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PLAIN TRUTH

a magazine of understanding

You Can Solve
Your
Financial Worries



Testing Time
for West Germany



Global Solution
to Our
Polluted Planet



**Yasuhiro
Nakasone**

**JAPAN'S
NEW
PRIME
MINISTER**





Personal from...

What If Adam Had Taken of the Tree of Life?

A most fruitful four-day visit to Johannesburg and Cape Town climaxed one evening in a dinner and social occasion at the home of Dr. Roy McCarthy, our regional director for South Africa. Present were the ministers of the Worldwide Church of God for the area, and their wives.

As I sat at the table after dinner, the various ministers and wives gathered around me. They asked many questions, especially concerning the kingdom of God, world conditions leading to it and other biblical subjects.

Somehow, it seemed to me something like times described in the New Testament when Jesus sat with a group of people, answering their questions and expounding about the kingdom of God. One sensed the presence of the Spirit of God—a spirit of love and peace, one of harmony and unity.

“What if . . .”

Special interest came when one asked, “What would have happened to the world if the first human, Adam, had taken of the tree of LIFE?” That is a question I have never heard or read of being answered. But elsewhere than in Genesis the Bible does at least imply the answer, partially. It seems almost no one ever thought to ask that question.

Would we not have lived in a different world?

You now live in a world of awesome progress, development and accomplishment. Yet this same world is filled with appalling evils. Crime, violence, immorality multiply. Discontent, unhappiness, frustration fill human minds.

WHY this astounding paradox?

Amid 20th century scientific and technological advances approaching the miraculous—amid tremendous advances in production of increasing

knowledge and its dissemination, we live in a world half literate, and half in abject poverty, living in filth and squalor.

WHY? Why cannot mankind solve his problems and eradicate his evils?

The die was cast at the very foundation of the world. Late 19th and 20th century intellectual progress has turned to and accepted the theory of evolution as the basic premise on which knowledge production and advancement is based. But knowledge development has been paralleled with escalating evils. Evolutionary ideas have not led to the increasing of, but the rapid elimination of well-being. Evolution cannot give us the answer to this mysterious paradox. It gives humanity NO HOPE for the future.

The only answer lies in the incident of the forbidden fruit in the garden of Eden. The only explanation of this world's paradox and the meaning of the purpose of human existence lies in understanding of that incident, which in fact was the foundation of this world.

Yes, WHAT *IF* the first man Adam had taken of the tree of LIFE, instead of the forbidden fruit?

Adam was required to make a choice. In that choice the die was cast on the whole 6,000-year human society up to this time. The CAUSE of every evil experienced by the billions of human lives during these 6,000 years lies in the decision made by the human father of all mankind.

Yes, WHAT *IF* he had taken of the tree of LIFE?

Look at that pivotal incident of all human existence. The forbidden tree was to result in DEATH. It was the tree of the KNOWLEDGE of good and evil. On man's taking *to himself* that knowledge, God closed off the tree of life (Gen. 3:22-24) from all mankind until Christ, the second Adam, came. The exception to this were the prophets of ancient Israel for the writing of the Bible.

What did the forbidden tree really mean? That

knowledge has no connection with material knowledge. Man was created with a mind capable of acquiring knowledge concerning matter—dealing with wood, metals, agriculture—the sciences and technology. Good and evil are concerned with relationships with other minds.

Man was made to have and need a relationship with his Maker—the supreme mind. He was made to engage in relationships with fellow humans—who have minds. Good and evil concerns MIND in relationships with other minds. But man's mind was not a finished creation. It contains a spiritual content, not present in the brains of nonhuman vertebrates. Animals are equipped with instinct, but not thinking, reasoning, knowing minds. The human mind not only can receive knowledge of the material and its use, but also ATTITUDES in relation to other minds. That is, attitudes of love or of hate. Attitudes of self-centeredness and vanity; attitudes of envy, jealousy, animosity, competition, strife and violence; attitudes of rebellion or, on the other hand, attitudes of outflowing love, humility, reverence for God, obedience, cooperation, helping, serving, sharing—concern for the welfare and good of others.

