

OPENING SCRIPTURES:

For all sinned and are falling short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23) [and also]

For the wage of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 6:23)

WHAT FOLLOWS IS A BRIEF SUMMARY OF GENESIS 3:1-7 [Read Genesis 3:1-7]

Since Romans Chapter 5 is Paul's theological assessment of Genesis 3:1-7, I will include some points here from the Genesis passage before turning to the theological section of today's Handout (Romans 5:12-19).

The questions addressed both in Genesis Chapter 3 and in Romans Chapter 5 are these:

- (1) What was the original (created) state (spiritually) of the human race?*
- (2) What is the current state (spiritually) of the human race?*
- (3) Has man always been as he is now, or did something happen to make him this way?*
- (4) Is there a spiritual remedy for mankind?*

(1) WHAT WAS THE ORIGINAL STATE (SPIRITUALLY) OF THE HUMAN RACE?

This is one of the easier questions to answer. We know from **Genesis 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25**, and especially from **verse 31**, that all the things God created, including **ADAM** and **EVE**, were **GOOD**¹. **ADAM** walked with God in the Garden, a place that can be described as '*a perfect environment.*' **ADAM** communed with God in perfect fellowship. There existed no wall of moral separation between the Creator and **ADAM**. All things were as they should be.

So, the answer to our first question is: '*the original state of mankind was one of perfect spiritual communion with God. ADAM had complete access to God. Nothing separated the human race from the Creator. Fellowship with God in the Garden of Eden did NOT require a mediator.*

(2) WHAT IS THE CURRENT STATE (SPIRITUALLY) OF THE HUMAN RACE?

The current state of the human race is summed up by the words of David in Psalm 14:

***THE FOOL** has said in his heart, 'there is no God.' They (the human race) are corrupt; they have committed abominable deeds; there is no one who does good (i.e., in the sense of divine good as described by the term *tôv*). **THE LORD** has looked down from heaven upon the sons of men to see if there are any who understand, (if there are any) who seek God. They (the human race) all have turned aside; together they have become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one – Psalm 14:1-3.*

The result of **ADAM'S** transgression, expressed so well by **DAVID**, also is described by the prophet **JEREMIAH**, who said: "*The heart (of man) is more deceitful than all else, and it is desperately sick, who can understand it*" – **Jeremiah 17:9**.

This is the current state of the human race: *corrupt, deceitful, sick, a denier of God, and terminally ill*. **JEREMIAH** uses the term '*sick*' in his description of the current state of mankind. The word-in-question is אָנָשׁ (pronounced 'ānaš'). It means, '*to be weak*' or '*sick.*' However, what is

¹ The Hebrew word translated 'good' is טוֹב (pronounced *tôv*). Among other things, '*tov*' means, whatever is referenced is operating in perfect consistency with the nature and attributes of God. Nothing God created is abnormal, including Adam and Eve.

interesting about this word is it also is the root word from which one of several Hebrew terms for 'mankind' is derived².

Of course, this begs **OUR THIRD QUESTION**: "*Has man always been as he is now, or did something happen to make him this way*"?

(3) HAS MAN ALWAYS BEEN (SPIRITUALLY) AS HE IS NOW OR DID SOMETHING HAPPEN TO MAKE HIM THIS WAY?

Our third question requires an understanding of man's original state – (*described above*) – which must be compared to man's current state – (*described in the previous section*) – Then by reviewing the events and consequences recorded in Genesis Chapter 3 – (*we learn to our dismay*) – **SOMETHING DID HAPPEN THAT MADE US THIS WAY.**

So, the answer is clear: something happened that made us as we now are ... something happened that explains the current state of mankind. *Man is not now what (or as) he was created to be.*

When **ADAM** disobeyed God and sin and death entered into the human race, everything changed. Beyond the moral separation between God and fallen man there is **A SERIES OF SEPARATIONS** that also occurred as a result of **THE FALL** ... And these can be summarized by the phrase, '**ADAM DIED.**'

So, how is it we see **ADAM** walking around, doing things after he sinned (*and supposedly died*)? **HOW IS IT HE IS ALIVE, YET DEAD? THE ANSWER IS, DEATH OCCURS IN THREE STAGES:**

I. FIRST THERE IS SPIRITUAL DEATH: **ADAM** was created to have eternal fellowship with his Creator – and this is what he experienced for some indefinite period of time.

