

Life Is Not Normal

By Dr. Gary M. Gulan, ©1983 (Rev. 86,89,92,95,05)

Introduction: Over the years, the Lord has brought people into my life that needed help. I remember one person locked himself in his bathroom at 1:30 in the morning and was going to shoot himself. I talked him out of killing himself. He had suffered from the effects of the Vietnam war. He asked "Why he was still having problems?" Another individual in our church was molesting his step sons. When discovered the mother and children asked, "Why this had happened?" One young lady in our church was raped late one night in her home. Later we found out it was her stepfather that did it. Her mother asked, "How could he have done this?" About ten years ago, one of our contractors at work was going through a trial. His wife, who was a nurse, developed a fast moving cancer and she died within one year's time. He asked, "Why would this happen to her when she was such a good woman?" Just recently, a friend at our local hardware store asked me, "Why one of his fellow workers developed brain cancer when she was such a caring person?" My answer to all these individuals was, "Life today is not normal."

Life today is not what God originally wanted for us. Allow me to show you what God's Word says about life. I would like to show you: 1. what our original world was like; 2. what the world we live in now is like; and 3. what the world to come will be like.

1. THE ORIGINAL WORLD

Let us look at the events of creation to see what life was like originally.

A. God created the light and darkness.

After this work on the first day of creation, God evaluated His work and said, "It was good," (Gen. 1:4).

B. God created the waters of the air, the dry land, and the sea.

After this work on the third day of creation, God evaluated His work and said, "It was good," (Gen. 1:10).

C. God created the grass, herbs, trees and fruit.

After this work also on the third day of creation, God evaluated His work and said, "It was good," (Gen. 1:12).

D. God divided the lights of heaven into day and night.

After this work on the fourth day of creation, God evaluated His work and said, "It was good," (Gen. 1:18).

E. God brought about the living creatures in the sea and the birds in the air.

After this work on the fifth day of creation, God evaluated His work and said, "It was good," (Gen. 1:21).

F. God brought about the living creatures on the land.

After this work on the sixth day of creation, God evaluated His work and said, "It was good," (Gen. 1:25).

What was the world like after the six days of creation? After all His creative work, God evaluated everything that He did, and He said, "It was very good," (Gen. 1:31).

The world was created and running just like God wanted. It was very good. God made a special place eastward in Eden for man to dwell. Life was very good. Life was perfect in Eden. So then, what happened to life? Why does it seem that life today is so difficult, so chaotic, and so trying at times, so abnormal?

2. TODAY'S WORLD

Something happened shortly after creation which changed our world and made our world "not normal." Man disobeyed God and brought about a total change to life. Notice that our life now is "not normal" because sin entered the world and judgment upon sin. Today's world is not normal because of the following reasons.

A. Disease, sickness, decay, degeneration, and deterioration, are all now a part of life.

The words of judgment God spoke to Adam, "You shall surely die," (Gen. 2:17), in the Hebrew literally means "in dying, you shall die."¹ The first part of this judgment was a "slow process of dying" which would ultimately lead to a "final death." This slow process would include disease, sickness, decay, and so on.

B. Death will happen as a part of life.

Both physical and spiritual death would happen to all of mankind, (Gen. 2:17, Rev. 20:14). At any moment we could die.

C. Evil and depravity are a part of life.

Evil (Heb. "ra'a" Gen. 3:5,22) is anything contrary to God's will and character. When man rebelled, all of mankind now would "know" what life is like to do things that were different than God's will and character.² Man would now know "evil."

D. Selfishness and self-centeredness are a part of life.

Man was now conscious of "self." He was now "aware of self" and became "self centered." He lost God's righteousness and was now all by himself. When the first man disobeyed God, all of mankind became selfish. His eyes were "opened," (Gen. 3:7), he was aware of "self," (Gen. 3:7). He understood he was naked because they lost God's garments of righteousness which covered him from these things, (Gen. 3:7).

E. God's provision and protection were forfeited now as a part of life.

Man experienced a separation from God. When the first man disobeyed God, fellowship was broken and man feared God and hid himself from God, (Gen. 3:8).

F. Sorrow was now a part of life.

There would be sorrow in child bearing and in marital fellowship, (Gen. 3:16).

G. The ground was cursed now as a part of life.

The background to this Hebrew word, "curse" (" 'arar," Gen. 3:17-18) comes from a word that means "snare or bind." The ground was to be a "snare" to mankind and it would be "bounded up" from the blessing of the Lord. Thorns and thistles will be brought forth in the creation.³

H. Toilsome labor was now a part of life.

"Sorrow or toil" in the Hebrew (" 'asab") means "toil or labor, with suffering." Life would become difficult. This toilsome labor in life would be the same as giving birth to a baby, (Gen. 3:17-18).⁴

I. Shortness or brevity was now a part of life.

There was no more access to the "tree of life" which would allow man to live forever in his physical state, (Gen. 3:22). Man's longevity would be greatly decreased. Life definitely changed from what God's original creation for man was. Now life was not normal for man. Man's sin caused many difficulties for him in every day life as well as over his lifetime.

3. THE FUTURE WORLD

There is a "new world" coming where life will be restored to a better world than it was in the garden of Eden. Notice how this "new world" from God will be.

A. There will be no tears, (Rev. 21:4).

B. There will be no death, (Rev. 21:4).

C. There will be no sorrow, (Rev. 21:4).

D. There will be no crying, (Rev. 21:4).

E. There will be no pain, (Rev. 21:4).

F. Former things passed away, (Rev. 21:4).

G. There will be no more curse, (Rev. 22:3,14).

Life in the "new earth" to come, will have all the evidence and effect of sin removed. God will recreate a "new" earth better than the garden of Eden. The word "new" (Gr. "kainos") means, "renovate, make better, of higher excellence."⁵

Conclusion: We know life today is not normal because: (1.) God originally created a perfect world a very good life for man; and that (2.) man disobeyed God which brought sinful consequences on life and changed life from its original creation.

We also know that God has a wonderful plan which: (1.) helps us live in a world that is not normal; (2.) is going to create a future world where life will be better than the life which was originally created the first time.

Notes:

¹Lectures in Systematic Theology, Henry Thiessen, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979, p. 183.

²Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, Harris, Archer, Waltke, Chicago: Moody, 1980, Vol. 2, p. 855.

³Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, Harris, Archer, Waltke, Chicago: Moody, 1980, Vol. 1, p. 75.

⁴Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, Harris, Archer, Waltke, Chicago: Moody, 1980, Vol. 2, p. 687.

⁵The Analytical Greek Lexicon, Harold Moulton, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979, p. 208.