

# BIBLE TRUTHS EXPLAINED

*What the Bible Teaches About*

## THE FALL OF MAN

*Revised Edition, 2026*

**GORDON LYONS**

**ESV Edition**

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Bible Truths Explained: *The Fall of Man*

First published: 2005, Revised 2026

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### *The Fall of Man*

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- Keil, C.F & Delitzsch, F *Keil & Delitzsch Commentary on the Old Testament* Vols. 1-10: Electronic Edition STEP Files Copyright © 2000, Findex.Com. All rights reserved. Parsons Church Group, A Division of Findex.com, Inc. Omaha, Nebraska.
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#### Special Acknowledgement

I must acknowledge a genuine debt of gratitude to the work of Dr. Charles Hodge. The writings of this theologian from a previous generation have helped considerably in preparing this work. On a number of occasions—as will be seen when reading these studies—I have cited or alluded to Dr. Hodge's remarks in his three-volume *Systematic Theology*. These references have been acknowledged in the footnotes to the study text.

# The Fall of Man

## Table of Contents

IMPORTANT NOTICE.....	ii
COPYRIGHT NOTICES.....	iii
Permitted Charges and Payments .....	iii
Translation Information.....	iii
PRINCIPAL WORKS CONSULTED .....	v
The Fall of Man .....	vii
PART 1 .....	1
Synopsis: The Fall of Man .....	1
Note 1: The Forbidden Fruit .....	1
Scripture References (ESV) <i>The Forbidden Fruit</i> .....	1
Note 2: Death is Punishment for Sin.....	1
Scripture References (ESV) <i>Death is Punishment for Sin</i> .....	2
Note 3: Imputed Guilt.....	2
Scripture References (ESV) <i>Imputed Guilt</i> .....	3
PART 2 .....	4
The Protovangel.....	4
Christ Destroys Satan’s Power .....	4
Scripture References (ESV) <i>Christ Destroys Satan’s Power</i> .....	4
Children of God, and Children of the Devil .....	5
Scripture References (ESV) <i>Children of God, and Children of the Devil</i> .....	5
Delivered from the Devil’s Domain.....	6
The Seed of the Woman is Christ.....	6
Scripture References (ESV ) <i>The Seed of the Woman is Christ</i> .....	6
Seed / Offspring: Singular and Plural .....	7
PART 3 .....	8
Origins of Mankind: Current Philosophical View .....	8
Mankind Worships a Supreme Being.....	8
Prehistorical Man?.....	8
Historical Man .....	9
Biblical Creation Account.....	9

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Scripture References (ESV) <i>Biblical Creation Account</i> .....	9
Man’s Mind is Finite .....	11
Some Biblical Statements Misinterpreted .....	11
PART 4 .....	13
Man Originally Righteous .....	13
Man Created in God’s Image .....	13
Scripture References (ESV) <i>Man Created in God’s Image</i> .....	13
Man Chose to Disobey God .....	14
Sexual Relations had No Part in the Fall.....	14
God Created Eve for Adam .....	15
Scripture References (ESV) <i>God Created Eve for Adam</i> .....	15
God Blesses the Marital Union .....	15
Corruption of Mind and Nature.....	16
PART 5 .....	17
Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden .....	17
The Entrance of Sin.....	17
Earth Cursed on Account of Adam’s Sin.....	18
Removal of God’s Curse on the Earth .....	18
Renewal of the Earth by Fire.....	19
God’s New Creation .....	19
PART 6 .....	21
The Fall of Man.....	21
Augustinian Doctrine of the Fall .....	21
Eve Tempted by Satan.....	22
Sins Committed at the Fall.....	23
The Magnitude of Adam and Eve’s Sin .....	24
PART 7 .....	25
Effects of the Fall .....	25
The Effects of God’s Curse .....	25
Adam’s Sin Imputed to all Mankind.....	27
Sinful from Conception.....	27
Sinful Nature Not Transmitted to Christ.....	28
Christ Totally Sinless .....	28
Virgin Mary Not Sinless .....	29
PART 8 .....	30
Nature of Death.....	30
Death is the Penalty of Sin.....	31

PART 9 ..... 33  
Eternal Life Now Limited to the Redeemed ..... 33  
Evidence of the New Life ..... 34  
Practical Evidences of a New Life..... 34  
What Counts is a New Creation ..... 35

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## PART 1

### Synopsis: The Fall of Man

When God created Adam and Eve, they did not have a corrupt or sinful nature. Rather, the Lord God created Adam and Eve originally righteous. When seduced by the subtlety and temptation of Satan, however, our first parents sinned by disobeying God's command, and eating the forbidden fruit. By this sin, they fell from their state of original righteousness and communion with God, and so became dead in sin, and wholly defiled in soul and body. Since Adam and Eve were the root of all humanity, the guilt of this sin (original sin) was imputed (reckoned) to all their offspring descending from them by natural procreation. Similarly, death—which included the total corruption of their nature—was transmitted to all their offspring. Thus, today, everyone in the world has a corrupt, sinful nature, inherited from Adam and Eve, their first parents.<sup>1</sup>

### Note 1: The Forbidden Fruit

The common belief that the forbidden fruit was an apple has no Scriptural basis or support. The Bible does not specify the type of fruit in the Garden; nor is it relevant to the fall of man. The point to be emphasised is our first parent's wilful disobedience and rebellion—not the precise nature of the forbidden fruit.

#### Scripture References (ESV)

#### *The Forbidden Fruit*

When God commanded Adam and Eve not to eat the forbidden fruit, the Lord God did not specify the kind of fruit. He specified the tree only as *the tree of the knowledge of good and evil*. Thus, God's Word says:

Genesis 2:9

<sup>9</sup>And out of the ground the LORD God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Genesis 2:16-17

<sup>16</sup>And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, <sup>17</sup>but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

### Note 2: Death is Punishment for Sin

When Adam and Eve disobeyed God's express command, and ate the forbidden fruit, God punished our first parents with the sentence of death. In the Bible, 'death' means *spiritual, physical, and eternal* death. (For fuller explanation, see below on the *Nature of Death*, Part 8, p.30.) From that moment on, Adam and Eve lost their close communion or fellowship with God. Their sin had alienated them from

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<sup>1</sup> Based on *Westminster Confession of Faith*, [Inverness: Free Presbyterian Publications, 1976 reprint] ch. 6:1-3, pp.38-40.

their Creator and Father in heaven. It had corrupted their originally righteous nature. Now, that fallen and sinful nature would be biased toward evil continually. This, and other related effects, forms part of *spiritual death*. In addition, their bodies now became subject to ageing, decay, illness, disease; and, eventually, cessation of all life-sustaining functions and activities. This is *physical death*. Unless they were to be forgiven, redeemed, and reconciled to God during their lifetime, physical death would be followed by *eternal death*. Eternal death is the final and everlasting separation from God and his love in that place of unremitting torments described in the Bible as ‘everlasting fire’ or a ‘lake of fire’.

