

The Origin of Sin – briefly stated

While doing research on what various Christian denominations and groups believe about the origin of sin, I ran across the following article "[Where Did Sin Come From?](#)" which explored the question of the origin of sin. The summation of the article did not answer the question at all, but left the reader with the following questions:

To answer our question, 'Where did sin come from?', we make the following conclusions:

- 1. Although Lucifer spawned the first sin, he was not the creator of the concept of sin.*
- 2. The concept of sin has always been known to the all-knowing God.*
- 3. Sin exists because—either it is a created concept of God brought about by God's decrees, or, it has always co-existed as the eternal antithesis of everything that God is.*
- 4. Sin could only experientially exist because, although God cannot sin, He made creatures who could.*

I could not bear it, and emailed the webmaster with the following question:

Who wrote this nonsense? Give me a name please.

And listed the questions above. I then finished with the following statement:

This evidences a complete and total lack of understanding. Whoever wrote this, missed the mark.

The gentleman who wrote it answered back, and was gracious

(considering my initial contact email) and stated that I had contested, but gave no reasons for disagreement. Moreover, he would be glad to address my concerns.

Fair enough. After all, had he been less than gracious, I would have deserved it. I thanked him for being gracious, and sent the following reply:

Sin has a cause, and that is transgression, which is brought about because of iniquity:

And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me; and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me. (*Jeremiah 33:8*)

Iniquity leads to transgression, which immediately results in sin.

Iniquity is the property of being unequal in any of one's ways:

Yet saith the house of Israel, The way of the Lord is not equal. O house of Israel, are not my ways equal? are not your ways unequal? Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord GOD. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel? (*Ezekiel 18:29-31*)

When the LORD states that the ways of the people of Israel are unequal, and He then calls them to turn so iniquity will not be their ruin, He is defining what iniquity is. To help in our understanding, we can use the analogy of a math equation (which is an equality):

In thinking about equations: If we introduce into it any element that makes it unequal, what are our chances of making it equal if we don't realize what we did? What are our chances of actually realizing we introduced an inequality? Moreover, if our understanding is not accurate because we perceive the equation wrongly (unequally – that is, not as it actually is), what are our chances of self-correction?

When a mistake is made working an equation, generally the person does not realize they erred, else they stop immediately and correct the error. However, the divergence with righteousness and iniquity here is that once a thought exists, it cannot be unthought or taken back. Since it is that the LORD judges the thoughts of the heart, once Lucifer had that one thought of being more glorious than the LORD on the throne, he committed an iniquity. Due to the very nature of inequality, he could not go back, nor find his way back. Because of this iniquity, pride arose, and Satan viewed himself to be better than the LORD God in numerous ways. Hence, he rebelled.

Now to look at righteousness: Being righteous is being equal in all one's ways (which only the LORD God is):

Before the LORD; for he cometh to **judge the earth: with righteousness** shall he **judge the world, and the people with equity**. (*Psalms 98:9*)

Here, like in Ezekiel, the LORD defines another term. Only in this case, it is righteousness. Putting the two together: Righteousness is the property of being equal in ALL one's ways, and iniquity is the property of being unequal in ANY of one's ways. It is of necessity true that if righteousness requires for all ways to be equal, that being (or becoming) unequal in any of one's ways, means that one has iniquity. Moreover, like the math equation, being unequal in one part,

spreads to every other part – and it grows.

Once one cannot perceive correctly because of being unequal (iniquity), the determination of what is the right thing to do is clouded and misperceived. It is easy to see then how we can transgress the bounds if we have difficulty perceiving where the bounds are. As soon as we transgress, we have missed the mark (sinned).

Briefly, to answer the final points you put forth in the article:

To answer our question, 'Where did sin come from?', we make the following conclusions: [My answers are in square brackets – italics for the web]

1. *Although Lucifer spawned the first sin, he was not the creator of the concept of sin. [There is no "concept of sin." Sin is not a concept. Rather, is a direct result of transgression (which is exceeding the bounds – thus missing the mark), which is brought about because of iniquity. Satan exercised iniquity because he thought in his heart that he was better than the LORD sitting on the throne he was covering (the descriptions of both the LORD and Satan are in the Scriptures, and that difference is significant). The "problem" is that the LORD gave both angels and men freewill and the ability to judge, but they were not given omniscience. Hence, perception and understanding were limited. Satan lost sight of who created him and gave him all that he had. To man, Satan is beyond genius. But he lost sight of the fact that he was GIVEN that. Just like his beauty and musical ability, his intelligence was given him by the LORD God. However, once he lost sight of that, it was a mere thought of the heart to become unequal – which slipped him into iniquity. Now Satan can never return from that, but only gets more and more unequal over time.]*

2. *The concept of sin has always been known to the all-*

knowing God. [No, the fact that creatures with free-will and the ability to judge, yet not having omniscience would have the potential to slip into iniquity, was known to the LORD God. Nevertheless, He chose to create them that way, and would deal with the consequences. The LORD God already knew what those consequences were, but He desired to create beings that would love Him of their own volition. The very nature of free-will, combined with the ability to judge, creates a situation in which the potential for iniquity exists. However, for love to be genuine, the will must be free, and to actually choose freely, one must be able to judge independently – that is, of oneself, given the facts to make a determination.]

3. Sin exists because—either it is a created concept of God brought about by God’s decrees, or, it has always co-existed as the eternal antithesis of everything that God is. [This is a false choice. We are to choose between the LORD God being the ultimate author of sin, or the core of Taoism? This is expressly man’s view, which lacks understanding of iniquity and righteousness.]

4. Sin could only experientially exist because, although God cannot sin, He made creatures who could. [Here you are closest to being right, but answer no questions. You would have to explain what you mean by “He made creatures who could.” How, and in what way?]

You are getting the essence of the doctrine. This is by no means extensive in addressing the ramifications of iniquity. But, it should briefly explain where sin came from. Of course, if you are of Calvinist or Reformed persuasion, you will likely reject everything I say.

In Christ,

Paul W. Davis

The Fourth Horseman

The following audio is from a recent Wednesday night service in which Article 5 of our Statement of Faith is being taught. The lesson concentrates on the fourth horseman in Revelation, Chapter 6, but touches on the other three horsemen and what they mean, as it is necessary to understanding the Fourth Horseman and the reason Death and Hell exist. I pray you find it profitable.

If the podcast player does not work, you want to use a different player than the embedded player, or you want to download the file, you can use the link below.

[The Fourth Horseman](#)

In Christ,

Paul W. Davis

Adam and the Fall – Addendum – Part 1

NOTE: This is a continuation of the series “Adam and the Fall.” If you have not read those posts, please do so as it will yield a far better understanding of what this series

deals with. The posts can be found here: [Part 1](#), [Part 2](#), [Part3](#), [Part 4](#), [Part5](#), [Part 6](#).

“Ok. This is what I believe and think you meant in the commentary’s above. Correct me if I’m wrong. In a nut shell, Pre-Fall man(Adam) had the ability to sin and the ability not to sin. I believe Adam’s righteousness was the equivalent to a “born again” Christian’s righteousness, a reborn believer has the ability to sin and the ability not to sin. Pre-Fall man and the Reborn man had the same abilities and desires. As far as what Adam knew, what he didn’t know, what he understood, what he didn’t understand is debatable, and one that I wish not to participate in.”
((<http://reproachofmen.org/blog/?p=382#comments>))

There is a misconception that exists concerning Adam and the righteousness he possessed with respect to the born-again child of God and the righteousness that child has imputed unto them. As was made plain earlier, Adam was righteous, but only within the confines of his existence. By and large, it is not understood that Adam was righteous only in the context of his creation. Instead, what is assigned to Adam is precisely what the comment quoted above states:

“I believe Adam’s righteousness was the equivalent to a “born again” Christian’s righteousness, a reborn believer has the ability to sin and the ability not to sin.” ((Ibid))

This simplistic view does not take into account, nor does it incorporate an understanding, of what happens to someone when they are born-again. This failure to understand or incorporate the extent of, and change in the nature of a person when they are born again, brings about many false teachings that could be easily resolved if the totality of the change in the nature of the individual were correctly understood. This change in nature is so radical a departure from what the believer once was, it is described in this way:

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. (*II Corinthians 5:17*)

And again:

But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. (*Galatians 6:14-15*)

This becoming a “new creature” is reinforced in the Old Testament, in the book of Jeremiah:

Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil. (*Jeremiah 13:23*)

Just as it is impossible for the leopard to change its spots, or a man to change the color of his skin, it is equally impossible for someone who has the nature of Adam to do good or become righteous in the sight of God. The reason for this is the corruption of the natural man – the man that is in Adam. As we are expressly told in Scripture, this natural man cannot please God as it is the nature of the flesh only that exists in the natural man, the one who is in Adam:

For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. (*Romans 8:5-8*)

Moreover, no matter how hard any man tries of his own ability, the attempted effecting of righteousness, and righteous acts only brings greater condemnation as we cannot possibly see the

real end of our works and will invariably select a course of action that falls far short of matching the righteousness of God. There are numerous reasons for this, which will be dealt with later, but suffice to state at this point, that once a transgression has been committed, it must be paid for, and no subsequent finite act, however righteous, is going to be sufficient to pay for the transgression that has occurred. Hence, whatsoever is done must be of God as man is incapable of effecting any sort of infinite payment that is required of God for transgression of His law.

