

A How did God originally communicate with humanity?

- ❖ In the beginning, God created the world to be inhabited by human beings (Isaiah 45:18). When everything was ready, He created Adam from the dust of the ground (Genesis 2:4-7). On the same day, He created Eve from one of Adam's ribs (Genesis 2:18, 21-22). Humanity was now complete and ready to inhabit the newly created world (Genesis 1:27).
- ❖ During this process, there was much communication between God and Adam:
 - He gave him instructions about the work he was to do in Eden (Gen. 2:15).
 - He pointed out his limitations (Gen. 2:16-17).
 - He asked him to name the animals (Gen. 2:19).
 - He introduced him to Eve, and united them in marriage (Gen. 2:22-24).
- ❖ God instructed Adam and Eve on how they should behave and what they should eat (Gen. 1:28-29). He created them as social beings, with the capacity to communicate, not only with each other, but with other beings (such as angels). Then he created the seventh day so that he could enjoy their company throughout that day. From that moment on, he met with them every day at dusk (Gen. 3:8).

B How did humanity stop communicating with God?

- ❖ Adam and Eve were created with the capacity to choose freely. In order for them to exercise that freedom, God gave them everything, but reserved a tree for himself (Gen. 2:16-17).
- ❖ On that same tree, the tempter, disguised as a serpent and pretending to want the well-being of Adam and Eve, told them a series of lies (which Eve transmitted to Adam): you are immortal ("you will not die"); you will be gods ("you will be like God"); God hides the truth from you ("God knows that...") (Gen. 3:1-5).
- ❖ Fascinated by the wonders of the forbidden fruit, Eve ate some and enticed Adam, who also ate some (Gen. 3:6). At that moment, the mantle of glory that covered them disappeared; they realized their nakedness; and they sought solutions to hide their error (Gen. 3:7).
- ❖ The next negative reaction was that they felt so guilty about their disobedience that they did not want to communicate with God anymore (Gen. 3:8).

C How did God try to restore communication?

- ❖ Knowing that Adam and Eve had sinned, God—as was his custom—approached them to speak with them. For the first time, instead of joyfully coming out to meet him, God had to call them to meet with him (Gen. 3:8-9).
- ❖ Although they did not want to communicate with God, God did want to communicate with them. He did not shy away from the sinner's company, but confronted him with his sin, seeking his repentance (Gen. 3:10-11).
- ❖ Centuries later, God looked upon another sinner to bring about his repentance: Peter (Luke 22:61-62). Unlike Peter, who acknowledged his sin, Adam and Eve began to justify themselves before God and blame others for their transgression (Genesis 3:12-13).
- ❖ Today, we humans follow similar patterns. We cling to sin and try to justify ourselves. Even though sin "sticks" to us, God still wants to restore us, and He calls us: "Come to Me" (Isaiah 55:3).

D Why can't we communicate directly with God now?

- ❖ God presented to the sinful couple the consequences of their sin, among which was the impossibility of speaking directly to God again after their expulsion from Eden (Gen. 3:16-24).
 - Consequences for Eve: Pain in childbirth and loss of equality with Adam
 - Consequences for Adam: To work hard and cultivate in order to eat
 - Consequences for All: Death and separation from God

E How can we communicate with God today?

- ❖ To communicate with us today, God has written two "reference books": Creation, and the Bible (Rom. 1:20; 2 Tim. 3:15).
- ❖ Although Creation speaks to us of the Creator, it is deeply tainted by sin. The Bible, however, contains clear and direct guidelines, transmitted by the prophets who received messages from God. In the Bible, we also find the most perfect manifestation of God in the life and ministry of Jesus (Heb. 1:1-2). In it, we are shown who we are, where we come from, and where we are going. There we find God's purpose for our lives.
- ❖ Furthermore, God communicates with us through prayer (Psalm 5:2); angels (Acts 8:26); prophets (Joel 2:28); and, especially, through the Holy Spirit (John 14:26).

APPENDIX: BIOGRAPHY OF ELLEN G. WHITE

Ellen Gould and Elizabeth Harmon, the youngest of Eunice and Robert Harmon's eight children, were born on November 26, 1827 in Gorham, Maine, USA.

Shortly afterwards the family moved to Portland, a major city in Maine, to expand their hat-making business.

When Ellen was nine years old, a classmate threw a stone at her, causing a severe facial injury. The injury left her with lasting effects that forced her to drop out of school and limited her social life.

The family accepted William Miller's teachings, and Ellen was baptized into the Methodist church in 1842.

But Ellen felt lost, and believed herself unworthy of salvation, until Pastor Levi Stockman helped her understand God's true love.

From that moment on, she fell deeply in love with Jesus and served him for the rest of her life.