

BIBLE TRUTHS EXPLAINED

What God's Word teaches about

THE FALL OF MAN

Gordon Lyons

KJV Edition

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The Fall of Man

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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

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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.¹

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

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

⁽⁹⁾ And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

Genesis 2:16-17

⁽¹⁶⁾ And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: ⁽¹⁷⁾ But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt 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*.) From that moment on, Adam and Eve lost their close communion or fellowship with God. Their sin had alienated them from their Creator and Father in heaven. It had corrupted their originally righteous nature. Now, that fallen and sinful

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

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 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

Spiritual death:

Ephesians 2:1

⁽¹⁾ And you *hath he quickened*, who were dead in trespasses and sins

Ephesians 2:5

⁽⁵⁾ Even when we were dead in sins, *hath quickened us together with Christ*, by (grace ye are saved;)

Physical death (prior to resurrection):

1 Corinthians 15:21-22

⁽²¹⁾ For since by man *came* death, by man *came* also the resurrection of the dead. ⁽²²⁾ For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

Eternal death:

Matthew 25:41

⁽⁴¹⁾ Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

Matthew 25:46

⁽⁴⁶⁾ And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

Revelation 20:15

⁽¹⁵⁾ And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast 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

Romans 5:12

⁽¹²⁾ Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

Luke 1:31, 34-35

⁽³¹⁾ And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.

⁽³⁴⁾ Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?

⁽³⁵⁾ And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

Part 2

The Protoevangel

Genesis 3:15

⁽¹⁵⁾ And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt 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

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

Luke 10:17-18

⁽¹⁷⁾ And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.

⁽¹⁸⁾ And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. (See vv.19-20)

John 12:31

⁽³¹⁾ Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. (See vv.32-33)

John 16:8-11

⁽⁸⁾ And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment...

⁽¹¹⁾ Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

Colossians 2:15

⁽¹⁵⁾ *And* having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

Hebrews 2:14-16

⁽¹⁴⁾ Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; ⁽¹⁵⁾ And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. ⁽¹⁶⁾ For verily he took not on *him the nature of angels*; but he took on *him* the seed of Abraham.

1 John 3:8

⁽⁸⁾ He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.

Children of God, and Children of the Devil

Scripture References

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

⁽³⁷⁾ He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; ⁽³⁸⁾ The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked *one*; ^(39a) The enemy that sowed them is the devil... (See vv.24-30)

John 8:44

⁽⁴⁴⁾ Ye are of *your* father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. (See vv.37-47)

1 John 3:8

⁽⁸⁾ He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.

1 John 3:9-10

⁽⁹⁾ Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. ⁽¹⁰⁾ In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.

1 John 5:19

⁽¹⁹⁾ *And* we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.

Delivered from the Devil's Domain

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

Ephesians 2:1-3

⁽¹⁾ And you *hath he quickened*, who were dead in trespasses and sins
⁽²⁾ Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: ⁽³⁾ Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. (See vv.4-10)

Colossians 1:12-14

⁽¹²⁾ Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: ⁽¹³⁾ Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son: ⁽¹⁴⁾ In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins: (See vv.2-11)

The Seed of the Woman is Christ

Scripture References

In Genesis 3:15, the seed of the woman is Christ—primarily. Thus, God’s Word says:

Romans 16:20a

^(20a) And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly...

Galatians 3:16

⁽¹⁶⁾ Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. {Gen. 12:7; 13:15; 24:7} (See vv.6-15)

Galatians 3:19

⁽¹⁹⁾ Wherefore then *serveth* the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; *and it was* ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. (See vv.17-22)

Galatians 4:4-5

⁽⁴⁾ But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, ⁽⁵⁾ To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. (See vv.6-7; cf. Gal. 3:29)

Seed: Singular and Plural

Before his conversion to Christ, the apostle Paul was already an accomplished theologian and scholar of the Jewish religion. Therefore, he would know that the word translated ‘seed’ can be used in the singular or the plural without the equivalent addition of the letter ‘s’ (in English translations). However, the point of the apostle’s argument remains valid: 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 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 of the woman would bruise or crush the serpent’s head. (Gen. 3:15; cf. Gen. 12:2 with 15:4 & 22:17-18)

Part 3

Origins of Mankind: Current Philosophical View

The ‘Ascent of Man’ is Unscriptural

If ever there was a mistaken and misleading teaching regarding the origin of mankind, it is the pernicious doctrine that teaches the ‘ascent of man’. 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)

Prehistoric Man?

The Bible does not concern itself with the possible existence or otherwise of prehistoric manlike 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.²

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

² 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 man—did exist. To date, the evidence is uncertain, unverified, and unreliable. In addition, this would suppose the existence of an earlier prehistoric 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 historic creation.

