

Imputation of Adam's First Sin to His Posterity

By [A. A. Hodge](#)

1. Give a summary of the facts already proved from Scripture, consciousness, and observation, and generally acknowledged in all Creeds of the Protestant Churches, as to man's moral and spiritual condition from birth and by nature.

1st. All men, without exception, begin to sin as soon as they enter upon moral agency. 2nd. They are all born with an antecedent and prevailing tendency in their nature to sin. 3rd. This innate tendency is itself sin in the strictest sense. It is inherently ill-deserving as well as polluting and destructive, and without any reference to its origin in Adam, it fully deserves God's wrath and curse, and except when expiated by the blood of Christ is always visited with that curse. President Edwards, "Freedom of the Will," pt. 4, sec. 1, says, "The essence of the virtue and vice of dispositions of the heart lies not in their cause but their nature." 4th. Men are, therefore, by nature, totally averse to all good and unable of themselves to reverse the evil tendency inherent in their nature and to choose good in preference to evil. 5th. Consequently they are by nature children of wrath, their character formed and their evil destiny fixed antecedent to any personal action of their own.

2. Show that the real difficulty in reconciling the ways of God to man lies in these unquestionable facts; and further, that recognition of these facts in their integrity is of far more doctrinal importance than any account of their origin can possibly be.

That we begin to exist, antecedent to possible personal agency, with a nature which justly condemns us and infallibly predisposes us to actual sin, is an amazing mystery, an indescribable curse, and yet a certain and universal fact. No possible theory as to its origin can aggravate its mystery or its terrible significance. We do not claim that the doctrine of our responsibility for Adam's apostatizing act is without grave difficulties. But we do maintain by (a) that it is taught in Scripture, and (b) that it is more satisfactory to reason and to our moral feelings than any other solution ever given.

It is no less evident that the full recognition of these facts is of far more doctrinal and practical importance than any explanation of their origin or occasion can be. Our views as to these facts must at once determine our relation to God, the entire character of our religious experience, and our views as to the nature of sin and grace, the necessity and nature of redemption, regeneration, and

sanctification, while any rationale of these facts will only clear and enlarge our views as to the consistency of God's dealings with the human race with his own perfections, and as to the relations of the several parts of the divine plan with each other.

Hence we find—(1) That these facts as to man's innate sinfulness are much more prominently and frequently set forth in the Scriptures than is the assertion of our responsibility for Adam's act of apostasy. (2) That these have been clearly defined and uniformly agreed upon by all parties and in all ages of the Christian Church, while with respect to our connection with Adam there has prevailed a great deal of vagueness and contrariety of view.—Principal Cunningham's "Theo. of the Ref.," Essay 7., 1.

3. State the self-evident moral principles which must be certainly presupposed in every inquiry into the dealings of God with his responsible creatures.

(1) God cannot be the author of sin. (2) We must not believe that he could consistently with his own perfections create a creature *de novo* (new) with a sinful nature. (3) The perfection of righteousness, not bare sovereignty, is the grand distinction of all God's dealings. The error that the volition of God determines moral distinctions, was for opposite reasons maintained by the Supralapsarians Twisse, Gomar, etc., and by such Arminians as Grotius, the one to show that God might condemn whom he pleased irrespective of real guilt, and the other to show that he could save whom he pleased irrespective of a real atonement. The fundamental truth, however, now admitted by all Christians, is that the immutable moral perfections of God's nature constitute the absolute standard of right, and in every action determine his will, and are manifested in all his works. (4) It is a heathen notion, adopted by naturalistic rationalists, that the "order of nature," or the "nature of things," or "natural law," is a real agent independent of God. "Nature" is simply God's creature and instrument. What is generated by nature is made by God. (5) We cannot believe that God would inflict either moral or physical evil upon any creature whose natural rights had not been previously justly forfeited. (6) Every moral agent must in justice enjoy a fair probation, *i.e.*, a trial so conditioned as to afford at least as much opportunity of success as liability to failure.

4. State the two distinct questions thence arising, which though frequently confused, it is essential to keep separate.

1st. How does an innate sinful nature originate in each human being at the commencement of his existence, so that the Maker of the man is not the cause of his sin? If this corruption of nature originated in Adam, How is it transmitted to us?

2nd. WHY, on what ground of justice, does God indict this terrible evil, the root and ground of all other evils, at the very commencement of personal existence?

WHAT fair probation have infants born in sin enjoyed? WHEN, and WHY, were their rights as new created beings forfeited?

It is self-evident that these questions are distinct, and should be treated as such. The first may possibly be answered on physiological grounds. The second question however concerns the moral government of God, and inquires concerning the justice of his dispensations. In the history of theology of all ages and in all schools very much confusion has resulted from the failure to emphasize and preserve prominent this distinction.

I. HOW DOES IT COME TO PASS THAT HUMAN SOULS ARE CORRUPT FROM BIRTH? IF THIS CORRUPTION IS TRANSMITTED FROM ADAM, HOW IS IT TRANSMITTED?