**Scripture References (ESV)*****Death is Punishment for Sin*****Spiritual death:**

Ephesians 2:1

<sup>1</sup> And you were dead in the trespasses and sins.

Ephesians 2:5

<sup>5</sup> even when we were dead in our trespasses [sins], made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—

**Physical death (prior to resurrection):**

1 Corinthians 15:21-22

<sup>21</sup> For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. <sup>22</sup> For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.

**Eternal death:**

Matthew 25:41

<sup>41</sup> “Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

Matthew 25:46

<sup>46</sup> And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

Revelation 20:15

<sup>15</sup> And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

**Note 3: Imputed Guilt**

In the above Synopsis, we said that the guilt of Adam’s sin was imputed or reckoned to all his offspring; i.e., to all humanity. We said also that the resulting corruption of Adam’s nature was transmitted to every one of his descendants. This, of course, means all of Adam and Eve’s posterity descending from

them in the usual way; i.e., by natural procreation and conception. Clearly, this encompasses every human being born into the world. However, it does not include the Lord Jesus Christ. Although Jesus developed naturally in Mary's womb and although he experienced a natural birth, the holy Son of God was not *conceived* naturally. Rather, Jesus was conceived *supernaturally and directly*, through the power of God's Holy Spirit. For this reason, Adam's fallen and sinful nature was not transmitted to the incarnate Son of God.

**Scripture References (ESV)*****Imputed Guilt***

Romans 5:12

<sup>12</sup>Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned—

Luke 1:31, 34-35

<sup>31</sup>And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus.

<sup>34</sup>And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"

<sup>35</sup>And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God.

## PART 2

### The Protovangel

Addressing the serpent who deceived Eve, the LORD God declared:

Genesis 3:15

<sup>15</sup> I will put enmity between you and the woman,  
and between your offspring [or *seed*] and her offspring;  
he shall bruise your head,  
and you shall bruise his heel.”

This verse is known as the *protoevangel*. It is the first announcement in the Bible of the *evangel* or *gospel*, by which Christ would redeem multitudes of people from the effects of the Fall, and would triumph over Satan through the cross. Christ would accomplish this redemption and victory over sin, death and Satan by his perfect obedience and substitutionary atonement.

### Christ Destroys Satan's Power

#### Scripture References (ESV)

#### *Christ Destroys Satan's Power*

Concerning the Lord's triumph over Satan, the Scripture says:

Luke 10:17-18

<sup>17</sup> The seventy-two returned with joy, saying, “Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!” <sup>18</sup> And he said to them, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. (See vv.19-20)

John 12:31

<sup>31</sup> Now is the judgement of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out. (See vv.32-33)

John 16:8-11

<sup>8</sup> And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgement: <sup>9</sup> concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; <sup>10</sup> concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; <sup>11</sup> concerning judgement, because the ruler of this world is judged.

Colossians 2:15

<sup>15</sup> He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.

Hebrews 2:14-16

<sup>14</sup>Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, <sup>15</sup>and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. <sup>16</sup>For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham.

1 John 3:8

<sup>8</sup>Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.

## Children of God, and Children of the Devil

Scripture References (ESV)

*Children of God, and Children of the Devil*

In Genesis 3:15, the seed of the devil is all mankind generally, with the exception of those whom God in his grace has redeemed. Thus, it is written of the Lord Jesus:

Matthew 13:37-39a

<sup>37</sup>He answered, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. <sup>38</sup>The field is the world, and the good seed is the sons of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one, <sup>39a</sup>and the enemy who sowed them is the devil... (See vv.24-30)

John 8:44

<sup>44</sup>You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies. (See vv.37-47)

1 John 3:8

<sup>8</sup>Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.

1 John 3:9-10

<sup>9</sup>No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's<sup>[a]</sup> seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born of God. <sup>10</sup>By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practise righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother.

1 John 5:19

<sup>19</sup>We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.

### **Delivered from the Devil's Domain**

More specifically, concerning those who are the children of God, the Scripture says:

Ephesians 2:1-3

<sup>1</sup>And you were dead in the trespasses and sins <sup>2</sup>in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— <sup>3</sup>among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. (See vv.4-10)

Colossians 1:12-14

<sup>12</sup>giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. <sup>13</sup>He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, <sup>14</sup>in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. (See vv.2-11)

### **The Seed of the Woman is Christ**

#### Scripture References (ESV) *The Seed of the Woman is Christ*

In Genesis 3:15, the seed (or *offspring*) of the woman to whom the Scripture is referring is Christ. Thus, God's Word says:

Romans 16:20a

<sup>20a</sup>The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet....

Galatians 3:16

<sup>16</sup>Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, "And to offsprings", referring to many, but referring to one, "And to your offspring", who is Christ. {Gen. 12:7; 13:15; 24:7} (See vv.6-15)

Galatians 3:19

<sup>19</sup>Why then the law? It was added because of transgressions, until the offspring should come to whom the promise had been made, and it was put in place through angels by an intermediary. (See vv.17-22)

Galatians 4:4-5

<sup>4</sup>But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, <sup>5</sup>to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. (See vv.6-7; cf. Gal. 3:29)

### **Seed / Offspring: Singular and Plural**

The same term, 'seed' (or 'offspring') can be either singular or plural in English translations. However, Paul was citing the Greek Septuagint (LXX) translation which uses different forms for singular and plural. In this case, the Greek singular is σπέρμα (*sperma*) and the plural form is σπέρματα (*spermata*)—and in the dative form that Paul cites in Galatians 3:16, it is σπέρμασιν (*spermasin*). Thus, Paul is not mistaken when he distinguishes between 'seed' and 'seeds'. He is reflecting the Greek LXX translation.