Here then we arrive at the event called the "new birth." It is an event that man cannot effect and cannot duplicate. It is solely and expressly a work of God. This event is of such magnitude of change that, were we to physically see it, we would never believe it possible, except that we could not deny that it obviously occurred. In Romans, Chapter 6, it is described thus:

Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. (Romans 6:3-7)

What is described above is nothing less than what would be if we saw someone die, and then immediately come to life, but they were entirely different when they came back to life than what they were before they died. When it states "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed . . ." it is stating nothing less than the fact that when someone believes the gospel, who and what they are – their very nature that caused them to behave and think

in a certain way, ceased to exist. This is further described in Galatians:

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. (Galatians 2:20)

Here, quite plainly, the apostle Paul states "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me:" which is to say that who the apostle Paul was, died when he came to personally know the Lord Jesus Christ through faith, when he believed in the Lord Jesus Christ for his salvation. Now, the Holy Ghost, by the apostle Paul insures this is very clear, so that we understand fully – who he was before, has departed – ceased to exist, died. This is the "old man" spoken of in the passage from Romans 6 above:

Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, . . . (Romans 6:6a)

Here then is a change that is beyond reformation, or "turning over a new leaf." This change is better described as transformation or translation, both of which are terms the Scripture uses to describe the change that occurs at salvation:

Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: . . . (Colossians 1:12-14)

Which translation was pictured in the taking of Enoch:

By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.

(Hebrews 11:5)

Above, when it declares that "Enoch was translated that he should not see death;" it is the perfect picture of what the Lord Jesus Christ described in John, Chapter 8:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death. Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death. Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself? *(John 8:51-53)*

And again:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. *(John 5:24-25)*

And yet again:

Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? *(John 11:23-26)*

All of which are confirmation of that which is stated in Revelation, Chapter 20:

And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God,

and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. (*Revelation 20:4-6*)

Thus we see in Enoch's translation a picture of the fact that a born-again child of God cannot die – ever. In addition, we should note that Enoch ceased to interact with this world, and ceased to partake of troubles of this flesh. This also is a picture of what occurs at salvation. It, like the picture of death Enoch portrayed (Enoch escaped it) also applies to the soul. ((There are quite a number of things that could be discussed at this point. However, to remain with the subject at hand, we shall have to forgo them for the moment.)) The problem that arises here is that problem highlighted by Aaron's comment quoted above:

"I believe Adam's righteousness was the equivalent to a "born again" Christian's righteousness, a reborn believer has the ability to sin and the ability not to sin. Pre-Fall man and the Reborn man had the same abilities and desires." ((Ibid))

The problem here is that Adam could, and did die. However, the Lord Jesus Christ is express that the born-again believer cannot die. This is not "will not" die, which would leave open the possibility of death based upon some as yet unforeseen change or event. Rather, this is "can not" die, which eliminates all possibility of death and dying. Thus, to understand this, we need to establish a perspective, and view everything from that perspective, not allowing any other perspective to cloud our vision. Once we have established that perspective and understand it, then we can examine all other

perspectives in light of that one perspective, which would eliminate considerable confusion.

Quite obviously the perspective we are going to view all this from is the perspective of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is God manifest in the flesh. There are several reasons for this, but the plainest and simplest is that His perspective is correct, He being the Creator of the "box" we live in and the Author of salvation. Hence, it is His perspective that is automatically correct, with all other perspectives taking a "back seat" to be considered only in light of the perspective of the LORD God.

In establishing this perspective, let us turn to a passage from the Old Testament in which the prophet Samuel was rebuked for having a wrong perspective and reminded of the perspective of the LORD:

And it came to pass, when they were come, that he looked on Eliab, and said, Surely the LORD'S anointed is before him. But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart. (I Samuel 16:6-7)

When the LORD tells Samuel that He "seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart." He does not speak here of the physical heart of a man. Rather, the LORD speaks of the soul, which is the part of man that He judges and holds accountable:

Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die. (Ezekiel 18:4)

Therefore, our perspective, if it is to be correct, must focus upon the soul and all things that pertain to the soul. Additionally, we must understand that when the LORD God makes

the soul the single element of the individual to be judged, He is quite plainly stating that the flesh, and what happens in the flesh are secondary. ((This is not to say the things that happen in the flesh are not important, but only to say they are secondary.)) We can confirm this by the following:

When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you? What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. (John 6:61-63)

And again:

Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught? But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man. (Matthew 15:17-20)

And when he was entered into the house from the people, his disciples asked him concerning the parable. And he saith unto them, Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, it cannot defile him; Because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats? And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: 23All these evil things come from within, and defile the man. (Mark 7:17-23)

Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life. (*Proverbs 4:23*)

The reason Proverbs tells us that the “issues of life” all stem from the heart, (which is the soul), is because the condition of our heart is what we are judged on. Moreover, in telling us that, the LORD God is also stating that a certain perspective we have is never correct – that is, we look at the flesh of a person first, and then say that person ‘has a soul,’ when in reality, it is entirely the other way around. What we should automatically say is ‘there is a soul’ understanding that people are souls, not ‘they have a soul.’ However, the reason we have that wrong perspective is because we are overwhelmed by the flesh, even to the point of not perceiving our soul at all.

Thus, we must change our perspective if we are to understand what the LORD God means when He speaks of life and death in relation to salvation, so that we also are not totally confused and mistaken about the condition of a person, even as the disciples were before the Lord Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead:

These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep. Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep. Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead. (*John 11:11-14*)

To be continued . . .

Adam and the Fall – Part 6

It is the fact that Adam continued to function after partaking of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil that creates the greatest problem in the minds of most people. After all, the LORD stated that Adam would die “in the day” he ate the fruit, and yet, Adam and Eve seem to function well enough to know how to make aprons to cover their nakedness. Yet, there is the problem of Adam now not wanting to face his Creator:

And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden. (*Genesis 3:8*)

Moreover, when the LORD calls to Adam, the response and exchange that follows indicates something is terribly amiss:

And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.

And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And the LORD God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.

And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: 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.

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.

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; 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. (*Genesis 3:9-19*)

Clearly, things have radically changed. Where before life was quite simple and easy, now life becomes complicated and hard. Moreover, instead of the fellowship that existed before, now the LORD God rebukes Adam and pronounces judgements and consequences for what has been done. In this we do see the single pronouncement that Adam will die when the LORD states "till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return," but that lies in the future, and it is not this day, which is what the LORD declared when He placed Adam in the Garden.

Clearly, there is need to search the Scriptures to understand what the LORD meant when He told Adam he would die. Since the common conception of death is that someone ceases to exist in this world, and that is not what happened to Adam and Eve, it is imperative that we resolve this so that we may know how the LORD God views us and all mankind.

Due to our limitations in understanding, we must go from what we can see and understand, to what we cannot see, and have no understanding of. In the Scripture we are able to do that as we have several instances where someone's death is described and the events that occurred are detailed concerning what happened, and in what sequence. One of the first descriptions we have is the death of Rachel, the wife of Jacob.

And they journeyed from Bethel; and there was but a little way

to come to Ephrath: and Rachel travailed, and she had hard labour. And it came to pass, when she was in hard labour, that the midwife said unto her, Fear not; thou shalt have this son also. And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Benoni: but his father called him Benjamin. (*Genesis 35:16-18*)

Here we see that Rachel, Jacob's wife, died and ceased to exist in this physical world. However, in that description of her death, we are clearly told that her soul departed her body, and that was the signal event of her death. We have this confirmed by another passage of Scripture as well:

And she said unto Elijah, What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God? art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son? And he said unto her, Give me thy son. And he took him out of her bosom, and carried him up into a loft, where he abode, and laid him upon his own bed. And he cried unto the LORD, and said, O LORD my God, hast thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son? And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the LORD, and said, O LORD my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again. And the LORD heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived. And Elijah took the child, and brought him down out of the chamber into the house, and delivered him unto his mother: and Elijah said, See, thy son liveth. (*I Kings 17:18-23*)

Again we have it confirmed that physical death is not the cessation of functioning of the soul, but a cessation of function of the body due to the soul departing the body. This then, renders the soul incapable of operating in the physical world, and thus, is separated from the physical world as it has no body in which it can operate to interact with the physical.

The fact that strictly spiritual creatures do not have flesh

and cannot operate in the physical without some sort of physical vessel to utilize is confirmed by the Lord Jesus Christ after His resurrection:

And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. (Luke 24:36-39)

Here we also see a separation exists in the interaction of the physical and the spiritual. Were the Lord Jesus Christ strictly a spiritual person after His resurrection, it would have been impossible for the disciples to touch Him. Thus a separation exists between the physical and the spiritual. This separation is a sharp and distinct separation that cannot be bridged, as the Lord Jesus Christ explained to Nicodemus:

Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. (John 3:5-6)

Since we now know that it is the soul that animates the body, and the body is simply a vessel the soul dwells in and utilizes until it's time is full and it departs, thus causing the body to cease to function and all interaction with the physical world is cutoff, we can see that physical death is simply a separation of a soul from its ability to interact with the physical world.

Thus, we can also see a parallel with the death the LORD spoke of in the Garden, in which the death spoken of is a spiritual death. If we understand that Adam did indeed die that day, we can understand that since Adam continued to operate in the physical world, his death must have been spiritual.

What then is spiritual death?

Since we know that physical death is simply the soul ceasing to interact with, or being separated from interaction with the physical world by departing the body, we can also see that spiritual death must also involve a separation. Here, Adam's behavior is telling:

And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. (*Genesis 3:9-10*)

Where before Adam was not afraid of his Creator, now he is afraid of the LORD God and hides himself from the presence of the LORD. Now there exists a situation where Adam cannot bear the presence of his Creator, and he has become alien to the LORD who made him. This situation is mirrored in Isaiah, Chapter 59:

Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear. (*Isaiah 59:1-2*)

It is not that Adam's soul has ceased to function, but that it no longer has any fellowship with the LORD God. We know that the soul of a person who never submits to the gospel doesn't cease to function, for the rich man in the parable of Luke, Chapter 16, whose soul was in hell, was fully cognizant of what was going on:

And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on

me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. (*Luke 16:22-25*)

What we then find in Scripture is that death, as the LORD God defines death, is not a cessation of function of the soul, and neither is the soul incapable of understanding what is going on. Rather, it is that the soul has no fellowship with the LORD God, and thus no meaningful interaction with the Creator, the source of all life. In John, Chapter 14, a statement by the Lord Jesus Christ's is recorded that sheds considerable light on this:

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. (*John 14:6*)

And again in John, Chapter 5:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. (*John 5:24-25*)

Here the construction of the statement is quite clear: that there are functioning individuals walking around which are dead, as they are separated from the LORD God by their sins and iniquities. However, if they will hear the gospel and believe, they will pass from death to life, and cannot die ever again.