5. What answers have been given to this question which deny or ignore the Adamic origin of sin?

1st. The Manichaeian theory, adopted by Manes, AD. 240, from the dualism of Zoroaster, of the eternal self-existence of two principles, the one good identified with the absolute God the other evil identified with matter, or that principle of which matter is one of the manifestations. Our spirits have their primal origin with God, while sin necessarily results from their entanglement with matter. This system obviously destroys the moral character of sin, and was earnestly opposed by all the early fathers of the Christian church.

2nd. The Pantheistic theory that sin is the necessary incident of a finite nature (limitation). Some writers, not absolute Pantheists, regard it as incident to a certain stage of development and the appointed means of higher perfection.

3rd. Pelagians and Rationalists, denying innate corruption, refer the general fact that actual sin occurs as soon as man emerges into free agency to the freedom of the will, or to the influence of example, etc.

4th. Others refer this guilty corruption of nature, which inheres in every human soul from birth, to an actual apostasy of each soul committed before birth, either in a state of individual preexistence, as Origen and Dr. Edward Beecher in his "Conflict of Ages" teach; or as transcendental and timeless, as Dr. Julius Muller teaches in his "Christian Doctrine of Sin," Vol. 2., p. 157. This is evidently a pure speculation, unsupported by any facts of consciousness or of observation, contradicted by the testimony of Scripture, Romans 5:12, and Genesis 3:, and one which has never been accepted by the Church.

6. What different views have been held by Christian theologians who admit the Adamic origin of human sin, as to the mode of its propagation from Adam to his descendants?

This is obviously a question of very inferior importance to the moral question which remains to be discussed. By what grounds, through right and justice, does God directly or indirectly bring this curse upon all men at birth? Hence it is a point neither explicitly explained in Scripture, nor answered in any uniform way even by a majority of theologians.

From the beginning, orthodox theologians have been distinguished as Traducianists and Creationists. Tertullian advocated the doctrine that the souls of children are derived from the souls of their parents by natural generation. Jerome held that each soul is independently created by God at birth. Augustine hesitated between the two views. The majority of Romish theologians have been Creationists, the majority of Lutheran theologians, and New England theologians since Dr. Hopkins, have been Traducianists. Nearly all the theologians of the Reformed church have been Creationists

1st. The common view of the Traducianists is not "that soul is begotten from soul, nor body from body, but the whole man from the whole man."—D. Pareus, Heidelberg (1548–1622), on Romans 5:12. In this view it is plain that the corrupted moral nature of our first parents would be inevitably transmitted to all their descendants by natural generation.

2nd. The doctrine of pure Realism is that humanity is a single generic spiritual substance which corrupted itself by its own voluntary apostatizing act in Adam. The souls of individual men are not separate substances, but manifestations of this single generic substance through their several bodily organizations. The universal soul being corrupt, its several manifestations from birth are corrupt also.

3rd. Those who hold that God creates each soul separately, have generally held that he withholds from them from the first those influences of the Holy Spirit upon which all spiritual life in the creature depends, as the just punishment of Adam's sin, as he restores this life-giving influence in consideration of the righteousness of Christ, to the elect in the act of regeneration. Dr. T. Ridgely, London (1667–1734), says Vol. 1., pp. 413, 414, "God creates the souls of men destitute of heavenly gifts, and supernatural light, and that justly, because Adam lost those gifts for himself and his posterity."

A few Creationists have, like Lampé, Utrecht (1683–1729), Tom. 1., p. 572, taught that the body derived from the parents "is corrupted by inordinate and perverse emotions through sin," which thus communicates like inordinate affections to the soul placed in it by God. This latter view has never prevailed, since sin is not an affection of matter, and can belong to the body only as an organ of the soul. Many Creationists, however, refer the propagation of habitual sin to natural generation, in a general sense, as a law whereby God ordains that children shall be like their parents, without inquiring at all as to the method. So

De Moor, Cap. 15., § 33, and "Canons of Synod of Dort."

II. WHY, ON WHAT GROUND OF JUSTICE AND RIGHT, HAS GOD ENTAILED THIS CURSE OF ANTENATAL FORFEITURE UPON ALL HUMAN BEINGS ANTECEDENT TO PERSONAL AGENCY?

7. What is the Arminian explanation of this fact?

1st. They admit that all men inherit from Adam a corrupt nature predisposing them to sin, but they deny that this innate condition is itself properly sin, or involves guilt or desert of punishment.

2nd. They affirm that it was consistent with the justice of God to allow this great evil to come upon all men at birth, only in view of the fact that he had determined to introduce an adequate compensation in the redemption of Christ, impartially intended for all men, and the sufficient influences of his grace which all men experience, and which restores to all ability to do right, and therefore full personal responsibility. Hence, infants are not under condemnation. Condemnation attaches to no man until he has abused his gracious ability. In the gift of Christ, God redresses the wrong done us by allowing Adam to use his fallen nature as the medium for the propagation of sinful children.—Dr. D. D. Whedon, "Bibliotheca Sacra," April, 1862, "Confession Rem.," 7. 3, Limborch, "Theol. Christ," 3., 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.

