

Christian Retirement

By [Thomas Reade](#)

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ON THE FALL

He who can contemplate the introduction of moral evil into our world without feelings of deep humiliation, is little prepared to receive with gratitude the stupendous mystery of redemption.

The doctrine of the fall, with all its direful consequences, shines with awful clearness in the Book of God—"as by one man sin entered into the world, death by sin: so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."

The doctrine of the fall lies at the foundation of atonement: for "those who are whole need not a physician, but those who are sick." Jesus came not "to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." He came "to seek and to save those who are lost." "This," therefore, "is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into world to save sinners." His glorious work was announced to Joseph by the angel, when he said, "His name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins.

While viewing the once happy pair after their awful fall, we are constrained to use the language of weeping Prophet: "how is the gold become dim, how is the most fine gold changed!" The sin of Adam was a compound of unbelief; pride, sensuality, ingratitude, and rebellion.

Unbelief; in giving credence to the tempter, rather than to God. Pride; in the fond desire of being wise as gods, knowing good and evil. Sensuality; in lusting after the forbidden fruit. Ingratitude; in leaguering with the fallen angels. Rebellion; in trampling the authority of Jehovah.

The Apostle says, "Adam was not deceived; but the woman being deceived, was in the transgression." The serpent first beguiled Eve through his subtlety and then Eve gained an easy conquest over her husband; for it is recorded, "She took of the fruit then and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her and he did eat." By this act Adam acquiesced in sinful compliance with the temptation, and became a full sharer in her guilt and misery. In this guilt their whole posterity were likewise involved; for it is written "by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation. In Adam all die."

The effect of the fall was shame, the never-failing companion of sin. "They knew that they were naked." The image of God was gone. Their native robe of innocence was gone. Their peace and purity were gone. Awful condition! They were indeed naked and exposed to all the terrors of incensed justice, without a covering from its wrath.

Another effect of the fall was the darkness of the mind. "They hid themselves from the presence of Lord God among the trees of the garden." Amazing blindness! to hide themselves from that Being, whose eyes are brighter than ten thousand suns; who fill heaven and earth with his presence, and from whom no secrets are hid.

Slavish fear was another fruit of the fall. When God asked Adam why he hid himself, he replied, "I was afraid." Ah! what inward torment did sin produce in the soul of our first parents! How changed their condition! They are now afraid to look upon Him whose presence was their heaven and their joy.

Impiety and impenitence were also the baneful offspring of the fall. When God charged Adam with eating of the tree whereof he commanded that he should not eat, Adam replied, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." Mark the impiety. "The woman whom you gave to be with me;" thus charging the guilt upon the Almighty: as if he had said, "If you had never given me this woman, I would have never sinned against you." Oh! the impious insult upon divine benevolence, goodness, and love. Then mark also the impenitence of Adam; "she gave me of the tree and I did eat;" thus throwing the blame of his eating upon Eve; as if he were compelled to eat because she presented the fruit to him; and as if his own will had no part in it.

We see here no conviction of sin—no confession of guilt—no contrition on account of it. The garden of Eden exhibited no signs of penitence, no brokenness of heart; nothing but hardness and obduracy. Eve was just as bad as her husband. She, in like manner, endeavored to exculpate herself by saying, "The serpent beguiled me and I did eat."

Now observe, Oh! my soul; yes, observe with wonder, gratitude, and love, the boundless grace and mercy of Jehovah.

He, who spared not the angels that sinned, proclaimed a rich and free salvation to rebellious man. The Lord promised a deliverer, even the seed of the woman, who should bruise the serpent's head. In the fullness of time, Jesus, the Savior, was born of a pure virgin; born to save his people from their sins, and to vanquish the powers of death and hell. This precious Jesus is now preached, through the everlasting Gospel, to all the guilty sons and daughters of Adam; with the blessed assurance, that all who believe in him shall be saved.

From this short view of man's apostasy and recovery it is evident that man is the sole author of his destruction; and that his salvation is altogether of free, unsought for, unmerited grace. Through the fall, man lost all spiritual power and will to love and serve God. But through the covenant of grace, he regains both; "for God works in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

An attentive perusal of the third and fourth chapters of Genesis will convince every humble inquirer after truth, through the teaching of the divine Spirit, that every man born into this world deserves nothing but everlasting damnation; since "that which is born of the flesh is flesh;" and "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." "Marvel not that I said unto you, you must be born again," was the reply of the Savior to the inquiring Nicodemus. The sinner may cavil and dispute, but his own heart will condemn him. His own life will condemn him. The law of God will condemn him. The sin of his nature, as a child of fallen Adam, will condemn him. He will find nothing but condemnation here, and judgment in the world to come. But let him look out of himself, to the second Adam, the Lord from heaven; to Jesus Christ, the promised deliverer; and there he will find every thing needful to repair the ruins of the fall; yes, to raise him to a more glorious state than if Adam had never sinned.