Thus, to the LORD God, death is being separated from Him, and He not knowing you, as the LORD cannot fellowship with those who countervail His judgements, call Him a liar continually, and are unrepentant in their hearts. They are strange and

alien to Him, even as Adam became strange to the LORD.

So then we see that death ensued that very moment Adam partook of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, became aware of the law, judged his condition, and judged that the LORD God had inadequately clothed him, and determined a course of action that revealed the condition of his heart and soul. In so doing, Adam separated himself from God and made himself strange to the LORD God, setting himself as a judge over the actions of the LORD, and finding them wanting.

By this, Adam became the enemy of God and dead to God, and the fall is complete. Man can now never escape the law and its consequences save through the Lord Jesus Christ, and His shed blood on the cross.

Adam and the Fall – Part 5

We have now come to the situation that Adam was warned about: that if he ate of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he would surely die that day. The question that now arises in the minds of many is:

How is he dead? After all, Adam did not immediately cease to function; how then can Adam be dead?

In the above questions and the attempts of many to answer them, we find that Calvin's commentary is not really any different than most when it comes to their understanding of the death the LORD God plainly stated would occur immediately upon partaking of the tree. Thus, we may use it for an example of what is commonly held to have taken place:

“But it is asked, what kind of death God means in this place?”

It appears to me, that the definition of this death is to be sought from its opposite; we must, I say, remember from what kind of life man fell. He was, in every respect, happy; his life, therefore, had alike respect to his body and his soul, since in his soul a right judgment and a proper government of the affections prevailed, there also life reigned; in his body there was no defect, wherefore he was wholly free from death. His earthly life truly would have been temporal; yet he would have passed into heaven without death, and without injury. Death, therefore, is now a terror to us; first, because there is a kind of annihilation, as it respects the body; then, because the soul feels the curse of God. We must also see what is the cause of death, namely alienation from God. Thence it follows, that under the name of death is comprehended all those miseries in which Adam involved himself by his defection; for as soon as he revolted from God, the fountain of life, he was cast down from his former state, in order that he might perceive the life of man without God to be wretched and lost, and therefore differing nothing from death. Hence the condition of man after his sin is not improperly called both the privation of life, and death. The miseries and evils both of soul and body, with which man is beset so long as he is on earth, are a kind of entrance into death, till death itself entirely absorbs him; for the Scripture everywhere calls those dead who, being oppressed by the tyranny of sin and Satan, breath nothing but their own destruction. Wherefore the question is superfluous, how it was that God threatened death to Adam on the day in which he should touch the fruit, when he long deferred the punishment? For then was Adam consigned to death, and death began its reign in him, until supervening grace should bring a remedy." ((John Calvin, Commentaries on the First Book of Moses, CCEL text edition))

Here Calvin, like so many others, does not go to Scripture and allow Scripture to interpret the meaning of death, but states

“It appears to me, that the definition of this death is to be sought from its opposite; we must, I say, remember from what kind of life man fell.” thus not allowing the LORD to explain what He means from His word, but in the end, plainly denying the express statement of the LORD that Adam would die that day:

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.
(Genesis 2:16-17)

Now we know that it is manifestly impossible for God to lie, as the Scriptures are plain that God cannot lie:

. . . In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began; . . . (Titus 1:2)

And again:

Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: . . .
(Hebrews 6:17-18)

So when we again look at the warning Adam was given, we must consider that a literal truth was spoken, and we are not seeing what we need to see when we do not view Adam as being dead. It is clear that the term “in the day” was used with direct reference to eating the fruit and death occurring. Again, because the plain references are to literal, 24 hour days to this point, we are not free to think that the LORD meant that Adam would die at some point in the future, or that death had begun its working in Adam, but expressly meant that Adam died that day, and immediately upon eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. So it is that

we find a clear difference between what we know and perceive, and what the LORD God plainly stated. To reconcile this, we must understand what death is from the LORD God's point of view since He declared Adam would die that day, and understands perfectly how Adam did die.

Moreover, to do this, we must understand the parts of man and what the LORD God looks at to judge man and hold him accountable. In pursuing that end, we must again examine Genesis, Chapter 2, where we see that man was formed of the dust of the ground, which is the physical part of man, and the LORD breathed into man the breath of life so that man became a living soul:

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. (*Genesis 2:7*)

At this point, we must quickly clarify the error of a particular belief that some have. As was pointed out before, we see a distinction from the animals due to the fact that the animals were not created with a soul, and man was. However, there exists considerable confusion among some over how animals are made, and whether they have a soul. Although the Scripture never speaks of any animal having a soul, it does indicate that there is a spiritual aspect to animals, even as there is to all things.

In Scripture, we do see that man is a living soul, and that man has a spirit. Moreover, for us, distinguishing between the two is an exceedingly difficult task, bordering on the impossible. We are also told that there is a spirit in everything and all living things have a spirit that is part of them. We see in Scripture that this extends even to inanimate objects, that they also have a spiritual aspect. This is evident from the following passages of Scripture:

And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the

mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen; Saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest. And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples. And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out. (Luke 37-40)

For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. (Romans 8:22)

God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. (Hebrews 1:1-4)

Thus, everything in all creation is upheld by spiritual power, and everything has a spiritual component to it. This does not say, and neither is it supported in Scripture, that God is in everything. Rather, it is to say that the LORD God constructed everything with a spirit in it and everything is bound together by a spiritual power. The LORD God is able to communicate with all His creation, and all His creation and the creatures in it acknowledge Him, as can be seen by the following passages in addition to those previously cited:

And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the LORD God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word. And the word of the LORD came unto him,

saying, Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there. (*I Kings 17:1-4*)

And God's anger was kindled because he went: and the angel of the LORD stood in the way for an adversary against him. Now he was riding upon his ass, and his two servants were with him. And the ass saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand: and the ass turned aside out of the way, and went into the field: and Balaam smote the ass, to turn her into the way. (*Numbers 22:22-23*)

And the LORD opened the mouth of the ass, and she said unto Balaam, What have I done unto thee, that thou hast smitten me these three times? And Balaam said unto the ass, Because thou hast mocked me: I would there were a sword in mine hand, for now would I kill thee. And the ass said unto Balaam, Am not I thine ass, upon which thou hast ridden ever since I was thine unto this day? was I ever wont to do so unto thee? And he said, Nay. Then the LORD opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand: and he bowed down his head, and fell flat on his face. (*Numbers 22:28-31*)

Here now it is evident that the animals perceived the spiritual far quicker than man, especially in the case of Balaam. This does not mean that animals are more spiritual than man, it is only to say that Balaam's obstinance and rebellion prevented him from perceiving the presence of the angel. In short, man is spiritually blind through and because of sin, whereas animals, which are not capable of sin, more readily perceived spiritual events.

In returning to man and man's construction (or how we are made), we must understand that there is a distinct difference between the spirit and a soul. Though there are times in Scripture that the word "spirit" refers to the soul, it is

only done due to the fact that the soul is strictly spiritual in makeup, and has no physical component. Therefore, it should not surprise us that the soul is sometimes referred to as a spirit. What we must be certain of is the context in which the word is used, and whether the characteristics described are applicable to God and man. Thus, for our proper understanding, we must perceive the differences between the two spiritual parts of man, the soul and spirit, how they interact, and their characteristics. For the purposes of knowing how death occurred that day, our understanding need not be exhaustive, only sufficient to establish what part of man died, and how that death was manifested, for it is undeniable that some part of man died as the LORD clearly stated that Adam would die that day.

In the following verse, it is clearly laid out that man is a tri-unity of parts: spirit, soul, and body, and for man to live in this physical world, all parts must function together.

And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. (*I Thessalonians 5:23*)

Now all that is required is to distinguish the function of each of the parts and how the LORD created them to function. We know, and it is clearly evident that the body only functions in this physical world, and when it ceases to function, it returns to the dust from whence it was. What is not so clear is the function of the soul and spirit, and how they relate to one another. To begin with, the Scripture has much to say about the soul and spirit, and we are told that the soul (and the heart which is the seat of the soul) is the part of man the LORD holds accountable:

Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die. (*Ezekiel 18:4*)

But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart. (*1 Samuel 16:7*)

Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith. (*Habakkuk 2:4*)

But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him: . . . (*Daniel 5:20*)

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings. (*Jeremiah 17:9-10*)

We are also told that it is the soul that is self-aware, that it thinks and feels:

I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. (*Psalms 139:14*)

Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God. (*Psalms 43:5*)

And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. (*1 Samuel 18:1*)

By the above passages, we see that it is the soul that makes us who we are, that gives us our personality, our individuality and identity, and that we are judged by the condition of our soul. When we become close to someone, it is our soul that is drawn to their soul (or should be), which is why a purely physical relationship is considered shallow and

unfulfilling. Our knowledge of God and good and evil are instinctual to our soul. We also have in our soul an awareness of self, of our existence, and an instinctive knowledge that when our body ceases to function, we will continue to exist.

So what then is the spirit? The following passages of Scripture are but a few of many that describe it, and its function:

The spirit of man is the candle of the LORD, searching all the inward parts of the belly. (*Proverbs 20:27*)

With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. (*Isaiah 26:9*)

And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem. And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village. (*Luke 9:53-56*)

What we are shown by this is that the spirit is the means by which we are communicated with, and communicate with, the spiritual world. It is our spiritual means of communication, and without a spirit, we would have no way of interacting with the spiritual world, even as our body could not perceive and communicate in the physical world without eyes, ears, nose, and the ability to taste, touch and feel. In the spiritual, our spirit accomplishes all the functions that the various sensory organs do for our body.