WE OBJECT to this doctrine.—(1) That our condemnation in Adam is of *justice*, and our redemption in Christ of GRACE. (2) The remedy of the compensatory system is not applied to many heathen, etc.(3) The view is inconsistent with Scriptural doctrines as to sin, inability, regeneration, etc., etc.

8. What has been the prevalent answer given by New England Theologians since the days of Dr. Hopkins?

Dr. Hopkins taught the doctrine of divine efficiency in the production of sin. This, of course, dissolves the question as to the justice of God in bringing Adam's descendants into the world as sinners, since he is the ultimate cause of all sin. Later New England divines discard the doctrine of divine efficiency, but they agree with Hopkins in denying imputation, and in referring the law which entails the corruption of Adam upon each of his descendants to a sovereign divine constitution.

If this view, while acknowledging that this divine constitution is infinitely just and righteous, simply disclaims clear knowledge of its grounds and reasons, we have only to answer, that while in part we sympathize with it, we dare not refuse the partial light thrown upon the problem in Scripture, and exhibited below. But if the design of these theologians be to assert, either (1) that this constitution is not

just, or (2) that God's bare will makes it to be just, and that its being sovereign is the ground of its being righteous, we protest against it as a grievous heresy.

9. What is the orthodox answer to the above question in which the Romish Lutheran and Reformed Theologians as a body concur?

It is certain that while there has been difference of opinion and looseness of statement as to the grounds of our just accountability for Adam's first sin, the whole Church has always regarded our loss of original righteousness and innate moral corruption to be a just; and righteous, not sovereign, penal consequence of Adam's apostatizing act. This is the DOCTRINE, agreement with which is alike accordant with Scripture, honoring to the moral attributes of God and the equity of his moral government, and conformable to historical orthodoxy. In the explanation of this doctrine the orthodox have often differed. It is a simple fact that God as a just judge condemned the whole race on account of Adam's sin, and condemnation by God, the source of life, involves and is justly followed by spiritual and moral death.

10. Where is the fact asserted in Scripture that God condemned the whole race because of Adam's apostasy?

Romans 5:17–19.— "For if by one man's offence death reigned by one;" "Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation;" "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners."

11. Show that in this doctrine the whole Church has concurred.

The sin of Adam was an act of apostasy. The spiritual desertion and consequent spiritual corruption which immediately occurred in his personal experience (the very penalty threatened) was, of course, a just penal consequence of that act. Augustine said ("De Nupt. et Concup." 2. 34.)—"Nothing remains but to conclude that in that first man all are understood to have sinned, because all were in him when he sinned; whereby sin is brought in with birth, and not removed save by the new birth."

Dr. G. F. Wiggers, the learned expounder of "Augustinianism and Pelagianism, from the Original Sources," says in his statement of Augustine's view of original sin, ch. 5, division 2, § 2. "The propagation of Adam's sin among his posterity is a punishment of the same sin. The corruption of human nature, in the whole race, was the righteous punishment of the transgression of the first man, in whom all men already existed."

The "Council of Trent," Sess. 5., 1 and 2, says that "sin which is the death of the soul was part of that penalty which Adam incurred by his transgression, and which is therefore transmitted to his descendants as well as inflicted on himself."

Bellarmin, "*Amiss. Grat.*," 3. 1, says, "The penalty which properly corresponds with the first sin is the forfeiture of original righteousness and of those supernatural gifts with which God had furnished our nature."

Luther (in *Genes.* 1, p. 98, cap. 5) says, that the image of Adam in which Seth was begotten "included original sin, and the penalty of eternal death inflicted because of the sin of Adam."

Melanchthon ("*Explicatio Symboli Niceni. Corp. Refor.*," 23. 403 and 583) says, "Adam and Eve merited guilt and depravity for their descendants."

"*Formula Concordiae*," p. 639 and p. 643, Hase ed.—"Especially since by the seduction of Satan, through the fall, by the just judgment of God in the punishment of men, concreated or original righteousness was lost . . . and human nature corrupted."

"*Apol. Aug. Confession*," p. 58.—"In Genesis the penalty imposed for original sin is described. For there was human nature subjected not only to death and corporeal evils, but also to the reign of the devil. . . . Defect and concupiscence are both penal evils and sins."

Quenstedt (†1688), "*Ques. Theo. Did.*," Pol 1., 994.—"It was not simply of the good pleasure or the absolute sovereignty of God, but of the highest justice and equity, that the sin, which Adam as the root and origin of the whole human race committed, should be imputed to us, and propagated in us so as to constitute us guilty."

Both the Second Helvetic, ch. 8, and the Gallic Confessions, Art. 9, say that Adam, by his own fault (*culpa*) became subject to sin, and such as he became after the fall, such are all who were propagated by him, they being subject to sin, death, and various calamities.