God Lives and Works

God the Creator from eternity has existed as God—a supreme spirit Personage—and the Word—also a supreme spirit Personage, willingly and by nature subservient to God in love. Constituting the God family, these two exist eternally (John 1:1-5, 14). They *lived!* How did they live—by what relationship? God loved the Word who 1,986 years ago became Jesus Christ. The Word loved God. Two can't walk together except they be agreed. They were in perfect harmony. Neither can two continue happily together except one is leader or head. God has always been head over all.

Living, they were *doing*. What have they been doing? They have been CREATING. Planning, designing, bringing into existence—positive constructing, not destroying. They worked thus together in love, peace, harmony. God created all

things BY the Word who became Jesus Christ (Eph. 3:9).

This way of LOVE, peace, cooperation always was their way of life. That way of life became the supreme LAW of the universe—for law is merely the WAY of life. People make laws to regulate their lives. There is a basic law or constitution on which every government is based. Even games in sports have rules. So outflowing LOVE is the foundational LAW of the government of God. Sin is the transgression of that law.

Adam transgressed that law—he sinned—when he rejected the tree of LIFE and continuing contact with God and chose, instead, to take to himself the knowledge of good and evil—the knowledge of HOW to live in relationship with other MINDS—both God and human. Thus he rejected the law of God.

Now, WHAT *IF* he had taken of the tree of life? God closed off the tree of life until Christ the second Adam came to redeem mankind. Jesus said, "I will build my Church." He chose 12 disciples. (The word *disciple* means student, one being taught.) Jesus taught them about the kingdom of God. He promised them they would receive the Holy Spirit. On the day of Pentecost, A.D. 31, the Holy Spirit came with a supernatural display (Acts 2). The Holy Spirit is the divine spiritual sperm, which impregnates with eternal LIFE (Rom. 8:11). Also it is the LOVE of God shed abroad in our hearts (Rom. 5:5).

What Did the Tree of Life Symbolize?

Therefore, the tree of life in Eden symbolized the Spirit of God, which imparts eternal LIFE. Adam was not created with eternal life. In that respect, his creation was not yet complete. Human creation is still going on!

IF Adam had taken of the tree of LIFE, he would have received that LIFE just as the Christian may today—by receiving the Holy Spirit. Only, Adam had not yet sinned—until he disobeyed. He would have needed no repentance as we do today. But he would have BELIEVED God. He would have received the

Holy Spirit—the LOVE OF GOD, which divine love fulfills God's law.

What more? Like Christians today, he would have become an HEIR of God. He would have been begotten to become a child of God, not yet born.

In I Corinthians 2:9, we read that the knowledge of spiritual truths, attitudes and purposes of God cannot be seen by the eye nor heard through the ear. All knowledge receivable by humans enters the mind through the five senses. But (verse 10) God reveals spiritual knowledge through his Spirit. Without the Spirit of God in combination with our human spirit, no human can comprehend spiritual knowledge. That is the reason the greatest, most intellectual, most highly educated minds CANNOT UNDERSTAND the Bible—which imparts spiritual knowledge.

Therefore, as the forbidden tree was one of knowledge leading to death, so the tree of LIFE was one of spiritual knowledge leading to immortal LIFE. What Adam took to himself was spiritual knowledge, which his mind, without the Holy Spirit of God, was not capable of comprehending. He decided for himself what is right and wrong. But Satan influenced him, through Eve, to decide selfishly.

Consequently, he decided what he thought was right or wrong in relation to others from an attitude of self-centeredness—not from that of outflowing love toward others.

The tree of LIFE—symbolic of God's Holy Spirit—was shut off and CLOSED to humans until Christ. Thus the foundation of this world—this civilization—was laid. Man has acquired material know-how to produce awesome progress, especially in this 20th century. But his progress is materialistic and physical. The uncompleted human mind has been capable of that. But the human mind has been only HALF there!

In relationship to God, what little mankind knows has been perverted by Satan. Man has been selfish in his relationship with people. He has lived the way of GETTING, not GIVING. He has been filled with greed, animosity, competition, vio-

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for Japanese history and culture.