God's promise to Abraham was fulfilled locally in the birth of his son, Isaac. Nevertheless, as a careful reading of the relevant passages will disclose, this was not the final or ultimate fulfilment of God's promise to Abraham. God had promised that through Abraham's promised seed or offspring he would bless all nations on earth. Only the ultimately promised 'Seed' (Christ) could bring God's blessings of salvation and eternal life to every nation on earth. Again, only Christ could fulfil God's earlier promise to Adam and Eve that the Seed (Offspring) of the woman would bruise or crush the serpent's head. (Gen. 3:15; cf. Gen. 12:2 with 15:4 & 22:17-18)

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## PART 3

### Origins of Mankind: Current Philosophical View

#### ***'The Descent of Man' and 'The Ascent of Man'***

If ever there was a mistaken and misleading teaching regarding the origin of mankind, it is the pernicious doctrine that teaches the evolution of mankind from *'Proto-Ape'* to mankind as we know him today (e.g. as in *'The Descent of Man'* (Darwin, 1871) and *'The Ascent of Man'* (Bronowski/BBC documentary, c.1973).)

According to this philosophy, man rose or evolved from a lower state of existence to his present state.

This doctrine could not be further from the truth. It is the very opposite of the facts of Scripture. Man did not ascend from some primitive condition to his present state of existence. On the contrary, the Bible tells us that God created man *fully developed*, and *originally righteous*. By his sin, however, man fell from that state of original righteousness.

### Mankind Worships a Supreme Being

Unlike the animal creation, God created mankind with a nature that included conscience, the ability to distinguish morally between right and wrong, and—above all—the innate desire *common to all mankind* to worship the Creator.

Apart from mankind, no created being possesses any of these qualities or attributes. Apart from mankind, no created being seeks to worship God. Certainly, due to their fallen nature, spiritual death and total alienation from the true God, the majority of mankind worship false gods or idols. Nevertheless, the fact that they attempt to worship at all, or to offer prayers or sacrifices, is a clear indication that mankind is a distinct and unique creation of God. Men and women are quite unrelated to even the highest species of animal life: for no animal ever offers worship, prayer or the sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving to a supreme being! The only other created beings to worship God are the holy angels.

Furthermore, God created mankind to exercise dominion over the entire animal creation. (Gen. 1:26,28; 2:19; Psalm 8:6)

### Prehistorical Man?

The Bible does not concern itself with the possible existence or otherwise of prehistorical man-like creatures. If such creatures did exist, they would not have been the same as those individuals whom God created and called 'Man'. Any man-like creatures would not have been created in God's image and likeness, nor for his special glory. Rather, if they existed at all, they would have belonged to God's animal creation—properly so designated.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> To cite a parallel example from pre-history: the Bible does not discuss the existence of 'dinosaurs'. However, through his revelation in nature, God has provided mankind with ample fossil evidence to prove that such creatures did exist. However, it has yet to be established that pre-Adamic creatures—outwardly resembling

In reality, such an animal might resemble human beings superficially. However, this creature would not possess the essential attributes of a fully rational, moral and spiritual nature. Such a creature might closely resemble a human being *outwardly, physically or biologically*. Nevertheless, if it did not possess a fully *rational, moral and spiritual* nature—a nature that sought to worship its Creator—then it was not a true human being: For true human beings reflect God’s image and likeness. True human beings are endowed with conscience and can discriminate morally between right and wrong. Above all, and absolutely uniquely, true human beings seek to worship.

### Historical Man

Man, *as we know him today*, was created by God, and in God’s own image and likeness (rationally, morally and spiritually—not physically, because God is Spirit). God formed man (Adam) out of the ‘dust of the earth’. The LORD created the first man, Adam, as a fully mature and fully developed human being, and God breathed into him the breath of life. In addition, the LORD gave man the power and authority to exercise dominion over the earth, including the animal kingdom. However, man could never have exercised dominion over the earth and over all kinds of animals, if he had not been created as a fully rational and fully developed human being.

Historical mankind, therefore, did not *descend or ascend* to his present position from some lower form of animal life. Rather, he *fell* from the state of righteousness, true holiness, and dominion, in which God had created him.

Many people may seek to evade this important issue by clinging to the theory of humanity’s gradual evolution. Concerning the origin of mankind, a person may reject the facts revealed by God in his Word in favour of man’s theories. To do so, however, is to claim that the theories of finite human beings are more to be believed than the revealed truths of the infinite God. This constitutes a denial of the biblical doctrine of the Fall of man, and an unwillingness to believe or trust God’s Word. We must remember that finite human beings are themselves the creation of God, but that we are also fallen and sinful individuals! We are, therefore, hardly in a position to pass judgment on God or on the truths of his Word!

### Biblical Creation Account

#### Scripture References (ESV)

#### *Biblical Creation Account*

The following passages indicate the state in which God originally created man, and from which he fell. They also indicate the extent of the dominion that God gave to mankind to rule over his natural creation. Thus, God’s Word says:

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man—did exist. To date, the evidence is uncertain, unverified, and unreliable. In addition, this would suppose the existence of an earlier prehistorical world, which ultimately God destroyed before he created the earth as we know it today. It would, of course, be on this more recent creation that God placed Adam and Eve and the entire historical creation.

## Genesis 1:26-28

<sup>26</sup> Then God said, "Let us make man <sup>3</sup> in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

<sup>27</sup> So God created man in his own image,  
in the image of God he created him;  
male and female he created them.

<sup>28</sup> And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

## Genesis 2:7

<sup>7</sup> then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.  
(Cf. John 20:22)

## Genesis 9:1-2

<sup>1</sup> And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. <sup>2</sup> The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth and upon every bird of the heavens, upon everything that creeps on the ground and all the fish of the sea. Into your hand they are delivered. (See vv.3-4)

## Psalms 8:3-6

<sup>3</sup> When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,  
the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,  
<sup>4</sup> what is man that you are mindful of him,  
and the son of man that you care for him?  
<sup>5</sup> Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings<sup>[a]</sup>  
and crowned him with glory and honour.  
<sup>6</sup> You have given him dominion over the works of your hands;  
you have put all things under his feet, (See vv.7-9; cf. Heb. 2:6-8)

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<sup>3</sup> *Man*: The Hebrew word for *man* (*adam*) is the generic term for mankind and becomes the proper name *Adam*. (ESV footnote to Genesis 1:26)

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**Man's Mind is Finite**

We must remember that mankind is the creation of God. Mankind is a finite being with limited abilities, faculties, or capacities. God, however, is uncreated, infinite and eternal. His attributes of knowledge, wisdom, understanding, etc., immeasurably exceed that of any human being.

