
The Gospel Proclamation

Christadelphian Unamended First Principles

Proposition 5

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PROPOSITION 5 – That Adam broke this law, and was sentenced to return to the ground from whence he was taken- a sentence which in effect defiled and became a physical law of his being, and was transmitted to all his posterity. Gen. 3:15-19, 22-23; Job 14:4; Psa. 51:5; John 3:6; Rom. 5:12; 6:12; 7:18-24; 1 Cor. 15:22; 2 Cor. 1:9; 5:2-4; Gal. 5:16-17.

What It Means

Proposition 5 deals with why man is mortal, the nature he took on as a result of the fall, and how this impacted the rest of the race which would arise from Adam and Eve. We will examine the reasons for human mortality, the circumstances leading to this situation, and the divine perspective on it. The question of why we die holds profound significance from a biblical standpoint. Let us commence an examination of certain Scriptural reasons that provide insight for a clearer understanding of this very important subject.

Scriptural Testimony

To begin, let us recap the events that transpired in the Garden of Eden. As recorded in

Genesis 2:15 – *And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.*

It is important to note that at this point, everything in the garden was in a state of being “very good.” This is clearly stated in Genesis 1:31, which says, “*And God saw every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good. the evening and the morning were the sixth day.*”

Adam, therefore, was considered “very good” and possessed no flaws or imperfections, just like the rest of creation. Adam was neither mortal (dying) nor immortal (not able to die).

Next, we read about the command, restriction, or law that God put Adam under to follow. This is in

Genesis 2:16-17 – *And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: 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.*

We recognize that this command was given directly to Adam, for as of yet Eve had not been created. It is evident though, that Adam did inform Eve of this command (Genesis 3:2-3). The main thing we want to understand at this point was that Adam fully comprehended the dire consequences of disobedience to God’s command: death, eternal death.

God has established a rule of His grace – a principle upon which He bestows His honors and rewards. That principle is to prove men before He exalts them. Peter speaks of this principle in 1 Peter 1:7 where he says

“That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:”

Trials and testing are for a purpose. This is also referred to in

Proverbs 17:3 – *The fining pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold: but the LORD trieth the hearts.*

The Lord challenges us by way of trials to demonstrate our steadfast faithfulness. The Edenic law was given for that purpose. The law given to Adam was simple and had easily understood consequences: Obey and continue to live, or disobey and die.

Adam disobeyed and therefore came under the condemnation to death, but we note that instead of him dying that day as the law had stated, an animal was slain and its coat was used as a covering for their nakedness (Genesis 3:21). The reason for this will be discussed in the next episode as Proposition 6 deals more specifically with this subject.

As a result of disobeying, which is the definition of sin, Adam received a sentence from the Lord. This is found in

Genesis 3:17-19 – *And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, (he didn't listen to the Lord) 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; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; 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.***

Romans 6:23 plainly states: *“The wages of sin is death...”* Adam and Eve sinned, and so the condemnation of death passed upon them.

This historic event is not to be viewed as an academic interest only, for it has a profound effect upon all living persons. This Divine sentence – *“the law of sin and death”* – condemned all mankind to an eternal grave from where there is *“no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest”* (Romans 8:2, Ecclesiastes 9:10).

This sentence upon Adam is the very reason we die! Thankfully, God in His merciful kindness did intervene. This subject will be taken up in the next few propositions from the Statement of Faith. Our focus here is on the breaking of the law and what resulted from it.

A question we might ask is, how do the consequences of Adams sin have an effect on us?

The answer is that humanity was in the loins of this first man. Every person who has ever existed since creation came out of Adam, and as a consequence, they are inseparably linked. As we have seen for ourselves, everyone eventually succumbs to the curse of death. On the principle that “like produces like” – which is embodied in the law of hereditary descent – sinful parents defiled by sin could only produce children possessing a sinful nature defiled by sin. The stream of human life was poisoned at its very source. Just as all mankind were in the loins of Adam when he sinned and fell, so they all fell in him.

This logic is also born out in Hebrews 7:9-10 which says that *“Levi also, who receiveth tithes, payed tithes in Abraham. **For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him.**”* The Levitical order of priests under the Law of Moses, who were descendants of Abraham, are stated to have paid tithes to Melchisedec

through Abraham their progenitor and representative, even though they were separated by over 400 years. This is because the entire tribe of Levi was in Abraham's loins when Abraham paid tithes to Melchisedec.

In the same way, the result of Adam's violation has had its effect upon humanity for the past 6000 years. It is because of this one act of sin that all die. It is a physical law of our nature.

Opening our Bibles to Romans 5:12 we read, "*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:* (better understood as "**in whom** all have sinned" as the Diaglott renders it)." This is a very powerful verse and is worth re-reading.