- But that relationship was broken the instant **ADAM** disobeyed God's commandment.
 - *You can think of this as a **VERTICAL** relationship – the relationship between the Creator and His creation.*
 - Another way to say this is, '*At the instant **ADAM** sinned, **HE DIED SPIRITUALLY***' – a spiritual separation occurred between **THE ABSOLUTE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD** and **THE SINFULNESS OF ADAM.**

Sadly, this is the condition of every man born a descendant of **ADAM**. On the many occasions I have said, '*every descendant of **ADAM** is born on **DEATH ROW***' – this is what I have meant.

- There are no exceptions to this ... and furthermore, you do not need to do anything to find yourself in this condition.
- If you were born into this world, you were born spiritually dead ... and there is nothing that lies within your power to change your situation.
- This is what **PAUL** meant when he wrote in 1 Corinthians 15:22: "*For **IN ADAM ALL DIE** but **ALL WHO ARE IN CHRIST ARE MADE ALIVE.***"

*So, the first stage of death is brought about by the original sin of **ADAM** and it has been passed on to all his progeny.*

² One of the Hebrew terms for mankind is a word that means '*man in his weakness, man in his frailty, man as failing due to his sickness.*' This word is אֱנוֹשׁ (pronounced 'enoš'). Do you see the similarity between 'ānaš ('to be sick') and 'enoš ('mankind'). Only the vowels are different. So, the weakness of man that resulted from the Fall has come to define who we are. We are 'enoš (weak mankind) because we are 'ānaš (spiritually weak and sick).

II. NEXT THERE IS PHYSICAL DEATH: Though ADAM continued to live physically, though he bore children, though he lived a longer biological life than we will – his body was destined to return to the dust from which he was made.

- God explained this to ADAM in Genesis 3:19 as part of the curse: “*You shall return to the ground from which you were taken, for you are dust and to dust you shall return.*”
- There was no confusion on the part of ADAM about what had taken place. He was not perplexed about *the difference in spiritual death and physical death* as so many people are today; he understood it.

III. AND FINALLY, THERE IS THE SECOND DEATH: *This is an eternal, conscious death – an eternal separation.* You can think of it as an ETERNAL HORIZONTAL EXTENSION of the SEPARATION FROM GOD caused by SIN. PAUL SAID IN 2ND THESSALONIANS:

(When) the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, (He will) deal out retribution to those, who do not know God, and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and the glory of His power – Thessalonians 1:7^B-9.

Here PAUL explains the duration and extent of what elsewhere in Scripture is called ‘HELL³.’

First, ETERNAL DESTRUCTION does not mean annihilation; rather, it is an irreversible state of conscious torment. The Greek phrase is *ὄλεθρον αἰώνιον* (pronounced *ólethron aiōnion*) indicates two things: (1) This new, irreversible state-of-being lasts forever, and (2) it is described as a separation from the presence of the Lord.

Those who do not accept the gospel of Jesus Christ will pay the penalty for ADAM’S SIN and for their own SINS – THIS IS THE WORD OF THE LORD.

It seems men want to ignore death to the degree possible, but it is important to understand exactly what death is and how it has impacted the human race – and is no surprise SATAN does not want us to understand the full extent of the peril in which we find ourselves.

REINHOLD NIEBUHR, a theologian not known for his conservatism, was able to comprehend *the current condition of the human race*, as well as *man’s never-ending effort* to avoid the clear message of Scripture. In his book, THE KINGDOM OF GOD IN AMERICA, published in 1937, NIEBUHR wrote:

Christian people have begun to put their trust in a God without wrath, who brings Men without sin into a Kingdom without judgment, through the ministrations of a Christ without a Cross.

NIEBUHR wrote that in 1937. He understood clearly that something had happened to the human race that ruined us and left us in need of a savior. And it is NIEBUHR who alludes to the remedy – which of course brings us to question number four.

(4) IS THERE A SPIRITUAL REMEDY FOR MANKIND?

Man had an excellent starting point; he was created ‘good’ by the LORD GOD, who handed ADAM on a silver platter the possibility of a perfect life of fellowship with God in a perfect environment: the Garden of Eden. But ADAM transgressed the one Law God had given him; he ate the fruit of THE TREE OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL, and by his act of disobedience, he became corrupt.

³ See Revelation 20:14-15; Matthew 8:12; 22:13; 25:30; Luke 16:24-26.

But this corruption did not end with ADAM. As THE FEDERAL HEAD of the human race, ADAM represented himself, he represented EVE, and he represented all his off-spring: *i.e.*, the rest of humanity.