The Almighty and Sovereign God of all creation has declared in his Word that he created the universe and all it contains. It would therefore be foolish indeed to disregard this testimony, or to endeavour to explain it away. It may be that God has not revealed every last detail of *how* he created the universe—including mankind. However, we know that whatever discoveries men may make regarding this subject, these discoveries (including their true origins) must conform to the revelation contained in God's Holy Word (correctly interpreted and understood). If they do not, then clearly man's interpretation of the available, and limited, evidence must be mistaken and subject to correction.

Man's mind—including his intellectual capacities and abilities—is finite. Although they may appear convincing and may sound plausible, man's potentially fallible theories or hypotheses must never be used as the basis for correcting the infallible Word of God. This would involve the absurdity of finite human beings attempting to correct the infinite God!

**Some Biblical Statements Misinterpreted**

The Lord's people must take great care, however, to ensure that they correctly interpret and understand the meaning of God's holy and inerrant Word. For many centuries, the church earnestly believed that the sun revolved around the earth, because the Bible appeared to say so. They had made the understandable mistake (for their time) of placing a literal interpretation on a particular Biblical expression. Thus, for example, it is written in the Psalms:

Psalms 50:1

The Mighty One, God the LORD,  
speaks and summons the earth  
from the rising of the sun to its setting.

The last line of this verse gives the impression that the sun rises and sets in relation to the earth. Other similar passages occur elsewhere in God's Word. On this basis, many generations of people accepted the mistaken doctrine—then taught officially by the church!—that the earth (rather than the sun) was the centre of our solar system.

This teaching was due to a misunderstanding of God's holy Word, which in turn was due to man's mistaken interpretation of that Word. These expressions were never intended to be understood as facts of science concerning the solar system. Rather, they were being used according to the language of customary or everyday usage, and not according to strict scientific fact.

We too must be careful not to misunderstand or misrepresent the Bible. On all matters where the subjects overlap, the Bible agrees with the findings of true science. Here, of course, we are referring to scientifically *verifiable and repeatable exercises*. We are not referring to the speculations, theories, or hypotheses of philosophers or quasi-scientists operating under the guise of true researchers or scientists. There is a world of a difference between the two categories.



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## PART 4

### Man Originally Righteous

In the beginning, God created man in his own image and likeness. This, of course, does not refer to physical likeness, for God is pure Spirit. Rather, it refers to the likeness of God's character or attributes. God created man with an immortal soul. Again, unlike the animal creation, God created man with a spiritual, moral, and fully rational nature. In these ways, human beings are said to be created in God's image and likeness.

God, therefore, had made mankind (i.e., Adam and Eve) spiritually and morally upright. This is sometimes known as '*original righteousness*'. Before the Fall, man's nature or character had been completely untainted by sin. Man and woman had walked in the closest possible fellowship with God.

Adam and Eve were the special creation of God. When God created them, they were perfect (although finite) human beings—morally, spiritually, and physically. God had invested them with glory, dignity, and honour. They were the living and unblemished temples of God's Holy Spirit.

### Man Created in God's Image

#### Scripture References (ESV)

#### *Man Created in God's Image*

Genesis 1:27

<sup>27</sup> So God created man in his own image,  
in the image of God he created him;  
male and female he created them. (See v.26)

Genesis 5:1

<sup>1</sup> This is the book of the generations of Adam. When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. (See v.2)

Genesis 5:3

<sup>3</sup> When Adam had lived for 130 years, he fathered a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth.

Genesis 9:6

<sup>6</sup> "Whoever sheds the blood of man,  
by man shall his blood be shed,  
for God made man in his own image. (See v.5)

1 Corinthians 11:7

<sup>7</sup> For a man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God, but woman is the glory of man. (See vv.3-16)

Ephesians 4:23-24

<sup>23</sup> and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, <sup>24</sup> and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness. (See vv.20-32)

Colossians 3:10

<sup>10</sup> and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. (See vv.8-14)

### **Man Chose to Disobey God**

Although initially they had no sinful nature, and no inner impulse to sin, Adam and Eve had free will. God had not created the first pair without freedom of choice. Rather, the LORD had created them as free and responsible agents. They had the capacity to obey or to disobey the command and will of God. Had Adam and Eve believed God's word and obeyed his will, they would have experienced the continual blessing of the Lord throughout their lives. Their descendants also would have benefited from God's special blessings, provided they too had remained faithful and obedient to God.

### **Sexual Relations had No Part in the Fall**

Some people believe that the 'sin' that led to the Fall of man was the conjugal love or sexual union between Adam and Eve. This is an absurdity, which hardly merits refutation; and the Bible itself contradicts this notion very firmly. Thus, the Scripture says:

Genesis 1:27-28a

<sup>27</sup> So God created man in his own image,  
in the image of God he created him;  
male and female he created them.

<sup>28a</sup> And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply  
and fill the earth and subdue it..."

This was one of the very first commands that God gave to Adam and Eve; and to this command, God attached the promise of his blessing. Far from being sinful, the expression of love by sexual union is holy and honourable in the sight of God, when shared between a husband and his wife. In God's sight, Adam and Eve were husband and wife.

## God Created Eve for Adam

### Scripture References (ESV)

### *God Created Eve for Adam*

The Scripture says:

Genesis 2:18

<sup>18</sup>Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him."

Genesis 2:22-25

<sup>22</sup>And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. <sup>23</sup>Then the man said,

"This at last is bone of my bones  
and flesh of my flesh;  
she shall be called Woman,  
because she was taken out of Man."

<sup>24</sup>Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. <sup>25</sup>And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed. (See vv.18-21)

Hebrews 13:4

<sup>4</sup>Let marriage be held in honour among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous.

## God Blesses the Marital Union

God made mankind male and female with the express purpose that a man should leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife. The love and affection expressed and experienced during sexual union is a supreme blessing from God.