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, for 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 *ascend* to his present position from some lower form of animal life. Rather, he *descended*; i.e., he *fell*. By his fall, man descended 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

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:

Genesis 1:26-28

⁽²⁶⁾ And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

⁽²⁷⁾ So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

⁽²⁸⁾ And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

Genesis 2:7

⁽⁷⁾ And the LORD God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. (Cf. John 20:22)

Genesis 9:1-2

⁽¹⁾ And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth. ⁽²⁾ And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth *upon* the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered. (See vv.3-4)

Psalms 8:3-6

⁽³⁾ When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; ⁽⁴⁾ What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? ⁽⁵⁾ For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor. ⁽⁶⁾ Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all *things* under his feet: (See vv.7-9; cf. Heb. 2:6-8)

Man's Mind is Finite

We must remember that mankind is the creation of God. He 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 too-literal interpretation on a particular Biblical expression. Thus, for example, it is written in the Psalms:

Psalms 50:1

⁽¹⁾ *A Psalm of Asaph.*
The mighty God, *even* the LORD, hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof.

The last two lines of this verse gives the impression that the sun rises and sets in relation to the earth (instead of vice versa). 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.

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

Genesis 1:27

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

Genesis 5:1

⁽¹⁾ This *is* the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; (See v.2)

Genesis 5:3

⁽³⁾ And Adam lived a hundred and thirty years, and begot a *son* in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth:

Genesis 9:6

⁽⁶⁾ Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man. (See v.5)

1 Corinthians 11:7

⁽⁷⁾ For a man indeed ought not to cover *his* head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man. (See vv.3-16)

Ephesians 4:23-24

⁽²³⁾ And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; ⁽²⁴⁾ And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. (See vv.20-32)

Colossians 3:10

- ⁽¹⁰⁾ And have put on the new *man*, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: (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

- ⁽²⁷⁾ So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

- ^(28a) And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth...

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

The Scripture says:

Genesis 2:18

- ⁽¹⁸⁾ And the LORD God said, *It is* not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a help meet for him.

Genesis 2:22-25

- ⁽²²⁾ And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

- ⁽²³⁾ And Adam said, This *is* now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.

- ⁽²⁴⁾ Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

- ⁽²⁵⁾ And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed. (See vv.18-21)

Hebrews 13:4

- ⁽⁴⁾ Marriage *is* honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.

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

- ⁽⁴⁾ And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made *them* at the beginning made them male and female, {Gen. 1:27}
⁽⁵⁾ And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh {Gen. 2:24}
⁽⁶⁾ Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. (See vv.7-12)

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

1 Corinthians 7:3-5

- ⁽³⁾ Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband. ⁽⁴⁾ The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife. ⁽⁵⁾ Defraud ye not one the other, except *it be* with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency [*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

- ⁽⁷⁾ And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they *were* naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. (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

⁽²⁸⁾ And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. ⁽²⁹⁾ And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which *is* upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which *is* the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. (Cf. v.29 with Gen. 9:3)

Genesis 2:8-9

⁽⁸⁾ And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. ⁽⁹⁾ And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

Genesis 2:15

⁽¹⁵⁾ And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to 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

⁽⁶⁾ And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make *one* wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

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

⁽¹⁶⁾ And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: ⁽¹⁷⁾ But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt 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

- ⁽¹⁷⁾ And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed *is* the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat *of* it all the days of thy life; ⁽¹⁸⁾ Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; ⁽¹⁹⁾ In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou *art*, and unto dust shalt thou 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

- ⁽¹⁸⁾ For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us. ⁽¹⁹⁾ For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. ⁽²⁰⁾ For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected *the same* in hope, ⁽²¹⁾ Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

- ⁽²²⁾ For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together 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

- ⁽⁷⁾ But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. (See vv.1-6)

2 Peter 3:10-13

- ⁽¹⁰⁾ But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

- ⁽¹¹⁾ *Seeing* then *that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness, ⁽¹²⁾ Looking

for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? ⁽¹³⁾ Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

God's New Creation

Concerning this new creation, the apostle John says:

Revelation 21:1-5

⁽¹⁾ And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. ⁽²⁾ And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ⁽³⁾ And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, *and be* their God. ⁽⁴⁾ And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. ⁽⁵⁾ And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. (See vv.10-22)

Revelation 21:24

⁽²⁴⁾ And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. (See vv.23-27; cf. Isa. 35:8-10)

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

Revelation 22:1-4

⁽¹⁾ And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. ⁽²⁾ In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, *was there* the tree of life, which bare twelve *manner of* fruits, *and* yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree *were* for the healing of the nations. ⁽³⁾ And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: ⁽⁴⁾ And they shall see his face; and his name *shall be* in 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.³

³ Based on C. Hodge, *Systematic Theology* Vol. 2, [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977 reprint] pp.161-162

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

⁽⁶⁾ And when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, and that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make *one* wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

James 1:13-15

⁽¹³⁾ Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: ⁽¹⁴⁾ But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. ⁽¹⁵⁾ Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

1 John 2:15-17

⁽¹⁵⁾ Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ⁽¹⁶⁾ For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. ⁽¹⁷⁾ And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.