Though humanity hit a low-point with the sin of ADAM, God had a remedy in mind, a remedy that would be found in the substitutionary atonement accomplished by JESUS CHRIST when He died on the cross for the sins of the world.

God first explained His plan to redeem a remnant of the human race in Genesis 3:15. Speaking to the serpent, who was in fact LUCIFER – the angel, who led the revolt against God at a point in time prior to Genesis One – God said:

I will put enmity between you (the SERPENT) and the woman (EVE) and between your seed and her seed. He shall bruise you on the head, and you will bruise him on the heel – Genesis 3:15.

Theologians see in Genesis 3:15 the first pronouncement of the gospel in Scripture. It is a divine promise that a remedy will be made available to redeem ADAM and his race from the effects of the Fall. That remedy is explained by PAUL in his letter to the Corinthian Church:

He (God the Father) made Him (God the Son: JESUS CHRIST), who knew no sin, to be sin on our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God in Him – 2 Corinthians 5:21.

Now that we understand the historical events that took place in Genesis 3:1-7, let's turn to the New Testament and see how THE APOSTLE PAUL interpreted these events theologically.

PAUL'S THEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION OF GENESIS 3:1-7 – [Read Romans 5:12-19]

Notice Romans 5:12 begins with the phrase, 'THROUGH ONE MAN.' This passage is about ONE DECISION made by ONE MAN. SEVERAL TIMES in our passage, reference is made to 'one man' committing 'one transgression.' We cannot overlook these statements, either explicit assertions or by the appearance of the term, 'transgression' in the singular, without concluding THE DOCTRINE OF ORIGINAL SIN rests solely on one transgression committed by one man – and that man was ADAM. THIS MEANS EVE WAS NOT THE ONE GOD TESTED.

What took place in the Garden of Eden indeed was a test, and it was ONE MAN who was tested and ONLY ONE MAN – ADAM. The result of the test was both a SIN and a TRANSGRESSION. A TRANSGRESSION differs from A SIN in that for a transgression to occur, a law or a commandment must be broken. WHEREAS SIN IS A MORAL ISSUE, A TRANSGRESSION IS A LEGAL ISSUE.

The structure of Romans 5:12-19 makes the passage somewhat difficult. PAUL begins his big idea – the thrust of the passage – in verse 12, but he interrupts the flow of thought in verse 13 ... (because verses 13-17 form a parenthesis between the beginning of PAUL'S big idea in verse 12, and his completion of it in the latter half of verse 18).

To understand PAUL'S point, we must read verse 12 ... then skip to the latter half of verse 18:

HERE IS THE INITIAL READING OF THE TEXT – (VERSE 12 & VERSE 18^B):

Just as through one man (ADAM) sin entered into the world (the HUMAN RACE), and death through sin, and so death spread to all men ... because (in ADAM) all sinned ... even so through one act of righteousness (the CROSS) there resulted justification of life to all men – Romans 5:12, 18^B.

THEN TO UNDERSCORE THIS POINT – (VERSE 19):

For as through the one man's disobedience (ADAM'S) the many were made sinners, even so, through the obedience of the One (JESUS CHRIST), the many will be made righteous – Romans 5:19.

This passage lays out the primary New Testament text for the Doctrine of Original Sin.

Romans 5:13 reads – *“For until the (Mosaic) Law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law.”*

This verse is strong support for the Doctrine of Federal Headship. From it we learn a principle is in play, viz., that *‘sin is not imputed apart from law.’* Why is this important to know? Because the Law in question is the Mosaic Law, a legal system given to Moses in the 15th Century B.C., long after the events in EDEN. So, between ADAM and MOSES, there was no law-code to break. During the time between ADAM and MOSES, sin was in the world, but it was not imputed apart from the Mosaic Law.

(Now look at) Romans 5:14 – *“Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam.”* During this period of time (between Adam to Moses) when there was no law to break, and when sin was not imputed because there was no law, still death reigned. Why? How?

And what does, *“those who had not sinned in the likeness of ADAM”* mean? Well, in what way did ADAM sin? He sinned by breaking a law ... so there was a law ADAM was commanded to obey and he transgressed by breaking that law. *It is breaking a law that makes a sin a transgression for ‘transgressor’ is a legal term that means, ‘law-breaker.’* So, *‘sinning in the likeness of ADAM’ would be ‘transgressing by breaking a divine law.’* Yet, between ADAM and MOSES, there was no such law to break, so men could not be legally guilty of sins they committed during a time of *‘no law.’* In other words, they could not sin after the manner and likeness of ADAM.

But even so, the same penalty – DEATH – reigned over all men, even those who did not sin in the likeness of ADAM.