This blessed union is to be practised regularly and enjoyed fully within the marriage relationship. It is the fusion of two people into one. It is a bonding relationship between a husband and his wife that neither of the marriage partners should ever neglect, abuse or disparage. Thus, to the Pharisees, the Lord Jesus said:

Matthew 19:4-6

<sup>4</sup>He answered, "Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, {Gen. 1:27} <sup>5</sup>and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? {Gen. 2:24} <sup>6</sup>So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate." (See vv.7-12)

Moreover, to the Lord's people, the apostle Paul says:

1 Corinthians 7:3-5

<sup>3</sup>The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband. <sup>4</sup>For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. Likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. <sup>5</sup>Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. (See vv.1-7)

### **Corruption of Mind and Nature**

When they had eaten the forbidden fruit, Adam and Eve experienced shame and guilt when they realised that they were naked. As the Scripture says:

Genesis 3:7

<sup>7</sup>Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. (See vv.9-11, 21; cf. Gen. 2:25)

Originally, this state had been their glory. Their bodies had been the perfect handiwork of God: a creation of signal honour, dignity and natural beauty. However, with the Fall came corruption of nature, including corruption of mind.

This corruption of nature also included a distorting of natural desires, which in turn resulted in a propensity to lust. God-given and natural sexual desire gave way to sinful licentiousness or uncontrolled and impure desire.

Similarly, with the corruption of nature, and with this now innate tendency to lust, came a sense of shame and guilt. Had Adam and Eve not fallen and corrupted their nature, they would never have experienced shame and guilt with their natural state, nor with their natural desire for physical or sexual intimacy.

## PART 5

### Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden

In the Garden of Eden, God had provided Adam and Eve with everything necessary. Further, God had promised to bless their union together as husband and wife. As the Scripture says:

Genesis 1:28-29

<sup>28</sup> And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” <sup>29</sup> And God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. (Cf. v.29 with Gen. 9:3)

Genesis 2:8-9

<sup>8</sup> And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. <sup>9</sup> And out of the ground the LORD God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Genesis 2:15

<sup>15</sup> The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.

### The Entrance of Sin

Our first parents, however, were not content with what the LORD had been pleased to provide. In their hearts, they desired more. As the Scripture clearly indicates:

Genesis 3:6

<sup>6</sup> So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.

Springing as it did from a rebellious and ungrateful heart, this evil desire represented the very beginnings of sin. God had commanded Adam to eat of any tree of the Garden—except of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Thus, the Scripture says:

Genesis 2:16-17

<sup>16</sup> And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, <sup>17</sup> but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”

God, however, prohibited Adam and his wife from eating the fruit of this one tree. Their disobedience to the express command of God would result in death; immediate *spiritual* death, followed later by *physical* death, and then by *eternal* death—the everlasting conscious separation from God in the torments of hell.

### **Earth Cursed on Account of Adam’s Sin**

God had endowed Adam with free will. However, if Adam chose to disobey God, his wilful rebellion would bring down upon him the threatened curse or punishment of God. This curse would not be confined to Adam alone; nor to Adam and Eve alone. The curse would extend to all their posterity; i.e., to the entire human race. In addition, God would place the earth itself under a curse. To this end, the Scripture says:

Genesis 3:17-19

<sup>17</sup> And to Adam he [the LORD God] said,  
“Because you have listened to the voice of your wife  
and have eaten of the tree  
of which I commanded you,  
‘You shall not eat of it’,  
cursed is the ground because of you;  
in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life;  
<sup>18</sup> thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you;  
and you shall eat the plants of the field.  
<sup>19</sup> By the sweat of your face  
you shall eat bread,  
till you return to the ground,  
for out of it you were taken;  
for you are dust,  
and to dust you shall return.”

### **Removal of God’s Curse on the Earth**

The earth would remain under God’s judicial curse, until the final purging (or purification) of the world by fire, and the subsequent inauguration of the new heaven and the new earth, in which righteousness dwells. Thus, God’s Word says:

Romans 8:18-22

<sup>18</sup> For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. <sup>19</sup> For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. <sup>20</sup> For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope <sup>21</sup> that the creation itself will be set free from its

bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. <sup>22</sup> For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. (See v.23)

### **Renewal of the Earth by Fire**

Regarding the purification of the world by fire, the apostle Peter says:

2 Peter 3:7

<sup>7</sup> But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgement and destruction of the ungodly. (See vv.1-6)

2 Peter 3:10-13

<sup>10</sup> But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.

<sup>11</sup> Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, <sup>12</sup> waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! <sup>13</sup> But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

### **God's New Creation**

Concerning this new creation, the apostle John says:

Revelation 21:1-5

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. <sup>2</sup> And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. <sup>3</sup> And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. <sup>4</sup> He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away."

<sup>5</sup> And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." (See vv.10-22)

Regarding the removal of the curse, the apostle John says:

Revelation 22:1-4

<sup>1</sup> Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb <sup>2</sup> through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. <sup>3</sup> No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. <sup>4</sup> They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.

## PART 6

### The Fall of Man

#### Early Church Teaching

After the apostolic period, the early Church held different views as to the interpretation of some fundamental Bible doctrines—particularly, the doctrines of sin, grace and predestination. Amid much error and heresy, Augustine (354-430), Bishop of Hippo in North Africa held closely to the biblical truth *concerning these particular doctrines*, although he erred very significantly in other matters.

Hundreds of years later, at the Reformation, both the Lutheran and Reformed wings of the Church based their interpretation of Bible doctrines on the express teaching of God's Word—comparing Scripture with Scripture. Among the many works that the Reformers consulted while preparing their statements of doctrine, were those of Augustine, Bishop of Hippo. Where Augustine's teaching expressed clearly the doctrines of God's Word—and God's Word alone—the Reformers drew upon this teaching and rephrased it to express even more accurately and clearly the teaching of the Bible on these issues.

In view of its relevance and importance to biblical doctrine, we will be referring briefly to Augustine's teaching, both in this study and in other studies in this series.

### Augustinian Doctrine of the Fall

1. God created man originally in his own image and likeness in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness. He was immortal, and was invested with dominion over the creatures. Adam was endowed with perfect liberty of the will.
2. Being left to the freedom of his own will, Adam—under the temptation of the devil—voluntarily sinned against God, and thus fell from the estate in which God created him.
3. The consequences of this sin upon Adam were the loss of the divine image, and the corruption of his whole nature, so that he became spiritually dead, and thus indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all spiritual good. Besides spiritual death, Adam also became mortal, liable to all the miseries of this life, and to eternal death.
4. Such was the union between Adam and his descendants, that the same consequences of his transgression came also on them. They are born the children of wrath: that is, in a state of condemnation, destitute of the image of God, and morally depraved.
5. This inherent hereditary depravity is truly and properly of the nature of sin, involving both guilt and corruption (or moral pollution).
6. The loss of original righteousness, and the corruption of nature consequent on the fall of Adam, are penal inflictions: that is, they are the penalty of Adam's sin against God.
7. Regeneration (which is included in effectual calling) is a supernatural act of the Holy Spirit in which the soul is the subject, and not the agent. Regeneration is a sovereign gift of God. It is

granted or withheld according to the good pleasure of God. Consequently, salvation is entirely of grace.

