receiving Jesus Christ, the person receives the One who sent Him. “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who

receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent me” (John 13:20).

If your heart does not reveal to you that you are apart from God, a lost sinner, barren of the life of Christ, without hope in this world, then you have not heard His voice and won't see your need of a savior. If you do perceive your need of a savior; God has sent the Mediator, Advocate and Friend to intercede to God for you, Jesus Christ the Righteous. Believing on Him will bring salvation (deliverance), forgiveness of sins and eternal life. “Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

Will you receive Him whom the Father has sent?

D. Neely  
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**Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them (Hebrews 7:25).**

**A highway shall be there, and a road and it shall be called the Highway of Holiness. The unclean shall not pass over it, but it shall be for others. Whoever walks the road, although a fool shall not go astray. No lion shall be there. But the redeemed shall walk there, and the ransomed of the Lord (Isaiah 35:8-9).**

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