Peter Martyr, Professor at Zurich (1500–1561), as quoted by Turretin (*Loco* 9., 2, 9, § 43), says, "Assuredly there is no one who can doubt that original sin (inherent) is inflicted upon us in revenge and punishment of the first fall."

Calvin.—"God by a just judgment condemned us to wrath in Adam, and willed us to be born corrupt on account of his sin."

Ursinus (1535–1583), friend of Melanchthon, professor at Heidelberg and author of the "*Heidelberg Catechism*," says (*Quest.* 7, pp. 40, 41), "original sin" (inherent) "passes over" to their descendants, "not through the body, nor through the soul, but through the impure generation of the whole man, on account of (*propter*) the guilt of our first parents, on account of which, God, by a just judgment, while he creates our souls, at the same time deprives them of the original rectitude and gifts which he had conferred upon the parents."

L. Danæus (1530–1596).—"There are three things which constitute a man guilty before God: 1. The sin flowing from this that we have all sinned in the first man. 2. Corruption, which is the punishment of this sin, which fell upon Adam and upon all his posterity. 3. Actual sins."

Theodore Beza (1519–1605), on Romans 12., etc.—"As Adam, by the commission of sin, first was made guilty of the wrath of God, then, as being guilty, underwent as the punishment of his sin the corruption of soul and body, so also he transmitted to posterity a nature in the first place guilty, next, corrupted."

J. Arminius, of Leyden (1560–1609).—"Whatever punishment, therefore, was inflicted on our first parents, has gone down through and now rests on all their posterity; so that all are children of wrath by nature, being obnoxious to condemnation . . . and to a destitution of righteousness and true holiness," are destitute of original righteousness, which penalty is usually called a loss of the divine image, and original sin.

G. J. Vossius, Leyden (1577–1649), "Hist. Pelag.," Lb. 2., 1.—1. "The Catholic Church has always thus decided, that the first sin is imputed to all; that is, that its effects are, according to the just judgment of God, transmitted to all the children of Adam . . . on account whereof we are born without original righteousness."

Synod of Dort (1618).—"Such as man was after the fall, such children also he begat, . . . by the propagation of a vicious nature, by the just Judgment of God."

Francis Turretin, Geneva (1623–1687), Locus 9, Q. 9, § 6, 14.

Amesius, "Medulla Theolog.," Lib. prim., cap. 17.—"2. This propagation of sin consists in two parts, in imputation and in real communication. 3. By *imputation* that single act of disobedience which Adam committed is made also ours. 4. By *real communication*, not indeed the single sin. 5. Original sin, since it essentially consists in deprivation of original righteousness, and this deprivation follows the first sin as a penalty, this has in the first instance the nature of a penalty rather than of a sin. Inasmuch as that original righteousness is denied by the Justice of God, so far forth it is penalty; inasmuch as it ought to be present and is absent by human fault, so far forth it is sin. 6. Therefore this privation is handed down from Adam after the manner of ill-desert in so far as it is penalty, and after the manner of real efficiency in so far as it has adjoined to it the nature of sin."

H. Witsius (1636–1708), "Economy," Bk. 1., ch. 8, §5 33 and 34.—"It is therefore necessary that the sin of Adam in virtue of the covenant of works, be so laid to the charge of his posterity, who were comprised with him in the same covenant, that, on account of the demerit of his sin, they are born destitute of original righteousness," etc.

"Formula Consensus Helvetica "(1675), canon 10.—"But there appears no way in which hereditary corruption could fall, as spiritual death, upon the whole human race by the just judgment, of God, unless some sin of that race preceded, incurring the penalty of that death. For God, the supremely just Judge of all the earth, punishes none but the guilty."

Westminster "Confession and Cat"; "Confession faith," ch. 7., § 2 and ch. 6., § 3; "Larger Catechism," 22 and 25; "Shorter Catechism," 18.

President Witherspoon, "Works," Vol. 4., p. 96.—"It seems very plain that the state of corruption and wickedness which men are now in, is stated in Scripture as being the effect and punishment of Adam's first sin."

See also the truth of this position affirmed by Dr. Tho. Chalmers, "Institutes of Theology," part 1, ch. 6; and by Dr. William Cunningham; "Theology of the Reformation," Essay 7., § 2; Dr. James Thornwell, "Collected Writings," Vol. 1., pp. 479, 559, 561, etc.; and a learned article by Prof. Geo. P. Fisher, of New Haven, Theo. Sem., in the "New Englander," July, 1868.

Thus we have the consensus of Catholic and Protestant, Lutheran and Reformed, of Supralapsarian and Infralapsarian, of Gomar, and Arminius, of the Synod of Dort and the Westminster Assembly, of Scotland and of New England.

12. Why was this doctrine expressed technically as the imputation of the guilt of Adam's apostatizing act? and state the meaning of the terms.