The above is the Augustinian doctrine of the Fall in all that is essential.<sup>4</sup>

Of himself, unregenerate man is totally unable to do any spiritual good. Because he is spiritually dead, he cannot contribute toward his salvation in any way. God, therefore, acting in sovereign grace and mercy toward sinners, must grant salvation to men and women.

### **Eve Tempted by Satan**

The sins committed in the Garden of Eden began in the mind. Satan, in the form of a serpent, tempted Eve with something that appeared pleasant and wholly desirable. The devil caused her to doubt in her heart the word or command of God. The visual attraction of the forbidden fruit further inflamed these sinful thoughts and desires. Eventually, the lust of the heart gave way to the outward sinful act. Overcome with desire, and no longer willing to exercise restraint, Eve took the forbidden fruit. She gave also to Adam, who joined with her in the transgression.

Illustrating this sequence of events, the Scripture says:

Genesis 3:6

<sup>6</sup> So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise,<sup>[a]</sup> she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.

James 1:13-15

<sup>13</sup> Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God", for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. <sup>14</sup> But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. <sup>15</sup> Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

1 John 2:15-17

<sup>15</sup> Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. <sup>16</sup> For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride in possessions—is not from the Father but is from the world. <sup>17</sup> And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides for ever.

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<sup>4</sup> Based on C. Hodge, *Systematic Theology* Vol. 2, [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977 reprint] pp.161-162

**Sins Committed at the Fall**

Some of the sins that led to the fall of man, were:

1.     **Unbelief**                     Failing to believe the word of God: "...you shall surely die."  
  
  Genesis 2:17  
  
  <sup>17</sup>but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it **you shall surely die.**" (*bold emphasis added here and below.*)
  
2.     **Lust**                             Desiring what God had forbidden.  
  
  Genesis 3:2-3  
  
  <sup>2</sup>And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, <sup>3</sup> but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'" (See vv.4-5)  
  
  Genesis 3:6  
  
  <sup>6</sup>So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was **a delight to the eyes**, and that the tree was to be **desired to make one wise**, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.
  
3.     **Pride**                             The desire to become as knowledgeable and as wise as God, and to be independent of God.  
  
  Genesis 3:4-5  
  
  <sup>4</sup>But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. <sup>5</sup>For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, **and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.**"  
  
  Proverbs 16:18  
  
  <sup>18</sup> Pride goes before destruction,  
  and a haughty spirit before a fall.

4.     **Disobedience**           Refusing to obey the express command of God: "...you shall not..." (v.17)
- Genesis 2:17
- <sup>17</sup>but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil **you shall not eat**, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."
- Genesis 3:3
- <sup>3</sup>but God said, '**You shall not** eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'"
5.     **Rebellion**               Determination to prove God's word wrong.
- Genesis 3:4-5
- <sup>4</sup>But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. <sup>5</sup>For God knows that **when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God**, knowing good and evil."

## The Magnitude of Adam and Eve's Sin

### Eve Believed Satan Rather than God

Eve doubted God's Word. Therefore, she doubted the character and integrity of Almighty God. Eve's doubt led her to heed the inducements of Satan. She believed Satan's word—even although the devil's suggestion was a lie. Eve chose to believe Satan rather than God.

Soon, Adam followed his wife in her sin and rebellion. Consequently, God expelled both of them from the Garden of Eden and from access to the tree of life. Adam and Eve's sin, therefore, was no minor matter. Our first parents sinned calculatedly and wilfully. They showed utter disregard for the word of the LORD and for the integrity of God. Again, they demonstrated a total disbelief in what God had said.

To believe the lies of the devil before the truth of God is a sin of the utmost magnitude. Our first parents were guilty of that sin. So too is anyone who chooses to believe the lie of the devil and reject the truth of God. (John 8:44)

## PART 7

### Effects of the Fall

What were the effects of the Fall, and of the resulting curse?

Adam and Eve immediately became sinners. They lost their original righteousness. They lost their close fellowship with God. Their sin would be imputed (reckoned), and their corrupt nature transmitted, to all their descendants. This consequence of the Fall is known as '*original sin*'.<sup>5</sup>

Again, Adam lost the privileges that God had granted him in the Garden of Eden—the earthly paradise in which the LORD had placed the man and his wife. Because of his sin, God expelled Adam and Eve from the Garden. They had forfeited their privilege to take from the tree of life, and live forever. From henceforth, they—and all mankind after them—would become subject to bodily ageing, decay, and death.

Concerning their expulsion from the Garden of Eden, the Scripture relates:

Genesis 3:22-24

<sup>22</sup> Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live for ever—" <sup>23</sup> therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. <sup>24</sup> He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.

### The Effects of God's Curse

Furthermore, instead of being able to enjoy the fruits of paradise earth with a minimum of effort, Adam would now need to toil for his living by the sweat of his brow. Likewise, Eve would be reminded of her sin by the intensified labour pains that she would endure during childbirth. The effects of the Fall, and the resulting curse upon Adam and Eve would be experienced by all humanity.

Because of Adam's sin, God placed the ground under a curse. Thus, the Scripture says:

Genesis 3:17-19

<sup>17</sup> And to Adam he [God] said,  
"Because you have listened to the voice of your wife  
and have eaten of the tree  
of which I commanded you,  
'You shall not eat of it',  
cursed is the ground because of you;  
in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life;  
<sup>18</sup> thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you;  
and you shall eat the plants of the field.

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<sup>5</sup> See further on *Bible Truths Explained: Sin*, under *Original Sin*.

<sup>19</sup>By the sweat of your face  
you shall eat bread,  
till you return to the ground,  
for out of it you were taken;  
for you are dust,  
and to dust you shall return.”