Because of the storm of protests, the Japanese government announced that it would take another look at the controversial changes in the interest of regional harmony.

On top of the textbook controversy there came to light new evidence of brutal disease and human endurance tests carried out on prisoners of the Japanese in occu-

pled Manchuria during the war.

Then Americans were treated on television, in late 1982, to a gripping account of the suffering of American and Philippine soldiers in the Philippines from 1942 to the end of the war. The documentary was entitled *Bataan—the Forgotten Hell*.

Key Is Confidence in U.S.

Because of recent past history,

Japan's leadership will certainly be cautious before translating its enormous economic power into greater political and military influence.

For now, at least, the Japanese are content to crouch safely behind America's nuclear shield. But, no doubt, leading Japanese are beginning to have grave doubts about

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Personal from...

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lence, destruction. He has destroyed all of God's earth his hands could touch or change—polluted the air and the water, worn out the soil. But **WHAT IF** Adam had taken of the tree of **LIFE** which God freely offered him?

"He Would Have . . ."

He would have received the Holy Spirit of God. He would thus have been given a spiritually comprehending mind. He would have continued in close relationship with God, especially in the Person of the Word, later designated as Yahweh, who would have revealed knowledge and truth progressively to Adam as he was able to absorb and understand it. He would have received the **LOVE** of God, God's divine love for fulfilling the law. He would have received the **FAITH** of God, and even spiritual **POWER** to resist evil and for self-control.

But, would Satan have been banished from the earth at the time? From here on many questions may arise that God has not as yet revealed to us in the Bible. But some answers are evident, and others indicated by what is revealed.

Christ, the second Adam, resisted and rejected Satan in the great temptation (Matt. 4). But he did not take over the throne of the earth from Satan at that time, although he had qualified to take it over.

We, who do receive the Holy Spirit, are not made immortal at once, nor even in this mortal life. We must continue to overcome, to grow in grace and spiritual knowledge, and we must endure to the end of this mortal existence before

we shall be made immortal. So it is indicated surely that Adam would have continued as a mortal, having God's Spirit, until God's righteous character had been developed in him. Eventually he would have been made immortal, Satan would have been deposed and Adam would have sat on the throne of the earth.

He would have been taught by God continually. He surely would have learned to teach Cain, Abel, Seth and other children, from the cradle, in God's way of life and in resisting Satan.

God has not revealed it all. But we may know it would have been a far different world than that which Satan has deceived.

What DID and WILL Happen

But the first human, Adam, did not take of the freely offered tree of **LIFE**. So what is important to us is what did, and will happen.

God's **PURPOSE** in creating and putting on earth the human family was and is to reproduce himself—to create in and through the human family his own **GOD FAMILY WITH PERFECT SPIRITUAL CHARACTER**, to have the human family born into the **GOD FAMILY**. God's **PURPOSE** stands. It *shall* be accomplished. But how?

God's own perfect character can only be created in us by him, but with our own individual free choice, decision and will. The first Adam did not then acquiesce in that decision and free will. He yielded to Satan and opposite character through his wife Eve.

Thereupon God moved swiftly to do certain things.

First, he shut off access by humans to the tree of **LIFE**—to immortality. God was not willing that humans should live eternally in the unhappy torture of perverted

minds and the consequences of sin.

At the same time, so that sinning man be not lost from God-like happiness and the possibility of being born into the God family, it was thereupon necessary—at the very foundation of the human world—that Christ should come, be born human, and through death pay the penalty for the sins of all humans who repent and turn to God's way of life.

Simultaneously, it was appointed that all humans should die, but after this, through a resurrection, come to judgment (Heb. 9:27) in which the book of life could be opened (Rev. 20:12)—and, that as in Adam all should once die, so in Christ should all be made alive (I Cor. 15:22) and then judged.