At the Council of Trent Albertus Pighius and Ambrosius Catherinus (F. Paul's by Hist. Con. Trent, Lib. 2., s., 65) maintained that the imputed guilt of Adam's first sin constituted the only ground of the condemnation which rests upon men at birth. The Council did not allow this heresy, but nevertheless maintained a rather negative than positive view of man's inherent guilty corruption. Consequently Calvin and all the first Reformers and Creeds were principally concerned in emphasizing the fact that original sin inherent, as distinguished from original sin imputed, is intrinsically and justly, as moral corruption, worthy of God's wrath and curse. It is the reason why the salvation of infants is referred to the sovereign grace of God and the expiatory merits of Christ, and it continues in adults the source of all actual sin and the main ground of condemnation to eternal death. Infants and adults suffer, and adults are damned on account of the guilt of inherent sin, but never on account of Adam's sin imputed.

But when the question is asked why God, either directly or indirectly, brings us into existence thus corrupt, the whole church answered as above shown, *because God has thereby justly punished us for Adam's apostasy.*

This is technically expressed as the "imputation to us of the guilt of Adam's act."

"Guilt" is just liability to punishment. The recognition of guilt is a judicial and not sovereign act of God.

"Imputation" (the Hebrew *bc'j*; and the Greek *logizomai* frequently occurring and translated "to count," "to reckon," "to impute," etc.) is simply to lay to one's charge as a just ground of legal procedure, whether the thing imputed antecedently belonged to the person to whom it is charged, or for any other adequate reason he is justly responsible for it. Thus not to impute sin to the doer of it, is of course graciously to refrain from charging the guilt of his own act or state upon him as a ground of punishment; while to impute righteousness without works is graciously to credit the believer with a righteousness which is not personally his own.—Romans 4:6,8; 2 Corinthians 5:19; see Numbers 30:15; 18:22–27,30; Leviticus 5:17,18; 7:18; 16:22; Romans 2:26; 2 Timothy 4:16, etc.

The imputation, *i.e.*, judicial charging of Adam's sin to us, is rather to be considered as contemplating the race as a whole, as one moral body, than as a series of individuals. The race was condemned as a whole, and hence each individual comes into existence in a state of just antenatal forfeiture. Turretin calls it "*commune peccatum, communis culpa* (common sin, common fault)," 50. 9, Q. 9. This and this alone is what the church has meant by this doctrine. Afterwards in our own persons God condemns us only and most justly because of our inherent moral corruption and our actual transgressions. The imputation of the guilt of Adam's apostatizing act to us in common leads judicially to spiritual desertion in particular, and spiritual desertion leads by necessary consequence to inherent depravity. The imputation of our sins in common to Christ leads to his desertion (Matthew 27:46), but his temporary desertion leads to no tendency to inherent sin, because he was the God–man. The imputation of Christ's righteousness to us is the condition of the restoration of the Holy Ghost, and that restoration leads by necessary consequence to regeneration and sanctification. "It is only when *justificatio forensis* (forum of justification) maintains its Reformation position at the head of the process of salvation, that it has any firm or secure standing at all."—Dr. J. A. Dörner's "Hist. Prot. Theo.," Vol. 2., p. 160.

13. What is the origin of the Distinction between the Mediate and the Immediate Imputation of Adam's sin, and what has been the usage with respect to those terms among theologians?

As above shown, from the beginning, the universal Church has agreed in holding that the guilt of Adam's first sin was directly charged to the account of the human race in mass, just as it was charged to himself. Likewise, Adam's first sin was punished in the race by desertion and consequent depravity, just as it was punished in him. This was uniformly expressed by the technical phrase, the imputation of the guilt of his first sin to his descendants.

In the first half of the seventeenth century, Joshua Placcæus, professor at Saumur, was universally understood to deny any imputation of Adam's sin to his

posterity, and to admit only inherent innate corruption as derived from Adam by natural generation. This was explicitly condemned by the French National Synod at Charenton, 1645; and repudiated by all orthodox theologians, Lutheran and Reformed. Placæus subsequently originated the distinction between Immediate and Mediate Imputation. By the former he meant the direct charging of the guilt of Adam's sin antecedent to their own sinful state. By the latter he meant that we are found guilty with Adam of his apostasy because in virtue of inherent depravity we are apostates also. He denied the former and admitted the latter.

It is obvious—1st. That this doctrine of mediate imputation alone is virtually the "New England Root Theory," above discussed, which refers the abandoning of the human race to the operation of the natural law of inheritance to the sovereign will, instead of to the just judgment, of God.

2nd. It is a denial of the universal doctrine of the Church that Adam's sin is justly charged to his descendants as to himself, and punished in them by depravity as it was punished in himself. That imputation was obviously, whatever its ground, purely immediate and antecedent.

3rd. It is evident that Adam's sin cannot at the same time be both immediately and mediately imputed to the same effect. It would be absurd to think that mankind are judicially punished with inherent corruption as a just punishment for Adam's sin, and at the same time counted guilty of Adam's sin because they are afflicted with that punishment. It is for this reason that so many advocates of the church doctrine of immediate imputation deny that imputation can in any sense be mediate.