Because of Eve’s sin, the Scripture records:

Genesis 3:16

<sup>16</sup>To the woman he said,  
“I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing;  
in pain you shall bring forth children.  
Your desire shall be for your husband,  
and he shall rule over you.” (Cf. John 16:21)

This is the reason why God’s Word says:

1 Timothy 2:11-15

<sup>11</sup>Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness. <sup>12</sup>I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet. <sup>13</sup>For Adam was formed first, then Eve; <sup>14</sup>and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. <sup>15</sup>Yet she will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith and love and holiness, with self-control. (Cf. 1 Cor. 11:3; Eph. 5:22-24; Titus 2:5; 1 Pet. 3:1,5-6)

Concerning the effects of the Fall on all mankind, God’s Word says:

Romans 5:12

<sup>12</sup>Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned—

Romans 5:18-19

<sup>18</sup>Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. <sup>19</sup>For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous. (See vv.13-17)

## Adam's Sin Imputed to all Mankind

### Adam's Headship Made Him Primarily Responsible

In point of time, it was Eve—rather than Adam—who was the first person to sin against God. However, as the man, God held Adam primarily responsible. This is because Adam was the head and representative of all humanity. Moreover, God had appointed Adam the head of his wife. When Adam fell, his sin was imputed to the entire human race.

Regarding these things, God's Word says:

Genesis 3:17

<sup>17</sup>And to Adam he said,  
"Because you have listened to the voice of your wife  
and have eaten of the tree  
of which I commanded you,  
'You shall not eat of it',  
cursed is the ground because of you;  
in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life;

1 Corinthians 15:22

<sup>22</sup>For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.

Concerning man's position as head of his wife, the Scripture says:

1 Corinthians 11:3

<sup>3</sup>But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God.

Ephesians 5:23-24

<sup>23</sup>For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Saviour. <sup>24</sup>Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.

## Sinful from Conception

Every child conceived by natural procreation, and born into the world, is born in sin. As the Scripture says:

Psalms 51:5

<sup>5</sup>Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,  
and in sin did my mother conceive me.

The sole exception to this was the Lord Jesus Christ. The virgin Mary did not conceive Jesus as a result of natural procreation, but by the power of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, *original sin* was not imputed or

transmitted to him. For the same reason, the Lord Jesus did not inherit Adam's fallen and corrupt nature. In all respects, the Son of God was—and is—totally without sin.

### **Sinful Nature Not Transmitted to Christ**

The Lord Jesus experienced a perfectly natural *birth*. However, his *conception* was supernatural and divine—caused by the direct intervention of God's Holy Spirit.

Concerning the miraculous conception of Christ, the Scripture says:

Matthew 1:20

<sup>20</sup> But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. (See vv.18-21)

Matthew 1:22-23

<sup>22</sup> All this took place to fulfil what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

<sup>23</sup> "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (See vv.24-25; cf. Isa. 7:14)

When the angel Gabriel told Mary that she would conceive and bear a son, the Scripture records:

Luke 1:34-35

<sup>34</sup> And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"

<sup>35</sup> And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. (See vv.26-33)

### **Christ Totally Sinless**

Concerning the sinless nature of Christ, the Word of God says:

2 Corinthians 5:21

<sup>21</sup> For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Hebrews 4:15

<sup>15</sup> For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

1 Peter 2:22

<sup>22</sup>He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. {Isaiah 53:9}

1 John 3:5

<sup>5</sup>You know that he appeared to take away sins, and in him there is no sin.

### **Virgin Mary Not Sinless**

There is, however, no scriptural support for the teaching that Mary was free from the corruption of original sin (the doctrine of the *Immaculate Conception*). Mary herself acknowledges God to be her Saviour. Only those, however, with an inherently sinful nature acquired from Adam, require a Saviour.

The conception of the virgin Mary was a *natural* conception. As such, the inherently sinful nature was transmitted to Mary from the line of Adam. The conception of Jesus, however, was a *supernatural and divine* conception. As such, the Son of God did not inherit Adam's fallen, sinful nature.

Concerning Mary's acknowledgement of God as her Saviour, it is recorded of this most blessed and favoured of women:

Luke 1:46-47

<sup>46</sup>And Mary said,

"My soul magnifies the Lord,

<sup>47</sup> and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,

This verse demonstrates that Mary herself acknowledged that she had need of God as her Saviour. No sinless person would need a Saviour.

## PART 8

### Nature of Death

Before Adam and Eve sinned, God gave them this command:

Genesis 2:17

<sup>17</sup> but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”

Again, in the book of Romans, the apostle Paul wrote concerning sin’s penalty:

Romans 6:23

<sup>23</sup> For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

When spoken of in relation to sin, the word ‘death’ does not refer merely to physical death. In the Scriptures, this term has a much more comprehensive meaning than we normally attach to it in everyday usage. When the Bible speaks of death—as the wages or penalty of sin—it is speaking of the following: (1) *spiritual* death, (2) *physical* death, and (3) *eternal* death.

We may represent this more fully as follows:

- |    |                         |   |
|----|-------------------------|---|
| 1. | <b>Spiritual death:</b> | <p style="margin-left: 20px;">Alienation from God in this life, together with all its attendant temporal miseries.</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">Spiritual death is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) mortality</li> <li>(b) the loss of original righteousness</li> <li>(c) hereditary corruption (i.e. moral and spiritual pollution, and ultimate depravity)</li> </ul> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">Spiritual death affects the whole person and personality, in body (including the mind) and soul. Sin, sickness, disease (mental and physical) and suffering, are but a few examples of its effect upon all humanity.</p> |
| 2. | <b>Physical death:</b>  | <p style="margin-left: 20px;">The death of the body, but not of the soul. The soul, being spiritual and immortal, is not subject to physical death. However, it can be subject to spiritual death and eternal death.</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">The body is subject to physical death and dissolution only until the resurrection. Then, the body will be raised again (reconstituted),</p>  |

reunited with the soul, and translated; i.e., suitably adapted for eternal existence—either in heaven or in hell.

3. **Eternal death:**

The everlasting separation of the lost from the blessed presence of God. This separation involves their eternal conscious sufferings in the torments of hell. This is the just recompense for their final and wilful impenitence and for their unforgiven sin.

This is the final state of the wicked (i.e., all those who remain wilfully impenitent, and outside of Christ. In hell—or ‘the lake of fire’—the finally impenitent will suffer for all eternity. They will be forever subject to pains of body and soul, and to the unremitting pangs of an ever-accusing conscience. There, too, they will suffer endless anguish and despair.