And what in yonder realms above
Is ransomed man ordained to be?
With honor, holiness, and love,
No seraph more adorned than he.

Nearest the throne and first in song,
Man shall his hallelujah's raise;
While wondering angels round him throng,
And swell the chorus of his praise.

Amazing mystery! Oh wonderful wisdom of God, in thus educing such good out of such evil; and making that to redound to his glory, and manifest the bright display of his perfections, which Satan intended as an awful blight on his new and fair creation!

Thus Satan is foiled, and "grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." "Sing, Oh! you heavens, for the Lord has done it. Shout, you lower parts of the earth; break forth in singing, you mountains, Oh! forest, and every tree therein; for the Lord has redeemed Jacob; and glorified himself in Israel."

Surely none but fools can make a mock at sin.

Sin transformed the angels of light into powers of darkness. Sin rendered the happy pair in Eden wretched outcasts in a world of woe. Sin was the cause of the universal deluge, and the fiery overthrow of the cities of the plain. Sin has ever

marked its steps by misery and blood. Pride, malice, envy, murmuring, uncleanness, and every abomination hateful to a holy God, and destructive to our wretched race, spring from this poisonous root. Every particle of sin contains an infinity of evil, and deserves everlasting damnation.

But, Oh! my soul, if you would view sin in darkest colors and most terrible effects, go to Bethlehem, and ask, "Why did the King of heaven become infant of days? Why was He who fills all space, wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger?" Go to Gethsemane, and ask, "Why did the incarnate God agonize, and sweat great drops of blood?" Go to the judgment-hall, and ask, "Why did the Sovereign Judge of men and angels submit to be judged? Why did the innocent suffer such indignities? Why was the guiltless condemned to die?" Go to Calvary, and ask, "Why did the Lord of glory hang on the accursed tree? Why did the Lord of life condescend to pour out his soul unto death?"

It was to save you from your sin to redeem you from the curse of the law, by being made a curse for you; to deliver you from going down into hell, by becoming your ransom: it was to merit heaven for you by his precious atonement and obedience unto death; it was to purchase for you the eternal Spirit, by whose powerful aid you might believe, and love, and delight in this precious Savior this adorable Redeemer, this almighty Deliverer through whom your sins are pardoned, and by whom you have access unto God, as your reconciled Father. Oh! my soul, praise the Lord for his mercy, and never cease to speak good of his name.

Let this view of sin, and of a sin-bearing Savior humble you in his presence; and empty you of pride and vain glory. Let it, at the same time, fill you with gratitude to God, for having provided such a remedy against the evils of the fall.

Sin, even your sin, nailed, pierced, and agonized the Lord of glory! Oh! then, hate sin, and avoid it as you would tremble to plunge a spear into your Savior's bosom; as you would shudder to trample under foot his sacred blood. "The wages of sin is death." But Oh! rejoice in this gracious declaration, "The gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

And what is sin? "Sin is the transgression of the law." "All unrighteousness is sin." Sin is enmity against God; an inveterate opposition to the gospel method of salvation; a preference of our own will and the enjoyment of the creature, to the will and favor of the Creator. As sin crucified the Son of God, so it hates and persecutes him in all his faithful people. Sin is a daring rebellion against the Majesty of heaven, and would if it were possible, pluck the Eternal from his throne. The proud sinner presumptuously asks "Who is the Lord, that I should obey him!" And "the fool has said in his heart, There is no God."

Oh! my soul, is this hideous evil the inmate of your heart? Can you cherish such a serpent in your bosom? Lord, I tremble at the thought. "Blessed Jesus, turn out

your enemy—my sin, and make me wholly yours; the purchase of your blood, the trophy of your grace, the monument of your mercy, a living temple consecrated to your praise.

Why is my heart so prone to leave
A God of mercy and of love?
Why dare the Holy Spirit grieve?
Why far from Christ and heaven remove?

Lord, it is the fruit of Adam's sin,
The awful taint which nature bears;
Create me all anew within;
Dissolve my flinty heart to tears.

To you I look, my only Lord;
On you, my trembling soul depends;
Blest Savior! speak the healing word;
Your pardoning mercy never ends.

Then will my heart overflow with joy,
My life proclaim its grateful praise,
Until safe in bliss, without alloy,
My soul shall chant celestial lays.

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