4th. But the penalty of Adam's sin was "Death;" that is, all penal evils, temporal, and eternal. The strongest advocates of immediate imputation, in order to account for the infliction of innate inherent sin, admit that *all the other* elements of the penalty denounced upon Adam come upon *us* because of *our own inherent and actual sins*.—See Turretin, 50. 9, Ques. 9, § 14, and "Princeton Essays."

5th. The immediate imputation of the guilt of Adam's sin is to the race as a whole, and respects each individual prior to his existence as a judicial cause of his commencing that existence in a depraved condition. When each single man is considered in himself personally and subsequent to birth, all agree that he is condemned with Adam because of a common inherent depravity and life.

6th. Many found difficulty in conceiving how inherited inherent corruption can be guilt as well as pollution. Their idea was that a sinful state must originate in the free choice of the person concerned, in order to invoke the moral responsibility implied by guilt. Yet all acknowledge that inherent corruption is guilt. Some silently accounted for this on the principle of Edwards, that the essence of the virtue or vice of dispositions of the heart lies not in their cause, but in their nature. Others, however, held that the guilt inherent in innate sin is due to the fact that

this sin is connected as an effect with the apostasy of Adam. If the question then be, Why the race is under and we are allowed to commence our agency in a depraved condition? all the orthodox answer in terms or in effect, "Because of the most just immediate imputation of Adam's first sin."

If the question be, Why are we severally, after birth, judged guilty as well as corrupt, and why are we punished with all the temporal and eternal penal evils denounced upon Adam? many of the orthodox say, "Because of our own inherent sin mediating the full imputation of his sin."

Andrew Quenstedt, Wittenberg (†1688), "Theo. Did. Pol.," 1., 998.—"The first sin of Adam is imputed to us immediately inasmuch as we exist hitherto in Adam. But the sin of Adam is imputed to us mediately in so far as we are regarded individually and in our own proper persons."

F. Turretin, Geneva (†1687), Locus 9, Quest. 9, § 14.—"The penalty which sin brings upon us is either privative or positive. The former is the want or privation of original righteousness. The latter is death both temporal and eternal, and in general all evils which are sent upon sinners. . . . With respect to the former we say that the sin of Adam is imputed to us immediately to the effect of the privative penalty, because it is the cause of the privation of original righteousness, and so ought to go before privation, at least in the order of nature; but as to the latter, the positive penalty may be said to be mediately imputed, because we are not obnoxious to that, unless after we are born and corrupt."

Hence—(1) All in effect admit immediate imputation, and deny mediate imputation alone. (2) Many ignore the distinction, which never emerged till the time of Placaeus. (3) A number, in the senses above shown, assert both.

14. How is this Doctrine proved by the analogy which Paul (Romans 5:12–21) asserts between our condemnation in Adam and our justification in Christ?

"Therefore as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; EVEN SO by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life."

The analogy here asserted is as to the fact and nature of the imputation in both cases, not at all as to the ground of it. Christ is one with his elect because of the gracious appointment of the Father and his voluntary assumption of their nature. Adam is one with his descendants because he is their natural head, and because of the gracious appointment of God. In these respects the cases differ. But the cases are identical in so far as in view of the oneness in both cases subsisting, we are justly charged with the guilt of Adam's first sin and punished therefor, and Christ is justly charged with the guilt of our "many offences" and punished therefor, and we are justly credited with the merit of his righteousness and accepted, regenerated, and saved therefor.—See above Question 12.

If the imputation of Christ's righteousness is immediate the imputation of Adam's sin must be the same, though the basis of the one is grace it is no less just. Although the basis of the other be justice, the original constitution from which it originated is no less gracious.

15. How have orthodox theologians explained the GROUND for this universally assumed judicial charging of the guilt of Adam's apostatizing act to his descendants?

They are generally agreed that the race is justly responsible for the judicial consequences of that act. Beyond this the accounts rendered of the latter have been different, and often vague.

1st. Augustine conceived of the race as essentially one. As far as Adam is considered as a person his sin was his own, but as far as the entire race in its essential undistributed, unindividualized form of existence was in him, his act was the apostasy of that whole race, and the common nature being both guilty and depraved is justly distributed to each individual in that condition and under that condemnation. The whole race was not personally nor individually, but virtually or potentially, coexistent and coactive in him.—Dr. Philip Schaff in "Lange on Rom.," pp. 191–196; Dr. Geo. P. Fisher, "New Englander," July, 1860. This is a mode of thought which at least presupposes Realism, and language to the same effect became traditional in the church, and has been used in a general sense by many, who were in no degree philosophical realists, when treating of our relation to Adam. Forms of expression originating in this view have lingered among theologians who have explicitly rejected realism, and have definitely substituted for it a different explanation of the facts. The whole race has been considered one organically, and we have been said to have been in Adam as branches in a tree, etc. Such renderings of the matter have continued to late times, and been commingled with others essentially different, as that of representation, etc. It is, however unsatisfactory as an explanation of guilt, in the highest degree orthodox, both because of the number and high authority of the writers who have used it, and because it implies the highest conceivable ground of immediate imputation. The apostatizing act is imputed to us, as it is imputed to Adam, "because we were guilty coagents with him in that act."—Shedd's "Essays."