According to the teaching of the Bible, therefore, hell is not a place of annihilation or non-being. Rather, it is a place of endless existence and eternal conscious sufferings.

In hell, each person will be so consumed with their own pain and anguish, that they will not be in the least concerned for the pains and griefs of others. It is a vain hope, then, to imagine that there will be plenty of like-minded company in hell.

### **Death is the Penalty of Sin**

Without sin, death would not have existed. As far as mankind is concerned, death has come upon everyone only because of the Fall. Death—in all its forms—is the *penalty* or *wages* of sin. Thus, God’s Word says:

Romans 6:23

<sup>23</sup> For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

James 1:15

<sup>15</sup> Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

Had Adam not sinned, he would not have incurred God's penalty—death: spiritual, physical, and eternal death. Had he not brought upon himself and his posterity the wrath and curse of God, mankind's physical body would not have become subject to gradual ageing and decay. Nor would his body or mind have become subject to sickness, illness, or disease. All of these flow directly from the corruption of man's nature at the Fall, and indirectly from God's curse on the ground; and, therefore, on the produce of the ground.

Had Adam and Eve obeyed God, they—like the holy angels now in God's presence—would have continued to live in blessed communion with their Creator, throughout the everlasting ages. Adam and his descendants may not have continued to live in the same body with which God had created them. Theirs was an earthly body, perfectly created for their present environment, but not suitably adapted for the glories of heaven. However, like Enoch and like Elijah who did not experience death, but were translated while still alive, Adam and Eve's bodies too would have been translated—without passing through death—and received into the presence of God.

A similar scenario will occur with those believers who are still living at the time of the Lord's Second Coming. They will not die. The Lord will transform their present earthly bodies into immortal spiritual bodies: bodies which—in union with the soul—he will fully adapt for everlasting life in his glorious presence.

However, in partaking of the tree of knowledge, Adam and Eve had immediately forfeited their privilege to take of the tree of life. They had sinned against God defiantly and wilfully. They knew that the penalty of sin was death. Of this, the LORD God had clearly warned them before they had disobeyed his express command. Thus, God had said:

Genesis 2:17

<sup>17</sup> but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat<sup>[a]</sup> of it you shall surely die."

Since, however, they had refused to heed God's explicit warning, Adam and Eve incurred sin's penalty and they lost the right to, and the privilege of, eternal life.

## PART 9

### Eternal Life Now Limited to the Redeemed

Now that the human race had fallen in Adam, God would never again extend to all humanity automatically, the privilege of eternal life. However, God would grant the gift of eternal life to all those who, by his sovereign and unmerited grace, he would call to repentance and faith in his Son. Those who heard God's call and who—through the Spirit—responded to that call, would be justified in his sight. By regeneration of their soul (i.e., the new birth), and through faith in Christ, they would become God's children. Together with Abraham and his spiritual seed, all truly born again believers are the children of God.

Those whom the Holy Spirit regenerates and calls to repentance and faith, are known as the elect of God. By his grace, God redeems his elect out of every people and nation on earth. These redeemed children of God are the sole possessors of new and eternal life. They—and they alone—are the heirs of the heavenly kingdom prepared for them by their Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.<sup>6</sup>

Regarding those whom God has redeemed, or will redeem, by his grace, the Scripture says:

Revelation 5:9-10

<sup>9</sup> And they sang a new song, saying,

“Worthy are you to take the scroll  
and to open its seals,

for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God  
from every tribe and language and people and nation,

<sup>10</sup> and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God,  
and they shall reign on the earth.”

Revelation 21:27

<sup>27</sup> But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Revelation 22:3-5

<sup>3</sup> No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. <sup>4</sup> They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. <sup>5</sup> And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign for ever and ever.

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<sup>6</sup> See further on *Bible Truths Explained: Predestination*.

Revelation 22:17

<sup>17</sup>The Spirit and the Bride say, “Come.” And let the one who hears say, “Come.” And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price.

### **Evidence of the New Life**

Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord is saved by the grace of God, and is clothed with the perfect righteousness of Christ. This reckoning of Christ’s perfect righteousness to the sinner’s account comes to him as a free gift from God. The repentant and believing sinner receives this gift, completely apart from good works or merit, and solely on the grounds of God’s grace and Christ’s redeeming work on the sinner’s behalf. It comes to the believer through his faith in Christ; but this faith, too, is a gift from God.

This gift of righteousness that God grants to the regenerated and believing sinner is known as *imputed* righteousness. We must not confuse imputed righteousness with inherent righteousness. No one—even as a believer—is inherently righteous. God justifies the believer (i.e., he declares him righteous) only on the grounds of Christ’s perfect righteousness being credited to him as a gift of God’s sovereign grace and undeserved mercy.<sup>7</sup>

### **Practical Evidences of a New Life**

Those whom God has pronounced righteous (i.e., those to whom he has imputed Christ’s righteousness), must show by their outward conduct that their lives have been inwardly renewed. If indeed God has justified them, then each believer’s life must show the evidence of this justification by holy, honest, and honourable living—at home, at work, and in all their activities. Thus, the Scripture says:

Galatians 5:22-23

<sup>22</sup>But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup>gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

The production of this fruit in a believer’s life, is the evidence of the new birth and new spiritual life. These fruits are the proof that the Holy Spirit of God has effected a new creation through regeneration and faith in Christ Jesus. For, if any person be in Christ, he or she is a new creation. To this end, the Scripture declares:

2 Corinthians 5:17

<sup>17</sup>Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.<sup>[a]</sup> The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

Romans 8:8-9

<sup>8</sup>Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

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<sup>7</sup> See further on *Bible Truths Explained: Justification*.

<sup>9</sup>You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.

Romans 8:10-11

<sup>10</sup> But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. <sup>11</sup> If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

### **What Counts is a New Creation**

Galatians 6:15

<sup>15</sup> For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.

If, however, the evidence of the new creation is lacking from a person's life, then evidently that person is not in right relationship with God. Regardless of outward profession of faith, there can be no new birth without subsequent new life; a life that is lived unto God, in holiness, and to his glory.

Our conduct is the mirror of our character. If our conduct is not in accord with a life that is being continually sanctified, then we must question whether we have been justified.

A tree is known by its fruit. A good tree cannot consistently produce bad fruit—nor can a good tree fail to produce any fruit.

What we think, is what we are.