In due time, nearly 4,000 years from the foundation of this world, Christ came. He said, "I will build my Church." As a foundation (with the prophets), he called and taught his 12 disciples. He commissioned them, as apostles, to teach all whom God would call. To them, upon repentance and belief, the Holy Spirit would be given, begetting them as sons of God. Even then, the Holy Spirit was still closed off to all except those chosen and drawn by God.

At the end of the Church age and 6,000 years from Adam, Christ would return to earth as King of kings and Lord of lords, ruling all nations, with the saints, for one millennium.

After this shall come the Great White Throne Judgment when all not called previously shall be resurrected in the judgment and come to understand what only a privileged few, who are called now, already understand.

Undoubtedly, billions of humans finally shall be born into the God family. □

Despite this Recession

YOU CAN SOLVE YOUR FINANCIAL WORRIES

by Herbert W. Armstrong

Here are facts you probably didn't know about your income.

FINANCIAL worries seem to plague us all!

In these recessionary times nearly every one of us is engaged in a constant struggle to make ends meet. Financial worries seem constantly to bear us down—rob us of real happiness and joy! Why should this be?

There is a reason! You can be free from financial worry!

What Most People Don't Know

Let me tell you something you probably *don't know* about your income. If there is anything people are jealous of in this period of rising costs, it is the money they earn. They usually work hard for it. And they want full freedom in deciding for themselves what they do with it.

People say: "What I earn is mine—I can do what I please with it!" But is the money you earn really your own? Don't be too sure. Listen to facts about your income you probably haven't known!

What you earn is not yours!

The man who says, "What I do with the money I earn is nobody's business! I produced it—it belongs to me," is mistaken.

What you earn by work performed, by services rendered, from investments made, *is not yours*—not any of it—that is, not UNTIL—and I will have to explain that "until."

There are two prior claims on your income. One, of course, is taxes.

But the *first* is God's claim. Most people have never realized this fact—but it is a fact. God Almighty the living creator-ruler of the universe claims it all—every dollar—every pound—every franc—every mark. Your Maker who gives you the very air you breathe tells you it all belongs to him, not to you!

But didn't you earn it? Didn't you produce it?

Not exactly! Everything produced—money, and the things that money can buy—comes out of the earth. You didn't produce the earth! God created that! You merely applied certain energy in thinking and in physical action to that which God created and owns. And where did the energy you expended come from? You didn't create it—you merely utilized what God created and supplied. God created even your thinking processes.

God Almighty created not only matter, but all force and energy. God set them in *motion*, in the laws of physics and chemistry. He created the human mind. He supplies even the energy used in thinking and acting. Yes, all has come from God!

It is God who sustains, preserves in motion, guides and directs, all the forces and energies. God is not merely a creator of the long ago!

God is the sustaining, directing, living ruler over all, today! It's a simple fact that, after all, it is God's labor of original thinking and planning and creating, and of continuous sustaining and directing, that really produces all.

Therefore God's claim to ownership of all you have thought you produced or earned is valid. It is prior to yours!

God Almighty says (Ps. 24:1-2): "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein..." (Revised Standard Version throughout). These inspired words are repeated in the New Testament in I Corinthians 10:26.

God Almighty owns this earth and everything that exists or lives upon it! "Whatever is under the whole heaven is mine," claims God in Job 41:11.

Turn to Deuteronomy 10:14: "Behold, to the Lord your God belong heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth with all that is in it." And in Exodus 19:5, God says: "All the earth is mine."

"If I were hungry," says God (Ps. 50:12), "I would not tell you; for the world and all that is in it is mine." "For every beast of the forest is mine, the cattle on a thousand hills" (verse 10).

Yes, even the money—even the gold and silver: "The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, says the Lord of hosts" (Hag. 2:8). Dare any man

deny this claim of God? God's claim stands! Admit, then, your income belongs to God! It's his to do with as he wills.

How God's Law Regulates Your Income

But God is a God of love. He knows your need in this time of recession. God is concerned about you. He has your welfare in mind. Therefore God has made a law respecting that portion of his wealth which your thinking and your labor has extracted and worked upon.