What we learn from this verse is:

- The "*one man*" who brought sin into the world is Adam;
- "*death by sin*" refers to the fact that death came into the world *only after and as a result of* sin, and;
- "*passed upon all*" is referring to all of the race being in his loins, and therefore inheriting the same curse.
- "*For that all have sinned*" (in whom all have sinned) emphasizes that it is by being *in Adam* that all are cursed to death. In Scripture, it is called "*the law of sin and death*" as we see in Romans 8:2. The **law** was given in Eden, and it stated that if man **sinned** by breaking the law, the result would be **death**.

Let's continue our consideration of this 5th chapter of Romans where the Apostle Paul drives home this principle of Adamic condemnation. It is abundantly clear that the responsibility for man's fall isn't because of some so-called supernatural "devil" which is popular in modern Christianity. The following verses in Romans 5 unquestionably place the blame specifically on what Adam did.

Vs. 15 – "*through the offense of **one** (Adam) many **be dead***"

Vs. 16 – *for the **judgment** was by **one** (Adam) **to condemnation*** (this is where we get the phrase "Adamic condemnation" from)

Vs. 17 – "***death reigned by one man's** (Adam's) **offense**...*" (death rules over mankind because of Adam)

Vs. 18 – "*Therefore as by the offense of **one** (Adam) judgment came upon **all men to condemnation**...*" (all are under condemnation)

Vs. 19 – "*by **one man's** disobedience the many were **made** (constituted, designated – see Strong's) **sinner**s.*"

Because of Adam's transgression, we experience death, are under its condemnation, death reigns over the race, and mankind have been constituted sinners. These are the reasons why the earth is plagued to this day with death and man is estranged from his Creator. All who are born in the line of Adam are considered "*in Adam*" and have this condemnation to death. 1 Corinthians 15:22 clearly states, "*For as **in Adam** all die...*"

Our Lord understood this principle of inherited condemnation and says in

John 3:18 – *...he that believeth not is **condemned already**...*

The message is that those who will not believe on the saving work of Jesus Christ through the Gospel are already under condemnation.

Consequently, we can deduce that men are not subject to this death penalty because of their own individual transgressions, **but rather as a consequence of Adam's transgression**, whose condemned nature we have inherited. While personal sins do condemn man, Adamic condemnation is the main reason man dies. Babies are incapable of committing personal sin, yet they can unfortunately die, showing that there is more to the problem of man than personal sins. Due to the results of Adam's sin, all individuals are born into the world under the sentence of death and corruption. Furthermore, we compound this situation with personal moral transgressions.

Instead of us today being born with a mind that is "very good", we have inherited a mind – a way of thinking – that is corrupted with the great inclination to act out in sinful ways. It is from within that sin begins.

Jeremiah 17:9 tells us that "**The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?**"

The wise man in Proverbs 28:26 warns us not to trust in our own fleshly thinking, declaring that "He that trusteth in **his own** heart is a fool:"

Our Lord Jesus Christ warns of natural thinking which results in bad actions. It comes as a result of our inherited constitution. He said in Matthew 15:19 that "**out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:**" Out of the heart!

James 1:14-15 likewise teaches that sin originates from our own corrupted nature. It says, "*But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away **of his own lust**, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death*". Personal sin arises from man's own fleshly desires. Aside from moral transgressions, the physical nature we inherit has already condemned us to death. All are sinful, all are mortal, all will die.

From Proposition 5, we have so far considered the sentence and the consequences upon Adam and ourselves which is the physical law of our nature. We would like to now consider what is indicated in the words of our proposition, "a sentence which in effect defiled". "Defiled from what or from whom?" we might ask. What took place as soon as sin entered was a moral change in conscience. Adam now had shame and feelings of guilt which he had not here-to-for experienced – from that of peaceful harmony and close interaction with the Elohim, walking side by side in the garden, to a position which was quite different – being cast from the garden! **This was a change in position between the Lord God and Adam. Adam and Eve were now defiled by the act of sin.**

When confronted and questioned by the Lord, confession was made (Genesis 3:9-13) and a very merciful sentence with the expectation of hope was given as a result. This was bound up in the pronouncements given to the serpent, to the woman, and to Adam. This is found Genesis 3:14-19. From this Divine judgment and sentencing, Adam now understood that things would be very different, but, out of God's mercy, he would not die in the very day that he had eaten. But he must die in order for the law to have its say, and so God orchestrated that man would eventually die and return to the dust of the earth, just not that day. Man was given a lifespan, at the end of which he would die. **Man therefore underwent a change of physical nature, morality, and relationship to God.** We'll discuss more on man's relationship (or position) to God in a moment. Yet Adam, with the belief in this hopeful prospect of continued life, proceeded to name his wife Eve, the mother of all living.