Now PAUL is careful to explain that *‘sin, as moral failure, was in the world even in the absence of divine law’* ... but that moral failure was not imputed apart from law. However, what WAS imputed was ADAM’S ORIGINAL TRANSGRESSION! So, in a time when there was no divinely ordained law, when men could not sin after the likeness of ADAM, when sin was in the world but was not imputed, **EVEN THEN MEN DIED. HOW? WHY THEN DID THEY DIE** if SIN BRINGS ABOUT DEATH, yet SIN IS NOT IMPUTED? They died because ADAM’S ORIGINAL SIN already had been imputed to them at the instant, **HE – ADAM** – transgressed God’s Law in the Garden of Eden ... and that is what is meant in Romans 5:12 by the phrase, **‘ALL SINNED.’**

[Read Romans 5:15-17] – After a lot of bad news, there is good news. God has given us a gift that is greater than the judgment that came through the imputation of ADAM’S SIN. ADAM’S TRANSGRESSION resulted in death to all men, but the free gift through Christ results both in (1) the cancellation of ADAM’S SIN and (2) forgiveness for all the personal sins committed by anyone who puts his faith in Christ alone as his Savior.

[Read Romans 5:18-19] – As covered in the lesson, this is the summation of PAUL’S big idea: *‘ONE Transgression’ committed by ‘ONE Man’ resulted in death passing upon ‘ALL Men,’ but through the obedience of ‘ONE Man’ (the Second Adam – JESUS CHRIST), many will be made righteous.*

Just as ADAM, our FEDERAL HEAD, brought judgment on us because of his **DISOBEDIENCE**, so also **CHRIST NOW IS OUR FEDERAL HEAD** and through **HIS OBEDIENCE**, we are made righteous.

Now I want to put forth a few words about **FAIRNESS**: The man who senses unfairness at the idea that ADAM stood as his representative in the Garden, has but *one alternative ... He must stand for himself as his own representative before ALMIGHTY GOD at the JUDGMENT.* So, ask yourself:

- **IS THAT WHAT YOU WANT?**
- **COULD YOU HAVE DONE BETTER THAN ADAM?**
- Would you have been **OBEDIENT** in the same situation?
- The man, who believes God is unfair, has stepped away from **THE PRINCIPLE OF SUBSTITUTION**, and in so doing, he has chosen to stand for himself.
- *And in that case, Christ no longer stands for that man as his Substitute in Redemption.*

The man who claims God's plan is unfair must be prepared to stand alone in the daily battle against **SATAN** ... and under no circumstances can he afford to fail ... *and yet – has he not already failed – a thousand times over?*

- God knew **ADAM** would fail. He knew it in eternity past before the world existed. And He already knew if man were to prevail against **SATAN**, He would have to become a man Himself in order to defeat **SATAN** on our behalf. **HE WOULD HAVE TO BECOME THE NEW FEDERAL HEAD OF ALL WHO BELIEVE THE GOSPEL.**
- You see, far from being unfair, God's plan shows a degree of **WISDOM** to which man could never attain.
- **ADAM** failed when he ate from *the forbidden tree*; but **CHRIST** succeeded by *dying on another tree* at a place called Calvary.
- *In God's Infinite Wisdom:*
 - *ADAM stood as your representative ... and failed; but ...*
 - *JESUS (the Second ADAM) stands in VICTORY as your representative ... and His victory has become your victory.*

And just what is that **VICTORY**? **PAUL TELLS US IN ROMANS 5:20-21:**

The Law came in so that the transgression would increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, so that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord – Romans 5:20-21.

ADDENDUM – FRANCIS SCHAEFFER'S FIVE RESULTS OF THE FALL:

FRANCIS SCHAEFFER has identified five results of **THE FALL** – and all five have to do with **SEPARATION** –

ADAM'S TRANSGRESSION SEPARATED:

- **MAN FROM HIS CREATOR**, so that all theological error results from **THE FALL** ... *The Fall Separated ...*
- **MAN FROM WOMAN**, thus all the marital problems that affect our homes find their origin in **THE FALL** ... *The Fall Separated ...*
- **MAN FROM MANKIND**, thus all the sociological issues we encounter in society are a result of **THE FALL**... *It Divided ...*
- **MAN FROM HIMSELF**, a separation that is responsible for all psychological pathologies ... *and finally, the Fall Divorced ...*
- **MAN FROM HIS ENVIRONMENT**, a division that is responsible for all the environmental issues we debate today.