Get this fixed thoroughly in your mind. Your wages, your salary, your profit, your income belongs to God, not to you. Probably you never realized this before. This may seem like a new idea to you. But it is not an idea—it is a fact!

So God, the rightful owner of your income, has made a law respecting its disposal and its use.

God's law respecting what you earn is in fact a deal he has made with you. He allows you to work on his earth, to use a part of the earth, or what is in it, or on it, to utilize its forces and energies, and to extract from it food, materials, supplies, wood, metals, oils, coal—or to work on or with that which others have extracted from the earth, in manufacturing, distributing, buying, selling, investing—whatever may be your occupation or job or profession. So, whether you have realized it or not you have been working in partnership with God.

The farmer or gardener may plant seed, plow, and expend his labor in raising food. But who supplied the soil? Who created the living process that makes the seed sprout and grow? Who sends the rain, or provides water for irrigation? Who set the sun in the sky and causes it to shine and warm the earth? Who causes the plant to drink out of the soil the minerals and good elements, and to grow into the vegetable, the grain or the fruit? Did you perform this part of the business of raising the food you eat?

When we really think about it, we shall see that God supplies about nine parts of everything man makes or produces, and man's thinking, planning, and working

supplies only about one part. But God does not take nine tenths of the proceeds or the income. He doesn't take even six tenths, or even two tenths. God is generous. God has reserved for his use only *one* little tenth of what is produced out of his earth through his forces and energies!

God takes only **ONE** tenth. And after you have been honest in **PAYING** God's tenth to God's chosen representative, then—**AND NOT UNTIL THEN**—God has decreed that the other nine tenths becomes legally yours!

That's God's law!

Not a penny of what you earn, or a penny's worth of the value of what you produce, is yours—it all belongs to God to do with as he directs. God has legally directed that after you have honestly paid him the one little tenth he requires for his creative work, then the other nine tenths he gives to you. Then and not until then can you rightfully claim ownership over that nine tenths.

When we get our thinking straight—when we get understanding—when we stop to realize how much of what we have was provided by God—then we realize how loving, how generous, how solicitous for our welfare in this time of financial stress God is.

The Curses and Blessings

But that's only part of the story.

What does God want with that first tenth? How does he use it? He requires that small fraction of what is produced out of his earth for the purpose of disseminating to the people his message of the way of life that will free them from fears and worries, give them peace of mind and happiness, give them joy and success and life eternal!

Yes, even this tenth that God withholds for his use is expended for human good! For proclaiming his gospel of peace and happiness and joy and salvation! For letting people know God will heal them when they are sick—that God will deliver them from every trouble—supply their every need! Give them eternal life!

This unhappy recession-ridden world is starving for that knowledge!

This world is under a curse because it has robbed God of his money and his wealth, and thereby withheld from itself the knowledge of why it is in economic chaos—why there is no real peace—why it finds life empty and fruitless, full of suffering and unhappiness, frustration and death!

All of God's laws are for man's good!

Obedience to God's laws brings blessings! When we violate his laws, we bring curses upon ourselves!

Even the true Christians—the Spirit-begotten sons of God—need to cry out to God for help, for deliverance. In this world today, even those who turn to the ways of God suffer from the common violations of mankind as a whole. But there is help. There is deliverance! In Psalm 34:19, we read: "Many are the afflictions of the righteous; but the Lord delivers him out of them all." And in the 18th verse we read: "The Lord is near to the brokenhearted, and saves the crushed in spirit."

If we want that prayer answered—if we want the blessings of God, and not the curses of transgression—the way is to forsake our ways and our thoughts and return to God's ways.

How to Have More

Throughout the Scriptures God makes it a law that the first tenth of every individual's income shall be paid to God through his own called and chosen servant—for the purpose of proclaiming his gospel message!

That law has always been in force and effect. We find Abraham, 400 years before Moses, paying the tithe or the first tenth of his income to God's High Priest. Four hundred years later, when the Levitical priesthood started, we find the tithing law continued. During that period God commanded the people to pay the tithes to God's servants for that dispensation—the Levites.

