

Romans: Verse-by-Verse

Romans 5:12 A

- **Introductory Notes:**

An introduction of two men as the “before and after” explanation of sin and forgiveness: Adam and Christ.

John MacArthur: This entire passage is an antithetical analogy. What he means is that it is an analogy of opposites -- not an analogy of similarities.

Adam is the model of disobedience, sin, condemnation, and death. Christ is the example of obedience, righteousness and life. Their effect on the entire human race is antithetical or opposite.

Verse 12: “Therefore, just as sin entered the world...”. In the original language, Paul does actually finish the sentence. It says, “Therefore, just as sin enter the world...”

- **The True Topic Of Verse 12:** Sin and Death

Paul: How mankind went from the perfection of their creation to the deterioration that we now recognize. F.F. Bruce: “From one man sinning to all men dying.”

Paul is not trying to explain the origin of evil -- but he is concerned with how evil invaded the human race: Sin entered the human race through one man -- that is -- through Adam's disobedience.

I Timothy 2:13-14: “For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner.”

Note: Sin -- as a power -- was already present in the world: The serpent was already in the Garden of Eden. In terms of the historical timeline, Satan had fallen long before Adam and Eve were created.

Paul's second point: The entrance of death into our world.

- **“Didn't Death Exist In The World Before It Came To The Human Race?”**

It would seem that death would have been present, even in the Garden of Eden. Example: plant life. The natural order of plants would suggest that plants would both grow and die over time.

Did animals die? Scholars have noted that the natural order of animals would presuppose that some animals would kill each other for food.

Daniel Harrell: “There had to be death in the Garden, otherwise Adam would have been overrun by bugs and bacteria long before he took that forbidden bite of fruit.”

- **Did Adam And Eve Have Immortal Bodies?**

Were Adam and Eve's bodies meant to last forever?

Some theologians say, “No, that was not the case”. What do they use to support this view? They say that the whole reason there was a “tree of life” was because their bodies were, in fact, not immortal.

So, what is the true curse of sin? Many theologians would say that it is far more than the death of the physical body. Instead, it is the breaking of fellowship with God -- which is, ultimately, spiritual death.

- **Adam: The Doorway For Sin and Death:**

Verse 12: “... And in this way death came to all men, because all sinned...”

Paul moves on from sin and death's presence in one man to their presence in all men, (meaning the human race).

Greek: "Houtos" -- "in the same way": Sin and death came through Adam, but all humans continued the process because, like Adam, all have sinned.

"... And in this way death came to all men, because all sinned...": A couple of different interpretations:

As a power, sin had already existed before Adam. See: John 8:44

Jesus indicates sin predates Adam. He did not originate sin, but he introduced it to the human race. MacArthur: "Adam [acted] as an introductory point. He was acting as an agent for Satan. Satan made the product; Adam just introduced it into the marketplace."

1 John 3:8: "He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work."

If Adam did not originate sin, how did it spread to everyone?

When Adam rebelled against God's authority, the corrupt, decaying principle of sin invaded the progenitor of the human race. But it didn't end with Adam.

In the same way that Adam and Eve's DNA helped to produce humans with physical similarities, such as eyes, noses, ears, hands, and hair color. Spiritually, they also passed down their sin condition.

- **Corporate Identity:**

In the Bible, humans are seen as a corporate identity. "When Adam sinned, he was the whole human race. He was mankind sinning. And in his loins was the seed that would bring forth every human life, every

human life. When he was polluted, it guaranteed that everybody born out of his loins would be polluted." See also: 2 Timothy 3:12-13

Paul and the Jewish concept of corporate personality: Paul did not view humans as isolated individuals. When he describes himself in He didn't see himself that way:

"Circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for legalistic righteousness, faultless." -- Philippians 3:5-6

In Old Testament we see how God often dealt with entire populations on the basis of the actions of even one person: 1). King David and the plague for taking a military census during peacetime: (2 Samuel 24). 2). Achan and the Battle of Jericho: Joshua 7

- **Paul's Insistence On Corporate Responsibility:**

1. All humans have sinned, effectively copying Adam's disobedience.
2. As our corporate representative, when Adam sinned, everyone else was included in his sinning.

Option 1: Imitation. (All have sinned like Adam). Option 2: Involuntary participation. (In Adam, everyone else sinned).

A prior hint: Romans 3:23 -- "For all have sinned and fallen short of God's glory".

Using ancient Jewish theological thought: "Adam is Everyman and Everywoman".

Another stronger viewpoint: The transmission of Adam's depraved nature to succeeding generations: "If Adam's race sins, it is because of the tendencies inherited from our first father."

Next time: What Paul means by "All have sinned".