

Romans Session 68 Adam and the Reign of Death 2 Christ and the Reign of Life 1

Romans 5:12-14 (NASB77)

¹² *Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned--*

¹³ *for until the Law sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law.*

¹⁴ *Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.*

We have been talking about Paul's argument about Adam's and the reign of death, in the human race.

Now some object to the idea that they sinned in Adam, arguing that they not only were not there but did not even exist when he sinned.

But by the same token, we were not physically at the crucifixion when Christ died, but as believers we willingly accept the truth that, by faith, we died with Him.

We did not literally enter the grave with Christ and were not literally resurrected with Him, but by faith we are accounted to have been buried and raised with Him.

If the principle were not true that **all sinned** in Adam, it would be impossible to make the point that all can be made righteous in Christ.

That is the truth Paul makes explicit later in this letter;

Romans 5:15-19 (NASB)

¹⁵ *But the free gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many.*

¹⁶ *The gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned; for on the one hand the judgment arose from one transgression resulting in condemnation, but on the other hand the free gift arose from many transgressions resulting in justification.*

¹⁷ *For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.*

¹⁸ *So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men.*

¹⁹ *For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous.*

In his first letter to the Corinthians he said;

1 Corinthians 15:22 (NASB)

²² *For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.*

Others argue that it is not fair to be born guilty of Adam's sin. We did not ask to be born.

They say that our parents and grandparents didn't ask to be born. All that was beyond their control.

But it is also true that it wasn't fair that the sinless Son of God suffered the penalty of sin on behalf of all mankind.

Listen if God were fair, Adam and Eve would have been destroyed immediately for their disobedience, and that would have been the end of the human race.

It is only because God is gracious and forgiving, and not merely just, that men can be saved.

The magnitude of Paul's analogy is mind boggling, and its significance cannot be fully comprehended but only accepted by faith.

Habakkuk had great difficulty understanding the Lord.

First, he could not understand why God did not bring revival to His chosen people Israel.

He cried out;

Habakkuk 1:2 (NASB77)

² How long, O LORD, will I call for help, And Thou wilt not hear? I cry out to Thee, "Violence!" Yet Thou dost not save.

Even less could he understand why God would punish His own people through the hands of the Chaldeans, who were pagans and immeasurably more wicked than the Israelites.

Listen to what he said;

Habakkuk 1:13 (NASB77)

¹³ Thine eyes are too pure to approve evil, And Thou canst not look on wickedness with favor. Why dost Thou look with favor On those who deal treacherously? Why art Thou silent when the wicked swallow up Those more righteous than they?

Finally realizing that the Lord's ways are beyond human comprehension, he testifies;

Habakkuk 3:17-19a (NASB77)

¹⁷ Though the fig tree should not blossom, And there be no fruit on the vines, Though the yield of the olive should fail, And the fields produce no food, Though the flock should be cut off from the fold, And there be no cattle in the stalls,

¹⁸ Yet I will exult in the LORD, I will rejoice in the God of my salvation.

¹⁹ The Lord GOD is my strength,

Habakkuk learned that when we cannot understand the Lord's ways, we must avoid the quicksand of human reason and stand in faith on the rock of God's righteous character.

It may, however, help to understand something of God's purpose for offering salvation to fallen mankind by considering the angels. Unlike man, they were not created in God's image or as procreative beings

Matthew 22:30 (NASB77)

³⁰ "For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.

And when they fell with Lucifer, they fell individually and were immediately damned to hell forever, with no opportunity for redemption.

Revelation 12:7-9 (NASB77)

⁷ And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. And the dragon and his angels

waged war,

⁸ *and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven.*

⁹ *And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.*

God created angels to serve Him and give Him glory.

Because they were created Holy, they fully understood such things as God's holiness, righteousness, and majesty. But they had no comprehension of His grace, mercy, compassion, or forgiveness, because those characteristics have meaning only where there is guilt feeling of sin.

It is perhaps for that reason that the holy angels long to look into the gospel of salvation.

1 Peter 1:10-12 (NASB77)

¹⁰ *As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful search and inquiry,*

¹¹ *seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow.*

¹² *It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven-- things into which angels long to look.*

It is impossible even for the holy angels to fully praise God, because they cannot fully comprehend His greatness.

For His own divine reasons, however, God created man to be procreative.

And when Adam fell, and thereby brought his own condemnation and the condemnations of all his descendants, God in mercy provided a way of salvation in order that those who would experience His grace would then have cause to praise Him for it.

Paul declares that through redeemed saints, saved human beings;

Ephesians 3:10 (NASB77)

¹⁰ *in order that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places*

Because the purpose of creation is to glorify God, it is fitting that God would fill heaven with creatures who have received His grace and His mercy, and have been restored to His divine likeness to give Him eternal praise.

HISTORY PROVES THAT DEATH REIGN OVER ALL MEN

Romans 5:13-14 (NASB77)

¹³ *for until the Law sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law.*

¹⁴ *Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.*

This is the fourth element of Paul's argument. That History verifies that death is universal.

The apostle points out that before God gave **the Law** on Mount Sinai, **sin was already in the world**. But men's failure to meet the standards of **the Law** was **not imputed** against them because during that period they had **no Law**. Yet, because **death reigned from Adam to Moses**, that is, death was universal even though there was no law, it is obvious that men were still sinful.

It was not because of man's sinful acts in breaking the mosaic Law, which they did not yet have, but because of their sinful nature that all men **from Adam until Moses** were subject to death.

Because Adam and Eve were evicted from the Garden of Eden after they sinned, they had no more opportunity to disobey God's single prohibition. They no longer had access to the forbidden fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, nor have any of their descendants.

Consequently, it has been impossible for any human being, either before or after Moses, to have **sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam**.

But in the principle of human solidarity, Adam was **a type of Jesus Christ**. That truth becomes Paul's transition to the glorious gospel of salvation from sin and death that God offers fallen mankind through His Beloved Son, **Him who was to come**.

CHRIST AND THE REIGN OF LIFE 1

Romans 5:15-21 (NASB77)

¹⁵ *But the free gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many.*

¹⁶ *And the gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned; for on the one hand the judgment arose from one transgression resulting in condemnation, but on the other hand the free gift arose from many transgressions resulting in justification.*

¹⁷ *For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.*

¹⁸ *So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men.*

¹⁹ *For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous.*

²⁰ *And the Law came in that the transgression might increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more,*

²¹ *that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Paul continues his analogy of Adam and Christ, showing how the life that was made possible for all men by Christ's atoning sacrifice is illustrated antithetically by the death that was made inevitable for all men by Adam's sin.

It is the truth the apostle summarizes in his first letter to Corinth.

1 Corinthians 15:22 (NASB77)

²² *For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive.*

As noted before, the only truly analogous factor between Adam and Christ is that of one man/one act.

That is just as the one-man Adam's sin brought sin to all mankind, so the one-man Jesus Christ's one sacrifice made salvation available to all mankind.

In the present passage, as if to examine every facet of this marvelous analogy, Paul explores five essential areas of contrast between the condemning act of Adam and the redemptive act of Christ.

1. Different in effectiveness (v15)
2. Different in their extent (v16)
3. Different in their efficacy (v17)
4. Different in their essence (vv18-19)
5. Different in their energy (vv20-21)

We will begin looking at these, next time together.