And in Hebrews 7 in the New Testament, God shows us that, since the priesthood is changed to that of Jesus Christ, there is also made a change in the law
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Recession

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respecting tithes—not an abolition of that law, but a change. The tithes are now paid to the New Testament ministry of Jesus Christ for the great commission of proclaiming his gospel—the very gospel Christ preached—to the world today! In I Corinthians 9 the apostle Paul is inspired of God to instruct us that God has ordained that the New Testament gospel ministry of Christ shall be financed as the Levitical priesthood of the old covenant—by the tithes and freewill offerings of the people.

God's own financial system is making possible THIS VERY WORK OF GOD in proclaiming the gospel Christ preached to the world, on the *World Tomorrow* radio and television program and in *The Plain Truth* and other publications. Hundreds are writing in asking, how can we send out this powerful broadcast to the world, without publicly asking for money—how can we publish a magazine of worldwide circulation without subscription price? The plain, simple, straightforward answer is, THIS is the work of GOD, and it is sponsored and endowed only by God Almighty, through faith—and it is financed and conducted God's way, as God directs in his word! God has simply laid it on the hearts of enough individuals—many of them belonging to no denomination or religious organization, others belonging perhaps to many churches or denominations—to pay God's tithe and give generous offerings to God through his called and chosen servant whom he uses and through whom he speaks! This is the doing and work of God!

But now I want to show you more of the blessings for obedience and for honesty in money matters toward God, and the curses for neglect or disobedience.

When you pay tithes you are not giving God anything. They are not yours to give. The tithes belong to God. They never were yours! You pay your tithes—or rather, God's tithes. They belong to him, and he

says you are stealing when you take them.

God says to us through Malachi: "Will man rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, 'How are we robbing thee?'" And God answers, "In your tithes and offerings. You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me; the whole nation of you" (Mal. 3:8-9).

Understand this: All wealth is produced out of God's earth. It is God who sends the rain and the sunshine. God also has a thousand ways of making what you do pay off-bigger!

When you work diligently in this partnership to produce all you can, when you are honest with your Senior Partner—God—in paying

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All wealth is produced out of God's earth. God has a thousand ways of making what you do pay off bigger!

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him his portion of the proceeds, then God works with you, blesses your effort, causes the partnership to produce and earn more. He promises repeatedly in the Bible to prosper the tither. The tither has far more retaining his honest nine tenths than the man who cheats God and robs himself of God's blessing in this partnership. It's a blessing, or a curse, depending on you!

How You Can Prosper in Inflation

Continuing in Malachi 3, verses 10 and 11: "Bring the full tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house; and thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour

down for you an overflowing blessing. I will rebuke the devourer [crop-destroying pest] for you . . . your vine in the field shall not fail to bear, says the Lord of hosts."

That's God's promise! Why don't you put God to that test? Why don't you prove him to see if he doesn't increase the value of your income in this period of recession so that your own nine tenths God gives you will be worth more than your whole income now, that your financial worries will be ended?

"But I can't afford to tithe," complains one man. God's answer is, can you afford to steal from God? Pay God his tenth—and watch God increase the value of both his tenth and your nine tenths. That's the way to get bills paid, to get out of burdensome debt, to be free from financial worries.

A Spiritual Blessing

Tithing is a financial law. Notwithstanding, the biggest blessing of all is the spiritual blessing! Jesus said, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." That, too, is a law. If your treasure is in this world's amusements and pleasures—if your money—pardon me—God's money—is being spent on yourself, and your selfish desires, even including your needs, then your whole heart and interest is in this world and not in the kingdom of God.

Jesus also said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God," and all these material needs shall be added to you. Seek God and you'll prosper. The vast majority of people do not know these facts. The times of this ignorance God overlooks, but now commands all you who know this truth to repent, and to begin to pay God's tithe regularly.

The way to grow spiritually and to enjoy the glorious happiness of God's grace is to put God's tithe and your offerings—your treasure—into God's work. Seek with all your heart the kingdom of God and financial troubles will soon vanish; your life will become happy, full with assurance of life eternal through Jesus Christ our Lord! □