What we further see, is that our spirit allows us to be affected by things spiritual as James and John were, even though they were saved men with the Holy Ghost indwelling

them. Hence, things perceived in the spirit, and being affected spiritually, does not necessarily have anything to do with the condition of the soul. It is also evident that our spirit remains active whether or not we are “dead in trespasses and sins,” for even the animals have a spirit that is active as previously cited passages show.

Therefore, when the LORD God instructed Adam that he would die “in the day” he partook of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and we see that Adam’s body continued to function, living in the world, and we also see from Scripture that the spirit never ceases to be active, we can only conclude that it was the soul of Adam that died. Thus we are left with the final question:

What is meant by “death” in relation to the soul?

Knowing all that has gone before, we then must see how the LORD defines death, since the Scripture is quite plain that the soul never ceases to exist.

To be continued . . .

Adam and the Fall – Part 4

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. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed. (Genesis 2:23-25)

Surely your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter's clay: for shall the work say of him that made it, He made me not? or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, He had no understanding? (*Isaiah 29:16*)

Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? (*Romans 9:20*)

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. (*Genesis 3:7*)

If now thou hast understanding, hear this: hearken to the voice of my words. Shall even he that hateth right govern? and wilt thou condemn him that is most just? Is it fit to say to a king, Thou art wicked? and to princes, Ye are ungodly? How much less to him that accepteth not the persons of princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor? for they all are the work of his hands. (*Job 34:16-19*)

Knowledge. It's supposed to be a wonderful thing. But there is some knowledge that we simply don't need, like that of chemical weapons, biological weapons, getting hit in the head, overdosing on heroin, etc., etc. In short, knowledge, simply for the sake of knowledge is not a good thing in and of itself. Moreover, the knowledge we receive has to be accurate to the reality that truly exists. Some knowledge would simply be better left unknown.

So it is with the knowledge of good and evil. Due to the very nature of knowing what constitutes or makes something good, and what constitutes or makes something evil, and because Adam was created the way he was created, he cannot help but judge everything he observes, and thus determine whether it is good or evil. But before continuing, we must fully understand that Adam was indeed created with the ability to judge, and did so, as this also is critical to our understanding of how the

knowledge of good and evil is instantly destructive to us. We know that Adam was created with the ability to judge by the first recorded task the LORD gave Adam:

And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him. (*Genesis 2:19-20*)

Here we see that Adam is fully able to distinguish the different characteristics of the animals, and judge the name most fitting for that animal, and where it fits into the environment they live in. Now, this does not tell us the extent or capacity of Adam's ability to judge, saving we are expressly told that he does not know good and evil. However, we can see that immediately upon partaking of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he immediately judges certain things that are of a different quality than simply naming animals.

Thus, though we are not told of the extent, we still see plainly that man was created with the inherent ability to judge, even as his Creator judges, but not to the same level of authority or power. Within Adam's limited existence, the judgement he possesses is commensurate with his ability to discern. Adam cannot see into the future, and has no mechanism by which he can determine the outworking or end of thoughts and events. Adam is also confined by the limits of his physical perception, and cannot accurately determine if an action performed at one place, can never or may never affect events at another place with any certainty. Or, if it does affect events, to what extent the effect is felt at the other, or any other place. We, living today, ought to be very familiar with these limitations. However, this limitation becomes immeasurably more severe when we consider the

ramifications within the realm of the spiritual.

If we remember, it is the spiritual that existed before the physical, and is greater and more powerful than the physical. If we also remember, sin is first and foremost, spiritual and begins in the heart and soul of the individual long before it is ever manifested physically:

Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. (Matthew 5:27-28)

And again:

And Jesus said, Are ye also yet without understanding? Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught? But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man. (Matthew 15:16-20)

And so it is that Adam's ability to comprehend what might be spiritually, is also severely limited, as he has no means by which he can determine the effect of the thoughts of his heart upon the entirety of the spiritual world. Thus, Adam's ability to make moral judgements concerning the things he perceives, observes and considers, was rightly and properly withheld as it would bring about a situation where Adam would judge something, and not seeing all the ramifications of it, would judge it to be one way and to have one outcome, and in reality it actually is a different way and a considerably different outcome will result. What the end of this situation is, is what the Scripture calls iniquity (which is the cause of sin), as the judgement made would "miss the mark" and be unequal to

the reality that exists.

For us to truly understand what “iniquity” and “sin” are, and why they are so egregious and destructive, we must examine righteousness, sin, and iniquity and how they are defined. In Scripture, iniquity and sin are clearly defined, and in so doing, righteousness is defined as well. The clearest passages that define iniquity and sin, and thus righteousness, are found in the Old Testament, in Ezekiel:

Yet saith the house of Israel, The way of the Lord is not equal. O house of Israel, are not my ways equal? are not your ways unequal?

Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord GOD. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. (*Ezekiel 18:29-30*)

Yet the children of thy people say, The way of the Lord is not equal: but as for them, their way is not equal. When the righteous turneth from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, he shall even die thereby. But if the wicked turn from his wickedness, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall live thereby. Yet ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal. O ye house of Israel, I will judge you every one after his ways. (*Ezekiel 33:17-20*)

In both the above passages, it is very clear by the use of the phrases “my ways equal” and “your ways unequal” and then the LORD God stating “turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity . . .” and again stating “When the righteous turneth from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity,” the LORD is clearly setting righteousness in direct opposition to iniquity, and saying that “iniquity” is being “not equal” in one’s doings. Therefore sin, which is a result of iniquity, is the result of being unequal in one’s way of being. This is to say that if the very way we think is unequal, that when we do not treat everything equally, we are

in sin, and are not righteous. This is confirmed in the New Testament in James, Chapter 2:

If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors. (*James 2:8-9*)

Beyond this, it is inherent in being equal or righteous, that one must, to be equal, see all things that are, as they are, not as we think or want them to be. Moreover, one must be able to see infinitely to know that all things that can be seen, are seen, and perceived accurately or as they are.

To simplify somewhat, it is like examining a sheet of copier, or printer paper, letter size. For us, we specify that it is 8.5 x 11.0 inches, and is .012 inch thick, and weighs "X" amount. However, all that is described by us, is approximate, and not actual. In fact, we cannot actually know exactly how wide, long and thick the sheet of paper is. Nor can we know exactly how much it weighs.

Why?

Because we do not have instruments that can measure the absolute size and weight of the sheet of paper. We are strictly limited by our capabilities and will never know exactly the physical aspects of the sheet of paper, we can only approximate. This makes us inherently unrighteous when we attempt to describe a single sheet of letter size printer or copier paper.

Now, as briefly touched on concerning Adam, once he has received the knowledge of good and evil, the problem goes further when making an attempt to determine the outcome of some physical action, or decision. To be righteous he must insure that all consequences of any action he decides upon and executes must fit perfectly in the creation in which the LORD God placed him. Any and all outcomes, no matter how remote, no

matter how seemingly insignificant, must match perfectly with the ordained order of the LORD's creation. Otherwise, Adam is unrighteous and not equal in his dealings and thus in iniquity, and as a result, sin.

Hence, looking at righteousness in this way demonstrates to us just how incapable Adam was of being righteous once he obtained the knowledge of good and evil. Moreover, it illustrates his (and our) inability to truly understand the extent of the LORD God's righteousness, which is intrinsic to His being.

Perhaps then, a description of the LORD God's righteousness can be understood by the following illustration:

It is as if there existed an infinitely large mathematical equation that extended in every dimension, both physical and spiritual, with an equal sign right in the midst. In all that would be done in this infinite, multi-dimensional equation, it is never not an equation. Meaning it is never, not even for the slightest of an instant, unequal as it is worked. Moreover, in every thought and action that occurs in this equation and the outworking or ramifications thereof, everything balances perfectly and remains equal at all times, from infinity to infinity in every and all possible dimensions.

Now then, if we begin to grasp that concept, we begin to understand how that in all that is done, the LORD God is ever and always righteous in all that He does, from infinity to infinity, and how incapable Adam was of being righteous should he gain the knowledge of good and evil. Thus, it is plain that in withholding the knowledge of good and evil, the LORD God was preserving Adam from making judgements against, and contrary to his Creator, and thus placing himself in opposition to the LORD God, the very one who made him.

Now then, let us return to the verses above, and what they

declare:

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. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed. (*Genesis 2:23-25*)

Surely your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter's clay: for shall the work say of him that made it, He made me not? or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, He had no understanding? (*Isaiah 29:16*)

Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? (*Romans 9:20*)

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. (*Genesis 3:7*)

If now thou hast understanding, hear this: hearken to the voice of my words. Shall even he that hateth right govern? and wilt thou condemn him that is most just? Is it fit to say to a king, Thou art wicked? and to princes, Ye are ungodly? How much less to him that accepteth not the persons of princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor? for they all are the work of his hands. (*Job 34:16-19*)

In light of all that is spoken of before, it is now plain that Adam judged the actions of his Creator and deemed them lacking. When Adam received the knowledge of good and evil, as the Scripture shows, he went from being naked and unashamed, to instantly judging that he was naked, and should not be so, for he was ashamed of his state of undress. By this action, Adam has brought a judgement contrary to the order the LORD God set up when he did not cloth Adam immediately after his creation. This then, is the visible manifestation of the

judgement that has occurred in Adam's heart concerning how he should have been adorned when he was made. The reality of Adam's judgement is to call God wicked for not clothing him when He made him, and thus giving Adam cause for shame. Moreover, now Adam also knows plainly that he should not have partaken of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and also knows that he has set himself against the LORD God. As a result of this, Adam's reaction upon the appearance of the LORD God in the garden can be well understood by us today:

And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden. (*Genesis 3:8*)

To be continued . . .