2nd. The Federal View presupposes the natural relation. Adam stands before God in Eden a free, responsible, fallible moral agent, with an animal body and a generative nature. Without a miracle his children must be carried along with him in his destinies. His own status was and must ever continue according to bare law contingent upon free will. God, therefore, as the benevolent and righteous guardian of the interests of all moral creatures, graciously constituted him the federal head and representative of his race as a whole, and promised him for himself and for all eternal life, or confirmed holiness and happiness, on condition

of temporary obedience under favorable conditions, with the penalty for him and for them of death, or condemnation and desertion, on condition of disobedience. This was an act of grace to him, as it substituted a temporal for an eternal probation. It was no less an act of grace for the race, for reasons stated below.

This "Federal Theology" was developed and introduced in all its fullness of detail and bearings by Coccejus (1602–1669), Prof. at Franeker and Leyden. It was regarded as eminently a Scriptural system, supplanting the prevailing scholasticism, and destroying forever the influence of supralapsarian speculations, and it gradually found acceptance, under appropriate modifications, with Lutherans and Arminians as well as Calvinists.

Two things however are historically certain—1st. That the idea of a covenant with Adam including his descendants had long before been clearly conceived and prominently advanced. This was done by Catherinus before the "Council of Trent" (Father Paul's "Hist. Council Trent" pp. 175, 177), and by such men among Protestants as Hyperius (†1567), Olevianus (circum. 1563), and Raphael Eglin (Dorner's "Hist. Prot. Theo," Vol. 2., pp. 31–45).

2nd. That the essential ideas of federal representation were long and very generally prevalent among Protestant theologians from the beginning. Dr. Charles P. Krauth says, with respect to Lutheran theology as a whole, "The reasons assigned for the imputation and transmission centre in the representative character of Adam (and Eve). The technicalities of the federal idea are late in appearing, but the essential idea itself comes in from the beginning in our theology." Melancthon said, "Adam and Eve merited guilt and depravity for their posterity, because integrity had been bestowed on our first parents, that they might preserve them for their entire posterity, and in this trial they represented the whole human race."—"Explicatio Symboli Niceni, Corp. Refor.," 23. 403 and 583.

Chemnitz (1522–1586), "Loc. Theo.," fol. 213, 214, says, "God deposited those gifts with which he willed to adorn human nature with Adam, on this condition, that if he kept them for himself he should keep them for his posterity; but if he lost them and depraved himself, he should beget children after his own likeness."—Hutter, Wittenberg (1616), Lb. "Chr. Con. Expli.," 90. "Adam represented the whole human race." Thus also James Arminius (†1609) (Disp. 31, Thes. ix); John Owen (1616–1683) ("Justification," p. 286), and West "Confession Faith," Ch. 7. § 2, and "Larger Catechism," 22 (1646 and 1647).

Hence it appears that when theological writers, before to the prevalence of the realistic philosophy, explain our moral oneness with Adam by the uninterpreted general phrases "that we sinned in him being in his loins," or "he being our Root," they are not to be understood as excluding all reference to representation, or to covenant responsibility. The language holds true under either theory, or when both are combined in one notion. And from the interchange of terms it is certain

that very often both theories were latent under a common general notion.

16. What can be fairly proved in support of the Augustinian mode of explaining our moral oneness with Adam?

This view explains our moral oneness entirely on the ground of his being the natural head and root of the race, and the consequent physical or organic oneness of the whole race in him.

It may be fairly argued in behalf of this view— 1st. That if it can be proved that we were "guilty coagents with Adam in his sin," the highest and most satisfactory reason possible is assigned for the righteous immediate imputation of the guilt of that sin to us.

2nd. The analogy, as far as it goes, of all God's providential dealings, both general and special, with mankind God's covenants with Noah, Abraham, and David embrace the children with the parents, and rest upon the natural relations of generator and generated. The constitutions alike of the Jewish and Christian Churches provide that the rights of infants are predetermined by the status of their parents. This is, of course, determined by a gracious covenant, yet that covenant presupposes the more fundamental and general natural relation of generation and education. All human condition and character, aside from any supernatural intervention, is determined by historical conditions. Hugh Miller ("Testimony of the Rocks") says, as a Christian scientist: "It is a fact broad and palpable as the economy of nature, that . . . lapsed progenitors, when cut off from civilization and all external interference of a missionary character, become founders of a lapsed race. The iniquities of the parents are visited upon their children." "It is one of the inevitable consequences of that nature of man which the Creator, bound fast in fate, while he left free his will, that the free-will of the parent should become the destiny of the child."

17. What can be fairly argued against the sufficiency of this explanation of the ground of the immediate imputation of the guilt of Adam's first sin?