But why would he not die that day as earlier stated? On what principle was this grace extended? The answer is that immediately after this, the Lord then did a wonderful thing for them. It's recorded in Genesis 3:21 which states, "*Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.*"

This subject of covering or atonement by the shedding of blood all points to the future seed of the woman, our Lord Jesus Christ who is called "*the lamb slain from the foundation of the world*" in Revelation 13:8. This will

be discussed in detail in Propositions 6-8. What we want to focus on now is the change of position the Lord had with Adam, and consequently with all of mankind who are “in Adam”.

We know even after the sentence was given and a covering was made for them by the shedding of blood that the two were still **expelled** from the garden as Genesis 3:23-24 state: *“Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he **drove out** the man...”*

Sin was the starting point of this defiling breach. Righteousness and sin fundamentally are at variance with one another. The Lord, Who is righteous, would no longer continue in the former position which He had with them before sin in the garden. This truth that sin separates from God is seen in Isaiah 59:2, which points out, *“But your iniquities have **separated** between you and your God, and your sins have **hid his face** from you, that he will not hear.”* This is very similar to what happened in the garden after transgression.

This emphasizes that sin caused a relational – or a positional – barrier, not just a physical one. This is sometimes spoken of as a “legal” barrier because it represents something that is not physical.

Consider what Habakuk 1:13 says about God – *“Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity:”* The Lord with His eyes of omniscience beholds all things good and evil, and all men good and bad, with all their actions; but He does not look upon the sins of men with approval or acceptance. They are contrary to His nature, repugnant to His will, and create a breach in fellowship with He who is Righteous.

David understood this completely, writing in Psalm 58:3 that *“The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon they be born, speaking lies.”* Note that this “estrangement” is *from the womb*, referring to our nature and state simply by being born in the line of Adam.

David, the person who is called *“the man after God’s own heart”*, even puts himself in this same estranged sinful condition at birth. He said in

Psalm 51:5 – *Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.*

David was not born illegitimately – he was born in a sinful condition like the rest of the condemned race.

This position, as we’ve already considered from the passage in 1 Corinthians 15:22, refers to a legal, official, or what we might call a federal head. Man is either “in Adam” or “in Christ.” These are the two positions in which man can be in, but not simultaneously. These positions are vastly different, just as the separation between eternal death and eternal life is immense. 1 Corinthians 15:22 states, *“For as **in Adam all die**, even so **in Christ shall all be made alive.**”*

As we have seen, man is naturally born “in Adam”, and all who are constitutionally in Adam perish eternally, never having removed the sentence of death from them. To embrace the hope of living after death (eternal life), one must change their headship to being “in Christ.”

By nature, we are in Adam. But we must obey God’s way, the only way of healing this separation. It is a rebinding, or “religion”, which is only through the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ. We **must** come out of Adam and come into Christ if we seek the hope of eternal life. There is only one way for any of the human race to be freed from the law of sin and death. It is exclusively God’s way – God’s plan! As we said before, the details of this hope of redemption and atonement will be discussed in later propositions.

Why This a First Principle

To recap our considerations, we understand without any doubt that Adam broke the Lord’s command, suffered the consequence of that sin in being condemned to return to the dust, and has passed this defiling physical and

legal condition along to all of mankind. Paul calls it a “*sentence of death in ourselves*” in 2 Corinthians 1:9. **We are a condemned, dying race, and it is imperative that we comprehend the reason behind this.** Man must understand that he returns to dust because of what our first parents did in the garden. The only logical understanding of this problem can be found within the Scriptures of Yahweh.

A correct scriptural understanding of the nature of man, as delineated in Proposition 5 of the Statement of Faith, is of vital importance and is a non-negotiable principle of Truth because **it defines what man needs saving from in the first place.** If we don’t understand what we need saving from, we can’t understand the remedy God has provided for it.

To believe this Scriptural understanding creates harmony with the other principles to follow and establishes the basis for what man must do to be reconciled to God. It also defines what the redeemer of the race would have *to do* and *to be* in order to act as a fit representation of the people he was sent to save as we will see in later episodes. These principles establish fellowship with our Father and His Son and with like believers who are recipients of such a great salvation. We are in such a blessed position to know of God’s wonderful plan of salvation through His son our Lord Jesus Christ.

In closing we will reread proposition 5:

“That Adam broke this law, and was sentenced to return to the ground from whence he was taken- a sentence which in effect defiled and became a physical law of his being, and was transmitted to all his posterity.”

Thankfully we have an assuring peace of mind as a result of

Romans 8:2 – *For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.*

Proposition 6 deals more extensively with how God mercifully intervened after man’s sin to create a way for man to restore himself to a relationship and favor with God, and this is the focus of the next episode.

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