Adam and the Fall – Part 3

NOTE: This is a reposting of Part 3 of Adam and the Fall due to significant revision and extension of the original article. I do apologize for its length. – *Paul*

And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, . . . (*Luke 24:44-45*)

Even as the disciples could not understand the Old Testament Scriptures because they were blinded by the hardness of their hearts, Adam, not by any hardness of his heart, but through ignorance, simply cannot understand that choosing to partake

of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is evil. What is meant in the passage from Luke, Chapter 24 is that the disciples could not grasp the significance of passages of Old Testament Scripture, and that those passages pertained to Christ. In the same way, to Adam, who does not know and cannot conceive good and evil, what is put before him is simply a choice of one thing over another. Though we see that Adam cannot be held guilty due to his innocence, he is indeed guilty by virtue of the fact he was given an express command. However, he does not, as we would, recognize that rejecting the command is an act of rebellion. He simply cannot understand anything good or evil about the command and his transgression of it. It is impossible for Adam to understand how failing to keep the command is wrong. This is a state of pure innocence. It is very much like the innocence of a child, which is described to us in Deuteronomy, Chapter 1:

Moreover your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, and your children, which in that day had no knowledge between good and evil, they shall go in thither, and unto them will I give it, and they shall possess it. (Deuteronomy 1:39)

Now, unlike little children and like the disciples, Adam's state is one of being intelligent yet undiscerning of what it means to be disobedient. He cannot comprehend that disobeying the commandment is an act of evil, any more than he can discern that both he and the creation he inhabits are "very good." In the same way, but looking from the other side, we have almost as much difficulty comprehending Adam's state of existence as he does comprehending that good and evil exist. The difference is that he can't, and if we honestly try, we can. After all, all we have to do is raise a child, and we gain firsthand knowledge of what it is like to deal with someone who cannot comprehend that what they are about to do, or what they just did is wrong.

Thus, there is a parallel that exists between the child reaching the age where they perceive the fact that the law of

God exists, and Adam partaking of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This "awareness" of the child is explained by the apostle Paul in Romans, Chapter 7:

What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. (*Romans 7:7-9*)

The parallels do not match completely, as Adam's state cannot ever be duplicated again. However, it is close enough that we can see what is meant by the statements "I had not known sin, but by the law" and "For without the law sin was dead." We may also add the following, as it confirms the picture presented by the child that becomes cognizant of the law of God, and due to his sin nature, promptly rebels:

The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. (*I Corinthians 15:56*)

Hence, immediately after the entrance of the law, sin revives in the heart of the child, deceives the child, the child rebels against the law and is promptly cut off from God. Nonetheless, we are also instructed in the passage from Romans, Chapter 7 cited above, that the apostle Paul was "alive without the law once:" meaning that as a child that could not distinguish between good and evil (yet the sin nature lay dormant in his heart) he lived, and had yet to run afoul of the law no matter what he did, as he was not capable of distinguishing between good and evil. Thus, we have confirmation of what Moses stated in the passage quoted above:

" . . .and your children, which in that day had no knowledge between good and evil,. . ." (*Deuteronomy 1:39b*)

Here then is the parallel between Adam and the little child

prior to the fall, and a parallel between what happened to Adam when he fell and death ensued, and the child that reaches the age of cognizance of the law of God and death ensues. In both cases, the parties are innocent, innocence is destroyed, and death comes about as direct result of the loss of innocence. Thus, we should have the ability to understand that Adam, as intelligent as he obviously was, could not make a moral judgement about the rightness or wrongness of his action, or of the actions of anyone or anything else. In this regard Adam is like a child (I should say here that to the LORD God, we are all like little children.), but in sheer intelligence, Adam has immense capability. He is, like the disciples, held back from understanding, yet is fully capable of understanding. The problem is not with Adam's intellect, but lies in the fact that the knowledge of what constitutes good and evil itself will kill him.

This calls to mind the time when I spoke with a couple of Mormon missionaries. During the discussion, one of them held up The Book of Mormon and declared "But we have more knowledge!" as a way of supporting their reliance on The Book of Mormon in addition to the Bible. Instantly, (and it was instant) my mind was brought to the fall of man and the very fact that it was the appeal to knowledge, and subsequent "wisdom" that snared Eve, then Adam – and killed them, resulting in misery for us all. Of course, the reply which I gave them was, "Yeah, Adam and Eve got more knowledge, and it killed them." The point here is that more knowledge is not necessarily a good thing. If we cannot handle the knowledge we receive, then it is ultimately detrimental, and likely to be fatal to us. Even so, the ability to distinguish between good and evil (which is the ability to make moral judgments) destroys us. Unfortunately, we can no more divest ourselves of that knowledge than any of us could jump to the planet Saturn. The "why" of this is critical, and requires examination as well.

It is notable that the tree was expressly named the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil," and not the tree of "good and evil." I have previously pointed out that there are those who fail to make this distinction. This failure flaws their understanding of what happened, and the why of it. The LORD God had, as He does in everything, a very significant point to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. It is up to us to inquire of it and seek the LORD for an answer to why this is so.

With the creation of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and the subsequent instruction that the fruit of it should not be eaten lest death ensue, the LORD places a barrier to a portion of knowledge He determined is destructive to man. Moreover, by telling Adam that "death" would be the direct, immediate result, even if death is not explained, the whole tenor of the command and warning would cause one to shy away from violating it. The clear perception is that death and dying is not a good result, and irrevocable. Hence, there is a knowledge here that will change things permanently and not in a desirable way. Thus Adam weighed in the balance whether the supposed gain of knowledge was worth the consequent price to be paid. Since we all live the result, we know both the decision and the result of it, neither of which were and are good.

That stated, this tree of the knowledge of good and evil is like a latch, that once tripped, cannot be reset, and we cannot return to the former state of innocence. Why? The answer lies in the very nature of righteousness and in the creation of Adam. The Scripture is plain that Adam was created in righteousness, and had his own righteousness, although finite, by virtue of his creation. Moreover, since Adam cannot differentiate between good and evil, he cannot effect a moral judgment. This makes Adam dwell in a state of innocency where, no matter what he does, it cannot be wrong. He has no ability to determine whether his own actions are good or evil, which

is to say, right and wrong. The principle of that is given to us in Romans, Chapter 4:

For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression. (*Romans 4:14-15*)

Here the principle is plainly stated, that if there is no law, there can be no transgression. In short, it is impossible to transgress that which does not exist. However, Adam has a law, and only one law:

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. (*Genesis 2:16-17*)

The law is plain: don't eat of the fruit of one specific tree. Now, if it happened to be that all the command encompassed was simply 'don't eat the fruit of this tree,' without the fruit thereof imparting knowledge, we would find a somewhat difficult situation in that Adam, having partaken, yet having no knowledge imparted to him, would still be uncomprehending of what he did wrong. Moreover, since he blundered in his innocence and naivete, and remained so, how was he to be dealt with? Righteously and within the law there is nothing specified and not really a way to deal with this situation. To outright destroy Adam is to treat Adam as we are commanded to treat animals that transgress:

If an ox gore a man or a woman, that they die: then the ox shall be surely stoned, and his flesh shall not be eaten; but the owner of the ox shall be quit. (*Exodus 21:28*)

Thus we would find an immediate end to the race of man. Moreover, Adam was not formed as the animals were formed, but was made in the image of God and is a living soul. Scripture

clearly testifies that animals were not formed in the image of God, and do not have a soul. Hence, this is not a tenable option in light of righteousness and the law, as the Scripture also demonstrates:

Keep thee far from a false matter; and the innocent and righteous slay thou not: for I will not justify the wicked. (*Exodus 23:7*)

Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven. (*Matthew 18:10*)

“ . . .and your children, which in that day had no knowledge between good and evil, . . .” (*Deuteronomy 1:39b*)

It is not simply that they are children that causes the Father to look upon the little ones among us, but that they are innocent, and live in innocency until they become cognizant of the law. This is a point of law that the LORD God cannot transgress, as it would violate His own nature. Even though Adam would have unrighteously eaten of the fruit, had he remained in innocency, the law of God and God's righteousness would have placed Adam in an irresolvable, irreconcilable situation. Therefore, we must look for the resolution of this through righteousness.

If we then look to righteousness, we can see that righteousness is an absolute quality where one is either righteous wholly and completely, or one is not righteous at all:

For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. (*James 2:10*)

But then, without the impartation of knowledge that would bring Adam out of his state of innocency, he would be guilty without understanding why, and would exist in a place that the law does not address, and indeed cannot address. However, if

we look at the effect of Adam's action, but not his intention, we can also see that Adam judged the command of God and found it to be lacking, but with no understanding that this was the actual effect of what he did. In accordance with the testimony of Scripture, we find that the knowledge of good and evil is the cognizant ability to make judgements and determine whether something is either good or evil under the law. Thus, once Adam partook of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, knowledge of the law was imparted and he became as a god, with the ability to knowingly judge. Since Adam had broken the law, the impartation of the knowledge of the law seals him to always knowing the law, and he cannot escape the fact that everything he sees he will automatically judge as to whether it is good or evil, right or wrong. Instantly, upon partaking of the fruit, we are told:

. . .the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked;. . . (*Genesis 3:7a*)

Therefore, we do plainly see that the partaking of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil imparts a certain knowledge, a certain ability, which is the ability to make moral judgments on an instinctual level. Moreover, it is an event that cannot be undone. This is why, though they knew not before that they were naked, they instantly recognized the moral aspects and implications to their nakedness, and knew instantly they should be clothed. Worse yet, having judged the command of the LORD God, and, in their eyes found it wanting, yet without understanding, they now go further and seeing themselves, knowingly judge that the LORD God should have clothed them. By this, without fully realizing it, Adam brought judgment against the LORD God and set himself at variance with the LORD.

With the above, we should now be able to understand the function of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Quite plainly we see that the instruction to not partake of it, was not simply a prohibition for the sake of giving Adam a law to

see if he would obey. Rather, there is a larger issue here, one of being able to determine what constitutes righteousness, and conversely wickedness. By the knowledge given in the fruit of this tree, man will be able to knowingly determine whether a thought, type of behavior, action, etc. is ultimately beneficial or detrimental, and why. If man is able to resist the temptation to misuse such knowledge, and operate in perfect harmony with his Creator, then all is well. If not, man "unbalances the equation" in that he is no longer operating according to his design. However, since man was given an express command, the mere fact of partaking, means that man would no longer be operating in harmony with his Creator, thus unbalanced in his thoughts, actions, and behavior and in sin.