1st. Observe (1) that the Jewish and Christian Churches, to whom the second commandment (Exodus 20:5) was given, and the children of Noah, Abraham, and David were embraced under special gracious covenants. (2) Observe that in the cases in which God visits the iniquities of parents upon their children in natural providence, irrespective of any special covenant obligations, God is acting with a most just though sovereign discretion in dealing with rebels already under previous righteous condemnation.

2nd. When the Natural Headship of Adam is referred to in general terms, and we are said to have been in him as a "Root," or as "branches in a tree," the notion is unsatisfactory, because (1) Utterly indefinite. (2) Because it is, as far as it goes, material and mechanical, and therefore utterly fails to explain moral

responsibility, which is essentially spiritual and personal. (3) Besides this notion at least latently assumes the fallacy that the laws of natural development are either necessary limits of divine agency, or agents independent of him, or independent concauses with him. The truth simply being that the constitution of nature is the creature and instruments of God. (4) This theory assigns no reason, either on the ground of principle or analogy, why only the first sin of Adam, and not all the subsequent sins of all ancestors, is imputed to posterity as the ground of parental forfeiture.

3rd. The idea of a non–personal but virtual or potential coexistence and coagency (see Dr. W. G. T. Shedd's "Essays" and "Hist. Christ. Doc.," and Dr. Philip Schaff's "Lange. Rom.," pp. 192–194) as the sole basis of just moral responsibility has no support in that testimony of CONSCIOUSNESS, which is our only citadel of defense from materialism, naturalism, and pantheism. Consciousness gives us no conception of sin but as a state or an act of a free personal agent. Even if impersonal, virtual, potential, moral coagency be a fact, it transcends both consciousness and understanding, and being dark itself can throw no light upon the mysterious facts it is adduced to explain and to Justify.

4th. When the attempt is made to expound this theory in the full sense of realistic philosophy the case does not appear to be improved.

(1) In pure realism humanity is a single, generic, spiritual substance which voluntarily apostatized and corrupted itself in Adam. Human persons are the individual manifestations of this common spirit in connection with separate bodily organizations. But—(a) If we so far leave consciousness behind how can we defend ourselves from pantheism? (b) How are individual spirits justified and sanctified while the general spirit remains corrupt and guilty? (c) How did the Logos become incarnate? (d) How, finally, will part of this spiritual substance be eternally glorified, while another part is eternally damned?

(2) Dr. Shedd explains that the generic spiritual substance which sinned has since, through the agency of Adam, been distributed and explicated into a series of individuals. But can a spirit be divided and its parts distributed, each part an agent as the whole was from which it was separated? Is not this to confound the attributes of spirit and matter, and to explain spirit as material, and is not SIN preeminently spiritual and personal?

18. State the reasons which establish the superior satisfactory character of the Federal Theory of our oneness with Adam?

1st. The federal headship of Adam presupposes and rests upon his natural headship. He was our natural head before he was our federal head. He was doubtless made our federal representative because he was our natural progenitor, and was so conditioned that his agency must affect our destinies, and because our very nature was on trial (typically if not essentially) in him.

Whatever, therefore, of virtue in this explanation the natural headship of Adam may be supposed to contain the federal theory retains.

2nd. The Covenant as shown above was an act of supreme divine grace to Adam himself. It was still more so as it respects his descendants. All God's moral creatures are introduced into existence in a condition of real, though unstable, moral integrity. This is obviously true of men and angels, and certainly equitable. They must, therefore, pass through a probation either limited or unlimited. Adam was under conditions to stand that graciously limited probation with every conceivable advantage. But, apparently, his descendants could have no fair probation except in his person. "Three plans exhaust the possible. (1) The whole race might have been left under their natural relation to God forever. (2) Each might have been left to stand for himself under a gracious covenant of works. (3) That the race as a whole should stand for a limited period represented in its natural head. The first would have certainly led to universal sin. The second is the one Pelagians suppose actual. The third is incomparably the most advantageous for the whole." Dr. Robert L. Dabney's "Syllabus." The separate probation of nascent souls in infant bodies was certainly not to be preferred.

3rd. God certainly did as a matter of fact condition Adam with a promise of "Life," and the alternative of "Death," upon a special and temporally limited probationary test. The precise penalty threatened upon him, has been in its general sense and special terms (Genesis 2:17 and 3:16–19) inflicted upon all his posterity.

4th. This view also is confirmed by the analogy which the Scriptures assert existed between the imputation of Adam's first sin to us, and the imputation of our sins to Christ, and of his righteousness to us. This, of course, implies necessarily that the race is one with Adam, and the elect one with Christ. And the analogy certainly is the more complete on the federal view of Adam's union with the race, than on that view which ignores it. Both the Covenant of Grace including the elect, and the Covenant of Works including the race, were gracious. Christ voluntarily assumed his headship out of love. Adam obediently assumed his out of interest and duty. God graciously chose the elect out of love, and graciously included the descendants of Adam in his representation out of benevolence.

Does not the remaining mystery lose itself in that abyss which is opened by *the fact of the permission of sin*, before which all schools of Theists on this side the veil must bow in silence.

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