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: "...thou shalt surely die."
Genesis 2:17
⁽¹⁷⁾ But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof **thou shalt surely die.** (*bold emphasis added*)

- 2. Lust** Desiring what God had forbidden.
Genesis 3:2-3
⁽²⁾ And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: ⁽³⁾ But of the

fruit of the tree which *is* in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. (See vv.4-5)

Genesis 3:6

⁽⁶⁾ And when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, and that it *was* **pleasant to the eyes**, and a tree to be **desired to make *one* wise**, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

3. **Pride**

The desire to become as knowledgeable and as wise as God, and to be independent of God.

Genesis 3:4-5

⁽⁴⁾ And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: ⁽⁵⁾ For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, **and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.**

Proverbs 16:18

⁽¹⁸⁾ Pride *goeth* before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.

4. **Disobedience**

Refusing to obey the express command of God: "...thou shalt not..." (v.17)

Genesis 2:17

⁽¹⁷⁾ But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, **thou shalt not** eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

Genesis 3:3

⁽³⁾ But of the fruit of the tree which *is* in the midst of the garden, God hath said, **Ye shall not** eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

5. **Rebellion**

Determination to prove God's word wrong.

Genesis 3:4-5

⁽⁴⁾ And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: ⁽⁵⁾ For God doth know **that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods**, 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. She 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 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.

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'.⁴

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

⁽²²⁾ And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever: ⁽²³⁾ Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. ⁽²⁴⁾ So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of 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

⁽¹⁷⁾ And unto Adam he [God] said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed *is* the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; ⁽¹⁸⁾ Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; ⁽¹⁹⁾ In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou *art*, and unto dust shalt thou return.

⁴ See further on *Bible Truths Explained: Sin*, under *Original Sin*, by the same author

Because of Eve's sin, the Scripture records:

Genesis 3:16

⁽¹⁶⁾ Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire *shall be* to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. (Cf. John 16:21)

This is the reason why God's Word says:

1 Timothy 2:11-15

⁽¹¹⁾ Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. ⁽¹²⁾ But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. ⁽¹³⁾ For Adam was first formed, then Eve. ⁽¹⁴⁾ And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.

⁽¹⁵⁾ Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety. (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

⁽¹²⁾ Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

Romans 5:18-19

⁽¹⁸⁾ Therefore as by the offense of one *judgment came* upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one *the free gift came* upon all men unto justification of life.

⁽¹⁹⁾ For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. (See vv.13-17)

Adam's Sin Imputed to all Mankind

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

⁽¹⁷⁾ And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed *is* the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat *of* it all the days of thy life;

1 Corinthians 15:22

⁽²²⁾ For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

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

1 Corinthians 11:3

⁽³⁾ But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman *is* the man; and the head of Christ *is* God.

Ephesians 5:23-24

⁽²³⁾ For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. ⁽²⁴⁾ Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so *let* the wives *be* to their own husbands in every thing.

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

⁽⁵⁾ Behold, I was shapen 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

⁽²⁰⁾ But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. (See vv.18-21)

Matthew 1:22-23

⁽²²⁾ Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, ⁽²³⁾ Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. (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

⁽³⁴⁾ Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?

⁽³⁵⁾ And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called 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

⁽²¹⁾ For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

Hebrews 4:15

⁽¹⁵⁾ For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are*, yet without sin.

1 Peter 2:22

⁽²²⁾ Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: {Isaiah 53:9}

1 John 3:5

⁽⁵⁾ And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.

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

⁽⁴⁶⁾ And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord,
⁽⁴⁷⁾ And my spirit hath rejoiced 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

⁽¹⁷⁾ But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

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

Romans 6:23

⁽²³⁾ For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ 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. **Spiritual death:** Alienation from God in this life, together with all its attendant temporal miseries.

Spiritual death is:

- (a) mortality
- (b) the loss of original righteousness
- (c) hereditary corruption (i.e. moral and spiritual pollution, and ultimate depravity)

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.

2. **Physical death:** 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.

The body is subject to physical death and dissolution only until the resurrection of mankind. Then, the body will be raised again (reconstituted), 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

⁽²³⁾ For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

James 1:15

⁽¹⁵⁾ Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth 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

⁽¹⁷⁾ But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it:
for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt 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 kindred, tongue, people, and nation. 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.⁵

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

Revelation 5:9-10

⁽⁹⁾ And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; ⁽¹⁰⁾ And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.

Revelation 21:27

⁽²⁷⁾ And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Revelation 22:3-5

⁽³⁾ And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: ⁽⁴⁾ And they shall see his face; and his name *shall be* in their foreheads. ⁽⁵⁾ And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign forever and ever.

Revelation 22:17

⁽¹⁷⁾ And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

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.

⁵ See further on *Bible Truths Explained: Predestination* by the same author.

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.⁶

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

⁽²²⁾ But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, ⁽²³⁾ Meekness, temperance: against such 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

⁽¹⁷⁾ Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

Romans 8:8-9

⁽⁸⁾ So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

⁽⁹⁾ But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

Romans 8:10-11

⁽¹⁰⁾ And if Christ *be* in you, the body *is* dead because of sin; but the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness. ⁽¹¹⁾ But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

What Counts is a New Creation

Galatians 6:15

⁽¹⁵⁾ For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.

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.

⁶ See further on *Bible Truths Explained: Justification* by the same author.