Thus, there is a further representation given by the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This representation then is a physical manifestation of a realm of spiritual knowledge, that, had Adam entered into solely in the spiritual (in the thoughts of his heart only) we could never tell the difference, saving that Adam suddenly found it necessary to be clothed. Moreover, if it were only in the spiritual that this occurred, then Eve would not have been, and could not have been guilty, and would have been unrighteously subject to death and destruction. Why? It is plain from both Scripture and from our own experience that a person's thoughts are strictly that person's private thoughts, and are not shared unless and until they are revealed by that individual. Hence, had Adam, who is the head of the race, and to whom was given dominion, transgressed in his heart, and been brought to the knowledge of good and evil, he would have brought death upon all in his dominion. However, Eve, who had not transgressed, and who has a soul and is made in the image of God, would have also been subject to death as well, and thus been unjustly condemned. Moreover, had Eve only transgressed in her heart, then Adam, who had not partaken, would have not fallen, and no death would have entered into Adam's dominion, yet sin would

be found in the realm of Adam's existence, confined to Eve. Here we find a situation where sinless Adam could have known sinful Eve, resulting in a situation where the children would have had an irresolvable conflict in their nature.

Hence, by making a physical manifestation (the tree of the knowledge of good and evil) of a spiritual realm of knowledge (knowing good and evil), and commanding man to not partake of it, the LORD insures that if transgression occurs, that the race of man is brought wholly and completely into transgression and the transition is visible to all. Moreover, that if it occurred, the event would be undeniable to all involved, and to all who would come to have knowledge of the event in the future.

To be continued . . .

Adam and the Fall – Part 2

Now we have arrived at the point before the fall of man, where Adam is given a help that is proper for him. In understanding this situation, we also need to understand Eve's relationship to Adam as far as authority and dominion are concerned, as it bears significantly on the fall. This relationship is clearly established in Scripture by the following:

And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him.

And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. 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. (*Genesis 2:20:23*)

This is confirmed also by the following passage:

But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. (*I Timothy 2:12-13*)

This “order of creation” reinforces the intent of the LORD God when he gave man dominion, but commanded Adam only concerning the tree of the knowledge of good and evil:

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. (*Genesis 2:16-17*)

Thus, Adam is the individual that will be held accountable if error is made and the dominion is lost, which we also see confirmed in Scripture:

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: (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come. (*Romans 5:12-14*))

And again:

For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. (*I Corinthians 15:22*) ((Yes, I know. Those who believe in Universal Salvation like to cite this verse as one of the “proofs” of their doctrine. However, the Scripture is plain there is no “universal salvation,” but that salvation is universally available.))

Therefore we can plainly see that Eve was under Adam's dominion, and that Adam, as the "governor" of the race, and of all the earth, is solely responsible for all that happens. As an additional note, we do see that Eve was "in Adam" before she was created, even as we were all in Adam. Thus, all that Eve is and we are, comes from Adam by inheritance. By this, we can understand that no fall will occur unless and until Adam himself disobeys the express instruction of God.

There is an additional point to address before continuing: there are those who would argue the point that Satan entering earth prior to the fall, and Eve partaking of the tree, somehow corrupted the environment and introduced sin. However, as Romans, chapter 5 is express:

Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; . . . (*Romans 5:12a*)

To argue the point is to say, by way of parallel logic, that heaven is corrupted, and the throne of God is corrupted by sin when Satan stands before the LORD and disputes about events and persons. This is manifestly not so, and the LORD God retains His righteousness and His dominion, and cannot be corrupted by the presence of the Devil. We must remember that it is only those portions the LORD God has given to others, i.e. Adam, that can be corrupted, if the individual having dominion over that portion falls.

So then, what is it that is offered unto Adam, by way of Eve? It is the knowledge of good and evil. This knowledge is made to be attractive by the appeal that one could be wise, if one only partook. Moreover, like all things the LORD God creates, it too, is beautiful and desirable:

Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit

of the trees of the garden: 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. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: 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.

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. (Genesis 3:1-6)

Now, in answering the question put at the first by our Calvinist friend, we must first look at what he asks:

In order for Adam to voluntarily chose to sin against God, he would need to have the desire to do so. If Adam was born without the desire to sin (sin nature), where did this desire to sin come from?

And again in his comments, he asks later:

To be created in God's image meant, among other things, that we were to mirror and reflect God's character. Adam was created with this character and does not have a sin nature. So how can Adam make a choice to do evil without having the desire for evil?

And yet again:

Yea, Adam was born perfect spiritually and physically without sin. I see what your trying to say, but rebellion is sin. It is evil. For Adam to sin against God, he would need the desire to do evil. That desire to do so, only comes from a sin nature, which Adam does not have.

It is impossible for a human being to make a choice without having a desire for that choice. Can't happen. That is like

making a choice for no reason. No desire, No choice.

In all these comments and questions there is a failure to understand the most critical point of all, which I mentioned earlier:

One of the things that is often overlooked in the above passage, that we must be careful about, is the naming of the tree. It is not, as is often referred to, the tree of good and evil, but the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Hence, to eat the fruit of it, does not bring about evil, other than the direct disobedience to God, but brings about an understanding of what constitutes good, and what constitutes evil. Moreover, it is not an analytical kind of understanding. Rather, it is knowing, in which we instinctively recognize when something is good, and some other thing is evil. It is the ability to instantly distinguish the difference between the two.

This ability to distinguish between what is good, and constitutes good, and what is evil and constitutes evil, is completely missing in Adam and Eve. It simply is not there. Adam cannot recognize and distinguish the difference between good and evil. This is strongly testified to by witnesses that are in opposition: The LORD God, and Satan.

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 for ever:
. . . (Genesis 3:22)

And:

. . . 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. (Genesis 3:5)

In each case, the clear testimony is that, prior to the fall,

Adam could not distinguish the difference between good and evil. Now, we say that hindsight is 20/20 and that we can see clearly after the fact. However, in this case, our hindsight is hindered by the fact that we know good and evil and cannot divorce ourselves from that instinctual knowledge. Hence, everything we view, we view through that lens and cannot see any other way. To us then, our Calvinist friend's view is the norm, and not at all unusual. Nevertheless, we are not left without recourse in the word of God, and we must look at this strictly from the Scripture, since we have no understanding at all of what it is like to be truly "innocent."

What we are told is strictly this, that the tree is a tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and Adam has yet to partake of it. Hence, to Adam, there is no cognizance of any choice he makes being anything other than a choice with consequences that are unknown, except what he has been told. He does not know what death is, as he has never seen death, and has nothing to compare it to. We cannot, as some suppose, assume that the LORD God explained death to him, as the Scripture does not tell us that. Even if "death" were explained to Adam, we could easily ascertain that he still had no real understanding of it, having never seen any such thing as there is no death in the world. Adam has likewise never experienced what we would know as "wisdom" in the sense of knowing that thinking and making decisions in certain ways would be "wisdom" and in other ways would be "foolishness."

Moreover, we must understand that the "knowledge of good and evil," to "know good and evil," and "knowing good and evil" all speak of a lack of discernment concerning the distinction between the two. We, the descendants of Adam, instinctively know good and evil as the Scripture plainly testifies:

(For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves:

Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another;) (*Romans 2:13-15*)

The parenthetical statement above sets forth the fact and principle that it was not instruction in the law, and subsequent failure to keep it, that condemned the Jews and everyone else. Rather, it is the fact that when Adam fell, the law was written into his heart and became an instinctive knowledge in all his descendants, of which we all are. And, since it is instinctive, we view everything through the law, automatically assigning values of good and evil to every thought and every action of both ourselves and others. Thus, to understand Adam's failure, we have to know that "the knowledge of" is what he lacks.

This lack of "the knowledge of good and evil" means that Adam could not assign any relevance to what he chose to do. He could not see it in the light of being "against" God, as that was not known to him as being "evil" or wrong. All Adam knew was that he was instructed not to partake of the fruit of this tree. Moreover, when Eve approaches him, having already eaten of the fruit, he sees no change in her, as he has yet to succumb and thus lose dominion and the righteousness that is his. The Scripture illustrates this in the following passage:

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. (*Genesis 3:6*)

Here we see that Eve partook first of all, and yet there was no effect on her. However, it is when she "gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat." that the fall occurred as it described in the following verse:

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. (*Genesis 3:7*)

We can now see that when the ruler of the dominion is conquered, that all the dominion is affected, as we are reminded in the passage from Romans, chapter 5 referenced above:

Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; . . . (*Romans 5:12a*)

However, it wasn't the "sin" that specifically killed Adam, insomuch as it was the opening of the eyes to the knowledge of good and evil – the law. Though the act of disobedience is sufficient, the act of disobedience comes from simply choosing one thing over another, and was done in innocency. Adam doesn't know that choosing to partake of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is wrong and sin, he just knows that he has been instructed that "death" will occur if he does. Yet, he has another evidence telling him there is no consequence, as he has seen Eve partake, and nothing happened to her. In short, Adam is blind, and does not know the law. Adam saw Eve partake at the suggestion of the serpent, and in opposition to the LORD the serpent told Eve that knowing good and evil brought wisdom, and such wisdom was a thing to be desired. Here then we have a situation where Adam cannot understand or comprehend that disbelieving the LORD is sin, as he does not know and cannot recognize and distinguish between that which is good and that which is evil. Thus, when it states:

And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; . . . (*Genesis 3:7a*)

By this act they became cognizant, or aware, of the ramifications of the expressed will of God, as the Scripture also tells us:

Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be

justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. (Romans 3:20)

Thus, it was not as when we set about to sin, wherein we know what we are about to do is wrong. Rather, it is much like a little child that cannot comprehend things they do are dangerous or wrong. All the child knows is that it wants to do this or that thing, and cannot comprehend any moral ramification to their thinking and actions. The understanding and perception of good and evil came after Adam partook of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. In this the Scripture is express when it states “and” and then continues with “the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew. . .” It then necessarily follows that they did not know prior to Adam eating of the fruit, but only after.

This leads us to examine what we mean by the words “knowing” and “to know” concerning good and evil. We ought to examine this, as it is critical to understanding how Adam could be bereft of what we live with daily, and indeed take for granted. Now, the “knowing” we speak of here is not simply ‘having knowledge of, or information about,’ but is to be instinctively certain of something. It is to understand without question what something is, and what it means. When the Scripture speaks of “knowing good and evil” there are three basic points that we can express about it:

- To “know” is to understand on an instinctual level.
- This “knowing” precludes thinking.
- The “understanding” involved is the ability to comprehend the significance of information, actions and events.

Therefore, Scripturally, to “know,” in the sense spoken of in Genesis, Chapters 2 and 3, is to instinctively understand information, actions and events and their significance. We do not have to think about a thought or action being good or evil, we know without question whether it is or isn’t, as

Romans, Chapter 2 reveals. Neither do we have to consider the significance of such thought or action. We do know that the end of evil thought and action is destruction, and the end of good thought and action is peace. The Lord Jesus Christ verified this during His earthly ministry with the following statement, when he testified that, although we are evil, without question we know what beneficial or good gifts are, and how to bestow them upon our children. Why? Because we have the knowledge of good and evil.

If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him? (*Matthew 7:11, Luke 11:13*)

It is this “knowing” that Adam lacked. Adam could not assign any significance to what he was about to do beyond the consequences he was instructed about (“death” which was unspecified as to its effect). He could not see how his actions would affect him, or Eve, or the creation over which he had dominion. He was incapable of understanding the law of God, and could not understand that the creation he inhabited was “very good” and that he was righteous. All Adam knew was that he lived in a place that was as it is, meaning he had nothing to compare it to, and no means whereby he could understand that it was good, and that he was good. That is why the statement is made “And the eyes of them both were opened, . . .” which in principle, is very much like the opening of the eyes of the disciples after the resurrection:

And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, . . . (*Luke 24:44-45*)

To be continued . . .

Adam and the Fall – Part 1

Note: This is included in the discussion of Westboro and Calvinist doctrine, as it directly impacts Calvinist/Reformed theology and understanding of the fall of man and the sovereignty of God.

Note – Update: In this article, the tenses shift between past and present as there are some parts that are written as if we are third party observers watching the events of creation; other elements are present tense as they continue unto this day. Where it is possible to shift to the more commonly used (and understood) past tense, I have.

I was asked by a Calvinist about a point in my Statement of Faith that is as follows:

VII. Of the Fall of Man

I believe that man was created in innocence under the law of his Maker. That the LORD God created man in a righteous state. That Adam's righteousness was finite, and thus required the LORD's guidance. However, Adam voluntarily chose to transgress the command of God, and in so doing, fell from his sinless and happy state.

And then the questions were asked:

1) Where in scripture does it say Adam's righteousness was finite?

2) What do you mean by finite righteousness?

3) *In order for Adam to voluntarily chose to sin against God, he would need to have the desire to do so. If Adam was born without the desire to sin (sin nature), where did this desire to sin come from?*

Now, I thought that it was obvious what I stated, but there again, I stated it and to me it had better be obvious. However, I am not someone coming along and reading it, perhaps for the first time, and having some difficulty grasping the reasons behind it. Thus, the burden is mine to explain what I mean, and answer the questions as they are put. The good thing about this is that it does give a good opportunity to address the fall of man and the nature of the LORD God. It does also bear quite heavily on the sovereignty of God, and what that sovereignty actually consists of.

In beginning, we must look at two verses from Genesis, chapter one, and what they expressly state:

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. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. 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 1:26-28)*

And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day. *(Genesis 1:31)*

One of the first things to note is the fact that God made man in His image, and that man was given dominion over the earth. Hence, man is made a prince and the pinnacle of God's

creation.

The second thing of note is verse 31, and what it states about man. Man is part of “every thing that he had made” and thus “behold, it was very good.” Plainly this means that man was righteous in his creation – in every aspect of his existence. Upon this, we can categorically state that Adam possessed a “finite righteousness.” To break it down, we can give the following reasons for stating Adam possessed a “finite righteousness.”

Adam is finite for the following reasons:

- Adam was created within an environment that is manifestly finite.
- In the physical, Adam’s limitations are defined by the physical creation within which he exists.
- In the spiritual, because Adam was created a living soul, and that by another, the LORD God.
- Adam is limited by his knowledge. Adam does not know the difference between good and evil, and does not know evil.
- Adam is limited in his ability to act. Adam can only act to the extent of his physical ability.

Adam is righteous for the following reasons:

- Adam was created “very good,” meaning that the condition of Adam before God, as the LORD testifies, is “very good” or righteous.
- Adam can only become unrighteous under one specific condition: disobedience to the single command of God.
- Adam names all the animals, and the LORD God does not disagree, nor chide in any way. In fact, Adam, being given dominion, was given the choice of what he would name all the animals, and did so.
- The LORD actively fellowships with Adam.

By all the above, we can state that Adam is both finite, and

righteous. Moreover, we can see that Adam's righteousness extends to the limit of his knowledge, which knowledge does not extend to knowing the difference between good and evil. This we find clear evidence for in the following passage:

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. (*Genesis 2:16-17*)

One of the things that is often overlooked in the above passage, that we must be careful about, is the naming of the tree. It is not, as is often referred to, the tree of good and evil, but the tree of *the knowledge of good and evil*. Hence, to eat the fruit of it, does not bring about evil, other than the direct disobedience to God, but brings about an understanding of what constitutes good, and what constitutes evil. Moreover, it is not an analytical kind of understanding. Rather, it is knowing, in which we instinctively recognize when something is good, and some other thing is evil. It is the ability to instantly distinguish the difference between the two.

In returning to the thought at hand, we can see that Adam was created in the image of God, and was given dominion over a realm of existence. This realm of existence was finite, and Adam had full control to operate in the realm as he saw fit, saving he was restricted from one activity only, and that only by instruction or commandment. We find evidence of this authority in the passage that follows:

And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an

help meet for him. (*Genesis 2:19-20*)

Here now we intersect the sovereignty of God, and what that sovereignty means in relation to Adam and his authority.

If we remember, Adam is made in the image of God. What this means are there are certain attributes that Adam has, which are ((There are those who will dispute the verb tenses here. However, they need to understand that the rules of English, (and most other languages) are not adequate to explain things that are timeless and continue until this day. Much of Adam's attributes that are attributes the LORD has, continue until this day, both in Adam in eternity, and in all his children here on earth. Hence, I am going to "break the rules" in explaining this. After all, even though Adam "was" made in the image of God, Adam still "is" made in the image of God, as Adam still exists. Kindly examine it from the LORD's perspective, before you jump to conclusions.)) very much in keeping with the attributes of God. This is not to say that Adam is a god. Rather, it is to say that some things intrinsic to Adam as he is created, are attributes the LORD God Himself has. One of those attributes is the fact that Adam is a living soul:

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. (*Genesis 2:7*)

This attribute also belongs to the LORD:

To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the LORD: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts? Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the

solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them. (*Isaiah 1:11-14*)

And again:

Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. (*Isaiah 42:1-3*)

And yet again:

Shall I not visit for these things? saith the LORD: and shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this? (*Jeremiah 5:9*)

These all plainly show that the LORD God has a soul, and that in making man, he chose to make man with a soul. In making man in His image, the LORD also gave man the ability to choose. We can see this plainly in the command given to Adam:

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. (*Genesis 2:16-17*)

Here, as we examine this passage again, we see that Adam must have had the ability to choose, and this ability to choose was freely given him by the LORD God. In placing the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the midst of the garden, and then instructing Adam in what his relationship to the tree ought to be, and the consequences of not heeding the instruction to avoid the tree, the LORD God clearly gave Adam the choice, and expressed His will toward Adam and Adam's conduct regarding the gaining of the knowledge of good and

evil. Thus, the decisions regarding Adam's future were left entirely up to Adam.

Now, it is essential to understand some other points concerning Adam's existence and how he is ((Again, I make the point: the word "is" is entirely appropriate here as Adam, whithersoever he is, is still governed by the sovereignty of God, even if he is in Hell. No one ever leaves the LORD God's dominion. Hence, "was" can never be used in relation to the sovereignty of God. To do so is every bit as egregious an error as saying "Jesus Christ was," in relation to Christ's existence. Jesus Christ is, as He is the I AM.)) governed by the sovereignty of God. It is held by those who believe Calvinist/Reformed theology that the LORD God willed that Adam should fall. ((For what purpose they never say, nor can they say what Adam's fall accomplishes for the LORD God. In fact, Calvin in his Commentary on Genesis completely skips over this question and avoids it. Neither does Calvin adequately explain the reason for the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.)) However, that flies in the face of the plain testimony of the LORD God Himself, who commanded and instructed that this tree was off-limits, and to touch it is to die. To believe that God previously willed that Adam should fall, albeit for some unknown reason (a mystery of God), and then plainly instruct him that he should not transgress and fall, is to believe a contradiction that is incomprehensible, verging on insanity.

Hence, to understand the relationship of Adam's ability to choose to the sovereignty of God, we must understand the context of Adam's existence and the meaning of "free will." As has been described, Adam's existence is within a finite creation, and Adam's understanding is itself finite (necessarily so, since Adam could not yet distinguish between good and evil) we may say that Adam exists within a set of bounds, or parameters which, if we are so inclined, we can readily describe as a "box." This "box" has a Creator, who is the LORD God, and he placed Adam within it, and gave Adam

dominion of a significant portion of it (the earth and all creatures therein). Within this "box" it is plainly apparent that Adam could do whatsoever he pleased, so long as he did nothing to violate the condition of the "box," which was to not partake of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The rule here, then, was that violation of the single rule brought about a condition known as "death," which at this point was yet unspecified as to what that consisted of.

So then, Adam before the fall did have a free will that was consistent with Adam's existence. Adam could act in whatsoever fashion he desired, could think whatsoever he wished to think, and was entirely free to do so. In fact, Adam could even partake of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, so long as he was willing to bear the consequence, which was death, a yet unspecified condition.

This, in principle, is no different than the free will the LORD God exercises. How so, one may ask? It is indeed legitimate to ask, but easily understandable if we understand that all things act in accordance with their nature. It is undisputable in Scripture that the LORD God is holy and righteous in and of Himself. This is so plain that for the sake of space, I will only cite two examples:

Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre. Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. (*Psalms 45:6-7*)

. . . In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began; . . . (*Titus 1:2*)

Thus, the LORD God acts in accordance with His nature – He can only do that which is righteous and holy. Therefore, free will is defined by either the nature, or the environment of the individual exercising that will. We cannot, nor are we free to define free will in absolute terms. To do so creates several

problems, not the least of which is a major impact on doctrine. In explaining, allow me to borrow from a letter I wrote to a brother in Christ some time ago. In this letter, I discussed why there exists no such thing as absolute free will, but that all actions of the will are conditional, based upon the nature and/or environment of the individual.

Why? Because there is no such thing as absolute free will. Absolute free will is defined as being able to do anything at all. Thus for God to have free will, He could do both righteously and wickedly and continuously pick and choose whichever He wanted to do. This cannot be as God is bound by His nature to do only righteously. Moreover, since righteousness is an absolute quality, as soon as God did unrighteously, He would no longer be righteous. Free will then, can only be defined in the context of the existence of the being.

Therefore, we find that before the fall, Adam had a free will which was granted him by the LORD God to do whatsoever he pleased, even to partake of that which is forbidden, only he (Adam) must bear the full consequences of his actions. At no time in the exercise of his free will can Adam ever leave the confines of his existence (the "box"). Adam cannot go beyond the parameters of his existence, as it is not granted to him to do that, and he has no inherent ability to do so. Moreover, since the LORD God created the confines of Adam's existence (the "box"), the LORD retains sovereignty over the "box," and holds all within the "box" accountable. As the LORD plainly told Adam he was free to act and think within his existence, at no time do we find that the LORD loses control of the "box" or of events in the "box."

Now, it is not reasonable for the LORD God to then predetermine for Adam to make the choice to fall, as all the LORD has to do is hold Adam accountable for the violation of the instruction given. This the LORD God has stated in His

word repeatedly:

For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil. (*Ecclesiastes 12:14*)

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. (*Revelation 20:12-13*)

According to the above two passages, the sovereignty of God is not affected at all by the free will of Adam, nor could it be, as that free will was granted by the LORD God Himself. So then, upon these things we stand at this point:

- 1. Adam was formed in the image of God, with certain attributes and characteristics that reflect the glory of God.*
- 2. Adam is given dominion over all the earth, and all things on the earth.*
- 3. Adam is righteous within the parameters of his existence (the "box").*

To be continued . . .

Biblical Inconsistencies? – The Creation of Light

Ever feel like you are dealing with a child who just refuses to learn? Well, that is the feeling I have in answering some of the supposed inconsistencies and contradictions in the Scripture that are raised by the Atheists and Freethinkers. Some of the supposed inconsistencies they “point out” are so childish and immature that it reminds me strongly of dealing with a petulant three or four year old who just doesn’t want to understand the simplest of things. Now, to be certain, there are things in Scripture that certainly appear to be contradictions that the LORD God has put there so that we would be drawn to look deeper and seek the LORD for answers. In reality, there are no contradictions and no inconsistencies at all in Scripture, only a lack of understanding on our part as to how to look at the passages in question.

I take a strictly literal interpretation of Scripture, as I am a fundamentalist by choice and conviction, and that to some, creates the most difficult of situations in Scripture. However, that is not really the case once it is realized that there is a literal physical, and a literal spiritual – and the two are vastly different worlds. Moreover, it also helps immensely to understand that the LORD God is not bound by time and history in explaining something. He is under no requirement to conform to the American point of view and experience, or the point of view of German, Jewish or Russian societies, or any other society on earth for that matter.

Primarily the LORD uses the Jewish experience in the Old Testament, but that is solely due to the fidelity of one man – Abraham, who was and is the friend of God. Because of Abraham’s faithfulness, the LORD God gave certain promises to him that included a child of promise (Isaac) and a nation out of that child of promise (Israel), and then the Messiah out of

that nation. Since the Scripture is centered around, and focuses on the work of the Lord Jesus Christ and the redemption of man, it is only natural that the predominance of Scripture is of a Jewish perspective, but not all.

With those things in mind, it makes understanding the Scripture not so difficult. However, if we approach the Scripture with such a petty and childish attitude as to point out the following as an inconsistency, then what can we expect to understand of the word of God?

GE 1:3-5 On the first day, God created light, then separated light and darkness.

GE 1:14-19 The sun (which separates night and day) wasn't created until the fourth day. (([Infidels.org|Biblical Inconsistencies](http://Infidels.org/Biblical%20Inconsistencies)))

Beyond doubt, the first question that sprang to mind was:

Have the Freethinkers ever heard of the explanation of how light is produced?

And it was followed by:

Do you Freethinkers and Atheists know anything at all about light, mass, and energy? Anything?

Sorry, but this is just petty and childish to say that only the sun and stars can produce enough light to light up the earth, and that only the sun could differentiate night and day.

After having worked with lasers for several years (calibration, sensing, and cutting applications) I am very familiar with the fact that light can be produced from any source material. All you need is mass, and sufficient energy, applied correctly to cause the electrons in the outer shell of

the atoms to jump to the next higher shell. When those electrons lose that energy and drop back to their normal energy level, they give off photons of light at a particular frequency, thus yielding whatever color of light that corresponds to that frequency. (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Light>)

Hence, the Scripture is express that mass was present:

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day. (*Genesis 1:1-5*)

Since it is clear that the LORD God has the energy to produce all that mass, then how hard would it then be for Him to apply energy to the water that is present, and then regulate it so that there are periods of light and darkness?

Not hard at all.

Here now we have the reason that most of the Atheists and Freethinkers cannot understand the Scripture and oppose it:

They are hidebound in their thinking. So hidebound that they throw out very simple, elementary, scientific principles in their opposition and attempts to denigrate and throw out the word of God.

By the Scripture, the result of this is predictable. The LORD God has already given the conditions by which He will grant understanding of His word. We can begin at any number of places in Scripture, but the clearest and plainest place to

begin is in Luke, chapter 24:

And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. (Luke 24:44-47)

As the Lord Jesus Christ makes plain, it is He that grants understanding of the Scriptures. Because the apostles were hard of heart, and expected the Lord Jesus Christ to establish the Kingdom right then and there, all that was to happen, which was foretold in the Scripture, was hidden from them. The LORD then had to open their understanding so they could look back into the Scriptures and see where it was foretold. This ought to be instructive to anyone, let alone those who believe and trust the LORD for salvation:

The LORD God is under no obligation to reveal His word to anyone, let alone someone who has a cavalier attitude toward His word.

This brings us directly to the conditions the LORD God has set in which it can easily be determined whether or not the LORD will reveal His word to any specific individual. These conditions are given in order of importance and progression so that it may be understood why the Scripture seems so difficult for some, and yet easy for others.

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings. (Jeremiah 17:9-10)

Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you. (*Matthew 7:6*)

Stay yourselves, and wonder; cry ye out, and cry: they are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink. For the LORD hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered. And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed: And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned. (*Isaiah 29:9-12*)

Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little: For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people. To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear. But the word of the LORD was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken. (*Isaiah 28:9-13*)

With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful; with an upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright; With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself froward. (*Psalms 18:25-26*)

But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldst take my covenant in thy mouth? Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee. When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst with him, and hast been partaker with adulterers. Thou givest

thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit. Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thine own mother's son. These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes. (*Psalms 50:16-21*)

Thus saith the LORD, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest? For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word. (*Isaiah 66:1-2*)

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. (*Romans 1:16-21*)

So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. (*Romans 10:17*)

But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. (*Hebrews 11:6*)

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and

believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. (John 5:24-25)

Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. (John 10:24-28)

Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this will we do, if God permit. (Hebrews 6:1-3)

Whether you know the Lord Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour or not, it behooves every last person on the face of the earth to listen, and attend unto the word of God. The emphasis the LORD God has laid upon His word cannot be over-stated. For those who claim that they exalt the name of God, yet refuse to hear and be obedient to His word, this is the LORD's reply to them:

I will praise thee with my whole heart: before the gods will I sing praise unto thee. I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name. (Psalm 138:1-2)

If we at all expect to understand the Scripture, we must be attentive and considerate of what the LORD God is telling us.

If we are childish and petty, we cannot expect to ever understand the first thing about the Scripture. The LORD plainly stated the conditions in which He will reveal His word to someone. *We must meet His conditions, and not the other way around.*

If you know the LORD, you can *NEVER* have the attitude that you know all you need to know, as the LORD can and will cut-off your understanding of his word. If you have the attitude that the verses above are *'just too many verses to look at, read and consider,'* then your attitude is not right, and don't expect your understanding of Scripture to increase.

We must ever be mindful that the LORD God is under no obligation, other than what He places upon Himself, to reveal His word to anyone. We would do very well to hold the attitude of Job after the LORD God rebuked him:

Moreover the LORD answered Job, and said, Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him? he that reproveth God, let him answer it. Then Job answered the LORD, and said, Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth. Once have I spoken; but I will not answer: yea, twice; but I will proceed no further. *(Job 40:1-5)*

We need to learn to shut our mouths and listen – and that goes for all of us (myself included), not just the Atheists and Freethinkers.

Now, is it any wonder the Atheists and Freethinkers do not understand the Scripture?

Is it any wonder that the majority of "Christians" do not understand the Scripture?

I didn't think so.

